

Admission Policy of Scoil Bhríde



Clara Co Offaly

Roll No: 13118U

School Patron: Rev Tom Deenihan

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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 and ratified by the Board of Management 08/10/2024. 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 Bhríde'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 www.sbclara.com and will be made available by email or in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of Scoil Bhríde

Scoil Bhríde Clara is a Catholic all girls primary School with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Rev Tom Deenihan the Bishop of Meath.

“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:

- (a) The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) A living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith and which 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 Bhríde 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 Bhríde provides education exclusively for girls and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Scoil Bhríde Mission statement states that the uniqueness of each student is nurtured and developed, enabling the student to lead a full life and to realise her potential as an individual.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Bhríde will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- (a) Scoil Bhríde is an all-girls school and therefore does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to this school
- (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.

Scoil Bhríde, will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the Council.

Scoil Bhríde, will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

All denominational schools

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

Schools with special education classes

Scoil Bhríde is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of ASD who also have a written professional recommendation for a place in a mainstream setting.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 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

5. 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:

Selection criteria for Junior Infants and Mainstream Classes

1. Sisters of children currently enrolled in the school
2. Sisters of boys who are currently attending Scoil Phroinsias BNS
3. Girls of the parish residing inside the boundaries of the parish of Clara
4. All other applicants in order of distance from the school.

Selection criteria for Sunrise Classes

1. Applicants currently enrolled in mainstream class in Scoil Bhríde with a diagnosis of ASD who have a written professional recommendation for a place in an autism class in a mainstream setting.
2. Sisters of children currently enrolled in the school
3. Girls of the parish residing inside the boundaries of the parish of Clara
4. All other applicants in order of distance from the school.

As outlined in Circular 0039/2025, updated eligibility criteria now require that **all applicants to special classes or special schools must have an eligibility letter from the NCSE** confirming that the child is known to the NCSE.

Key Deadline: Parents/guardians must notify the NCSE by **October 1st, 2025** if their child requires a special class or special school place for the 2026/2027 school year. Notification can be submitted via the NCSE Parent Notify System available on the <https://ncse.ie/> website.

Upon review, the NCSE will provide a letter confirming the child's eligibility, which parents should include in their enrolment applications. **Eligibility letters dated 2025/2026 must be updated.** A short video guide is available to support parents in submitting the notification form online.

Categories of Additional ("Special") Educational Needs Catered For

Scoil Bhríde, Clara, with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established two special classes to provide an education exclusively for autistic students / students with autism.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autistic students / students with autism when the following documentation is provided in support of the application:

- A professional report outlining a diagnosis of special educational needs (e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11; psychologist, psychiatrist, or multi-disciplinary report).
- Evidence in the professional reports demonstrating an understanding of the complexity of the child's overall level of needs.
- A clear professional recommendation, based on the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for this recommendation.
- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autistic students / students with autism.

****Note The Board of Management currently operates a maximum average of 19 pupils per mainstream class, based on the staffing circular of the Department of Education and Skills Circular 06/2023.***

The maximum number of pupils for the year 2026-2027 is 190.

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:

In the event that the number of applicants in any of the selection criteria categories outlined above exceeds the number of school places available, places will be allocated to the applicants within that category beginning with the eldest and proceeding in descending order of age until all remaining places are allocated. Where more than one applicant is tied on grounds of the same date of birth for the last available place, that place will be awarded by lot. Where twins are tied for the last school place, both will be admitted to the school by way of exception.

6. 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) the student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, 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 having previously attended the school;
- (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.

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Bhríde 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

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.

8. 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).

9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Bhríde, you, the applicant, 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 to the principal of Scoil Bhríde
- (ii) whether or not you have applied for or are 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 to the principal of Scoil Bhríde National School.

10. Circumstances in which admission's offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Scoil Bhríde, 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 applicant's child; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 9 above.

11. 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.

12. 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 Bhríde 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 Bhríde 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 Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of the receipt.

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. The criterion date of birth of the child applying will only be applied in the case of children who are tied for the last place in the Junior Infants intake classes. When children are tied for the final places in classes above Junior Infants, after all of the four criteria in section 5 of this policy are applied, lots will be drawn for the final place and remaining applicants will be kept on a waiting list for any places becoming available later.

13. 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.

14. 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:

Parents Guardians complete an applications form

Admission will depend on space in the required class. At the moment the Board of Management of Primary school adheres to an **average class size of 19 pupils per class**, based on the current staffing circular from the Department of Education and Skills (Circular 06/2023). This class size includes pupils enrolled in Sunrise classes at the same level.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

The procedures of the school in this instance include those in the table above. However Primary School will recommend to applicants seeking places after September 30th each year and whose children are attending schools in the locality, that where possible, they retain their children in their current schools until the end of the instructional term (i.e. end of October, December, March)

15. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of Scoil Bhríde 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.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents/guardian requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school.:

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.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent/guardian 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 for Education & Skills 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.

Signed

Mary Dedwith
Chairperson Board of Management

Date

9/10/2025