



ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

This policy has been formulated by Wicklow ETNS to assist parents/guardians in making an informed decision in relation to child enrolment and to comply with legislation and Department of Education and Skills circulars

School Details:

Name: Wicklow Educate Together National School

Address: Hawkstown Road

Telephone: 0404-62786

Email: info@wicklowetns.com

Roll Number:

Principal: Sinéad Watson

The school day starts at 8:50 am and finishes at 1:30 pm for Junior and Senior Infants, and from 2:30 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.

Wicklow ETNS is under the patronage of Educate Together. Parents/ Guardians are advised to familiarise themselves with the Educate Together ethos prior to enrolling their child in the school.

This policy was drafted in May 2017 in response to our move to Hawkstown Road. The school is currently operating at almost full capacity and has waiting lists for enrollment for all classes. At the same time the population of Wicklow Town and surrounding areas is set to increase in the coming years. 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 of the school and legislative requirements.

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The policy also aims 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.

The school caters for (children in Junior Infants initially/ children from Junior Infants to sixth class). It is co-educational and multi- denominational. Wicklow 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.

Wicklow ETNS follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

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 Wicklow ETNS children must be 4 years old on or before 31st of March of the year of admission into Junior Infant classes. (This is effective for applications received after 1st September 2017)

The Board of Management of Wicklow Educate Together National School considers the 'First Come, First Served' system the most equitable, accountable system for fulfilling its commitment to this charter and to children whose parent/ guardians are seeking a place for them in the school.

In determining admissions the Board of Management/ Manager shall take account of Department of Education and Skills regulations in relation to staffing, class size and class average. The Board of Management/ Manager shall also have regard to issues such as physical space, multi- grade classes, and the presence of children with special educational and/or behavioral needs.

Pre-enrolment

- Complete and return a Pre-enrolment Application Form. These are available from the school office and/or the school website.
- On receipt of the completed form, the school's Enrolment Officer stamps the date and time of receipt on the form and enters the child's name in the school's Pre-Enrolment List (PEL). This is a chronological list of all Pre Enrolment Applications received. Multiple applications received on the same day will be processed in order of the time of receipt in the school. Where multiple applications are received at the same time, they will be processed in alphabetical order of the child's surname.
- The child is assigned a PEL Number which records the child's place on the Pre-Enrolment List. 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.

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- Admission for the Special ASD Classes is on a first come first served basis if a space is available, and all admission criteria are met. Children must fall within the mild to moderate disability range and have the potential for integration into the mainstream classroom.
- The PEL is stored on computer. Pre-enrolment data will only be used for the purpose of admissions to the school.
- The Pre-enrolment Application will be acknowledged by post and/or e-mail, and the child's PEL Number will be included. This letter should be kept safely as it is a record of a child's PEL number.
- No guarantees of places will be given or implied by pre-enrolment number.

Admissions procedures

- Letters will be sent out in the spring term of the year prior to that for which the child pre-enrolled. Parents/Guardians must reply in writing to remain on the Pre-enrolment list within 14 days. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in the place being forfeited. This letter does **NOT** constitute an offer of a place in the school.
- The Amended Pre Enrolment Lists for each class for a given year will be compiled from all those who said YES and returned it fully filled out, by the closing date. Priority on each class Amended Pre Enrolment List is based on the original PEL number.
- 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. (see relevant section).
- 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 be 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!)
- Offers of places in the school will be made from the above list, strictly on a first come, first served basis, taking into account the number of places available. If there are more applications than available places, children on the Amended Pre Enrolment List to whom we cannot offer a place will be put on a Waiting List.
- The school will send out the Letters of Offer of places within three weeks of the closing date for the return of the Confirmation Form.

WICKLOW EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL

- Parents must reply to the Letter of Offer by the specified date, stating that they accept the place for their child, otherwise the offer will lapse and the place may be offered to another child on the waiting list.
- Enrolment of Junior Infant children will take place in the June prior to the September of entry to the school and parents will be notified in writing of this date. If parents are unable to attend on this day, they are asked to inform the school in writing or risk losing their place. Under certain circumstances enrolment can occur by posting the required documentation to the Enrolment Officer.
- In the case of enrolment of pupils from senior infants – sixth class, individual arrangements will be made with the school for enrolment. Enrolment times and registration may vary depending on when vacancies arise. Parents will be required to bring the following documents on enrolment day:
 - Completed Registration Form
 - The long version of the child's birth certificate or a copy of the entry in the Register of Adoptions (Note: NOT Baptism Certificate) which will be photocopied and returned.
 - The child's PPS number. The child's PPS number will be used as the unique pupil identifier on the Primary Online Database (POD). Further information on POD can be found here, <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Primary-Online-Database-POD-/POD-Fair-Processing-Notice.pdf>
 - Parents of children aged between four and six years, if previously enrolled in another National School, must obtain a certificate to that effect from the Principal Teacher of the school which the pupil previously attended.
 - A recent school report (in the case of children transferring from another school).
 - A copy of any recent assessments (where these have been carried out).
- The following categories of applicants may choose not to accept a place in the school, should it be offered, yet retain their original PEL number and date of PEL Application:
 - Children who have not reached the age of five by the September of anticipated entry to school.
 - Children of families who are living temporarily outside the area
 - Children with special needs who have reached the age of six by the September of anticipated entry to school and whose parents feel they are not yet ready for school.
- Parents/ Guardians of Junior Infants may defer the child's place for one year, providing the child is under 6 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.
- 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. By doing this the child will be placed on the

list for the following year according to their original pre-enrolment number. 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 pre-enrolment list.

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

Enrolment of Children with Special Educational Needs into Mainstream Classes

Where it is apparent that a child has a disability or other special educational needs, the school may require that these needs be assessed prior to admission in order to enable the school to make suitable advance preparations for the admission of the student and, if necessary, to seek additional resources.

The school will use the funding provided to it by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with a disability or other special educational needs, including, where necessary, alteration of buildings and provision of appropriate equipment.

Wicklow Educate Together N.S. endeavours at all times to practice the school policy of inclusion and welcomes applications from children with special educational needs. Such applications are subject to the enrolment principles outlined above. 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 Wicklow Educate Together N.S.

Where such a report is not available, a request should be made that the child would be assessed immediately. Following receipt of the report the Board of Management will assess how the school can meet the needs specified therein. Where the Board/ Manager deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the DES and/or the HSE 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 Special Educational Needs Organiser (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.

Applications for admission in respect of a child with a disability or other special educational needs will be refused where the nature of the child's needs are such that they would make impossible, or have a seriously detrimental effect on, the provision of education by the school to other children.

ASD Classrooms

The school caters for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in a Special Class (ASD Class) in the school. Access to this class is limited to children who have received a Multi-disciplinary team report stating that they should be accommodated in this unit. Children must fall within the mild to moderate disability range and have the potential for integration into the mainstream classroom.

Admissions for this class are operated on a 'first come first served basis. Parents of children with special needs are given an option on the Confirmation Form to postpone application for a place to a future year even where the child will have reached six years of age by the following September. This choice does not confer a right to a place in a future year, only a right to apply for a place. The child retains his/her PEL number. In order for a pupils application to the ASD class to be considered a professional report recommending an autism specific environment must be supplied to the school

Exceptional Conditions

1) Enrolled pupils who leave WETNS temporarily

There are some circumstances in which enrolled pupils may leave WETNS and retain their original PEL number. These include:

- The family temporarily living in another area.
- The pupil is attending another school in order to deal with specific special educational needs.

In these circumstances, the place vacated by the child will be filled by a child on the waiting list. However, the enrolled pupil will return to the PEL, and will be offered a place in the school, should one be available when they wish to return. Their place on the PEL will be in accordance with their original date of application.

Parents of such children will be asked to confirm in writing annually that they wish their children to remain on the PEL. Failure to do this will result in the child's name being removed from the PEL. Parents may of course re-apply and receive a new PEL number.

2) Siblings, Foster children, adopted children and recent migrants into the area.

In order to be family friendly, two places in every 28 of the Pre-enrolment list will be reserved to be allocated at the discretion of the Board of Management to cater for the following exceptional circumstances:

- Where siblings or dependents of staff have not been placed on the pre-enrolment list for a well-justified reason
- Where parents/guardians with foster children or adopted children are affected –i.e. they have adopted a child of school going age within the previous year.
- Where a family moves into the locality within the previous six months and this is the school of choice for the family.

Students applying to transfer from another school

Where a student applies to change school, provision of a place will be conditional on the following:

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- Department of Education requirements for the transfer of a pupil from one primary school to another being fully complied with
- A recent school report
- Recent assessments, where relevant
- The school being satisfied with the reasons for transfer. Information will be requested from the student's current/former school in this regard
- There being a vacancy in the class in which the student would be most appropriately placed
- Information/documentation on any Special Educational Needs being provided by the parents/guardians at the time of application
- The school being satisfied that the move is in the best interests of the student

Applications during the academic year will be considered up to the 30th of October. The Board of Management will consider whether any place will be offered to commence on the first day of the term following the offer, or whether it would be more appropriate to wait until the beginning of the next school year. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the Board of Management may decide that a transfer during a school term may be appropriate.

For transfers from other schools in Wicklow Town and surrounding area parents must notify the child's current school of their intention to transfer before any place can be offered.

It is the policy of the school to communicate information concerning attendance and the student's educational progress to other schools if requested.

Late Applications

When Applications are received after January for anticipated entry to school in the following September, the same procedures will apply but obviously not in the same time scale. When the school sends an acknowledgement letter, a confirmation letter and form will accompany it. The confirmation letter will specify a closing date, as usual. On receipt of reply, by the closing date, the child's name will be added to the waiting list in order of date of Application. The parent will be informed within three weeks of the child's position on the waiting list.

Parents are reminded that it is their responsibility to keep the enrolment officer informed of any change of address or contact numbers. This applies even when there is a sibling enrolled at the school.

Code of Behaviour

Children enrolled in Wicklow Educate Together 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.

Parents of children who have been offered a place will be supplied with a copy of the school's code of behaviour. Admission of a child to the school is conditional upon the child's parent(s) confirming in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them, and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with this code by the child.

Right of Refusal

If the needs of any child (on the pre-enrolment list for mainstream or ASD classes) are such that even with additional resources available from the DES and the Department of Health the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment. The Board of Management also reserves the right to refuse enrolment where the nature of the child's needs are such that they would make impossible, or have a seriously detrimental effect on, the provision of education by the school to other children.

Failure to secure a place

If a decision is communicated by WETNS to a parent/guardian indicating that the school is unable to accept their child, that parent/guardian may request a copy of the enrolment policy and enquire as to what section/sections of the policy justify the refusal. If unhappy with the explanation the parent/guardian may appeal the decision directly to the Board of Management. The Board of Management then considers the appeal and advises the parent/guardian of its decision. If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the outcome, the parent/guardian may then make an appeal to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to the parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians 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/Guardians 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 Educational Welfare Officer: www.newb.ie | info@newb.ie | 01 873 8700

Disclosure

It is expected that, in line with the ethos of the school, all applications are made honestly and fully, with all of the information relevant to the enrolment of a child in the school. Failure to disclose information at pre-enrolment registration or immediately on receipt where the information is obtained after that date may render the application void. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment where false/inaccurate information is provided.

Additional Information:

Wicklow Educate Together 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 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 applicants 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. 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 BoM.

Contact: Please refer all admissions related queries to: enrolment@wicklowetns.com

Timeframe for implementation

This policy will be implemented in June 2017 having been communicated to the school community.

Responsibility for the review

This policy and these procedures will be amended as a result of changed circumstances, and shall in any case undergo full review in 2018

Ratification and communication

The policy has been in operation since June 2017 having been communicated by the Board of Management by means of circular following ratification at school Board of Management meeting of June 2017.