

The Irish Society's Nursery Unit
3 Rugby Avenue
Coleraine
BT52 1JL

Controlled Nursery Unit
Admissions No: 52 (Part-time)
Session Times: Morning Session: 8.50am – 11:20am
Afternoon Session: 12:20pm – 2.50pm

Principal: Mr C A Murdock
Chair of Board of Governors: Mr S Wilson

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Respective Functions of the Board of Governors and the Principal in relation to admissions.

The Board of Governors will determine the Admissions Criteria. The criteria will be applied by the Principal on behalf of the Board of Governors.

Admissions Criteria

A timetable of pre-school admissions procedures setting out the dates by which an application is to be submitted is available at www.eani.org.uk/admissions under 'Pre-School Admissions'. During the admissions procedure when applying the criteria punctual applications will be considered before late applications are considered.

The application procedure opens on 07 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) and an application submitted by the closing date of 21 January 2026 at 12noon (GMT) will be treated as a punctual application. An application received after 12noon (GMT) on 21 January 2026 will be treated as a late application.

As the pre-school admissions procedure is in two stages the timetable also specifies the relevant dates at Stage 2 which will determine if an application is to be considered as punctual or late.

Admissions criteria to be used in the event of the school being oversubscribed. The criteria are listed in order of priority.

Children will be admitted according to the following statutory criteria:

1. Children from socially disadvantaged circumstances in their final pre-school year who were born:

- on or between 2 July 2022 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) and whose parents have not exercised their right to defer their child's entry to primary school; or,
- on or between 1 April 2022 and 1 July 2022 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
 - have not attended or are not currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged child; and,
 - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2027.

Note: Children from 'socially disadvantaged circumstances' means a child whose parent has an entitlement to (i) Income Support, or (ii) Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or (iii) Income related Employment and Support Allowance, or (iv) Universal Credit. When parents apply for places for their child on this basis they must provide Benefit Verification to confirm that they have an entitlement. The application procedure for Pre-School will outline how Benefit Verification can be submitted.

2. Children not from socially disadvantaged circumstances (as defined above) who are in their final pre-school year (as defined by Criterion 1).

Sub-Criteria

If there are more children satisfying the last criterion above, which can be applied, then selection for the remaining places will be on the application of the following sub-criteria in the order set down below:

Sub-criteria

In the event of oversubscription on the application of a statutory criterion the sub-criteria will be applied in the order set down.

- a. Children will be selected in accordance with the preference for The Irish Society's Nursery Unit named on the application form i.e., those whose form indicates a first preference will be selected before those whose form indicates a second or subsequent preference, second preferences will be selected before third or subsequent preferences etc.
- b. Children who have siblings attending The Irish Society's Primary School at the time of application.
- c. Children whose siblings have been offered a provisional place at The Irish Society's Primary School.
- d. Children who have had siblings attending The Irish Society's Primary School.
- e. Children who are the eldest or only child in their family at time of application to apply to a mainstream nursery unit. Children who are more than 7 years younger than their next eldest sibling will be included within this criterion. *
Governors will consider the following as verification – child benefit letter, letter from GP, letter from Clergy/Solicitor
- f. Children will be admitted on the basis of the initial letter of their legal surname as set out below:

Q K S X V D F U A B H M E P Mc J W R Y N Mac O C G T I L Z

In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter, the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames, the alphabetical order of the initial of the forenames, as stated on the birth certificate, will be used.

This order was determined by a randomised selection of letters (selection with a clear audit trail). In the event of surnames beginning with the same initial letter the subsequent letters of the surname will be used in alphabetical order. In the event of two identical surnames the alphabetical order of the initials of the forenames will be used, if necessary, the subsequent letters of the forenames.

It is the responsibility of parents to make all relevant information available to governors at the time of application. It should be noted that parents may be required to produce information pertinent to the verification of the above criteria.

When considering which children should be selected for admission, the Board of Governors will only consider information which is detailed on the application form. Parents should therefore ensure that all information pertaining to their child and relevant to the school's admissions criteria is stated on the application form.

Non-statutory criteria

Note: Applications falling under Criterion 3 are processed only during Stage 2 of the admissions process, after final pre-school year (Statutory 1 and 2) applications.

3. Children who were born:

- on or between 1 April 2022 - 1 July 2022 (inclusive), or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and,
 - and have attended or are currently attending a funded pre-school setting under the Pre-School Education Programme as a target aged (not penultimate aged) child; and,
 - that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1, or
- on or between 2 July 2023 and 1 July 2024 (inclusive); or,
- on or between 1 April 2023 and 1 July 2023 (inclusive) or were due to be born on or between those dates but were born earlier; and that child's parent has completed a request to defer their child starting P1 until September 2028.

Tie Breaker – Non-Statutory Criterion 3

Children within Criterion 3 will be selected in Chronological Order of Age – eldest child first. In the event of two or more children having the same DOB the above random selection of letters will be used.

Duty to Verify

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require such supplementary evidence as it may determine to support or verify information on any application form. If the requested evidence is not provided to the Board of Governors by the deadline given, this will result in the withdrawal of an offer of a place. Similarly, if information is supplied which appears to be false or misleading in any material way, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Waiting List Policy

Should a vacancy arise after placement letters have been issued, all applications for admission to the Nursery Unit that were initially refused, new applications, late applications and applications where new information has been provided will be treated equally and the published criteria applied. This waiting list will be in place until the end of the academic year. The school will contact parents in writing if a child gains a place in the school by this method. A child's name will be automatically added to the list. Parents should contact the school if they wish for their child to be removed from the list.

Applications and Admissions to Pre-School		
Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2025/2026*	75	59

***The Total Admissions for year 2025/2026 includes all pre-school children admitted to the pre-school including those who have a statement of special educational needs and/or may be attending SPiMS.**

(SPiMS = Specialist Provision in Mainstream School)