

Scoil Bhríde, Kilbride, Clonee, County Meath

Enrolment Policy for School Year 2019/2020

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

Equality of access in accordance with the enrolment policy is the core value that determines enrolment of pupils in Scoil Bhríde.

Scoil Bhríde

Scoil Bhríde is a Roman Catholic co-educational school under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath (**'the Patron'**), which serves the Roman Catholic Parish of Dunboyne and Kilbride. It aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person - intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and others. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school provides religious education for Roman Catholic pupils in accordance with the practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of Roman Catholic pupils in the Roman Catholic Faith.

The school currently has twenty three teachers. This includes the Principal Teacher, 14 mainstream class teachers, six learning support/resource teachers and two special class teachers. The ancillary staff includes a secretary, caretaker and a number of special needs assistants.

Scoil Bhríde has two classes in a specialised unit known as "*Coiscéimeanna*." This unit is for children on the autistic spectrum, within the mild range of learning disability and accommodates a maximum of twelve pupils in two classes. The particular process for enrolment in this unit is set out below.

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 of all pupils and to provide for the educational needs of existing pupils.

This policy sets out the criteria used to determine enrolment into Junior Infants; enrolment into other classes and enrolment into the ASD Unit. It 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 Department of Education & Skills (**'DES'**); Pupil Teacher Ratio (**'PTR'**), school and class sizes etc.

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

- Overall school capacity: The school has accommodation for 12 mainstream classrooms and an Autism Unit. The Patron has determined and directed the BoM that no additional accommodation will be provided in Scoil Bhríde. Consequently, the maximum number of pupils that may be enrolled is capped at 338 pupils i.e. 326 pupils in mainstream classes and 12 pupils in the ASD Unit.

- Availability of space in classrooms, play areas and overall site size
- Health and Safety requirements, including school site, space and traffic restrictions
- 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
- Educational needs of existing pupils
- The presence and/or integration of pupils with special educational and/or behavioural needs
- The maximum number that may be enrolled in Junior Infants will not exceed 35 pupils.

The arrangement of pupils on an annual basis into classes and the numbers in each class setting, for teaching and learning purposes, remains the prerogative of the Principal Teacher, subject to BoM approval.

ENROLMENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR JUNIOR INFANTS

Those who wish to make an application for enrolment into Junior Infants must do so **by post or by hand**, to the school office, during enrolment week i.e. between 9.00 am on the 14th January and 3 pm on Friday 18th of January, 2019 ('**Enrolment Week**'). The school will not accept applications in advance of 9.00 a.m. on the 14th January and the strict deadline for receipt of fully completed enrolment applications is 3 pm on Friday 18th January ('**The closing date**'). The BoM is not obliged to consider applications received before enrolment week and/or after the closing date.

Announcement of enrolment week will be published on the school's website, in the Dunboyne/Kilbride Parish newsletter and notified by text message to the Parents of existing pupils in the school.

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:

- A child must have reached his/her fourth birthday on or before the 1st April preceding the September in respect of which the application for enrolment into Junior Infants is made.
- A fully completed enrolment application form, duly signed and dated, must be returned during enrolment week and in any case not later than the closing date. Such an application strictly relates to enrolment for the following September.
- The official application form must be used. This is available for download from the school's website at www.scoilbhridens.ie and/or in hard copy on request, from the school.
- A separate form must be used in respect of each child's application.
- 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 in the name of one of the Parents, which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date.

Complete applications only will be considered. The BoM is not obliged to consider late and/or incomplete applications.

- The BoM is not obliged to place applications, which are late and/or incomplete, on a waiting list.

- 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 and the place being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from 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, by completing and returning an enrolment acceptance form, within seven calendar days. 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 pupil shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.

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 5pm on the 30th September of the year in respect of which the application for enrolment has been made.

Criteria used to prioritise applicants for Junior Infants

The criteria 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.

If an applicant falls into a number of categories, s/he will be placed in the category which affords her/him the highest priority.

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

Criteria

1. Siblings of pupils currently enrolled in the school.
2. All applicants currently living within the Roman Catholic parish boundary of Dunboyne/Kilbride
3. Children of staff currently employed in the school
4. All other applicants.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ENROLMENT INTO A MAINSTREAM CLASS, DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020 (INCLUDING APPLICATION FOR JUNIOR INFANTS AFTER THE 1ST OCTOBER 2019)

The following criteria apply when an application for enrolment into any mainstream class (including Junior Infants after the 1st October) during the academic year is under consideration:

- i. That optimum arrangements of existing pupils for teaching and learning purposes are maintained

- ii. That a place exists in the relevant class/es, taking all relevant circumstances into account, eg needs of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, integration of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, cap on class sizes as provided for in this policy, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations etc.
- iii. Scoil Bhríde is limited to its current accommodation of 12 mainstream classrooms. The Patron has determined and directed the BoM that no additional accommodation will be provided in Scoil Bhríde. Consequently, the maximum number of pupils that may be enrolled is capped at 326 pupils in the mainstream classes.
- iv. As and from the 1st September 2018, an application to enrol into a mainstream class, will not be accepted where the existing class, in respect of which the application is made, has 26 or more pupils.
- v. As and from the 1st September 2018, where a pupil leaves a mainstream class, in which the number of pupils already exceeds 26, an application to enrol into that class will not be accepted where this would result in the number of pupils remaining equal to or at any number in excess of 26. No pupils will be accepted into Junior Infants prior to October 1st. An application for enrolment into Junior Infants after October 1st and for the remainder of the academic year, will be considered only where a vacancy exists, the applicant was already enrolled in another primary school and is/was in attendance at that primary school for not less than 20 school days.

Pupils will be enrolled in age appropriate class/es once the following criteria have been met:

- The official application form, which is available for download from the school's website at www.scoilbhidens.ie and/or in hard copy on request from the school, must be fully completed, dated and signed by the Parents
- All requested documentation must be furnished i.e. a copy of the applicant's birth certificate
- A separate form must be completed for each child
- The BoM is not obliged to consider incomplete applications
- Failure to submit a birth certificate will mean that the application is incomplete.
- The availability of a place, in a specific class, will be determined in the context of the overall number of pupils which the school can accommodate at the time the application is made and in addition taking into consideration other relevant circumstances eg needs of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, integration of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, cap on class sizes as provided for in this policy, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations etc.
- 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 and it being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list
- Written notification of the decision regarding the application will be issued to Parents within 21 calendar 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 by completing and returning an enrolment acceptance form within seven calendar days. 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 pupil shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.

Applicants who are not successful in securing a place will be placed on a waiting list in date order of receipt of completed application. A place on the waiting list expires at the end of the academic year for which the application was made.

The BoM is not obliged to consider applications which are incomplete and/or not signed and /or not dated and/or do not include the required documentation.

Where the number of applications received outnumbers 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.

ENROLMENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE ASD UNIT

Coiscéimeanna ('the Unit') has a maximum capacity of twelve pupils in two classes. In setting up the Unit, 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. The name '*Coiscéimeanna*', meaning footsteps, was chosen to support a vision for the pupils taking small 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 Unit will be those that are deemed most appropriate by the school, to the individual pupil's learning needs.

Criteria for Admission to the Unit:

The total number of places in the Unit is twelve. If it is 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 the Unit unless s/he is four years of age on or before the 1st September of the academic year for which the application is made
- No student can be older than thirteen years of age during his/her last year in the Unit
- 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 Unit
- 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.
- If the applicant with autism, presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild range. This diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure and the report

confirming this must be submitted with the application form. This diagnosis cannot be dated more than two years prior to the proposed admission date

- 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 Unit
- 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 Unit 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, who will advise the BoM on the application
- The BoM will decide on the acceptance or otherwise of the application
- In the event that the number of applicants seeking enrolment into the Unit 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 the "first come first served basis" in respect of those parents/guardians who opt to place the student'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.

Placement and Continuing Placement of a Pupil in the Unit

- Pupils will be "phased in" gradually to the Unit through a mutually agreed process between the school and the Parents
- The individual needs of each pupil are constantly reviewed to ensure that the Unit is the appropriate setting to meet the pupil's needs. A review of each pupil's progress and his/her Individual Education Profile will be carried out in consultation with Parents and other professionals where necessary
- The school reserves the right to review the pupil's progress at the end of each academic year to determine whether the Unit continues to be an appropriate placement for him/her.

ASD Class Enrolment Advisory Board

- The Advisory Board consists of the school Principal, a member of the BoM and a teacher from the Unit. The Advisory Board will advise the BoM on the applications for places in the Unit
- The decision as to the placement of an applicant in the Unit lies with the BoM

- Places are allocated in the Unit 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 Unit into Mainstream

Arrangements for pupils' integration into the mainstream will be made according to their level of need and attainments. School personnel will decide when inclusion/integration into a mainstream setting is appropriate. This may be at an age range above or below the pupil's age, but will be the class that is best suited to meet the pupil's needs and the one that is chronologically most appropriate.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Pupils with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DES and/or NCSE. In the event that the applicant has special educational needs, a copy of the student's medical/psychological reports and/or a professional assessment of the pupil's needs must be submitted, so that provision can be made for that pupil's welfare and educational progress.

REFUSAL TO ENROL i.e. JUNIOR INFANTS; A MAINSTREAM CLASS; ASD UNIT

- 1) 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 Scoil Bhríde and/or transferred from it/enrolled in another school while on suspension and/or undergoing a process under Scoil Bhríde's Code of Behaviour.
- 2) Scoil Bhríde will refuse to enrol an applicant who is seeking to be enrolled in the school where that applicant is transferring from/is enrolled in/was enrolled in another school if that applicant has either been expelled from or is currently suspended from that school and/or is/was undergoing a process under that school's code of behaviour. Reports detailing the applicant's behaviour record from the school from which the applicant is proposing to transfer/the last school which the applicant was enrolled in, is a requirement prior to the consideration of the application.
- 3) The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant who does not comply with the terms of this enrolment policy.
- 4) In exceptional circumstances the school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant where:-
 - i. The applicant has special needs such that, even with additional resources being made available from the DES/NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the applicant with an appropriate education.
 - ii. The applicant poses unacceptable risk(s) to other pupils, staff and/or school property.

Parents of pupils refused under 1 – 4 above 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 days of receipt of the decision of the BoM to refuse enrolment.

RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

This Policy was ratified by the BoM on December 5th 2018 and approved by the Patron on 6th December 2018.

This Enrolment Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Management eg in the light of change to the Pupil Teacher Ratio ('PTR'), Patron, legislative or other requirements.



Chairperson of the Board of Management