



Admissions Policy

CASTLEBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL
ROLL NO. 20562H

Castlebar Primary School

Senior Campus, Upper Chapel Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo F23K389

Junior Campus, The Lawn, Castlebar, Co. Mayo F23YD79

Roll Number: 20562H

School Patron: Archbishop Francis Duffy

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was reviewed in line with the Department of Education Circular 0039/2025 and subsequently approved by the school Patron in September 2025. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Castlebar Primary School admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

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

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of Castlebar Primary School

Castlebar Primary School is a Catholic primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Tuam. The school is committed to providing an inclusive and respectful learning environment in line with its ethos, and welcomes applications for enrolment from all children, subject to the criteria set out in this policy.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of Castlebar Primary School, as a Catholic primary school, means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

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- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Castlebar Primary School shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

Mission Statement of Castlebar Primary School

The mission of Castlebar Primary School is to give human and Christian education to the young, with special concern for the disadvantaged. Our school is a community where the different groups associated with it work together in close partnership for the good of all.

Philosophy of Castlebar Primary School

1. Castlebar Primary School is a Christian community assisting the family and parish in creating a positive ethos, which permeates all the activities of the school and where every attempt is made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of the children.
2. Our school is a centre of formation enabling each child to become aware of the dignity and value of each person. It creates an environment where discipline aims at responsible freedom and where there is respect for faith, tradition and culture of others.
3. We accept that our school strives to provide its students with education for life and living. We aim to develop and implement the curriculum which seeks to ensure that each child has an equal chance of obtaining optimum personal fulfilment.

Vision of Castlebar Primary School

1. This school will promote the development of the whole person within a Christian community encouraging an awareness of self-worth and personal dignity so that each can live as integrated and responsible citizens. It will foster parental involvement to assist this.

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2. It will aspire to excellence in all things by insisting on high standards of discipline, punctuality and academic performance, by encouraging integrity grounded in justice and a social conscience, and by empowering each person to develop skills necessary for now and the future.

3. It will be a centre of organisation that nurtures the development of the whole person based on order, personal responsibility, interdependence, respect for persons, respect for others' property and the cultivation of a deep religious sense through reflection, ritual celebration and prayer.

4. Mindful of our culture, our traditions and our rich heritage, this school will be a caring, compassionate community alive to justice, to the search for truth, to our own giftedness, to true freedom and open to the wholeness of life.

Aims of Castlebar Primary School

1. To enable the child to live a full life as a child.
2. To equip him/her to avail himself/herself of a pathway in education.
3. To prepare him/her to live in time a full and useful life as an adult and by drawing on the combined efforts of his/her home, his/her parish and his/her school to strive to ensure that his/her all-round growth is healthy and harmonious.
4. To help the child to develop self-discipline and socially-acceptable behaviour.
5. To help the child to think clearly and act independently.
6. To cultivate in the child, the motivation to apply himself to worthwhile and satisfying activities - thereby enhancing his/her self-esteem

3. Admission Statement

Castlebar Primary School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

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

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

Castlebar Primary School is a co-ed school.

Castlebar Primary School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Castlebar Primary School is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students (boys or girls) with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student (boy or girl) who does not have the category of needs specified.

Castlebar Primary School, will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the Council. Castlebar Primary School, will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the special class

Castlebar Primary School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD).

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal 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

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Castlebar Primary School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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The special Speech and Language class attached to Castlebar Primary School provides an education exclusively for students with a Speech and Language disorder (also termed a Developmental Language Disorder / DLD) and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

1. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who have brothers and sisters currently enrolled in the school.
2. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who qualify as a resident of our catchment area (Catholic parish boundary.)
3. Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: Bank Statement, Utility bill, e.g. electricity, or water.
4. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who are not included within the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
5. Children whose siblings are past pupils.
6. Children whose parents and grandparents attended the school (this criterion is subject to a cap at 25% of the overall admissions intake for the year in question).
7. Children living outside the Catholic parish boundary.
8. Children who are four years of age on or before the first day of April and who are not included in categories 1-6.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

The Board of Management will apply the seven selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. In the event of a tie for the final place, the board will then determine the access to the final place by choosing the eldest of the tied applicants. In the event of more than one tied applicant having the same date of birth, the board will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place (this will be independently verified). Any remaining applicant will be retained on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

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Castlebar Primary School has two types of special classes: a **Language Class** and an **Autism Class**. Admission to these classes is governed by the eligibility criteria set out in Circular 0039/2025 and the associated Department of Education Information Note.

Eligibility requires:

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for Autism and Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

☑ Diagnosis of special educational needs (e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)

AND

☑ A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

☑ Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

☑ A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for

- Autism,
- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD)

Where applications exceed the number of places available, the school will apply its oversubscription criteria in line with this policy.

Selection / Eligibility Criteria – Special Class - Language

Eligibility criteria for enrolment in Mayo Language Classes adheres to the Department of Education (DOE) Criteria for Enrolment in Special Classes for Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) (Circular 0024/2025), i.e. a pupil enrolled in a special class for pupils with SSLD must meet each of the following criteria:

The child has a conclusive diagnosis by a Speech and Language Therapist of:

a) Developmental Language Disorder where:

i. there is evidence of significant and pervasive needs evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools, observation in both clinical and social environments and assessment for risk factors and clinical markers and monitoring of responsiveness to intervention

and

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ii. language scores at or below a standard score of 78 (-1.5 SD from the mean)

and/or

b) Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist where there is evidence of significant and pervasive impact of the SSD of unknown origin on learning, literacy and social relationships evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.

AND

3. The child has complex or severe educational needs as a result of their DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin that are pervasive in nature and require the integrated and targeted educational and therapeutic supports of a special class for children with DLD/SSD.

Supporting evidence should include:

a) Evidence that despite targeted and intensive therapeutic and educational supports, the child's DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin continues to impact on their learning, participation, socialisation and well-being in their current educational setting.

b) Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation over time through Speech and Language Therapist review.

c) Education documentation from schools or early learning and care settings including Student Support Plans and/or Access and Inclusion Profiles detailing:

- Regular reviews of needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment and review with parents and educational staff
- Target-setting
- Evidence-informed intervention and review at key points.

Selection Criteria – Special Class/Autism Class

1. Children with a diagnosis of Autism and special class recommendation who are currently enrolled in the school.
2. Children with a diagnosis of Autism, a special class recommendation and who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.
3. Children with a diagnosis of Autism, a special class recommendation and who qualify as resident for the purposes of this Admission Policy within the Parish of Castlebar.

Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: Bank Statement, Utility bill, e.g. electricity, or water.

4. Children with a diagnosis of autism, special class recommendation and who are not included within any of the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school. Priority to the eldest.
5. Children with a diagnosis of Autism and who are not included within categories 1-4

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and have a recommendation for a special class placement on a relevant psychological report.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above, (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply: The board of Management will apply the five selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. In the event of a tie for the final place, the board will then determine the access to the final place by choosing the eldest of the tied applicants. In the event of more than one tied applicant having the same date of birth, the board will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place. Any remaining applicant will be kept on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a list for admission to the school:

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- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude other than in relation to admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school (other than the school's selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, these criteria are subject to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school. This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.
This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Castlebar Primary School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

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9. Notifying applicants of decision

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 18](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Castlebar Primary School, you must indicate—

- (i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

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 Castlebar Primary School 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 in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal 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; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 10](#) above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom

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- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of Section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13. 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 whose applications for admission to Castlebar Primary School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Castlebar Primary School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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15. 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 or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

15 (A) At the commencement of the school year:

Parents complete an application form.

Selection Criteria – Senior Infants – 6th class

1. Children who are currently enrolled in the Developmental Language Disorder Special Class in the school.
2. Children who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.
3. Children who qualify as a resident for the purposes of this Admission Policy within the Parish of Castlebar.

Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: Bank Statement, Utility bill, e.g. electricity, or water.

4. Children who are not included within any of the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
5. Children who are not included in categories 1-4.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above, (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

The board of management will apply the five selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. In the event of a tie for the final place, the board will then determine the access to the final place by choosing the eldest of the tied applicants. In the event of more than one tied applicant having the same date of birth, the board will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place (this will be independently verified). Any remaining applicant will be kept on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

15 (B)

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, **after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows.**

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Parents complete an application form.

Selection Criteria

1. Children who are currently enrolled in the Developmental Language Disorder or Autism Special Class in the school.
2. Children who have siblings currently enrolled in the school.
3. Children who qualify as resident for the purposes of this Admission Policy within the Parish of Castlebar. Note: Two of following documents dated within three months of the date of application must be supplied as proof of address: bank statement, utility bill, gas bill, electricity bill or water bill.
4. Children who are not included within any of the preceding categories and whose parent is a member of the staff of the school.
5. Children who are not included in categories 1-4.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above, (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

The board of management will apply the five selection criteria in the order of priority in which they are listed. In the event of a tie for the final place, the board will then determine the access to the final place by choosing the eldest of the tied applicants. In the event of more than one tied applicant having the same date of birth, the board will draw lots between these tied applicants for the last place (this will be independently verified). Any remaining applicant will be kept on a waiting list for the school year in which admission is being sought.

16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The board of Castlebar Primary School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

18. Reviews/Appeals

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Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998 and will be considered subject to the School's Admission Policy.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** within three weeks of the date of refusal of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** within three weeks of the date of refusal of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** within three weeks of the date of refusal of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (See Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** within three weeks of the date of refusal of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (See Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

Fionnghuala King,
Chairperson, BoM

Joseph Carty,
Principal

Date: _____