1. **Introduction**

The Board of Management of St. Fiacc’s NS hereby sets out its Admissions and Participation Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal Teacher will be happy to clarify any matters arising from this policy.

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school.

1. **General School Information**

Name of School: St. Fiacc’s NS.

Telephone No. (059) 9132444

His Lordship Bishop Denis Nulty is the Patron of the school. At present, the teaching staff is comprised of 21 class Teachers, 8 Support Teachers, 3 Special Needs Assistants. The full range of classes is taught in the school and classes are of mixed gender.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department. The school Policy has regard to the resources and funding available.

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

School commences at 9.20 a.m. and finishes at 3.00 p.m. For Junior and Senior Infants school finishes at 2.00 p.m. The bell is rung for mid-morning breaks at 11.00 a.m. and this break lasts from 11.00 a.m. to 11.10 a.m. Lunch break is from 12.40 p.m. to 1.10 p.m.

1. **Rationale**

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, the mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements.

* 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.

* To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school.

1. **Legal Framework**

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that “A recognized school shall ….Subject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”.

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall “publish …. The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected”.

Section 27 (1) states that “A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school” and (2) that “the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers”.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school’s Admission Policy. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof” .

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction.

There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values [Section 7 (3)].

1. **Goals**

The school shall have in place appropriate channels of communication and procedures:

* To inform parents about the school, it’s programmes, activities, and procedures.
* To enable applications for admission to the school to be handled in an open, transparent manner.
* To put in place criteria under which applications shall be considered.
* To ensure that these criteria are informed by our Ethos, our Mission Statement

& current legislation.

* To specify what information is required by the school at the time of application.

1. **Context, Resources, School Organisation & Curriculum**

The school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.

The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parent’s choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of any applicant or student. It will make every effort to secure those resources.

The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil – teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programme for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

1. **Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy.**

Roles of Board of Management:

* To ensure that a policy is in place and that it is reviewed.
* To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its

implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

* To decide on appeals by parents or students with respect to any decision(s) made by the Principal/Board.
* To prepare (and submit to the Education Welfare Board) a statement of Strategies regarding Attendance. The Statement of Strategy will have regard to guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board and will set out the measures the Board of Management proposes to adopt

a) For the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending the school.

b) Encouraging regular attendance at the school on the part of all students.

Role of the Principal

* To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, students,

parents, Board and Trustees

* To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review

Date.

* To implement the policy and to support other teaching staff in their implementation of the policy.
* To apply for and acquire such resources as are available in accordance with

government policies.

* To ensure, within the constraints of available resources, that alternative

programmes are devised where necessary and practicable to meet the needs of

students.

* To appraise the policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its

implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

* To ensure a register of all students attending the school is established and maintained
* To ensure that a record of attendance or non-attendance is maintained for each student registered at this school and, in the case of non-attendance, the reason for same.
* Prior to registering a child, to provide the parents of an applicant with a copy of the school’s Code of Behaviour and ensure that the parent confirm in writing their acceptance of the Code of an assurance that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the child.
* To provide, on request, to any parent of a child registered in the school with a

copy of the Code of Behaviour.

* Where a child is refused admission, to advise the parents of their right of appeal to the Trustees and the Department of Education setting out Title and Address of each and advising of time limits.

Role of Teaching staff

* To co-operate with the implementation of this policy.
* To take the needs of all students into account in the way in which they select textbooks, plan and teach their lessons and conduct assessments.
* To bring concerns about Special Needs curricular matters and information to the attention of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Needs Teacher.
* To keep parents informed through the regular Parent / Teacher Meetings and School Reports and by meeting parents from time to time as required.
* To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

Role of Students

* To co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of the policy.
* To offer suggestions for improving the service to students with special needs.

Role of Parents

* To support the policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation.
* To bring to the attention of the school authorities any concern they may have in relation to the school’s provision for the educational needs of their child.
* To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its

implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

1. **Policy Considerations**

All students are welcome to enrol at St. Fiacc’s NS irrespective of learning need.

The school will maintain a list of refused applicants for each class, their place on that list having been determined under the criteria outlined on page 6.

The Board of Management respects parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided the enrolment criteria are fulfilled.

The Board of Management of St. Fiacc’s NS, in its Policy of Admissions/Enrolment, respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, bearing in mind:

* Health & Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children.
* Available classroom space.
* Department of Education & Science class size directives.
* Appropriate Supports and Resources are available
* Time of school year

1. **Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision / Appeals**

* Failure to fully complete forms may result in refusal to admit a student.
* Further relevant information may be sought at a later stage
* In applying the criteria for enrolment, the school will take into account Gender Balance Male / Female and limitations in the size of classes
* Failure to fully complete the application form, failure to supply any relevant information requested by the school or failure to make reasonable arrangements to meet with the school authorities to discuss the application may result in a child being refused admission to the school.

St Fiacc’s NS reserves the right to refuse admission in the following circumstances:

* The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education
* Student poses unacceptable risk to other students/staff/school property.
* The class size exceeds 27 pupils. (As per Primary Staffing Schedule 2017- 2018 i.e. 1 classroom teacher for every 27 pupils)

1. **Junior Infant Enrolment Procedure**

The registration process is initiated on receipt by the school of a completed Application Form. This form must be signed and dated by one or both parents or guardians and returned by January 31st. The form will be dated on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications. Parents are then furnished with the *Application for Enrolment* form.

Date of application, child's date of birth, address and telephone contact number are recorded in the School Record of Applications, and the attached *acknowledgement* together with a copy of this policy is sent to the applicant. The acknowledgement of an application merely confirms that it will be assessed under the criteria outlined, and does not confer any further status on that application.

Entry in the School Record of Applications means that an application will be considered in *early March* of the relevant enrolment year, and will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria outlined in this policy.

Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board, listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome, and if refused admission will be notified of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

*Please note:*

The Board of Management strongly recommends that applicant children are at least four years of age on or before April 30th of the school commencement year.

Parents/Guardians must confirm in writing that they agree to abide by St. Fiacc’s NS’s Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

**Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria.**

If the number of children on the Waiting List exceeds the number of places available, the following prioritising criteria are used:

Priority Criterion.

1. Roman Catholic Children who are siblings or step siblings of past or present pupils – priority to eldest as of 31st March.
2. Children other than Roman Catholic who are siblings or step siblings of past or present pupils – priority to eldest as of 31st March.
3. Roman Catholic Children living in Carlow/Graiguecullen urban area, priority to eldest. If the class is oversubscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
4. Children of current school staff, priority to eldest.
5. Children living in the area of varying denominations while maintaining the ethos of the school, priority to eldest
6. Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
7. If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.
8. **Criteria for Enrolment to SI to 6th Classes**

The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6th classes.

Priority Criterion

1. Roman Catholic Children who are siblings or step siblings of past or present pupils – priority to eldest as of 31st March.
2. Roman Catholic Children living in Carlow/Graiguecullen urban area, priority to eldest. If the class is oversubscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
3. Children of current school staff, priority to eldest.
4. Children living in the area of varying denominations while maintaining the ethos of the school, priority to eldest
5. Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Procedures.

1. **Application for immediate admission in the current school year**

* Application forms are available from the school secretary.
* Failure to fully complete forms will result in refusal to admit the applicant
* The behaviour record of a student in their previous school shall be considered
* The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered

The School reserves the right to consult with such school(s) in order to assess the application. An interview with parents and student will also take place before any decision is made. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the Board’s decision within 21 days of the application.

1. **Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon

* Effective management placed on application process.
* Clarity and transparency relating to the process.
* Applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly

in the case of refusal to enrol.

* Positive Parental feedback.

1. **Monitoring Procedures**

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

1. **Review Procedure**

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

1. **Linkage with other Policies**

**Code of Behaviour & Health & Safety**: Admission to St Fiacc’s is conditional on parents confirming in writing that the code is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by their child.

St Fiacc’s reserves the right to refuse admission if a student poses unacceptable risk to other students/staff/school property

**Attendance:** The attendance record of a student in their previous school shall be considered when deciding to enroll a transferring pupil.

**Special Needs:** If a pupil for enrolment has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education, St Fiacc’s reserves the right to refuse admission

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| Name of School | St Fiacc’s NS |
| Address | Killeshin Road, Graiguecullen, Carlow |
| Roll Number | 19958C |
| The School’s vision and values in relation to attendance | St Fiacc’s embodies values which emphasises a good work ethos and striving for excellence. |
| The School’s high expectations around attendance | We expect that every child comes to school unless there is a genuine reason. We expect that pupils come to school on time. |
| How attendance will be monitored | Attendance will be monitored using *Aladdin* -an electronic roll. The roll is called by 10.10am daily.  The school has a priority list of students with a history of poor attendance. Any unexplained absences in respect of said pupils are followed up immediately with a phonecall.  Other pupils are added to the list if attendance deteriorates.  Phonecalls are followed up with an invitation to a meeting with the Principal and School completion project worker.  School completion project worker provides further support with home visits, regular phonecalls and one-to-one meetings with older pupils.  If there is no improvement still, pupil is referred to the Education Welfare Officer. |
| Summary of the main elements of the school’s approach to attendance   * Target setting and targets   *To improve attendance & punctuality.*   * The whole school approach * Promoting good attendance * Responding to poor attendance | Attendance rate 2015-16: 92.9%.  Attendance rate 2016-17: 93.2%  93 pupils missed over 20 days 2015-16  100 pupils missed over 20 days 2016-17.  Aim is to reduce to 2016-17 levels.  Suspensions 2015-16: 1  Suspensions 2016-17: 4  Targeted pupils will participate in the following **in-school** programmes to improve participation and attendance: *Friends for Life; Transition programme; Copping on Programme; Breakfast and lunch provision; Social skills programme; One to one meetings; Internet Safety*; *Sporting activities;attendance certificates*  **After schools** programmes: CRYS afterschools programmes; Homework club.  **During Holiday periods**: Refer students into local CRYS Summer camp and sports Camps including *Cul Camps*.  Parents to be reminded around procedures for notification of student absences in Sept newsletter and by text.  Follow up letters will be sent where attendance has improved.  All teachers must call the roll and record lateness for the system to work. All teachers feedback concerns around lateness, poor attendance and signs of neglect to the Principal before *Care Needs* Meetings.  Good attendance is encouraged weekly at assembly. End of term certificates are awarded to pupils who achieve 95% attendance or higher.  Discussion with Pupil (Where appropriate) - Phonecall – letter- house visit- Meeting- use of interventions - phone support – EWO. |
| School roles in relation to attendance | **Parents:**  To ring Secretary/Principal on first day of child’s absence.  To provide a note when child returns. Attach a doctor’s cert where necessary.  To write a letter if pupil goes on holidays during term time.  To ensure child is in school by 9.20. (Roll is called at 10.00am)  **Teachers**  To call the roll on time (between 10.00 and 10.10)  To record lateness  To keep all notes of explanation on file.  To accurately record reasons for absence.  To alert management of concerns re attendance/lateness/child protection  **Principal**  To monitor attendance data and identify trends and patterns in attendance.  To follow up poor attendance/punctuality  To liaise with care needs team  **School Completion Project Worker**  To monitor attendance of pupils on priority list and follow up where necessary with phonecalls; meetings; house visits.  To arrange in school/out of school/holiday period activities to improve attendance with priority list pupils  To liaise with Principal weekly.  **Deputy**  To assist Principal in attendance monitoring and follow up.  To attend care needs meetings  **Special Duties post holder for attendance**  To assist Principal in attendance monitoring and follow up.  To ensure quarterly returns are made to Tusla.  To attend care needs meetings. |
| Partnership arrangements (parents, students, other schools, youth and community groups) | School Completion Programme (Tusla); Carlow Regional Youth Services; Barnardos; Parents; BOM; GAA; local Secondary schools. |
| How the Statement of Strategy will be monitored | Periodically with alterations made where required. |
| Review process and date for review | Reviewed annually by Board and staff in September. |
| Date the Statement of Strategy was approved by the Board of Management | 26/10/2017 |
| Date the Statement of Strategy submitted to Tusla | 26/09/2017 |