

**Presentation Primary School,  
Station Road,  
Portarlinton,  
Co. Laois**



**Presentation Primary School Mission Statement**

We endeavour to provide a holistic Catholic education for each child, where respect and care for all, are central values.

**Admission/Enrolment Policy**

|                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Patron:</i></b>            | <b>Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin</b> |
| <b><i>Chairperson B.O.M.</i></b> | <b>Frank Smith</b>                    |
| <b><i>Principal</i></b>          | <b>Cathal Ruane</b>                   |

In setting out our enrolment/admission policy the Board of Management is acting in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Epsen Act 2004, and the Board trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters and that the Chairperson Frank Smith and the Principal, Cathal Ruane will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

## **Aims and Visions**

Our ideal is a school community in which:

- while upholding the Catholic ethos and Presentation spirit of the school we promote inclusiveness and respect cultural and religious diversity
- we endeavour to develop a sense of awe and wonder and gratitude to God for creating, ourselves and the environment
- both staff and pupils are encouraged to work to their full potential and prayer and meditation is a feature of the school day
- teachers united with each other, work with parents united with each other, to create a caring and just atmosphere in which the children feel secure and free to exercise all their God given talents
- we create an awareness of the suffering caused by injustice in the world and promote a generous and caring response

## **General Information**

- Our School is a Catholic school under the Patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin
- There are 38 teachers in the school, including the Principal. There are 27 mainstream class teachers, 8 within the learning support and resource department including Nano Nagle Centre, 1 Administrator and 1 Deputy
- All classes from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class are taught in the school. In Junior and Senior Infants the school is co-ed and from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes we enrol girls only. All boys transfer after Senior Infants
- The school operates within the regulations laid down from time to time, by the D.E.S. and is dependent on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Dept. of Education and Skills. All our school policies must have regard to the resources and funding available

- The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Dept. 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 regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding resources available, the 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 (while observing the decision making criteria for enrolment as stated in the policy)
  - Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life in society (while upholding the ethos of the school)
  
- **Opening hours:** 8.50a.m. – 1.30p.m. (Junior and Senior Infants)  
8.50a.m. – 2.30p.m. ( 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> classes)

Bell rings at 8.45a.m. All children stand in their line and are brought into the school by their teacher.

*Lunch Break:* 10.30a.m. – 10.45a.m.  
12.30p.m. – 12.55p.m.

## **Rationale**

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Ethos, the Mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school

## **Legal Framework**

**Section 9(j)** of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that “A recognised school shall ...Subject to this Act and particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”.

**Section 15 (2) (d)** states the Board of Management shall “publish....The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of parents choice are respected.

**Section 27 (1)** states that “A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school” and (2) that “the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers”.

**The Education Welfare Act, 2000 (Section 19 (1) )** requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the Schools Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible ( but no later than 21days ) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof”.

**The Equal Status Act, 2000 (Sections 5 & 7 (2))** prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values (Section 7 (3))

### **Section 29 Education Act**

1. Where a board or a person acting on behalf of the board;
  - a) permanently excludes a student from a school, or
  - b) suspends a student from attendance at a school for a period to be prescribed for the purpose of this paragraph, or
  - c) refuses to enrol a student in a school, or
  - d) makes a decision of a class which the Minister following consultation with patrons, national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations, recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, may from time to time determine may be appealed in accordance with this section

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of eighteen years, the student, may, within a reasonable time from the date that the parent or student was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school or the patron, in accordance with section 28, appeal that decision to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and Skills and that appeal shall be heard by a committee appointed under *subsection (2)*

2. For the purpose of the hearing and determination of an appeal under this section, the Minister shall appoint one or more than one committee (in this section referred to as an 'appeals committee') each of which shall include in its membership an Inspector and such other persons as the Minister considers appropriate.
3. Where a committee is appointed under *subsection (2)* the Minister shall appoint one of its number to be the chairperson of that committee and who, in the case of an equal division of votes, shall have a second or casting vote.
4. In hearing and determining an appeal under this section an appeals committee shall act in accordance with such procedures as may be determined from time to time by the Minister following consultation with patrons, national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers.

## **Goals**

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures:

- To inform parents about the school, its programmes, activities and procedures
- To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner
- To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered
- To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement and current legislation
- To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application

## **Context, Resources, School Organisation & Curriculum**

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways

of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent's choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil- teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time. The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extracurricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

### **Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy;**

#### **i. Roles of Board of Management**

- To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementations and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board
  
- To prepare (and submit to the Education Welfare Board) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board and will set out the measures the Board of Management propose to adopt:
  - a) For the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among Students attending the school and
  - b) Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students.

#### **ii. Role of the Principal**

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students, parents, Board and Trustees
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date
- To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy

- To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with government policies
- To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of students
- To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate
- To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained
- To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same
- To provide any parents of children registered in the school with a copy of the Code of Behaviour
- Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits ( refer to legal framework)

### **iii. Role of Teaching staff**

- To co-operate with the implementation of this policy
- To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments
- To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Needs Teacher
- To keep parents informed through the regular Parent/Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

### **iv. Role of Students**

- To co-operate fully with the school in the implementation of school policies
- To make every reasonable effort to comply with the Code of Behaviour

### **v. Role of Parents**

- To support school policies and to co-operate fully with the school in their implementation
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the schools provision for the educational needs of their child
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate

## **Policy Considerations**

The Board of Management Presentation Primary School, Portarlinton reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Department guidelines on class size etc.

The school will **not** refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

The Board of Management of Presentation Primary School, Portarlinton, in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the **maximum number of children in each class** bearing in mind:

- Health and Safety concerns regarding staff and children
- Available classroom space
- Department of Education & Science class size directives
- Educational needs of the children
- Presence of children which special needs
- Multi-grade classes
- Appropriate Supports and Resources are available
- Time of school year

## **Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision/Appeals**

- Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student
- Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage

Admission to the school is subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student it will make every effort to secure those resources, where the resources cannot be secured, the school reserves the unfettered right to refuse admission. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians of any child to inform the school of any such needs on the enrolment application form for the child's own welfare. In this context the school authorities will have equal regard for the welfare of all the students and their

right to an education in an atmosphere that is not detrimental to their physical, emotional, moral, social or intellectual development.

Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

#### **i. Junior Infant Enrolment Procedures**

- Application forms for Enrolment are available during January from the School Office
- The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed application form. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians. The form will be dated and stamped on receipt by the school. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications
- Date of application, child's date of birth, address and telephone contact number are recorded in the School Record of Applications. The application merely confirms that it will be assessed under the criteria outlined, and does not confer any further status on that application
- Entry in the School Record of Applications means that an application will be considered in February of the relevant enrolment year and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy
- Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome and registration forms will be issued
- These registration forms must be accompanied by a Birth Cert, Baptismal Cert and copy of utility bill showing proof of address
- There will be a meeting with new parents in June and new Junior Infants will spend one informal period in school to familiarise themselves with their new environment

#### **Please Note**

1. The closing date for applications for admission will be 31<sup>st</sup> January of the year in which it is expected that the child will start school.
2. The Board of Management will **not** consider enrolling a child unless they have reached their fourth birthday by 30th April of the year in which they wish to enrol.

**Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria:**

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places available, the places will be allocated as follows:

1. To children living within the parish boundaries of Portarlinton giving priority to the oldest. Children of staff members and siblings already enrolled in the school are accorded the status of parishioners.
2. All remaining places will be allocated to all other applicants giving priority to the oldest.

**ii. Criteria for Enrolment of Senior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class**

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Presentation Primary School, Portarlinton has also a responsibility to respect 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 of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind the above criteria and in that school year the:

- (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
- (e) DES maximum class average directives (currently 28:1)

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/standard exceeding the number of places available preceding or during the school year, (due to the BOM being unable to provide suitable accommodation or recruit the required teaching staff) the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:

1. To children living within the parish boundaries of Portarlinton giving priority to the oldest. Children of staff members and siblings of children already enrolled in the school are accorded the status of parishioners
2. All remaining places will be allocated to all other applicants giving priority to the oldest

**iii. Pupils transferring:**

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to the policy of the school, available space and with approval of the Department of Education & Skills **or** when a transfer is made because of a change of the ordinary residence of the child.

When an application is made, the Principal must obtain a transfer certificate from the school the pupil previously attended.

If there is a vacancy, the Principal must admit and enrol a child who is transferred at any time of year either subject to school policy and with the Department of Education & Skills consent or because of change of address, whether the pupil has a transfer certificate or not.

**iv. Policy on participation of Students with disabilities and special educational needs.**

- a) The school promotes the principle of integration of students with disabilities and special educational needs within the general student body.
- b) The school shall and may request in respect of any student from their parent or guardian as may be required such specialist reports (such as Psychological, Psychiatric, Occupational Therapist or other Assessments) to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the student.
- c) The school will follow the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education with particular attention to differentiating for the specific individual needs of students with disability and special educational needs and will admit students up to the level of facilities and staff available to the school.
- d) The Board of Management may upon considering any student for admission request the parent/guardian of the student to give sufficient information to consider the child's needs and requirements.
- e) The Board of Management in considering the requirements for students with any special needs, disabilities or other care shall be mindful of the fact that the school presently operates in a building structure which is restricted in terms of capacity and design, students, staff and carers and accordingly will have regard to these requirements and needs in determining the capacity for enrolment of any student where it may be unable to meet the demands and requirements which are needed in the best interest of such student or the students or the students and capacity of the staff at large.

**v. Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon:

- Effective management placed on application process
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process

**vi. Monitoring Procedures**

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to an applicant, by the authority delegated to her by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

**vii. Review Procedure**

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management every five years or earlier if deemed necessary.

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: September 2017

***Ratified by the Board of Management on 02/10/2014***

## **Appendix A**

### **Enrolment Policy for Nano Nagle Centre**

The Board Of Management of Presentation Primary, Portarlinton has set out this Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act of 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000, Disabilities Act 2002 and the Epson Act 2004.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the Nano Nagle Centre is to provide a supportive, caring, learning environment which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's educational potential. The pursuit of this aim informs all of the planning processes and activities which occur in our school. With a team of dedicated teachers and special needs assistants, the school provides individual programmes in small classes of 6 children catering for the uniqueness of each pupil's personality and needs. The Principal, Teachers, Support Staff and Parents are partners in their children's education with co-operation and communication between home and school being of vital importance in the educational process.

#### **Enrolment Procedure**

The process of enrolment begins with:

1. A referral from the Autism team or a telephone call from the parents/guardians.
2. A meeting with the parents. Following a meeting with the parents a **Pre-Enrolment form** will be filled in.
3. The completion of a Nano Nagle Pre-Enrolment form for the Pre-School or the Primary Class (a decision on the continuation of the Primary Class is still pending). All pre-enrolment forms must be accompanied by an up-to-date Educational Psychologist Assessment, a Diagnostic Report which confirms diagnosis of ASD or PDD/NOS in line with current Department of Education criteria and the relevant NCSE forms.
4. Fully completed **Pre-Enrolment** forms for the Preschool Unit or the Primary Class (continuation of this class is a decision pending) are then recorded in the applications file.
5. Entry into this file secures a place on the list of **Pre-Admission** applicants.
6. Each fully completed application will be dated, placed in an A4 envelope and placed in the Nano Nagle Centre **Pre Admission File**.

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places available, the places will be allocated as follows:

- (a) To children living within the parish boundaries of Portarlinton. Children of staff members and siblings already enrolled in the school are accorded the status of Parishioners.
  - (b) All remaining places will be allocated to all other applicants on a **first come first served basis**.
7. Under the guidelines for the D.E.S. the maximum class size is 6 pupils.
  8. Placement in our Preschool Unit **does not** mean automatic enrolment to our Primary Unit. (As per D.E.S. Guidelines)
  9. The N.C.S.E. Special School Application Form together with the diagnosis and relevant documentation is then forwarded to the S.E.N.O for approval. On approval the child is then offered a place in N.N.C.

### **Admissions Policy**

- Each child must be in receipt of support or be on a waiting list for the services of Early Intervention in Laois/Offaly
- Diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder or PDD/NOS by a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist or multi-disciplinary team “Psychologist or Paediatrician plus O.T. and S.L.T.” and a report from a psychologist on the student's cognitive ability /learning profile where available

The D.E.S. states that the Early Intervention Centre will have a pupil teacher ratio of 6:1 plus 2 S.N.A's with additional support of an S.N.A. if deemed appropriate.

- The Nano Nagle Centre caters for children from 3 -5 years. A child who turns six during the academic school year should not be in a Preschool setting and therefore will not be considered for enrolment/ admission
- The school timetable for the Centre is available in the office of the N.N.C.
- The B.O.M. reserves the right to enrol a child provisionally for a period of 8 weeks prior to full enrolment. The Board then reserves the right to defer or refuse enrolment if it believes that the child's needs cannot be met in the Nano Nagle Centre

- On completion of two years in the N.N.C. the next stage of the pupils education will be determined based on a recommendation from the Psychologist in consultation with the child's parents/teachers and all other

Services involved. Each child's placement in the Primary Unit will be reviewed after a two year period, following a psychological assessment and input from the multi disciplinary team.

- As we are primarily a girls school from First to Sixth Class, we are unable to facilitate the enrolment of boys from First Class upwards in mainstream classes. However we will facilitate the integration of pupils from the Primary Class to mainstream but we are unable to facilitate the transfer of boys from the Primary Class into mainstream from first to sixth class. Our General Enrolment Policy for Presentation Primary School, Portarlinton applies to the Nano Nagle Centre except where the situation arises that the number of applicants out numbers the number of places available. If this situation arises the places will be allocated as per point 7 of the Enrolment Procedure.
- Our General Code Of Behaviour for Presentation Primary also applies to the N.N.C. unless otherwise specified.
- Progress of pupils will be monitored on a regular basis. All placements are subject to review at the request of parents/carers and/or the school.
- The review will include input from all parties involved in the child's Education.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional cases. For example such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- a) the pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, 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, to school staff or to school property.

If unhappy with this decision, parents may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills on the official form provided by the Department of Education and Skills. This appeal must be logged within 42 days of receipt of the final refusal from the school.

### **Review of Policy**

The Board Of Management has the right to review and propose amendments to the Enrolment Policy.

Amendments proposed require the Patrons Approval before they become operative.

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: September 2017