

Enrolment Policy for Blessington Educate Together National School National School

Introduction

The Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School wishes to inform all parents and guardians that this enrolment policy has been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998 and the Welfare Education Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act for Persons with special Needs 2004. The Board of Management trusts that by doing so, parents and guardians will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The chairperson of the Board of Management, Charlie Brophy or the principal, Rosemary Lynch will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

General Information

Blessington Educate Together National School, under the patronage of Educate Together, is located at Red Lane, Blessington, Co. Wicklow. Blessington Educate Together National School was founded in September 2006. The teaching staff currently comprises of three teachers including the Principal, and two part-time resource/learning support teachers. At present classes range from Junior Infants to Sixth Class and all classes are co-ed. Blessington Educate Together National School is a developing school, which is expected to grow an 8-class school.

The school day begins at 9.00a.m. Infant classes go home at 1.40p.m. senior classes at 2.40p.m. The school follows the curricular programme prescribed by the Department of Education and Science, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act, 1998. Blessington Educate Together National School also implements the Ethical Education Programme as prescribed by its patron, Educate Together.

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Science regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act and the funding and resources available, Blessington Educate Together National School supports the principles of:

- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need

Enrolment Policy

1. The enrolment policy of Blessington Educate Together National School has been drawn up in accordance with the national policy of Educate Together.
2. The Board of Management of the school oversees and is responsible for the implementation of the enrolment policy.
3. Children may be placed on the pre-enrolment list from birth.
4. Allocation of places is on a first come, first served basis.
5. No guarantee of places is given or implied by pre-enrolment.
6. ***Blessington Educate Together National School does not operate a sibling policy.***
7. ***Junior Infants are entitled to start in the school if they are four years old before August 1st of that year.*** Parents can choose to pre-enrol their child for that year or for the following year when they are five. ***Senior Infants must be 5 by August 1st of the year they start in a Senior Infants***

class.

8. While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Blessington Educate Together National School also respects the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children.

Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- A. size of / available space in classrooms
- B. educational needs of children of a particular age
- C. multi-grade classes
- D. presence of children with special educational / behavioural needs

(See section on *Enrolment of children with special needs*)

- e. DES maximum class average directives (*currently a maximum average of 27 children*)

9. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment will be made by the Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, in accordance with our school policy.

10. Parents will be informed, in writing, of the school's decision.

11. Children enrolled in Blessington Educate Together National School are required to co-operate with and support the school's Code of Good Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum organisation and management.

12. The Board of Management places parents/guardians responsible for ensuring their children co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education's Rules for National Schools, these policies may be added to and revised from time to time.

Enrolment Procedures

1. Parents/guardians can obtain pre-enrolment forms from the school secretary.

2. Upon receipt of completed applications, each pre-enrolment form will be endorsed with a unique, sequential pre-enrolment number. If more than one form is received on the same day, they are ordered by post date on the envelope. If post date is the same, they are put in alphabetical order.

3. Each child will be placed on the pre-enrolment list according to their pre-enrolment number. If parents have twins/triplets etc, the children will be put on the list one after the other.

4. Junior Infants may start in the school if they are 4 years old by 1st August, and Senior Infants 5 years old by 1st August of the year in which they start in those classes.

5. Two lists will be kept for each year, a Junior Infant and a Non-Junior Infant list. Children will be ranked in pre-enrolment number order on these lists.

6. No guarantee of places is given or implied by pre-enrolment.

7. Children will be offered places strictly according to the ranking of the pre-enrolment numbers on the pre-enrolment list, that is, strictly on a 'first-come-first-served' basis.

8. Parents must respond in writing to accept an offered place for their child within 14 days of that offer being made.

9. On receipt of the acceptance form, the school will confirm in writing that a place has been reserved for their child.

10. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in their child's place on the pre-enrolment list being forfeited.

11. Parents pre-enrolling Junior Infants may defer the child's place for one year providing that the child will be under six by September 1st of the year that he/she starts school. This means that the child will be placed on the list for the following year according to the original pre-enrolment number. This does not guarantee an offer of a place, as places will be allocated strictly according to the ranking of the pre-enrolment numbers on the pre-enrolment list.

12. Junior Infants, who may have taken up an offer in the school, and defer after the school year has started, will be treated as if the deferral had taken place before actual enrolment. Junior Infants' actual enrolment may be deferred for a maximum of one year. Placement order in the following year's pre-enrolment list will be in accordance with their original pre-enrolment number (i.e. as if they had originally pre-enrolled for the deferred year)

13. Non-Junior Infants cannot defer a place that has been offered to them. However, if a parent/guardian wants to put them on the list for the following year (for a different class) they will be issued with a new pre-enrolment number and put on the non-Junior Infant list for the following year.

14. If a non-Junior Infant is not offered a place in the year of initial application, parents/guardians will be offered the option to put their child's name on the pre-enrolment list for the next available year, retaining the original pre-enrolment number. Parents must respond to this offer, in writing, within 14 days of that offer being made. Otherwise, their child's place on the pre-enrolment list will be forfeited.
15. If a child leaves during the school year, his/her place may be back-filled. The place may be offered to the next person on the list for the same class. If there is no child on the list for the same class who wishes to take up the offer, the place may be offered to a child on the list for a different class. This will be decided in conjunction with the Principal and the Board of Management.
16. It is the sole responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform the school promptly of any change of address, telephone number or any other relevant circumstances.
17. Parents/guardians of children wishing to transfer from another school will be required to supply a copy of the child's most recent school report and any other relevant reports/information.
18. In the event of a child being referred to a Reading/Special school, the Board of Management agrees that children may retain their original pre-enrolment number and will be put on the list for the next year's class. At the end of each school year their case will be reviewed as to whether or not they will return to Blessington Educate Together National School and which would be the most appropriate class for the child. Parents will be informed of the decision.

Appeals

The Board of Management of a school is also obliged under section 19(3) of the Educational Welfare Act 2000 to make a decision in writing in respect of an application for enrolment within 21 days and to inform the parents in writing of that decision.

Where a Board of Management refuses to enrol a student in a school, the parent of the student or, where the student has reached 18 years of age, the student himself or herself, following the conclusion of any appeal procedures at school level, has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act.

Enrolment of children with special needs.

1. In order to enable us to establish the educational needs of children with special needs and to make proper provision for such children, it is very important that parents/guardians inform the Principal of any special needs their children may have.
2. It is imperative that parents/guardians wishing to enrol a child with special needs supply the school with copies of psychological, medical or other relevant reports which have been made about the child
3. Where no such report exists and where the school considers the child may have special educational needs, the Board of Management may request that the child be assessed.
4. Prior to enrolment and following receipt of the relevant reports, the school will assess how the special needs of the child may be met. Where it is deemed that further resources are required, the school may request the DES to provide the resources necessary to meet the child's needs as outlined in the reports. As part of the enrolment procedures for Blessington Educate Together, the school may wish to meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held. This may include parents/guardians, Principal, class teacher, learning support teacher, resource teacher and/or psychologist as appropriate.
5. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to defer enrolment of a child pending receipt of an assessment report and/or the provision of appropriate resources by the DES to meet the needs specified in the report- To be deleted

Enrolment Information

On enrolment, the school requires that an original birth certificate be produced and a copy of the birth certificate be kept on file, and a school registration form, including the child's PPS number be filled in fully by the parent(s)/guardian(s). ***The Board of Management reserves the right to defer the enrolment of a child or ask that the child be temporarily removed from the school in the event that false information is given.***

September 2007

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