

Admission Policy of Tallanstown National School

School Address: Tallanstown, Dundalk, Co. Louth

Roll Number: 02745N

School Patron: Archbishop of Armagh

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 board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 21st December 2022. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Tallanstown 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 school year concerned.

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

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

- In 1969 the three schools in the parish of Tallanstown i.e. Aclint N.S., Stormanstown N.S. and Tallanstown N.S. were amalgamated to form one central school. In the course of this amalgamation guarantees were given that any children living in the historical catchment area of Aclint N.S. and Stormanstown N.S. would be afforded equal rights of access to the centralised school as the children living in the historical catchment area of Tallanstown N.S. This guarantee was to have no time limitation.
- Tallanstown N.S. is under the patronage of the Archbishop of Armagh.
- Tallanstown N.S. currently has 13 mainstream teachers, and 4 Special Education Teachers.
- The school is a vertical mainstream mixed school with classes ranging from Junior Infants to 6th Class.
- Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special education needs, disability language/ accent, gender, asylum-seeker/ refugee status, religious/ political belief and values, family or social circumstances.

- Tallanstown N.S. is a place where children are encouraged to grow and to develop in a supportive, positive and enjoyable atmosphere. Our core aims are to provide a broad and comprehensive education, to recognise the needs and to develop the talents of each pupil.
- We are a caring school. We strive to live up to Christian values and to show genuine concern for one another. We appreciate individuality and difference. Tallanstown N.S. will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of teachers through staff development programmes.
- Tallanstown N.S. will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in the Parents Association. Tallanstown N.S. will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils' respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.
- Tallanstown N.S. will promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.
- Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt agus a fhorbairt tríd an scoil.

3. Admission Statement

Tallanstown National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (i) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (ii) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (iii) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (iv) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (v) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (vi) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (vii) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (viii) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (ix) 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, 'gender ground', 'civil status ground', 'family status ground', 'sexual orientation ground', 'religion ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'ground of race' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

- Tallanstown National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.
- Tallanstown National School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

Tallanstown National School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

Tallanstown National School is a mainstream school. It does not have a Special Class(es) at present. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are catered for by their mainstream class teacher with the support of the Special Education Team. Children with special needs enrolling in Tallanstown National School will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to the Board of Management.

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

Tallanstown National School is a Roman Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic Denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that 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 full list of applicants will be drawn up after 18th January of the preceding year by the Board of Management (BOM) using the following criteria:

- (i) Siblings of children already enrolled
- (ii) Children of current school staff
- (iii) Children living within the traditional parish catchment area of the school
- (iv) In the event that there are more applicants within any category than there are available places, priority will be given to children within the particular category in order of age, starting with the oldest.

Please note:

1. The BOM will determine the appropriate number of children to be enrolled in accordance with the rules and recommendations of the Department of Education and Skills and taking the existing circumstances particular to our school into consideration.
2. The Board of Management will then offer the appropriate number of places in Junior Infants Class to children starting with the above lists
3. If any child/children offered a place/places do not accept a place/places, then this place/places will be offered to the next child/children listed.
4. All applicants will be notified about the decision of the B.O.M.
5. Any applicants not accommodated will be automatically placed on the list of applicants for the following year.
6. The final decision on all the above rests with the Board of Management of Tallanstown N.S.

In the event that 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:

- A student's connection to the school in relation to parents or grandparents having attended Tallanstown National School this criteria will only apply to a max of 25% of the available places set out in the admissions policy.
- All applicants not accommodated will be automatically placed on the list of applicants for the following year.
- The final decision on all the above rests with the Board of management of Tallanstown National School.

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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (i) an early intervention class, or
 - (ii) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (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, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria 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 an application for admission was received by the school,

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 Tallanstown National School 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 make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to 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 why they were not offered a place 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 Tallanstown National School, 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 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 Tallanstown National School where—

- (i) it is established that 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 in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a board to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student’s personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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 Tallanstown National School 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 Tallanstown National School 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:

Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment and circumstance:

- a) Failure to fully complete forms will result in failure to admit the applicant
- b) The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.
- c) The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered.
- d) The final decision on all the above rests with the Board of Management of Tallanstown N.S.

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 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.

The final decision on all the above rests with the Board of Management of Tallanstown N.S.

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

The board of Tallanstown National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) 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.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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) or the pupil, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

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.

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 prior to making an appeal under 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 prior to making an appeal under 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 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 **prior to making an appeal** under 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 prior to making an appeal under 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.

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.