

Newtown School Waterford

Admission Policy

For enrolment 2017/2018

SECTION A

Introduction

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 Quaker Munster Quarterly Meeting 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.

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, directives from the Patron and following consultation with the School community.

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.

The School 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.

SECTION B

Preamble and context

The Board has reviewed the School's Admission Policy.

Following this review, the Board has made changes to the criteria which apply for enrolment for the 2017/2018 school year. The Board is conscious that applicants for enrolment for the 2017/2018 school year should not, insofar as possible, be affected by this change and has determined that it will allocate spaces for a total of seventy two students who will be allocated across three class groups.

The maximum capacity that the school's infrastructure and resources can cater for is currently 350 students. For subsequent years, the intake will be determined on the resources and infrastructure available and the capacity of the school.

School Resources

The financial resources of the School as an education enterprise (excluding boarding, residential and extra-curricular provision) are provided by a combination of grants from the DES, voluntary contributions from parents, fundraising and other school generated income. Teaching resources to cover the school day are provided by the DES.

Enrolment into the School is subject to the resources available including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources.

Curriculum

Details of the School's curriculum and other services for students are available on the School's website. www.newtownschool.ie

Admission Policy for the 2017/2018 School Year

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. 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.

SECTION C

Application Procedures and enrolment criteria

1. Students Eligible for enrolment into First Year in the 2017/2018 school year

Enrolment into first year in the 2017/2018 school year will be open to all students from Ireland or abroad.

To be eligible for enrolment into first year, students must

- Have reached the age of 12 on or before 31 December 2017
- Accept, together with their Parents, the School's Code of Behaviour
- Complete a student data form which will be issued following acceptance for enrolment.

2. Application Procedure for enrolment into First Year in the 2017/2018 school year

All applications for enrolment into the School must be submitted on the official application form.

The following enrolment procedures will apply for students, both day and boarding, seeking enrolment into first year in the School for the 2017/2018 School Year:

- Parents must fully complete, date and sign the official application form which available from the School office and on the School website

- A birth certificate must accompany the application form and all other requested documentation must also accompany it. If not, the application will be treated as incomplete, will not be processed and will be returned to the Parents
- The closing date for receipt of applications is 30th September 2016 for day students and 31 July 2017 for Boarders
- When an application form, properly completed and signed, is received, it will be stamped with the date of receipt
- Properly completed application forms will be acknowledged
- Incomplete application forms will not be processed but returned to the Parent/Guardian
- Late applications will be considered only after all applications received on time have been fully processed. The Board reserves the right in its absolute discretion to consider and facilitate late applicants (falling within categories 1-6 of Section D) which arise due to relocation of the applicant's family to Waterford and adjacent counties during the application process, provided the application complies with this Admission Policy, subject to a space being available and subject to the priority order provided for in this Admission Policy being complied with
- Seventy two places will be available in First Year for the school year 2017/2018. In the event that applications for enrolment exceed this number, the criteria and process outlined in Section D will apply
- The School will reserve 24 spaces for boarding students. In the event that not all boarding places are filled on or before 31 July 2017, the available places will thereafter be offered to qualifying applicants for day places in accordance with the criteria and process outlined in Section D.
- In accepting a boarding place, a non-refundable booking fee of €950 must be submitted with the completed application form to secure a boarding place. This non-refundable booking fee will constitute part of the first installment of the boarding fees for that year.

3. Application for Places in Years Higher than First Year

Applications will be accepted for all years other than first year for both boarders and day students in accordance with the criteria laid down in this policy provided there are sufficient places available in the relevant year group.

Application for any year other than first year, must be accompanied by the two most recent school reports and a letter from the Parents outlining the reason(s) for the proposed transfer from another school. Permission to contact the applicant's previous school must also be granted.

(It is not the policy of the Board to accept transfer applications for students already enrolled in post-primary schools, except in exceptional circumstances or upon application for boarding.)

In addition, the application to enrol an applicant enrolled in another school will be refused where the Board is of the opinion that the transfer may place the School's other students, staff etc at risk.

(In the case of applicants for Boarding the school must be satisfied that the student is suitable for living and participating boarding.)

4. General

It should be noted that the submission of an application form does not confer a right to enrolment. The application must comply with the requirements set out in this policy.

The numbers of boarders accepted in each year will be subject to the limitation of availability of gender specific accommodation.

Applications are also subject to the overall requirement that the ratio of girls to boys in the student intake in any year be maintained as close as possible to 1:1.

Parents who wish to make an application to enrol their child in the School must fully complete, date and sign the official application form available from the School office and on the School website and all requested documentation must accompany the application form. If not, the application will be treated as incomplete, it will not be processed and will be returned to the Parents.

The Applicant together with his/her Parents must confirm acceptance of the School's code of behaviour.

Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn and the place being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list.

When an application form, properly completed and signed, is received, it will be stamped with the date of receipt and will be acknowledged. Incomplete application forms will not be processed but returned to the Parents

Parents must complete a student data form which will be issued following acceptance for enrolment.

All applications will be subject to the charges as set out annually in the schedule of charges.

Decisions regarding student enrolment are a matter for the Board.

Within 21 days after the closing date for receipt of completed application forms in the case of applications for first year and within 21 days of receipt of a completed application for

places in years higher than first year, the Board will make a decision in respect of each application and inform Parents of the outcome in writing.

When a place in the School is offered, Parents will be required to confirm in writing their acceptance of the place. If the place is not accepted by the date specified in the letter of offer, the offer may be withdrawn.

Parents of students who are enrolled may wish to bring the student to visit the School. This visit provides an opportunity to see something of school life at first hand and to learn more about the secondary school experience in the School.

Students with Special Education Needs

Students with special educational needs are very welcome in the School. When a student, whose application for enrolment into the school has been accepted, has special educational needs, an up-to-date medical/psychological report must be submitted within 14 days together with the student's individual education plan, if such exists. This is to ensure that the School is in a position to apply for resources in respect of the student's special educational needs so as to try to ensure that such resources are in place prior to the Student commencing in the School. In general, it is expected that such students will be fully integrated in mainstream classes.

Refusal to enrol

The Board reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant who does not comply with the terms of this Admission Policy

The School reserves the right not to enrol any applicant in exceptional cases such as:

- An applicant who with special needs such that, even where additional resources are available, the Board cannot meet these needs or provide the applicant with an appropriate education
- The applicant poses an unacceptable risk to other students, school staff or school property.

Appeal

When an applicant is refused enrolment to the School, the Parents, or the Student if aged over 18 years of age, may make an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the DES on the official Section 29 Appeal Application Form which can be downloaded from www.education.ie. This appeal must be submitted to the DES within 42 days of the receipt of the decision of the Board to refuse enrolment.

SECTION D

Priority order

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.

In the event that the number of applicants, in any one of the categories, outnumber the places available, places will be offered in chronological order, based on the date of receipt of completed application forms. In the case of boarders, priority will be based on the criteria as prioritised in categories 2-6.

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. Where applications are received from two or more Siblings, if one Sibling is offered a place, all Siblings will be allocated places, provided the total number to be enrolled is not exceeded.
4. Applicants whose Parent(s) attended the School or whose Parent(s) are a member of the staff of the School ^b.
5. Applicants, who fall into one or both of the following groups ^c:
 - I. 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
 - II. 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.
6. Remaining places will be offered in chronological order, based on the date of receipt of completed application forms.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order of priority outlined in this policy. If places subsequently become available, these will be allocated in accordance with this priority order. This waiting list will expire on 30 September of the year of enrolment.

- 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

Admission Procedure and Timeline for intake 2017/18

- Boarding places will be offered from 1st September 2016
- Day applications will close on Friday 30th September 2016
- Initial places to be offered within 2 weeks of closure date (14 October 2016). Letters stating place on waiting list if applicable.
- Two weeks to accept or reject the offer (28 October 2016)
- 2nd round offers to be made within 2 weeks of this date (11 November 2016) with all applicants informed of their place on the waiting list should such exist.
- 2 weeks to accept /reject (25 November 2016)
- Boarding application remain open until 31st July 2017 and then places will be issued to day students unless the boarding allocation is full.
- If a boarding application is received it will take precedence over the existing day waiting list.