



Holy Family Community School  
Education is Opportunity  
Admission Policy

Title:	Admission Policy
Approved by:	The Board of Management
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# Holy Family Community School

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Pobalscoil an Teaghlaigh Naofa

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## 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 Trustees/Patrons and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school Patrons on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025. It is published on the school's website ([www.hfcs.ie](http://www.hfcs.ie)) and will be made available in hardcopy on request.

The relevant dates and timelines for Holy Family Community School's 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.

All applicants must complete and return the school's official application form and all requested documentation to the principal. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to supply the required information. Incomplete applications may not be processed. The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request.

## 2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the School

Holy Family Community School is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of the Spiritan Education Trust (formerly The Holy Ghost Fathers), the Presentation Sisters (with CEIST as their agent) and Dublin & Dún Laoghaire Education & Training Board (ETB) (formerly County Dublin Vocational Education Committee).

Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Following lobbying by the communities of Rathcoole, Newcastle and Saggart, for a second level school where all of the children of these communities could be educated, Holy Family Community School was established under the Deed of Trust and opened on 21st September 1981 on a greenfield site in Rathcoole. The values of Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of the Presentation Sisters and the Spiritan Congregation are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Holy Family Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his/ her full potential in a calm,

caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, our school provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Holy Family Community School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In Holy Family Community School we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others and our environment.

### 3. Admission Statement

Holy Family Community School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

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

#### 4. Admission of students

The Department of Education rules state that secondary school students must be aged 12 on 1st January in the calendar year following the child's entry into first year. The Board of Management reserves the right to decide the subject level/class/year group/programme, appropriate to the student's age, academic ability and previous educational experience.

Holy Family Community School shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 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

All application forms must be physically submitted to the school office, and incomplete application forms will not be accepted.

#### 5. Oversubscription (First Year applicants)

Each year the Board of Management decides the number of students in each subject class group, in each year group and programme for whom the school can provide an appropriate education having regard to the students' educational needs, accommodation, personnel, resources and health and safety. The Board reserves the right to determine on an annual basis the range of subjects and the minimum number of students required to offer a particular subject class or programme.

If 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:

##### **Category 1: Students attending any of the following four feeder schools:**

- Holy Family National School, Rathcoole
- Scoil Chrónain, Rathcoole
- St. Finian's National School, Newcastle
- St. Mary's National School, Saggart.

If there are insufficient places priority will be given to the following students in the order listed below:

- 1a) siblings of students attending or having attended the school (siblings are individuals having one or both parents/guardians in common. Siblings are considered to be full / half / step / foster / adopted brothers and sisters):
- 1b) children living in the catchment area;
- 1c) the remaining applicants in this category.

##### **Category 2: Students residing in the catchment area.**

If there are insufficient places priority will be given to the following students in the order listed below:

- 2a) siblings of students attending or having attended the school;
- 2b) the remaining applicants in this category.

**Category 3: Students residing outside the catchment area.**

If there are insufficient places priority will be given to the following students in the order listed below:

- 3a) siblings of students attending or having attended the school;
- 3b) the remaining applicants in this category.

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:

- siblings of students attending or having attended the school;
- the remaining applicants in this category.

The places will be allocated by lottery conducted by the Principal in the presence of a member of an Garda Síochána or Commissioner of Oaths or member of the Parents' Council.

**School Catchment Area and Map**

The school's catchment area is defined as all areas within the following:

- the 3A junction on the N7 (southbound) along Garter Lane to the junction of Citywest Drive/Fortunestown Lane;
- the junction of Citywest Drive/Fortunestown Lane down along Church Road/Garter Lane to the junction of Mill Road/Boherboy Road (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- the junction of Mill Road/Boherboy Road to The Fairgreen, Saggart (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- the Fairgreen, Saggart to the junction for Mahon Lane, down Mahon Lane to the N81 Blessington Road to the Dublin/Kildare County boundary line;
- the Blessington Road junction along the Dublin/Kildare County boundary line to Farmersvale Road;
- the Farmersvale Road along the Dublin/Kildare County boundary line back to Farmersvale Road, (crossing the N7 bridge) and towards Alymer Bridge on the Grand Canal;
- the Alymer Bridge, along the Dublin/Kildare County boundary line, to the Hazelhatch Bridge on the Grand Canal, to the junction of Hazelhatch Road and Loughtown Road (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- along Loughtown Road to the junction of Peamount Road (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- the junction of the Loughtown Road with the Peamount Road, along Peamount Road to the junction with Main Street, Newcatle (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- The junction of the Peamount Road with Main Street, Newcastle to the junction of Aylmer Road (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);

- The junction of Main Street, Newcastle up Aylmer Road to the junction of College Road (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- The junction of Aylmer Road and College Road, through the Jordanstown Roundabout, continuing up Jordanstown Road to the Aerodome Roundabout (dwellings/housing estates on both sides of the road);
- The Aerodome Roundabout across the N7 bridge, and along the N7 (Southbound) to 3A junction on the N7 at Garter Lane.

### Map of Catchment Area



## 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;
- 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, siblings of a student attending or having attended the school;
- 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.

## 7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Holy Family Community School will be based on the following:

- The 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

Applicants must accept a place within two weeks of an offer of a place.



In accepting an offer of admission from Holy Family Community 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.

The offer of a place cannot be deferred.

Students who are allocated a place in any year group must attend school to secure their place. Any student who fails to take up his/her place / is absent for a period of two weeks or more without any explanation / communication will be removed from the roll and this student's place will be offered to the next applicant.

#### 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 Holy Family Community 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.

#### 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 certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

#### 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 Holy Family Community 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 Holy Family Community School for First Year 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. In the event of oversubscription late applicants for admission to Holy Family Community School will be placed on the waiting list after the applicants who applied on time in the order of receipt of the applications. Placement on the waiting list for other years is in order of receipt of applications.

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.



## 14. Procedures for admission of students to year groups other than First Year, during the school year and to a repeat year

The Board of Management decides the number of students in each subject class group, in each year group and programme for whom the school can provide an appropriate education having regard to the students' educational needs, accommodation, personnel, resources and health and safety. The Board reserves the right to determine on an annual basis the range of subjects and the minimum number of students required to offer a particular subject class or programme.

### **Procedures for admission of students in the following school year to year groups other than First 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:

The school will commence accepting applications for admission on 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year preceding admission. 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 Holy Family Community 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.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications to all year groups other than First-Year. All waiting lists expire at the end of the relevant academic year.

The students' parents must complete the school's official application form and submit it and all requested documentation to the Principal. In order to ensure a smooth transfer following the offer of a place, the school may also request:

- information relating to the reasons for transfer;
- information from the previous school re attendance, educational progress, behaviour and additional educational needs;
- consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer, Social Worker, Juvenile Liaison Officer, Doctor, Psychologist, Psychiatrist or Occupational Therapist.

Applicants will be accommodated subject to Section 4 of the Admission Policy and provided:

- application procedures are adhered to and all relevant information and documentation is supplied;
- the school can match the curricular needs of the applicant.

Applicants will receive a reply within 21 days of submitting completed application forms including returning all relevant information and documentation to the school. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn are detailed in Section 10 of the Admission Policy. Successful applicants are expected to accept an offer of a place within two weeks as per Section 9 of the Admission Policy. In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list will be compiled in the order of receipt of the application form.

### **Procedures for admission of students during the current school year**

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:

The students' parents must complete the school's official application form and submit it and all requested documentation to the Principal. In order to ensure a smooth transfer following the offer of a place, the school may also request:

- information relating to the reasons for transfer;
- information / reference from the previous school re attendance, educational progress, behaviour and additional educational needs;
- consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer, Social Worker, Juvenile Liaison Officer, Doctor, Psychologist, Psychiatrist or Occupational Therapist.

Applicants will be accommodated subject to Section 4 of the Admission Policy and provided:

- application procedures are adhered to and all relevant information and documentation is supplied;
- the school can match the curricular needs of the applicant.

Applicants will receive a reply within 21 days of returning all relevant information and documentation to the school. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn are detailed in Section 10 of the Admission Policy. Successful applicants are expected to accept an offer of a place within two weeks as per Section 9 of the Admission Policy. In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list will be compiled in the order of receipt of the application form.

### **Procedures for admission of students to a repeat year**

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students to a repeat year are as follows:

Parents of students who wish to repeat a year must write to the Principal outlining the reasons for repeating a year. Applications for a repeat year must be received by the first Friday in April in the year preceding admission. The Department of Education gives the following grounds on which consideration of requests for students repeating a year must be based:

- prolonged absence;
- serious illness;
- serious family trauma;
- very poor academic record and evidence that the student can benefit from the extra year;
- change of school in certain circumstances;

Documentary evidence must be supplied as outlined in circular letter M2/95.

- Applicants for a repeat year will be accommodated subject to the availability of places and provided:
  - application procedures are adhered to and all relevant information and documentation is supplied;
  - the reason for the repeat year meets one or more of the criteria given above;
  - the repeat year is not detrimental to the educational progress, rights or health and safety of the applicant or the other students;
  - the school can match the curricular needs of the applicant;
  - the student is likely to benefit educationally from the repeat year.

Students may not repeat more than one year.

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

The Board of Holy Family Community 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.

## 16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Holy Family Community School offers religious education in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, religious education supports the ‘multi-denominational’ aspect of our school’s ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers.

In this context it is important to understand the distinction between ‘religious education’ and ‘religious instruction’:

- Religious education is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.
- Religious instruction is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.

Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise.

## 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.

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.