



Admission Policy of Newtown School Waterford

School Address: Newtown Road, Waterford City, X91 XR20

Roll number: 65010R

School Patron: Friends Patron Company C.L.G, (Newtown Schools Patron Committee) on behalf of Munster Quarterly Meeting (M.Q.M) of The Religious Society of Friends in Ireland (Quakers).

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy has been devised in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Equal Status legislation, the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, Data Protection legislation, the enacted parts of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, and directives from the Patron and following consultation with the School community.

The policy was approved by the school patron on [date]. 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 Newtown School Waterford (NSW) 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

Newtown School Waterford ("**the School**") was established in 1798 by the Religious Society of Friends ("**Quakers**"). Its original purpose was the education of Quakers from Munster. It has developed over the past two centuries and it now welcomes students of all religious persuasions and none, in accordance with the terms of this Admission Policy. It is still very much based on the Quaker ethos which respects and acknowledges the contribution of each individual, regardless of ability or aptitude. Priority is given to applicants who are Quakers and/or who are of the Reformed and/or Protestant faith in accordance with the terms of this Admission Policy.

The Munster Quarterly Meeting of Quakers, (M.Q.M.), nominates the School's Patron ("**the Patron**"). The School is managed by a Board of Management ("**the Board**") which is answerable to the Patron, for among other things, upholding the school's ethos and traditions.

The Board is subject to the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation. The school operates within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Skills' ("**DES**") regulations and the funding and resources available from the State and private sources.

Reference in this policy to ("**Parent(s)**") is to be taken as including reference to guardians, reference to ("**Child**") is to be taken to include a child who has been adopted and reference to ("**Siblings**") is to be taken as including reference to step siblings.

Newtown School is a coeducational boarding and day school guided by a Quaker Ethos, owned by Munster Quarterly Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), and under the patronage of Friends Patron Company CLG.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Newtown School 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.

The Schools' Quaker Ethos

While the School strives for academic excellence and achievement, its Quaker ethos and tradition also promotes the discovery of true self, nurtures confidence and encourages independence and respect.

Based on its Quaker Ethos, the core beliefs of the School include:

- Each individual's educational needs are recognised and treated equally
- The purpose of education is to help students discover their own potential
- Learning is a lifelong experience and is part of living rather than a preparation for it
- The contribution of each individual in the learning process deserves respect and encouragement
- Each individual is equal, and the School seeks to eliminate discrimination
- Relationships based on mutual respect create the ideal learning environment
- Discipline, which is based on trust and mutual support, always seeks to promote the positive and is administered in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour.

The aim of the School is to teach a set of values which reflects a balance between the spiritual and material aspects of life. In such an environment, encouragement is more desirable than negative criticism. All members of the school community are of equal value and worthy of respect.

Every student is empowered to achieve his/her academic potential and encouraged to uphold a sense of caring for others which extends to the wider community. Within this caring community, the school provides a sound, liberal education for life, preparing students for the environment they will meet in their future lives.

Context of enrolment and admissions

For each year, the intake will be determined on the resources and infrastructure available and the capacity of the school. This will be decided by the Board of Management. Currently the

Board will allocate spaces for a total of seventy-two students to each 1st year intake who will be allocated across three class groups. Each year the intake will be indicated in the school'

The School is committed to the twin ideals of co-education and boarding. Accordingly, the School will strive to achieve an even gender balance and a balance between day and boarding students within the limitations of available facilities and resources. With this the School will permanently reserve a minimum of 24 spaces for boarding students per year group. Within this context, allocation of places will be made in accordance with the criteria specified in this Policy.

While recognising the right of Parents to enrol their Child in a school of their choice, the Board reserves the right to determine maximum school and class size, in order to ensure the safety of all students and to provide for the educational needs of existing students and to determine applications for enrolment in accordance with this policy.

3. Admission Statement

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

- (a) the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the 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,
- (i) 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.

In relation to the Equal Status Act 2000 above the following exclusions from this Act apply to applications received for entry to Newtown School where oversubscription occurs:

Post-primary denominational schools

Newtown School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student who is a Quaker or a member of Reformed and/or Protestant faith in preference to others.

All denominational schools

Newtown 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 a Quaker or a member of Reformed and/or Protestant faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [5](#) below for further details)
- Or
- 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
- Or
- c) the applicant has special needs such that, even with additional resources having been provided by the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the applicant with an appropriate education, or to do so would be inconsistent with the effective provision of education for pupils with whom the applicant is to be educated.
- Or
- d) in the opinion of the Board of Management, the applicant could have a seriously detrimental effect on the health and / or safety of other pupils and or staff of the School.

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5. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

Where the number of applications for enrolment exceeds the number of available places, the following priority order will apply to applications subject to the overall requirement that the ratio of girls to boys in the student intake in any year be maintained as close to 1:1 and to the limitation on the availability of gender specific accommodation where priority applies to those seeking boarding.

1. In the first instance, preference will be given to applicants seeking boarding who will make optimal use of the boarding facilities ^a.
2. Applicants where they, or one or both parents are Members of the Religious Society of Friends. (applicants must provide a letter from their Clerk of Meeting).
3. Applicants who have a Sibling attending, or who has attended, the School.

4. Applicants whose Parent(s) are a member of the staff of the School.
5. Applicants **not included in any of the categories above** who are a child of a parent who is an old scholar of Newtown School. (This category is capped statutorily at a maximum of 25% of the places offered for entry each year).
6. Applicants who have attended a primary school under the patronage of the Religious Society of Friends and/or Reformed/Protestant denomination for at least 3 years immediately prior to the date of proposed entry to the School
7. Applicants who are affiliated to a Protestant or Reformed Church as defined by the Secondary Education Committee (S.E.C.) prescribed list of churches. Applicants in this category must provide a letter from Rector, Minister, Pastor, or recognised Church Official confirming their association with the church.
8. Applicants whose names were placed on a list maintained by the school prior to 1st February 2020 for the purposes of allocating places in the school year concerned, in order of their priority on that list.
9. All other applicants.
 - a) *A student who successfully applies for and who was awarded a place as a boarder in the School will not receive any priority if at any time s/he subsequently applies to instead be enrolled as a day student. In such cases, such a student will be deemed to be making a new application and the application will be determined in accordance with this admissions policy and will be afforded the priority that applies to an applicant making an application for a day place. No account shall be taken of the fact that the applicant had been a boarder in the School. For the avoidance of all doubt, this means that an applicant who had been enrolled as a boarder in the School, who subsequently applies to be admitted as a day student, may not be successful in applying to be enrolled in the School as a day student. The boarding space held by the applicant shall not be deemed to be a day space for the purposes of his/her application. In exceptional and extenuating circumstances, the final decision will be made by the BOM.*

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:

The Date of Receipt of the original Intention to Enrol Form will be taken into account. In the event of these being of the same date and all other criteria being equal between such applicants a process of random selection will occur. This will be carried out by an independent, external person nominated by the Board of Management and witnessed by the Principal and a member of the Board of Management, or their nominated replacements in the case of unavailability.

6. 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;
(other than in relation to a deposit for Boarding Fees or a deposit for participation in out of school activities which are provided on a scheduled basis outside the scope of provision of the Department of Education and Skills).
- (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;
(other than in the case of admission to the residential element of the boarding school)
- (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 (1) siblings of an applicant attending or having attended the school and/or (2) a parent or parents of an applicant having attended the school, as set out in Section 5.6 above).
- (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).

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Newtown 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 13](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 14](#) 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.

8. 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 17](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Newtown 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. 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 Newtown 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 9](#) above.

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

11. 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 data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school 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).

12. 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 Newtown 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 Newtown 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.

13. 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list in accordance with section 12 of this policy.

14. 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:

Applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Applicant students will be offered a place in the relevant Year Group if a place is available in (a) Newtown School, (b) in the relevant boarding area if the application is for Boarding and (c) if a place is available within the relevant Year group.

In the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 6 of this policy to those applications. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the Waiting List in accordance with [Section 12](#) of this policy.

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:

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Applicant students will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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

The Board of Management of Newtown School or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post- primary schools. In the case of Newtown School an exception in respect of admission to the boarding element of the school applies.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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)/guardians or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. It is noted that Newtown School does not hold classes of religious instruction and that the Meeting for Worship is open to all religious denominations and none.

17. 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 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 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 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.

Approved by the Board of Management of Newtown School Waterford

Date: 20th September 2022

Approved by Friends Patron Company CLG

Date: 3rd October 2022