

# **Scoil Bhríde, Kilbride, Clonee, County Meath**

## **Amended Enrolment Policy for Remainder of School Year 2017/2018**

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.

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.

The school currently has twenty two teachers. This includes the Principal Teacher, 13 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.

In devising this policy, the BoM has regard to available resources, directions from the Patron; Circulars from the Department of Education & Skills (**'DES'**); school and class sizes etc.

The following is a list of factors taken into consideration by the BoM in amending 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.
- Availability of space in classrooms and play areas
- 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 of pupils with special educational and/or behavioural needs.

Pursuant to direction of the Patron dated 01/12/2017, no applications for enrolment into a mainstream class, received on or after 01/12/2017, will be processed for the remainder of 2017 - 2018 school year.

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 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 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 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.

### **REFUSAL TO ENROL**

Pursuant to direction of the Patron dated 01/12/2017, no applications for enrolment into a mainstream class, received on or after 01/12/2017, will be processed for the 2017 - 2018 school year.

1. The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any applicant who does not comply with the terms of this enrolment policy.

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

2. 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.
3. The applicant poses unacceptable risk(s) to other pupils, staff and/or school property.

Parents of pupils refused under 1 – 3 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](http://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 7th December 2017 and approved by the Patron on 7th December 2017.

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



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**Chairperson of the Board of Management**