



John Scottus Primary School Old Conna

Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

John Scottus Primary School Old Conna is a private Primary School under the patronage and trusteeship of the John Scotus Education Trust.

The educational philosophy of the School is centred in the belief that every child has a core of fine, quiet energy, an inner light*, which expresses itself according to the child's individual nature and talents. Teachers facilitate this beautiful and bright expression by providing good examples, encouragement and a focus on developing virtues such as kindness.

The School has an eight-year cycle from age 5 to 12 years. Teaching follows the Primary School Curriculum. However, John Scottus Primary School Old Conna is not a National School and is not under the auspices of the Department of Education nor is it subject to the Rules for National Schools.

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management of the school has consulted with school staff and the school patron.

The policy was approved by the Board of Management on 27th January 2022. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

[* the presence and inward working of a very fine intelligence at the heart of each person]

2. Characteristic Spirit and Values

Our school is named after John Scottus Eriugena, the Platonist philosopher, theologian and poet of Ireland's Golden Age. Our values are inspired by a common thread, or perennial philosophy, found in the great traditions of East and West.

Our motto 'Laetus Impresens' – Delight in the Present (borrowed from the renaissance Florentine philosopher Marsilio Ficino) expresses the importance we attribute to being fully present and connected in every moment. At John Scottus, we emphasise the regular practice of meditation and mindfulness which strengthens focus, enhances awareness and connects the student to a sense of quiet presence whether in stillness or in activity. We see this as an essential tool for living a fulfilled life.

Our values include:

Unity: we celebrate the concept of oneness and interconnection, as found in many great traditions from the East and the West.

Spirituality: We see our students and each other as spiritual beings. We acknowledge that there is a deeper presence beyond that of the body, mind and heart.

The Spirit of Enquiry: we encourage the Socratic Method of discussion to train the mind and open the heart, developing the power of reason and learning through self-discovery.

Service: we enable our student's growth into responsible global citizens by encouraging social awareness of the world around us and our relationship to it.

Love: we endeavour to meet each person and situation from a place of love, first. We believe all of our students to be intelligence and love in action.

3. Ethos

The ethos of John Scottus Primary School is grounded in the belief that at the core of each individual there is a perfection which can find expression in the life as it unfolds. The job of the educator is to nurture and fulfil this expression. As put by Plutarch,

' Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire'

The relationship between teacher and pupil is fundamental and our ethos values the building and maintaining of strong relationships between teacher and pupil. This involves connecting with the child and developing a real understanding of their nature, qualities and tendencies.

Simple practices such as greeting each child openly and warmly each morning foster this connection.

We believe that 'to light this fire', nurturing the innate qualities such as courage, generosity, and perseverance, provides a base from which children can explore and meet the challenges of the world with confidence and hope.

Harnessing the power of attention is another essential feature of allowing each child to flourish and be successful. They explore the power of connecting in the present moment when playing, writing, speaking, listening, running or pausing. We encourage our children to 'let their light shine' to always do their best and to be confident that this effort will sow the seeds of excellence and will help uncover their particular aptitude. We aim to deliver quality learning without pressure. The children are encouraged to 'meet the need', which further develops the power of attention and helps them to practice being independent while engaging with other people in the approach to school work.

Revealing and evolving the inner divine spark in each child is greatly enhanced by the regular practice of falling still. Children naturally have an affinity with the present moment. The daily practices of stillness give them the tools to help diminish the 'noise' in the head and empower them to harness their inner strengths.

Outdoor learning is a central aspect to the ethos of John Scottus. Imparting the skills and content of the National Curriculum through the medium of the environment is vigorously explored by teachers and pupils alike. This can be at all times of the year and in all weathers.

To nurture this 'best self' within each child, they need to be exposed to the best that our own culture can provide along with the best from the traditions which have sustained the civilisations of the world. In the belief that this great greatness will be recognised by the child, we encourage them to learn and have fun with words of wisdom from both east and west. Emphasis is placed on speech, drama and learning by heart. This gives them a rich store to enjoy in the moment but also to draw on in adulthood for inspiration and guidance.

4. Admission Statement

John Scottus Primary School Old Conna will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

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

- (h) the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned is a member of the Traveller community
- (i) 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, The grounds of 'civil status', 'disability', 'family status', 'gender', 'race', 'religion', 'sexual orientation', 'Traveller community' and 'discrimination' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

5. Admission of Students

John Scottus Primary School Old Conna is a private fee charging school. The school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the Head Teacher 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
- c) exceptional circumstances

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment of a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- the pupil has special needs such that, even with the supports currently available in the school, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education;
- in the opinion of the Head Teacher, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk, to other pupils, to school staff or to school property

Terms and Condition of Admission

1. The acceptance and enrolment of pupils in the School is based on a private contract between John Scottus Primary School Old Conna and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each pupil.
2. Parents or Guardians must be prepared to respect the ethos of the School and agree to have their children educated in accordance with this ethos.
3. The Head Teacher of the School will be responsible for implementing the Admission Policy.
4. John Scottus Primary School Old Conna may, from time to time, vary the numbers of pupils in each class. Should it be decided to reduce the number of pupils, the number of places available for new pupils may be reduced accordingly.

6. Allocation of Places

The school will apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below:

- a. Available places in the school will first be offered to children who have attended John Scottus Pre-School.
- b. Children who have siblings attending John Scottus Primary School Old Conna, John Scottus Pre-School, or John Scottus Secondary School and in that order..
- c. Children of staff members of the three schools.
- d. Children or grandchildren of past pupils of the school subject to a 25% cap.
- e. If there are any remaining places, these will be offered to applicants in the order in which such applications are received.
- f. The Board of Management reserves the right to give priority to children over and above criteria (a), (b), (c), (d) where, in the opinion of the Board, such priority is justified. This priority can be based on compassionate grounds or exceptional circumstances.

Waiting Lists will proceed in accordance with criteria a b c and d and will then be subject to lottery.

Applications are accepted throughout the year.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

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 academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (b) academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents

8. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to John Scottus Primary School Old Conna will be based on the following:

- our school's admission policy;
- the information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form together with any relevant reports.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

- Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the Head Teacher.
- Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the Head Teacher's decision (see section 15 below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

- An offer must be accepted in writing within 10 working days of the date of receipt of the offer.
- An acceptance must be accompanied by the completed registration form and requisite deposit to secure the place.

11. 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 John Scottus Primary School Old Conna 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 by the school in its letter of offer;
- iii. the parent of a student, when required by the principal 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 10 above.

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 will be compiled.
- Placement on the waiting list of John Scottus Primary School Old Conna is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria (see Section 6 a,b,c,d) in accordance with this admission policy.

- 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.
- Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought by applicants who do not meet selection criteria (see Section 6 a,b,c,d) will be selected based on a lottery system.

13. Procedures for Admission of Students to Other Years and During the School Year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in the school in a class other than the school's intake group for the following school year may also complete an Application form which is available on the school website. Applications for other classes are accepted throughout the year.
- Places will be offered to parents when the availability of places in those classes has been determined. Where the number of children seeking enrolment in any given year or class exceeds the number of places available, the same criteria that are used for the enrolment of the school's intake group will be used to prioritise children for enrolment in such classes.
- Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in the school in any class during the course of the school year may complete an Application form. The same criteria that are used for the enrolment of the school's intake group will be used to prioritise children for enrolment in such classes.

14. Reviews/appeals

The parent of a student may request the Board of Management to review the decision of the Head Teacher to refuse admission of the student to the school. Such a request must be made in writing within 14 days of the date on which the decision to refuse admission was communicated by the Head Teacher. The decision of the Board of Management in such a review is final.

This document will be subject to on-going review, as appropriate.

Mary Telford

Mary Telford
Chairperson,
John Scottus Primary School Old Conna BOM
Date: 27/1/22

Elizabeth Dempsey

Elizabeth Dempsey
Head Teacher
John Scottus Primary School Old Conna
Date: 27/1/22