



St. Finbarr's NS

Admissions Policy 2025

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the school's board of management has consulted with school staff, the school patron, and parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for St. Finbarr's National School admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice, which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the relevant school year.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school:

- St. Finbarr's NS is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Dermot Farrell.
- 'Catholic Ethos' in the context of Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:
- The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith and which school provides religious education

for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

- In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Finbarr's NS shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

Mission Statement:

St. Finbarr's NS is a primary school catering for classes ranging from Junior Infants to Sixth class. At present, there are 13 full-time teachers and an administrative Principal employed in the school. The school set up an Early Intervention special class for students with ASD, commencing 1st September 2016.

Our aims are: (a) To help pupils realise their potential and be confident of their own ability; (b) To help our pupils to make decisions and to develop a sense of discipline; (c) To encourage the uniqueness of each child and to help him to develop relationships with others around him; (d) To celebrate the diversity of our pupils' differing cultural backgrounds.

3. Admission Statement

St. Finbarr's NS will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender of the student or the applicant with respect to the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant with respect to the student concerned,
- (e) the religious grounds of the student or the applicant with respect to the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant, in respect of the student concerned, has special educational needs.

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Schools with special education classes

St. Finbarr's NS is a school that has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category of special educational needs specified by the Minister, and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

In the case of a mainstream school with a SEN class attached

St. Finbarr's NS, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for preschool students with Autism.

(Please see attached criteria for Early Intervention Class and Junior Autism class)

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

School with a special education class

The special class attached to St. Finbarr's NS provides an education exclusively for students with Autism, and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

6. Oversubscription

If the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

- (a) Siblings and step-siblings of children already enrolled in the school (1) and children resident in the parish (2) (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
- (b) Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking)
- (c) Children residing outside the parish (the eldest child will also have priority)

- (1) In the case where there is a boy's and a girl's school in the parish, siblings should be accommodated.
- (2) Proper documentation, as determined by the Board of Management, must be provided to prove their residency in the parish area.

If there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will be held with an independent party present.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills, or aptitude;
other than in relation to:
 - Admission to a special class is necessary to determine whether the student has the relevant category of special educational needs.
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills, or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
(Other than on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2), parents who have attended a school may only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

- (g) the date and time on which the school received an application for admission.

This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Finbarr's NS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to decide on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 18](#) below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Finbarr's NS you must indicate—

- (i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not you have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by St. Finbarr's NS where—

- (i) it is established that the information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that Section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Finbarr's NS were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of St. Finbarr's NS is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018, and any regulations made under that Act.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- All applications for admission received for any class from Senior Infants to Sixth Class, inclusive, as outlined in the annual admission notice, will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018, and any regulations made under that Act.
- The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:
- All applications for admission received after the commencement of the school year, as outlined in the annual admission notice, will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018, and any regulations made under that Act.

16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Finbarr's NS or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or voluntary contributions as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

18. Reviews/appeals

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents/guardians have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/ guardian(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998, which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management before appealing to section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management before appealing to section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **before appealing to** section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management before appealing to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998, which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

This Admissions policy was approved by the Board of Management after review by the Patron and after consultation with the parent body. It was ratified at a Board of Management meeting on 08/09/2024. Ratified by the Board of Management, September 2025

Ratified: 

Signed: 

Pre-School Autism Class

St. Finbarr's NS, with the approval of the Minister of Education and Skills, established an early intervention class to provide education exclusively for pre-school children with an autism diagnosis.

St. Finbarr's welcomes children and their families to apply for a place in the class. Referrals for the pre-school autism class are made by the parent. The enrolment form must be completed, including all necessary reports.

The principal, the class teacher, and learning support teachers will meet with the parents to discuss the child's strengths and needs for the academic year. This meeting will assist in clearly identifying the supports required to provide a quality educational experience for the child.

The school endeavours to work closely with parents. This partnership is very important as all stakeholders want the best outcome for the child. As such, parents will keep the school informed of any new assessments or appointments that will support the child in school. The school will also inform parents about the child's progress formally and informally.

On occasion, the Principal and teachers may need to speak to parents about a child's progress and overall suitability for the class. The overarching outcome is for the child to be placed in the most suitable environment that meets their learning needs.

Unsuccessful applicants and their information will be kept on file and reviewed in line with the admissions policy should a place become available.

Eligible Criteria for Admission to the Pre-School Autism Class

The number of admissions depends on the number of places available, which may vary from year to year. The class has a maximum of 6 children each year; however, all 6 places are rarely available at any one time. Below is the minimum requirement for admission into the early intervention class: Entry to the Pre-School Autism class shall be compliant with DES policy and procedures. The school will work closely with the NCSE and ensure all children have been registered.

All criteria below must be met before any application is considered:

- Children must be over 3 years of age on entry and cannot be 6 years old in the final placement year, i.e., within the academic year (First of September to the 30th of June). It is important to note that the majority of children only qualify for a maximum of 2 academic years in the early intervention class.
- The child must have a diagnosis of autism as per DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria.
- The child must have a psychological assessment report that confirms autism and recommends placement in an autism class or a pre-school autism class in a mainstream setting.

The school shall not admit each student seeking admission except where-

- a) The class is oversubscribed (please see below for further details)
- b) A definite diagnosis of autism has not been met using DSM-V and ICD 10 criteria.

What will not be considered or taken into account:

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a pupil on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a pupil's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service,
- the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- a pupil's academic ability, skills, or aptitude;
- the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills, or aptitude of a pupil's parents;
- a requirement that a pupil, or their parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
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St. Finbarr's NS -Criteria for admission in the event of oversubscription for the Early Intervention Class is weighted based on the following criteria

- The Pre-School Autism Class was set up to support children from 3 years of age. The child must be 3 years old on the 1st of September of the year they are starting.

- Eligible siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school.
- Eligible children resident in the Parish of Cabra West. The youngest child will have priority in this ranking.
- Eligible children from outside the parish of Cabra West. The youngest child will have priority in this ranking.
- Eligible children from outside the Dublin 7 area. The youngest child will have priority.

Eligible criteria for Admission into the Junior Autism class

The Junior Autism class has a maximum of 6 places each year. This number will vary each year and will be displayed on our admissions notice online. Unsuccessful applicants and their information will be kept on file and reviewed in line with the admissions policy should a place become available.

Below is the minimum requirement for admission into the junior autism class.

- The child must have a diagnosis of autism as per DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria.
- The child must have a psychological assessment report that confirms autism and recommends placement in an autism class in a mainstream setting.
- The child must be five years old on the first of September of the year they are applying

In the event the autism class is oversubscribed, the criteria below will be used:

Finbarr's BNS -Criteria for admission in the event of oversubscription for the Junior Autism class is weighted based on the following criteria:

- Eligible children who meet the age criteria and have already enrolled in the Early Intervention class. If several children are seeking a place, the eldest child will be given priority ranking from the Pre-School Autism Class.
- Eligible children currently enrolled in St. Finbarr's NS mainstream setting who meet the above criteria.
- Eligible siblings and stepsiblings of children currently enrolled in St. Finbarr's.
- The child must be of an age consistent with the existing profile of the class.
- Eligible children from the parish of Cabra West.
- Eligible children from the Dublin 7 area.
- Eligible children from outside the Dublin 7 area.
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Ratified by the Board in January 2025

Ratified:

S. Shovlin

Signed:

Eoin Clark