

# METNS ENROLMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

## MONKSTOWN EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL

### ENROLMENT POLICY

*With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September] 2011 (the “Effective Date”)*

This policy is published by the Board of Management pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Education Act 1998, and sets out the procedures governing admission of children to Monkstown Educate Together National School (METNS).

The Enrolment Policy provides for equality of access and participation in METNS for all children in society whatever their social, religious, cultural and racial backgrounds and whether or not they have a disability or other special educational need.

METNS does not have a defined catchment area. Places are offered to children according to METNS' enrolment procedures, as described below, until METNS is deemed by the Board of Management to be full. The Board of Management shall determine what constitutes a full school for any academic year having regard to a consideration of factors, which it considers relevant. These include the goal of maintaining class sizes at as low a level as possible in order to maintain an optimal pupil/teacher ratio in the interests of the whole school community, the quality of education throughout METNS, and the specific educational needs of needs of its pupils and relevant Department of Education guidelines.

The Board of Management makes decisions in relation to enrolment. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend or change this Enrolment Policy from time to time.

This Enrolment Policy was approved by the Board of Management on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and takes effect on the Effective Date. Please note that the admission procedures for pre-enrolment applications received on or after the Effective Date have been changed from those previously in effect. This policy preserves, however, the previous admission procedures applicable to pre-enrolment applications received before the Effective Date.

This Enrolment Policy should be read in conjunction with METNS' other policies available on its website or on application to METNS, and in particular METNS' Positive Behaviour Policy.

**Since METNS receives more applications than it can accommodate, parents seeking to enrol their child in METNS should submit a completed Pre-Enrolment List Application Form as soon as possible after the child is born, adopted or fostered. These forms are available from METNS at Kill Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin or at [www.metns.ie](http://www.metns.ie).**

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1. Parents wishing to apply for a place for their child in METNS must complete and return a Pre-Enrolment List Application Form (“PEL Form”). These forms are available from METNS. A PEL Form will not be accepted until a child is born and will be invalid if submitted before birth.
2. Children are placed on the Pre-Enrolment List by METNS based on the date of receipt by METNS of the PEL Form (the “PEL Application Date”), subject to one exception. In the case of an adopted child, or child in long-term foster care, the PEL Application Date shall be backdated so that when a PEL Form is received for an adopted child or child in long term foster case, the number of days between the date such child was placed for adoption or fostering and the date the PEL Form was

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received shall be calculated and the child will be given a PEL Application Date and placed on the Pre-Enrolment List as if the PEL Form had been received the same number of days after his or her date of birth. For example, if a child is born on 1st November 2009 and adopted on 1st September 2011 and a PEL Form is received for such child on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the PEL Application Date shall be backdated to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and the adopted child placed on the Pre-Enrolment List accordingly. This exception is however subject to a proviso that it may not apply so as to prejudice the position of children on the Pre-Enrolment List whose PEL Form was received before the Effective Date and METNS may modify an adopted or fostered child's PEL Application Date so as to resolve any such conflict whilst giving effect as far as possible to this provision.

3. METNS will write to the parents of a child who has been entered on the Pre-Enrolment List and such confirmation letter will state:
  - (a) the child's personal identification reference number (PIN Number) which should be used in future correspondence with METNS. Please note that this is merely a reference number and does not give any indication as to a child's place on the Pre-Enrolment List;
  - (b) the child's PEL Application Date; and
  - (c) the anticipated year of admission of the child to METNS.

This confirmation letter should be checked carefully and kept safely, as it is an acknowledgment of METNS' receipt of the PEL Form for the child. This letter is **NOT** an offer of a place in METNS in any given year.

4. A child must be at least 4 years of age before the 1<sup>st</sup> September in the year in which they propose to start school. Preference will, however, be given to applicants who are 4 by 30<sup>th</sup> June of their year of admission.

In respect of any PEL Form received on or after the Effective Date, it will be assumed that any child who reaches their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August in any given year will start school in the September of the following year (namely at age 5) unless such child's parents specifically request, prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of September in the year of that child's third birthday, that such child be considered for enrolment in the year in which they reach their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday (should a place be available).

5. In the academic year prior to the September of a child's anticipated entry to school, parents of children who are on METNS' Pre-Enrolment List will be sent a Confirmation Letter and Confirmation Form. This Confirmation Letter will ask parents to confirm whether
  - (a) they will enrol their child, should they be offered a place at METNS; or
  - (b) they would like to defer enrolling their child but remain on the Pre-Enrolment List for the following year; or
  - (c) they no longer wish to take up a place in METNS.

**The Confirmation Letter and Confirmation Form do NOT constitute an offer of a place in METNS in any given year. It is however essential that parents return the completed Confirmation Form to METNS by the specified closing date (the "Confirmation Closing Date") or they will lose their priority for a place in METNS.**

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If METNS does not receive a completed Confirmation Form for a child by the Confirmation Closing Date then that child's name will be removed from the Pre-Enrolment List.

If a Confirmation Form is subsequently received in respect of a child who has been removed from the Pre-Enrolment List, such Confirmation Form shall be treated as a new application for the child to be placed on the Pre-Enrolment List or Waiting List (as the case may be) and the child will be placed on such list based on the date of receipt of the Confirmation Form (which date shall be regarded as a new PEL Application Date for this purpose).

6. Following the Confirmation Closing Date, offers of places in METNS will be made from the Pre-Enrolment List, taking into account the number of places available, for each class, in the following order of priority:
  - (a) Places shall be offered to children whose PEL Forms were received before the Effective Date, in order of their place on the Pre-Enrolment List;
  - (b) Any places remaining shall then be offered to Qualifying Siblings, who have not already been offered a place and who, in the case of those applying for entry to junior infants, have, or will have, reached the age of 4 by not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June of the year of admission, in order of their place on the Pre-Enrolment List;
  - (c) Any places remaining shall then be offered to remaining applicants and who, in the case of those applying for entry to junior infants, have, or will have, reached the age of 4 by not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June of the year of admission, in order of their place on the Pre-Enrolment List ;
  - (d) Any places remaining shall then be offered to Qualifying Siblings who have not already been offered a place in order of their place on the Pre-Enrolment List; and
  - (e) Any places remaining shall then be allocated to remaining applicants in order of their place on the Pre-Enrolment List.

A "Qualifying Sibling" means a child:

- (a) whose PEL Form is received by METNS on or before that child's first birthday (or in the case of an adopted or fostered child, is received on or before the anniversary of the child's adoption or fostering); and
  - (b) who is the sibling of another child who is enrolled as a pupil in METNS and will remain so enrolled for the academic year in which the first mentioned child is to be enrolled and in this regard, for the avoidance of doubt, sibling relationships shall include any family members who are adopted and/or fostered.
7. If there are more applications than available places, children to whom a place cannot be offered will be put on a Waiting List.

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8. Following the Confirmation Closing Date, METNS will send out the Letters of Offer of places.

A Registration Form will be sent with each Letter of Offer. In order to accept an offer of a place, parents must return the completed Registration Form together with following documents by the date specified in the Letter of Offer (the "Registration Date").

- (a) Long version of the child's birth certificate;
- (b) Child's PPS number;
- (c) 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 METNS which the pupil previously attended;
- (d) A recent school report (in the case of children transferring from another school);
- (e) Recent assessments (where these have been carried out);
- (f) A non-refundable charge (which will be applied to books and stationary costs if the child joins METNS);
- (g) The Positive Behaviour Policy, signed by parents; and
- (h) Any other documentation, which may be specified in the Letter of Offer (as approved by the Board of Management from time to time).

**Parents must return the completed Registration Form by the Registration Date together with the required documentation and non-refundable charge as otherwise the offer may lapse and the place be offered to the next child on the Waiting List.**

9. Waiting List letters will be sent to parents of children on the Pre-Enrolment List who were not offered a place. This letter will inform parents of their child's position on the Waiting List for his / her particular class. A parent whose child is on the Waiting List and will not have reached 6 by the 1<sup>st</sup> September, may elect for their child to re-enter the Pre-Enrolment List for entry the following year and such child will retain his or her original PEL Application Date.

Letters of Offer will be sent to those on the Waiting List if and when vacancies arise. METNS cannot predict exactly when these might occur.

10. Open day for Junior Infant children will take place in the summer term prior to the September of entry to METNS and parents will be notified in writing of this date. If parents are unable to attend on this day, they are asked to inform METNS in writing.
11. In the case of enrolment of pupils from Senior Infants to Sixth Class, individual arrangements will be made with METNS for enrolment. Enrolment times and registration may vary depending on when vacancies arise.

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### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

METNS equally welcomes all children to the school. Parents of children with Special Needs apply for a place at METNS in exactly the same way as everyone else. Their child's name is added to our Pre-Enrolment List on receipt of the PEL Form. The same enrolment policy and procedures apply. Children with Special Needs are offered places in METNS on the same basis as applies to all other applicants.

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 original PEL Application Date.

Parents of children with special needs who have been offered a place in Junior Infants will be requested to meet with the Principal and provide any necessary material in order to ensure that METNS can put in place all necessary supports for the child. If, in the view of the Principal, the needs of the child cannot be met without extra support, she / he will so inform the Board of Management. The Board of Management having considered the views of the Principal may decide not to enrol the child in METNS unless and until such supports are in place. It is the responsibility of METNS, in consultation with the parents / guardians and other appropriate agencies, to provide such supports. A place offered to a child with special needs will be held for him / her and will not be offered to anyone else, unless, and until, the parents of such child withdraw their child's application, or the Board of Management determines and informs the parents in writing that it is not possible for METNS, having regard to its available resources, to provide the necessary supports to enable the child to be enrolled in METNS.

In the case of children with special needs seeking to enter METNS after junior infants, material to be provided will include reports from his / her current school. The offer of a place in METNS to such a child will be contingent on the availability of places in the appropriate class, the provision of all relevant documentation and the ability of METNS (in the view of the Board of Management, having considered the views of the Principal) to provide that child with the education she / he needs and deserves.

METNS has a policy for children with special needs and is available upon request.

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR ENROLLED PUPILS WHO LEAVE METNS TEMPORARILY

There are some circumstances in which enrolled pupils may leave METNS and retain their original PEL Application Date. These include:

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

In these circumstances, a child on the waiting list may fill the place vacated by the temporarily absent child. However, if the parents of the temporarily absent child request, METNS will return such child's name to the Pre-Enrolment List in accordance with their original PEL Application Date and such child will be offered a place in METNS, should one be available when he / she wishes to return.

Parents of such children will be asked to confirm in writing annually that they wish their children to remain on the Pre-Enrolment List. Failure to do this will result in the child's name

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being removed from the Pre-Enrolment List. Parents may of course re-apply and re-enter the Pre-Enrolment List based the new PEL Application Date.

### APPLICANTS WHO MAY CHOOSE NOT TO ACCEPT AN OFFER BUT MAY RETAIN THEIR ORIGINAL PEL APPLICATION DATE

The following categories of applicants may choose not to accept a place in METNS, should it be offered, yet retain their original PEL Application Date on the Pre-Enrolment List:

- (a) Children who have not reached the age of six by the 1<sup>st</sup> September of anticipated entry to school.
- (b) Children of families who are not living in the area.
- (c) 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.

### PEL FORM RECEIVED AFTER THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR ANTICIPATED ENTRY TO SCHOOL IN THE FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER

When a PEL Form is received by METNS after the enrolment process has started for anticipated entry to school in the following September, the same procedures will apply but not on the same time scale. When METNS sends an acknowledgement letter, a Confirmation letter and Confirmation Form will accompany it. The Confirmation Letter will specify the Confirmation Closing Date, as usual. On receipt of reply, the child's name will be added to the Waiting List in order of their PEL Application Date.

The parent will be informed within three weeks of the child's position on the Waiting List.

Procedures will continue from there as described in this document.

### APPEALS PROCESS

If a decision is communicated by METNS to a parent indicating that the school is unable to accept their child, that parent 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 may appeal the decision directly to the Board of Management. The Board of Management then considers the appeal and advises the parent of its decision. If the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome, the parent may then make an appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Information on the procedures for appeal is available from the Department of Education and Skills.

**PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP METNS INFORMED OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR CONTACT NUMBERS.**

**THIS APPLIES EVEN WHEN THERE IS A SIBLING ENROLLED AT THE SCHOOL.**