



Enrolment Policy

Introduction

Stepaside Educate Together National School wishes to inform all parents and guardians that this enrolment policy has been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998 and the Welfare Education Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act for Persons with special Needs 2004. Stepaside Educate Together National School trusts that by doing so, parents and guardians will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

School Details:

- Name: Stepaside Educate Together National School
- Address: Belarmine Vale, Stepaside, Dublin 18.
- Telephone: 085 7454998/(01) 2946753
- Email: info@stepasideetns.ie
- Roll Number: 20401G
- Principal: Anne Carroll
- Chairperson: Aidan Gallagher

The school day starts at 8:30 am until 1.10pm for Infants, and is from 8:30 am until 2:10 pm for all other classes.

General Information:

This policy has been set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and provides for equality of access and participation in the school for all children in our society whatever their social, religious, cultural and racial background and whether or not they have a disability or special educational needs.

Stepaside Educate Together National School is under the patronage of Educate Together. Parents/ Guardians are advised to familiarize themselves with the Educate Together ethos prior to enrolling their child in the school.

The school opened its doors in September 2012. It is a developing school and is co-educational and multi-denominational. Stepside ETNS is a national school and as such operates in accordance within the Rules for National Schools and is dependent on such grants and teachers' resources as are provided by the DES. All school policies must have regard to the resources and funding provided.

The teaching staff in the school year 2018/2019 currently comprises one teaching Principal plus 10 mainstream class teachers and two special class teachers and 2 full-time SE teachers. On the school staff also are a school secretary and six SNA's.

Eligibility Criteria:

Under the Education Act 1998, a child may not be allowed to attend or be enrolled in a primary school before the 4th anniversary of his/her birth. In Stepside ETNS children must be 4 years old on or before *March 31st of the year of admission into Junior Infant classes. All places in mainstream classes are allocated on a first come, first served basis. In determining admissions the Board of Management shall take account of DES Regulations in relation to staffing, class size and class average. The Board of Management shall also have regard to issues such as physical space, multi-grade classes, and the presence of children with special educational and/or behavioural needs.

* March 31st cut-off begins from the 2023 pre-enrolment list.

Admissions Procedures:

1. Parents/Guardians wishing to apply for a place for their child must complete and return a pre-enrolment form. This form can be obtained by contacting the school office or may be downloaded from the school website. This form requires the parent to give the school certain information regarding their child.
2. On receipt of a completed application form a pre- enrolment number will be allocated to each applicant. If more than one application form is received on a particular day then these numbers are awarded in the order of post-date on the envelope. If the post date on the envelopes is the same then children will be put on the admissions list one after the other in alphabetical order of surnames.
3. Each child will be placed on the list according to the pre-enrolment number. If parents have twins, triplets, etc. then the children will be put on the list one after the other in alphabetical order of the child's first name.
4. Two separate lists will be kept for each year, a Junior Infant and a non-Junior Infant list (i.e. list of other children/age groups up the school awaiting places). Children will be listed in order of pre-enrolment number.

5. If a place is not offered during the school year for which a place is sought and parents wish their child's name to be put on the waiting list for the following year (either for Junior Infants or for another class) they must inform the school by the 30th September of the year for which the place is sought. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make such a request in writing; otherwise the application will be removed from the school's admissions list.

6. No guarantees of places will be given or implied by pre- enrolment.

7. Children will, as a rule, only be admitted into Junior Infant classes during the month of September. Children may be admitted to a Junior Infant class during the school year provided they are transferring from another school.

8. Children will be offered places strictly by order of pre-enrolment number on the admissions list. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the school are given priority over those on the pre-enrolment list subject to the conditions outlined below. All remaining places are offered on a first come, first served basis. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'siblings' includes reference to step-siblings, half-siblings or adopted/foster children living in the same household.

8.1 Siblings of children currently attending the school shall be offered places subject to availability. All remaining places will be offered by order of pre-enrolment number on the pre-enrolment list.

8.2 Fostered or adopted children will be placed on the pre-enrolment list in accordance with their birth date. Their place on the pre-enrolment list will depend on the time elapsed between placement of the child with the family and the enrolment date. For example, a child placed with the family at age two but placed on the enrolment list at age three will be treated as a child enrolled at age one. Confirmation from the relevant agency of the date of placement of a child with the family will need to be provided with the enrolment form. A pre-enrolment number will be provided which is relevant to the child's place on the list. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of this at pre-enrolment (not when offers are being made).

9. Letters of offer will be sent out starting in November, or earlier, of the previous year for which the child is enrolled. Parents/Guardians must reply in writing to confirm an offered place within **4 days**. Failure to respond within 4 days will result in the place being forfeited.

10. Parents/ Guardians of Junior Infants may defer the child's place for one year, providing the child is under 6 years of age by the first of September of the year in which he/she starts school. This means that the child will be placed on the list for the following year according to the original pre-enrolment number. Deferral does not guarantee a place the following year. Parents/Guardians of children for classes other than Junior Infants cannot defer a place.

11. Once intake lists have been closed all those remaining on the pre-enrolment lists will be contacted via email to confirm that the lists are closed and asking whether or not they wish to remain on the waiting list.

12. It is the sole responsibility of the parent to inform the school promptly of any change of address, telephone number or other relevant circumstances.

13. On acceptance of a place the child's birth certificate should be provided to the school, a copy will be taken, and the original sent back. The child's PPSN number should also be provided.

14. If a pupil attending SETNS moves abroad for a period of time but will be re-locating to SETNS in the future they will be given priority on the waiting list for their class. This will be dependent on spaces being available.

Important update, December 2018

Due to the planned commencement of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act, 2018, Stepside Educate Together National School will not accept pre-enrolment application forms for September 2023. A new Admission Policy will be approved with an annual admissions process for this intake group.

Enrolment of Children with Special Educational Needs into Mainstream Classes:

Stepside ETNS is an inclusive school and welcomes applications from children with special educational needs. Such applications are subject to the sibling policy and first come, first served principle and applicants with special educational needs will not be advantaged or disadvantaged over other children in terms of the priority afforded their application as long as the school can meet the care needs of the child. In order to assist the school in establishing the educational and physical needs of the child relevant to his/her ability or special needs, and to profile the support services required, the school requests that the parent/guardian of the child:

- Informs the school of any special needs as early as possible in the pre-enrolment /enrolment process.
- Ensures that copies of the child's medical and /or psychological report(s) are provided to Stepside ETNS.

Where such a report is not available, a request should be made that the child would be assessed immediately. Following receipt of this the report the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs specified therein. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the DES and/or the HSE to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report.

The Principal may, in conjunction with the SENO or DES inspector, meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs.

Please see separately the enrolment policy for Stepping Stones, our two classes for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Code of behaviour:

Children enrolled in Stepside ETNS 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. Each pupil enrolled in the school has a copy of the Code of Behaviour emailed to them and parents must sign their consent to engage with this Code of Behaviour as part of the pre-enrolment process.

Appeals Procedure:

Parents/Guardians who are dissatisfied with an enrolment decision may appeal in writing to the Board. The letter of appeal must be addressed to the Chairperson, Aidan Gallagher, stating the grounds of appeal and it should be lodged within 10 days of receiving the refusal. Parents/Guardians who are unhappy with the outcome of the appeal may appeal to the DES on foot of Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 on the official form provided by the DES.

School Numbers:

Shortly before or during the summer break, a statement as to what constitutes a full school for the forthcoming school year is recorded in the SETNS Board of Management minutes. The concept of a full school is not an exact science in that it is based on consideration of a wide range of factors in any given year such as: Department of Education and Skills regulations regarding class size; maintaining quality of education throughout the school; the school's commitment to multi-denominational education and the number of children in the incoming Junior Infants class with English language education needs; the school's commitment to special education needs (SEN) and the number of low incidence SEN children in the incoming Junior Infants class; health and safety considerations; the overall physical size of the school, the area of individual classrooms, yard space available to the school, etc.; operation of the school's sibling policy in tandem with a 'first come, first served' admissions policy for non-siblings, etc.

While taking account of ongoing demand for school places, the above factors are weighed each year alongside the school's ongoing goal that class sizes should be maintained at as low a level as possible, (i.e., at an average of 26) in order to maintain an optimal pupil/teacher ratio in the interests of the whole school community. The Board of Management considers that the maximum number of pupils in the school should be 624 in eight class years (24

classes). Furthermore, although total numbers in classes may vary throughout the school (due to attrition or for other reasons that may arise from time to time), the Board of Management considers that the maximum number of pupils in any class should not exceed 32.

Failure to Secure a Place:

Parents may appeal a refusal of admission to the school to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

For further information, contact:

Section 29 Appeals Unit
Department of Education and Skills
Friars Mill Road
Mullingar
Co. Westmeath
T | (044) 9337008
E | www.education.ie

Parents who are experiencing difficulty in securing a place for their child should contact the National Educational Welfare Board to seek the assistance of their local Child and Family Agency office; www.tusla.ie | info@tusla.ie | 01 7718500

Additional Information:

Stepside ETNS endeavours to provide the highest standards of care for its pupils. In order to achieve this objective successfully, it is vital that the school be informed of any relevant situation regarding health, bereavement, domestic circumstances etc. Any such information should be passed by the school principal and shall be treated in the strictest confidence.

Data Protection

The school acknowledges its obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Information obtained for the purposes of allocating places in the school to applicant children will only be used and disclosed in a manner which is compatible with this purpose. Only such personal data as are relevant and necessary for the performance of this function will be retained. The school undertakes to ensure that such information is processed fairly, that it is kept safe, secure, accurate, complete, and up-to-date. Individuals have the right to have any inaccurate information rectified or erased. **All data submitted as**

part of the admissions process will be destroyed within two months of commencement of the new school year. A copy of all personal data obtained and kept as part of the admissions process will be made available to the subject of such data on receipt of a written request to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 18th of November 2014. It is scheduled for review on the 18th of November 2015.

Reviewed on April 11th 2016: 2 small changes arising see BoM notes re same on 11-4-2016

Educate Together, as patron, approved the manner of this policy's publication on the 3rd December 2014.

Reviewed and updated in December 2018 as per instruction from Educate Together National Office.

The Board of Management reserves the right to alter this policy, subject to its statutory obligations, including its obligations to Educate Together as patron.

Contacts

Please refer all admission-related queries to Jackie O'Shea, enrolment secretary on the Board of Management, via enrolment@stepasideetns.ie. Alternatively some queries will be dealt with by the school secretary Magda Gorzelanczyk via info@stepasideetns.ie or on 01-2946753.

Aidan Gallagher, Chairperson: _____

Anne Carroll, Principal: _____

Date: _____