



SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

DIOCESE OF KILDARE & LEIGHLIN

NAME OF SCHOOL: SCOIL MHUIRE NATIONAL SCHOOL

ADDRESS: BALLYROAN ROAD, ABBEYLEIX, CO LAOIS.

ROLL NUMBER: 19750B

CHARITY NUMBER 20126391

Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin

Patron Approval

15/9/2020

PATRON: Most Reverend Denis Nulty, Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin

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 approved by the school patron on **15 September 2020**. 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 Scoil Mhuire's 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 THE SCHOOL

Scoil Mhuire is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos. The Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin is the Patron of this school.

'Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive. Therefore, Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices

of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all’.

‘The Catholic Preschool & Primary Religious Education Curriculum p15’

Catholic Ethos’ in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and 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 Scoil Mhuire 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.

SCOIL MHUIRE ABBEYLEIX, ETHOS STATEMENT/VISION STATEMENT

Scoil Mhuire is a Catholic school that aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of each pupil: Intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual including a loving relationship with God and with other people. Scoil Mhuire models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Daily prayer, morning, midday and evening form part of each school day. This school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith. The school works in co-operation with the local priests and parish in all matters and will, as part of this co-operation, engage in the preparation of the pupils for the sacraments.

Scoil Mhuire is a community where each individual pupil is made to feel that he/she belongs to a community that

- (a) Promotes the development of self-discipline
- (b) Encourages each pupil to recognise his/her potential and
- (c) Helps him/her to acquire a good self-image.

We recognise the role of teachers, parents, and clergy as partners in this process, all aiming to achieve what is best for each individual child/pupil.

While the school acknowledges the importance of academic excellence it strives to contribute to all aspects of each pupil's development – spiritual, emotional, social, cultural, creative and moral.

The school takes account of the changing social and economic conditions of our country and nurtures in each pupil those attitudes and skills that enable him/her to cope with these changes. It endeavours to foster attitudes and skills that will enable a positive use of leisure time both now and in later life. It encourages an attitude of responsibility and care for our planet as well as an attitude of practical concern for the local and school environment.

Scoil Mhuire recognises that all children are equal in the sight of God. We will have special regard for the poor and less privileged in our school community. The school will grant every possible assistance to those pupils who are materially poor and we will strive to diminish any consequent disadvantage to such pupils. The school will also be aware of the needs of specific groups within the school such as children with Special Educational Needs, New Irish Pupils (Immigrants) and Ethnic Minorities and will endeavour to meet these needs in a relevant and appropriate manner. The school will endeavour to show special consideration to those pupils who are emotionally deprived through the loss of a parent or through family breakdown.

The purpose of the education as delivered/provided in our school is to nurture the child in all dimensions of his/her life:

- Religious
- Spiritual
- Moral
- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Imaginative
- Aesthetic
- Social
- Physical
- Technological

We feel that the best way to achieve these goals is to provide a wide balanced curriculum which reflects the educational, social and economic aspirations of Irish society. Scoil Mhuire will work with all the partners in Education to achieve these goals – Parents, pupils and the wider community/parish.

Scoil Mhuire takes account of the changing social and economic conditions present in society and recognises that the relationship between education and society is dynamic and interactive. To this end the curriculum provided in Scoil Mhuire will endeavour to equip each child with those attitudes and skills which enable them to cope adequately in society. Scoil Mhuire will place due emphasis on cultivating skills in both information and communication technologies in order to enhance learning both now and in the future.

3. ADMISSION STATEMENT

Scoil Mhuire 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,
- (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.

All denominational schools

Scoil Mhuire 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Schools with special education class(es)

Scoil Mhuire is a school which has established three classes with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CATERED FOR IN THE SCHOOL/SPECIAL CLASS

(a) In the case of a mainstream school with a SEN class attached

Scoil Mhuire with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three classes to provide an education exclusively for students with ASD.

In the case of the ASD class, a diagnosis that meets D.S.M IV & V or I.C.D.10 criteria by a clinical psychiatrist/ multidisciplinary team is required. In addition to these, a recommendation that the student be placed within an ASD class respectively attached to a mainstream school is also required.

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
- c) in the case of the ASD classes, admission will depend on (i) availability of places (ii) child meeting the criteria (see Admission Policy)

All denominational schools

Scoil Mhuire Abbeyleix is a (Roman Catholic denomination) and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

School with special education class(es)

The special class attached to Scoil Mhuire, provides an education exclusively for students with ASD 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:

- (a) Brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled – priority to oldest.
- (b) Children living within the parish (i.e. The Roman Catholic Parish of Abbeyleix – priority to oldest.
- (c) Children of current school staff – priority to oldest.
- (d) Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an OS map) if the child is normally resident outside the parish/agreed catchment area.

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:

- a. The place will be allocated to the applicant as drawn by lot in public in the presence of the Chairperson of the BOM, the School Principal and a member of the Garda Síochána.

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 student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (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) a special school or
 - (b) 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 and/or
- (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, in the case of the school inclusion of a selection criteria based on siblings of a student attending the school as outlined in Section 6 above
- (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.

8 DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Mhuire 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.

9 NOTIFYING APPLICANTS OF DECISIONS

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 Scoil Mhuire 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 Scoil Mhuire Abbeylax 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—

- (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 Scoil Mhuire Abbeyleix 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 Scoil Mhuire Abbeyleix 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.

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:

1. Pupils that have moved on a permanent basis to reside in the Catholic parish of Abbeyleix will be admitted as soon as possible on application subject to places being available in the school.

2. Applications from all other mainstream pupils will be considered under the normal provisions of the Admissions Policy and if admitted the pupil will be offered admittance at the commencement of the next school term unless in case of emergency as made known to the school Principal and BOM .

16 DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON-CHARGING OF FEES

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Scoil Mhuire Abbeyleix 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.

18 REVIEWS/APPEALS

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the 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.

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** 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** 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** 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** 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.

This Admission Policy was approved by the Patron; Bishop Denis Nulty on 15/9/2020



This Admission Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire on

___/___/___.

(Chairperson)

(Principal)