

SCOIL BHRIDE

OLDTOWN, NAAS, CO. KILDARE

ENROLMENT POLICY 2017/2018

Scoil Bhríde is a coeducational national school, under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin (the "**Patron**").

This enrolment policy for Scoil Bhríde has been devised in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 (as amended), the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Equal Status legislation, directives of the Patron and following consultation with the school community.

Scoil Bhríde caters for classes from junior infants to sixth class.

Scoil Bhríde also has 3 classes for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (**ASD Classes**).

Mission Statement

Scoil Bhríde is a Roman Catholic School which aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It provides Religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.

The school embraces the philosophy of inclusiveness and endeavours to reflect that philosophy in the enrolment of pupils with a disability or other special educational needs. The school also embraces the principle of equality of access and participation in the school. Scoil Bhríde welcomes children from all faith backgrounds.

Scoil Bhríde endeavours to foster respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life that exist in our community.

Within the context and parameters of the relevant legislation outlined above, Department of Education and Skills ("**DES**") regulations, the rights of the Patron and the funding and resources available, Scoil Bhríde will support and foster those aforementioned principles and philosophies.

While recognising the right of Parents/Guardians ("**Parents**") to enrol their child in a school of their choice, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde ("**BoM**") reserves the right to determine maximum school and class size, in order to ensure the safety and educational needs of pupils.

School Curriculum

The school curriculum is as prescribed by the DES which may be amended from time to time.

Categories of enrolment

This policy sets out the criteria used to determine applications for enrolment in the following categories:

1. Applications for enrolment of children into junior infants in September 2017
2. Applications for enrolment children into the ASD Classes
3. All other applications for enrolment

This policy sets out the priority order, which will apply, where the number of applications for enrolment exceeds the number of available places. In doing so, the BoM has regard to available resources; directions from the Patron; circulars from the DES; school and class sizes etc.

The following is a list of factors taken into consideration by the BoM in devising its enrolment policy:

- i. Overall school capacity: The DES considers Scoil Bhríde to be a co-educational vertical school with twenty-four mainstream classes and three classes for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- ii. Space: Availability of space in classrooms and play areas.
- iii. Health and Safety requirements. Average class sizes will not exceed a pupil teacher ratio of **twenty-seven to one**. In addition, enrolment is confined to a total of three junior infant classes i.e. the total junior infant intake will not exceed **eighty-one**.
- iv. Availability of grants and resources: The school depends on grants and resources from the DES and operates in accordance with regulations and circular letters issued from time to time by the DES.
- v. Educational needs: The educational needs of existing pupils will be taken into account.
- vi. Special educational/behavioural needs: The presence of pupils with special educational and/or behavioural needs will be taken into account.
- vii. DES/Patron requirements from time to time

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR JUNIOR INFANTS

Parents who wish to make an application for enrolment of their child into junior infants must do so by post or by hand during the period from **Thursday November 10th. to Friday December 2nd**. The strict deadline for receipt of fully completed enrolment applications is 3pm on Friday **December 2nd**. ('**The closing date**'). The BoM is not obliged to consider applications received before or after the dates outlined above.

It should be noted that the submission of an application form(s) does not confer a right to enrolment.

The following conditions must be met for application for enrolment into junior infants in September 2017:

- The official application form must be used. This is available for download from the school's website at www.scoilbhridenaas.com or in hard copy from the school.
- A fully completed enrolment application form, duly signed and dated, must be returned during the dates specified and in any case not later than the closing date.
- An applicant must have reached his/her fourth birthday before the 1st September 2017

- The following documentation must accompany a fully completed, signed & dated application form, which must be submitted no later than the closing date in order for the application to be considered a “**complete application**”:
 - i. Copy of the applicant’s birth certificate
 - ii. Proof of address in the form of a utility bill or bank statement in the name of one of the Parents, which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date. It is essential that a copy of such a utility bill be enclosed with the application form as if not, even if the applicant is living within the parish, the application will not receive any priority on the “living within the parish of Naas” ground.
- Applicants in respect of whom a complete application has been made, who are not successful in securing a place in junior infants, will be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will expire at 5 pm on the **30th.** of September 2017.
- The BoM is not obliged to place applications, which are late on a waiting list. In the event that the BoM considers late applications, such applications will be placed last on the waiting list in the order of date received. For the avoidance of doubt, complete applications that are received on time will receive priority over late applications. Incomplete applications cannot be considered until such time as all required information is received. If such information is received after the closing date, the application will be treated as a late application.
- Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void *ab initio*. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, the place being reallocated and the applicant being placed last on the waiting list. Where the applicant was placed on a waiting list, it will result in the applicant being placed last on the waiting list.
- Written notification of the decision regarding the application for enrolment will be issued to Parents within 21 calendar days of the closing date.
- Parents of applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school in writing of the acceptance of the place, by completing and returning an enrolment acceptance form within seven calendar days from the date of offer. Failure to do so will result in the place being forfeited and the place being reallocated.

If the application for enrolment is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined above, the child shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.

CRITERIA USED TO PRIORITISE APPLICANTS FOR ENROLMENT INTO JUNIOR INFANTS IN SEPTEMBER 2017

The criteria for enrolment, in priority order 1 – 4 below, are used to determine enrolment, where the number of applications received outnumbers the number of places available in junior infants.

In the event that the number of applicants, in any one of the categories, outnumbers the places available, applicants’ ages will determine the outcome i.e. places will be offered beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in the oversubscribed category and proceeding in descending order of age from oldest to youngest, until all available places have been filled.

It is to be noted that reference to siblings is to be taken as including reference to step siblings.

Criteria

1. Siblings of pupils already enrolled in the school.
2. Children of staff currently working in the school.
3. Children living within the parish of Naas
4. All other applicants.

ENROLMENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ENROLMENT INTO ANY CLASS OTHER THAN FOR ENROLMENT INTO JUNIOR INFANTS IN SEPTEMBER 2017 OR THE ASD CLASSES.

In the case of applications for enrolment in the 2017/2018 school year other than for enrolment into Junior Infants in September 2017 or the ASD Classes, the following criteria apply:

Criteria

(i) That a place exists in an age appropriate class. The availability of a place, in a class will be determined in the overall context taking all relevant circumstances into account, including, but not limited to the following,

- Overall number of pupils which the school can accommodate at the time the application is made
- Needs of the existing pupils
- Presence of pupils with special educational needs.
- Physical space
- Current optimum arrangements for teaching and learning purposes are maintained for existing pupils
- Maximum class size will not exceed **29:1**

(ii) In addition, the capacity of Scoil Bhríde will not exceed the level prescribed by the DES and/or the Patron i.e. a school with 24 mainstream classes.

(iii) Other than as provided for above, no application can be made to enrol or transfer a pupil into junior infants from another school prior to 1 October 2017. In addition, such an application can be only be made after **30th** September 2017. Such an application will only be considered where a vacancy exists, the applicant was already enrolled in another primary school, s/he is/was in attendance at that primary school for not less than 20 school days, s/he was 4 years of age before 1 September 2017 and the other requirements of this enrolment policy have been fulfilled.

The following application procedure applies:

- The official application form must be fully completed. This is available for download from the school's website at **www.scoilbhridenaas.com** and/or in hard copy on request from the school and must be dated and signed by the Parents.
- All requested documentation must be furnished i.e. a copy of the applicant's birth certificate, relevant reports etc.
- Applications which are incomplete, not signed, not dated and/or do not include the required documentation will not be considered. A place will not be offered and/or the applicant will not be placed on a waiting list. The Parents will be notified of this.
- A separate form must be completed for each child, if applicable.
- Where the number of applications outnumber the available places, any available places arising will be allocated on a "first come first served basis," based on the date

the fully completed application form was received provided in the first instance that the applicant meets all of the enrolment requirements.

- Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void *ab-initio* and where a place has been offered will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, the place being reallocated and the applicant being placed last on the waiting list. In the case of placement on a waiting list, the applicant will be placed last on the list.
- Written notification of the decision regarding the application will be issued to Parents within 21 days of receipt of the fully completed, signed and dated application form.
- Parents of applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school in writing of the acceptance of the place, by completing and returning to the school an enrolment acceptance form within seven working days. Failure to do so will result in the place being forfeited and reallocated.
- If the application for enrolment is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined above, the pupil shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.
- Applicants in respect of whom a fully completed application form and in respect of whom all relevant documentation has been submitted, who are not successful in securing a place will be placed on a waiting list. This place on the waiting list expires within one year of the date of receipt of the fully completed application form.

ENROLMENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE ASD CLASSES

The ASD Classes have a maximum capacity of eighteen pupils, six in each class. The BoM is committed to developing an educational setting which is focused on the needs of the pupils and enables learning to take place in a safe environment, in which pupils with ASD learn a range of skills that will facilitate their making a gradual transition into mainstream classes with their own age cohort where appropriate. The school supports a vision for the pupils taking steps when appropriate into a mainstream setting.

Parental involvement in the pupils' learning is encouraged and valued. It ensures consistency between the pupils' various learning environments.

The teaching methodologies employed in the ASD Classes will be those that are deemed most appropriate to the individual pupil's learning needs.

Criteria for Admission to the ASD Classes:

The total number of places is eighteen. If oversubscribed, places will be allocated on a "first come first served basis", provided in the first instance that the applicant meets all of the following criteria:

- An applicant will not be enrolled in an ASD class unless s/he is four years of age on or before the 1st September of the academic year for which the application is made.
- Students enrolled in the ASD classes who start at junior infant level may have a school placement for eight school years. Students enrolled in the ASD classes at other levels may have a school placement until the end of the school year in which they reach their thirteenth birthday.
- A fully completed, signed and dated application form for enrolment has been submitted to the school by the Parents and a vacancy exists in the classes.
- The applicant must have a primary diagnosis of a qualifying autism spectrum disorder and the applicant must submit a professional report which

- Confirms a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM IV/V or ICD 10) **and**
- Contains a recommendation to attend an ASD class **attached to a mainstream school**. Such a recommendation cannot be dated more than two years prior to the proposed admission date **and**
- Confirms that the diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder was made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.
- A letter of acceptance from the clinical support service(s) associated with the pupil's learning challenges must be submitted with the application form, as the school has no responsibility for the provision of such professional services to pupils attending the ASD Classes.
- If the application form is not fully completed, and/or all the required reports have not been furnished, the application will be deemed incomplete. The Parents will be notified that the application will not be considered, nor a waiting list number allocated, until a complete application is submitted.
- When a complete application is submitted, the date and time of receipt are noted on the application form and an acknowledgement is sent indicating that the application has been allocated a waiting list number on a 'first come first served' basis.
- The Parents and the applicant are invited to a meeting with the ASD Classes Coordinator and are encouraged to bring reports from the applicant's present educational setting to this meeting.
- The application will be assessed by the ASD Enrolment Advisory board, which may advise the BoM on the application.
- In the event that the number of applicants seeking enrolment into the ASD Classes exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list in order of date of the school receiving a fully completed eligible application.
- If offered a place, the Parents must confirm in writing within 7 calendar days that the place is being accepted. If this confirmation is not received within that time, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be reallocated.
- If the applicant fulfils all of the enrolment criteria but is not offered a place due to lack of an available place, the Parents may opt to place the pupil's name on a waiting list. The waiting list will operate on a "first come first served basis" in respect of those parents/guardians who opt to place the applicant's name on the waiting list.
- The waiting list will be maintained for the duration of the academic year only, for which the application was initially made.

ASD Class Enrolment Advisory Board

- The Advisory Board consists of the school Principal, Deputy Principal and a teacher from the ASD Classes. The Advisory Board will advise the BoM on the applications for places in the ASD Classes.
- Places are allocated in an ASD class on condition that the appropriate resources are provided and continue to be provided, by the National Council for Special Education ('**NCSE**') and the DES.

Transition from the ASD Class into Mainstream

Arrangements for pupils' inclusion in the mainstream will be made according to their level of need and attainments. School personnel will decide when inclusion in a mainstream setting is appropriate. This will be the class that is best suited to meet the pupil's needs and the one that is chronologically most appropriate.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Pupils with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DES and/or National Council for Special Education (NCSE). In the event that an applicant has special educational needs, a copy of the applicant's medical/psychological reports and/or a professional assessment of the applicant's needs must be submitted, so that an application for resources can be made.

REFUSAL TO ENROL

Scoil Bhríde reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant who does not comply with the terms of this enrolment policy.

In exceptional circumstances Scoil Bhríde reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant where: -

1. The applicant has special needs such that, even with additional resources being made available from the DES/NCSE, Scoil Bhríde cannot meet such needs and/or provide the applicant with an appropriate education.
2. The applicant poses unacceptable risk(s) to themselves, other pupils, staff and/or school property.

Scoil Bhríde will refuse to enrol an applicant who is seeking to be enrolled in the school where that applicant was previously a pupil in Scoil Bhríde and was either expelled from the school and/or transferred from the school to another school while on suspension and/or undergoing a process under the school's Code of Behaviour.

Scoil Bhríde will refuse to enrol a child who is transferring from another school if that child has either been expelled from or is currently suspended from that school and is undergoing a process under that school's code of behaviour. Reports detailing the child's behaviour record from the school from which the pupil is transferring is a requirement prior to the consideration of the application.

Parents of applicants refused enrolment will be advised of their right to appeal the BoM's decision as outlined below.

APPEAL PROCEDURE AGAINST REFUSAL TO ENROL

Parents who are unhappy with an enrolment decision may appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the DES on the official *Section 29 Appeal Application Form*, which can be downloaded from www.education.ie. This appeal must be submitted to the DES within 42 calendar days of receipt of the decision of the BoM to refuse enrolment.

RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

This Policy was ratified by the BOM on **October 19th**. and approved by the Patron on **October 25th. 2016.**

This Enrolment Policy will be regularly reviewed by the BoM eg in the event of change to the pupil teacher ratio and/or legislative/DES/Patron/other requirements etc.

Chairperson of the Board of Management