



# St. Louise de Marillac Primary School

## Enrolment Policy (Early Start)

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The Board of Management of St. Louise de Marillac Primary School formulates its enrolment policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998 and the “Revised Guidelines For Schools Participating in the Early Start Pre-School Pilot Project” (Policy Unit, March 2012) issued by the Early Years Education Unit. It trusts that, by doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management and / or the principal of the school will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

The school contact details are:

St. Louise de Marillac Primary School, Drumfinn Rd., Ballyfermot, Dublin 10.

*Ph:* 01-6234153 / 6265081

*Website:* <http://stlouises.scoilnet.ie>

*e-mail:* [admin@stlouises.scoilnet.ie](mailto:admin@stlouises.scoilnet.ie)

St. Louise’s is a Catholic primary school under the trusteeship of the Daughters of Charity and the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. The school enrolls boys and girls. The boys are in Early Start, Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class. The girls are in Early Start, Junior Infants to Sixth Class. The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science (DES). It operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Minister for Education and Science. We are designated as a DEIS (Delivering Equality In Schools) Band 1 school.

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

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Science (DES) regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and way of life in society.

### **EARLY START:**

The Early Start Pre-School project, which was launched in 1994, is in place in 40 selected schools in designated areas of disadvantage. The main objectives of the programme are “to expose young children to an educational programme, which will enhance their overall development, and to lay a foundation for successful educational attainment in future years.” (DES, October 2002).

St. Louise’s has been allocated only 30 pupil places in the Early Start project, 15 pupils in the morning session and 15 pupils in the afternoon session.

The times of the pre-school are:

Morning Session: 9.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.  
Afternoon Session: 12.00 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.

## **CRITERIA FOR THE ENROLMENT OF PUPILS IN EARLY START:**

### **Age Requirement**

1. As per guidelines from the Early Years Education Policy Unit, children **must** be aged more than 3 years two months and less than 4 years 7 months on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of September of the year in which they are enrolled. This age requirement is in line with the age requirement for children participating in the Free Pre-school (ECCE) Scheme.

### **Personal Public Service Number (PPSN)**

2. Children may either be enrolled in Early Start or in the Free Pre-School Year Scheme. Children are not eligible to be enrolled in both schemes at the same time. In order to ensure compliance with this, parents/guardians of children in Early Start must supply their children's PPSN's. (The PPSN's will be cross-referenced by the Department).

### **Disadvantage Requirement**

3. All of the children in Early Start must be from disadvantaged backgrounds. In the case where the number of applications exceeds the supply of places, the children from the most disadvantaged families will be given priority.

### **Toilet-Trained**

4. All of the children in Early Start should, generally speaking, be toilet-trained when beginning in Early Start. If, perhaps because of special needs or for other reasons, the child is delayed in toilet-training, parents should speak in confidence to the Principal and/or Chairperson.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES:**

1. Parents of a child who meet the above criteria, and who are seeking to enrol their child(ren) in Early Start (in September) are requested to return a completed Application Form (available in the school office) with an original Birth / Adoption Certificate to the school as early as possible, but no later than 31st December of the preceding year. In relation to an application for enrolment for a child with special needs, a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report should also be provided, if available. (See #5 below). The names of children for whom Enrolment Application forms **and** Birth/Adoption Certificates have been returned, will be placed on a list. No application can be considered without an accompanying birth certificate. Parents are asked to indicate on the application form if they have a preference for the morning, afternoon or either session.
2. Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender (except for second to sixth class with a single sex tradition), traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious/ political beliefs & values, family or social circumstances.
3. In the event of the number of children (who meet the age requirement and have provided a birth certificate to verify this; who are toilet-trained or who have made a case as to why he/she is not), seeking enrolment in Early Start exceeding the number of places available on 1<sup>st</sup> January, the following criteria, as outlined by the Department of Education and Science, will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:
  - a. "The children from the most disadvantaged families should be given priority." ("Revised Guidelines For Schools Participating in the Early Start Pre-School Pilot Project" : Early Years Education Policy Unit, March 2012).

The school has been directed by the DES to use the following indicators to determine levels of disadvantage:

- Pupils whose family live in a rented local authority house or flat or in non-permanent accommodation;
- Pupils whose family hold a medical card;
- Pupils whose parents are in receipt of unemployment benefit or assistance;
- Pupils whose mother did not take the Group or Intermediate Cert/Junior Cert examination at school;
- Pupils living in a lone-parent household.

Preference will be given to pupils who satisfy all or most of the criteria above. In addition, pupils with either a physical or mental disability will be given priority when places in Early Start are being allocated.

A selection committee may use the services of the Home/School/Community Liaison Co-ordinator, School Completion Programme Co-ordinator, local agencies, external agencies (Health, Social Welfare, etc.) and other relevant authorities to determine which of the applicants are most deserving of a place in Early Start.

If the selection committee decides that all socially/economically disadvantaged children who have met the age requirement have been accommodated, priority will then be given to:

- b. Brothers and sisters (including step-siblings, resident at the same address) of children already enrolled in St. Louise's Primary School – priority to the oldest
- c. Children who live within St. Matthew's parish – priority to oldest
- d. date of application, i.e. first come, first served

If all children from within the parish have been accommodated, applications from **outside the parish** will be decided on:

- e. brothers and sisters (including step-siblings, resident at the same address) of children already enrolled in St. Louise's Primary School – priority to the oldest
- f. date of application, i.e. first come, first served
- g. if date of application is the same, children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line in an OS map)

**N.B. It is important for all parents to note that having a child's name on a waiting list (even for years!) DOES NOT guarantee a place in Early Start.**

4. In the event of over-subscription to a particular session, e.g. morning session, for all of those who specified this preference, they will be offered (in order) a place in the alternative session and given right of refusal before the place is offered to an applicant further down the list..
5. Parents will receive notification in January/February informing them if they have been successful in obtaining a place in Early Start and, if not, if they are on a waiting list. There is a meeting for prospective parents (for September) held in May/June.
6. Children with special needs should provide the Board of Management with a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report, if available, with completed application form. Where such a report is not available, it is advisable that the child would be assessed immediately in order to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child. Following receipt of the report, the BoM will assess if and how the school can meet the needs specified in the report.

The Staff of St. Louise's Primary school has an agreed systematic cycle of review of policies whereby new policies are reviewed after one year and subsequently every three years. This policy was reviewed in January 2014.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

Signed

\_\_\_\_\_ *Sr Claire McKiernan* \_\_\_\_\_  
Sr. Claire Mc Kiernan D.C, Chairperson

Date: 28/01/2014

This policy will be reviewed in the academic year 2016-2017 unless the Board and/or Principal seek an earlier review for any reason.