



Enrolment Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the teaching staff of Lumcloon National School at school planning sessions in 2008. It was subsequently reviewed in early 2011 in line with Catholic Primary Schools' Management Association guidelines and again in 2019.

The draft policy was circulated to all staff and parents/guardians of pupils attending the school for comment/input and was presented to the Board of Management for ratification.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Fr. Pierre Pepper, The Presbytery, Banagher, Co. Offaly (Telephone 057 9151338) and the School Principal, Catherine Doolan, Lumcloon National School (Telephone 057 9345224) will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

Mission Statement

Through its Catholic ethos, Lumcloon National School aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils: cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian philosophy of life.

Children enrolled in Lumcloon National School are required to co-operate with the school's Code of Behaviour and other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with these policies in an age appropriate way.

Rationale

The rationale for this Enrolment Policy is to provide a framework for the selection of applicants for places in the school and to assist parents in relation to enrolment matters.

The Board of Management in making decisions regarding enrolment is bound by the Department of Education and Skills *Rules for National Schools* which provides for the enrolment of pupils from the age of four years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of six years.

The Board of Management of Lumcloon National School has compiled its Enrolment Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), Equal Status Act (2000), the Disability Act (2005), General Data Protection Regulations and the Education (Admission to Schools) Act, 2018 .

Aims

The aims of this Enrolment Policy are that Lumcloon National School shall have in place an appropriate framework in order:

- To establish criteria under which applications for enrolment in our school shall be considered
- To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner
- To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement and current legislation/national guidelines
- To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application for enrolment



General School Information

Lumcloon National School, Cloghan, Birr, Co. Offaly.

Telephone (057) 9345224

Lumcloon National School is a co-educational, mixed National School with a Catholic ethos. It is under the patronage of the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, Dr. Francis Duffy.

The school has the services of 5 teachers - two mainstream class teachers, two special class teachers (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and Special Education Teachers. The school caters for pupils from approximately 4 to 12 years of age in classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and operates within the rules and regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills.

The school is subject to The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004), the Equal Status Act (2000) and all relevant equality legislation. Lumcloon National School follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Skills which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding and resources available the Enrolment Policy of Lumcloon National School supports the principles of: -

- inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- equality of access and participation in the school;
- parental choice in relation to enrolment
- respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Therefore, no child will be refused access to Lumcloon National School for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

Application Procedures

As a general principle and insofar as practicable having regard to the Enrolment Policy of Lumcloon National School, children will be enrolled on application provided there is space available.

Admission of Junior Infants normally takes place on the first day of the academic year. Any child who has not reached his/her fourth birthday cannot be enrolled at any time. Children may be admitted during the school year provided they are transferring from another school.

Information regarding enrolment of Junior Infants for the coming school year will be communicated generally via through school social media accounts, parish newsletters, local papers and any other appropriate media. This will generally take place in January/February. The Board of Management has determined that following a parent contacting the school wishing to enrol their child, the school will send the parent an enrolment pack including a copy of this Enrolment Policy and an Enrolment Form. Enrolment Forms must be completed and returned to the school on or before a date set by the school principal.

Provision of Key Information by Parents

Applications will only be accepted on the basis of a fully completed Enrolment Form. This form must be accompanied by a copy of Birth/Adoption Certificate.

When an application to enrol a child in Lumcloon National School is made certain information will be required. **The categories of information and the purposes for their collection and retention are in line with our GDPR Policy.**



The categories include:

- Pupil's personal data
- Pupil's parents'/guardians' personal data
- Relevant medical history including GP details
- Any legal order under Family Law that the school should know about
- Previous preschools/schools attended, if any, and reasons for transfer, if applicable
- Any other relevant information deemed necessary by the school (including any such other information as may be prescribed under the Education Welfare Act, 2000).

Religious denomination and Baptismal Certificate are required for children who will be receiving Catholic sacraments during their time in our school. Religious denomination is not a deciding factor in enrolment.

Permission for various school activities is sought as part of our enrolment form in order to comply with requirements under General Data Protection Regulations.

Decision Making

A decision on enrolment of a pupil will be given in writing within 21 days of receiving a completed application. Where the school reasonably requires further information, the application will not be treated as complete until such time as all requested information has been received.

In line with Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000, the school as a condition of so registering a child, will require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

Enrolment Criteria

The Board of Management makes decisions relating to enrolment in accordance with school policy. In the event that applications exceed/ are expected to exceed the number of spaces available the Board of Management has determined that priority in the allocation of places will be given to the following groups of children:

- All children resident in the Catholic parishes which the school serves (Cloghan & Banagher and Ferbane), regardless of religious denomination/none
- Brothers and sisters of children already enrolled in the school
- Children of current staff, including ancillary staff
- Pupils whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by Google Maps).

Places will be allocated thereafter according to the priorities above and confirmed by the Board of Management at its next meeting.

In determining enrolment the Board of Management shall take into account Department of Education and Skills regulations regarding staffing provisions, maximum class size and maximum class average and any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation such as physical space, the educational needs and rights of children already enrolled, multi-grade classes and the presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs.

The Board of Management shall at all times have regard for the Health, Safety and Welfare of pupils, teachers and others who work in the school.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Skills' Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the ages of 4 years of age upwards although compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years.



Enrolment of Pupils with Special Needs

In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs the Board of Management may request a copy of any relevant medical or psychological reports as are available.

Following receipt of such reports the Board of Management shall assess how Lumcloon National School can meet the needs specified in the report. If further resources are required the Board of Management may, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the required resources. These may include any combination of the following: visiting teacher service, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport or other services. However, approval/allocation of these resources will not be cause for the enrolment of the child to be deferred or postponed.

The school principal will meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the suitability and capability of Lumcloon National School to meet those needs. If necessary, a full case conference may be called which may include parents, principal, class teacher, Special Education Teacher, SENO, psychologist, medical personnel and any other relevant parties.

Refusal to Enrol on Grounds of 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The Board of Management of Lumcloon National School reserves in its Enrolment Policy the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances e.g.

- a) The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education
or
- b) In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

Right of Appeal

Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 provides for a right of appeal against a decision to refuse enrolment.

Parents, who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision, may appeal to the Board of Management. It must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal, and lodged within ten days of receiving the refusal. Parents, if unhappy with the result of this appeal, may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act on the official form provided by the Department. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the refusal from the school to enrol.

The Chairperson of the Board of management has responsibility for preparing a response for the Appeals Committee if and when an appeal is initiated. Following a decision of the Supreme Court, it is noted that, in an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, an Appeals Committee can substitute its decision for that of the Board of Management and may make such recommendations to the Secretary General of the DES as it considers appropriate.

Transfer of Pupils

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time subject to school policy, available space, the provisions of the Education Welfare Act (2000) and in some cases the approval of the Department of Education and Skills.

Code of Behaviour

Lumcloon National School shall append to its Enrolment Policy a copy of its Code of Behaviour and any other policy referred to in its Enrolment Policy. As per Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act, 1998, this Enrolment Policy adheres to the National Education Welfare Board's Guidelines with regard to suspension and expulsion of pupils.



Approval of Patron

In line with Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998, the Board of Management of Lumcloon National School now publishes, with the agreement of the patron, the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs, and ensures that as regards that policy, principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected and such directions as may be made from time to time by the Minister, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons concerned, are complied with.

Communication/Circulation of Policy

This revised copy of the Enrolment Policy will be made available on request to all parents/guardians of pupils attending Lumcloon National School. New applicants to the school will be given a copy along with their enrolment form.

Review & Ratification

This policy was approved by the Patron of the School and ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of May 25th, 2011. It was reviewed in 2015 and again in 2019. It shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.