

Admission Policy of Scoil Mhuire Strokestown

Roll number: 65100S

School Patron/s: Ceist

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education 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 Ceist on 14th December 2023. 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 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 voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust).

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.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims to promote:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, 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 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.

Catholic education is therefore a lifelong process of human growth and development which has been at the heart of the Church's mission since Jesus Christ urged his disciples to 'go teach all nations'. The person of Christ is the core of Catholic education.

Scoil Mhuire draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The charism of founder *Catherine McAuley* of the Religious Mercy Order who began this school is of very significant importance in the life of the school.

As a CEIST school, Scoil Mhuire values teaching as one of the most important of all human activities. Our school seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes, and bears witness to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the CEIST Charter. These are encapsulated in the core values which are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools.

- ***Promoting Spiritual and Human Development***
- ***Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning***
- ***Showing Respect for Every Person***
- ***Creating Community***
- ***Being Just and Responsible***

Scoil Mhuire is inspired by the words of Jesus Christ to his disciples, "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). Because of this, Scoil Mhuire provides a rich, holistic education in the Catholic tradition where engagement with and development of the whole person; the intellectual, moral, religious, physical, spiritual and psychological are at the core of our practice.

Education has as its goal the formation of a human person who is free, rational and mature in relationships. Scoil Mhuire offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly and creatively to their own lives, the lives of others and to the earth, which is our common home.

In Scoil Mhuire the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God is acknowledged and affirmed. The Catholic school is an inclusive community, ideally built on love and formed by the interaction and collaboration of its various components: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the Board of Management. Catholic schools are also outward looking. They are connected to their local parish and Diocese and other local organisations which enrich the life of the

school. Our school draws on the rich resources of the local community and, in turn, contributes to the life of the local community.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education, the school supports the formation in faith of our students through many school-based experiences of prayer and ritual. All students' spiritual growth is further enhanced through such areas as sport, language, nature, art, poetry and music.

Mission Statement

Scoil Mhuire Strokestown is a caring Christian community, valuing all students equally irrespective of ability. Adhering to the Ceist philosophy we aim to adopt a holistic approach to education; enabling students to achieve their full potential in all areas – intellectual, physical, spiritual, social and cultural.

Within our teaching we aim to encourage a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and self-motivation among students. We aim to foster a mutually respecting and supportive relationship between all partners in our school and with the wider community.

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.

Scoil Mhuire Strokestown will co-operate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of the education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the council.

Scoil Mhuire Strokestown will comply with any direction served on the Patron or the Board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the Board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

Post-primary 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 admits a student of any faith in preference to others.

Schools with Special Class

Scoil Mhuire is a school which has established a special class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with complex and severe 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

Scoil Mhuire with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established two classes to provide an education exclusively for students with complex and severe educational needs. Our special class was re-designated to cater for students with Multiple Disabilities. The Department of Education has a placement capacity designated for these classes which cannot be exceeded.

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.

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 Christian and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The two special classes attached to Scoil Mhuire provides an education exclusively for students with complex and severe education needs. The special classes was re-designated by NCSE to cater for students with Multiple Disabilities. 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, or that the class is oversubscribed.

6. Oversubscription

The Board of Management sets a figure each year for the overall number of students in the school and the overall capacity as stated above and is contingent on provision of resources from the Department of Education and Skills. In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission and 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

1: Applicants who are registered in the following primary schools on the closing date of application.

St Marys Girls Primary Strokestown

St Patricks Boys Primary Strokestown

Tulsk Primary School

Kiltrustan Primary School

Ballyfeeney Primary School

Clooncagh Primary School

Killina Primary School

Scoil Bride National School Fourmilehouse

Scrabbagh National School

Whitehall National School

Cloonfour National School

Slatta National School

Abbey Carton National School

Rooskey National School

2: Applicants who have a sibling in the school or applicants whose parents/guardians are staff members on the closing date of application.

3: Distance from the applicant's home address to Scoil Mhuire Strokestown by road. Places will be offered to students who live closest to Scoil Mhuire Strokestown. Eircodes will be used to determine distance.

Notes re Junior Cycle

1. It should be noted that applications for places in First year may exceed the number of places from year to year. Therefore, parents/guardians are strongly advised to ensure that applications are submitted on time.
2. Secondary school students must be aged 12 or over on January 1st of the calendar year following the child's entry into First year.
3. Students entering the school must supply a birth Certificate or other appropriate identification.
4. All applicants who have secured a place are obliged to sit the schools Assessment test on a day, time and date determined by the school.
5. The school should be given all relevant reports in relation to the applicant.

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 school is oversubscribed in any of the above categories, the determining factor in allocating places and establishing a waiting list will be independently overseen. This selection process will be witnessed by the Board of Management.

1. If more than one sibling from a family applies for admission to first Year, then in the event that one sibling is offered a place, the other sibling/s will automatically be offered the next place/s.
2. Where a student is in receipt of an offer of a place in Scoil Mhuire but does not accept the offer, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this policy, the place will be offered to the next student on the waiting list in a second round of offers. This process will continue until all places have been filled.

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 to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
 - admission to 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.
 -
- (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, 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 wishing to include a selection criteria based on siblings of a student attending or having 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

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 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 17](#) 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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 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.
- (v) The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of Management is required under section 15(1) of the Education act 1998 to provide, or cause to provide, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which the Board has responsibility.

- (vi) An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 1998 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. The Act 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;
- (vii) 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 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 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.

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.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but wishes to be considered for admission to the same group in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that student.

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 not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

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:

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- (a) The school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 for further details)
- (b) A parent of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section 23 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

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:

- (a) The school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 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 behavior of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such a code by the student.

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of Management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to provide, an appropriate education to each student at the school for which that Board has responsibility.

An application may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school. Or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

In order that the educational interests of incoming students are met the Board of management may instruct the Principal to request academic reports and/or educational psychological assessment reports.

Admission to Scoil Mhuire is not conditional on any of the above.

Application forms are available from the school office on request. Applicants should complete the application form, giving all the detail required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.

Applicants will be required to furnish details about their prior second level education, including copies of their two most recent school reports that set out the results of in house examinations. Where an applicant has attended one or more second level school they may be required, at the discretion of the Board, to submit reports from each school and copies of the results of any State Examinations.

All properly completed application forms will be dated and time stamped on receipt and retained by the school.

Where it is considered necessary by the school, an applicant may be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to provide a further education psychological assessment report. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above, or to any other relevant documentation requested by the school, or to make a reasonable arrangement to meet the Principal to discuss the application if requested, may result in inadequate provision being made for the applicant or may result in a previous decision to enrol the applicant being revoked.

Year other than First Year Enrolment Criteria:

1. Applicants must meet criteria laid down by the Department of Education and Skills.
2. All students entering the school must supply a Birth Certificate or other appropriate identification.
3. The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which the Board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.
4. The Board of Management sets a figure each year for the overall number of students in the school and the overall capacity as stated above and is contingent on provision of resources from the Department of Education and Skills.
5. Every effort will be made to offer students the full range of subjects, unfortunately a class/subject may be oversubscribed and students may not get their first choice in subjects.
6. In a year group other than First Year, where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated according to the following order of priority:

- A. Applicants who have a sibling in the school. These applicants will be ranked on the basis of date and time of receipt of completed application form.
- B. Remaining places will be allocated on the basis of date and time of receipt of completed application. For applicants with the date and time of receipt of completed application, the final determining factor in allocating places will be random selection. This random selection process will be witnessed by the Board of Management.

This is a matter for the Board of Management but is normally delegated to the Principal, who decides on such matters in accordance with the schools Admission Policy. The Principal may refer any application to the Board for decision. In exceptional circumstances where the Board of management is unable to meet at short notice and to ensure compliance with legally imposed deadlines, the Principal may consult with the Chairperson and together they may make a decision in regard to the enrolment of a student/prospective student. This decision must be reported to and ratified by the Board of management at its first meeting held after such a decision is made.

Admission to repeat a Year.

All such applications are subject to the Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter M2/95.

The Board Of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which the Board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

Should any information supplied on an application form be invalid/become invalid, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the School Office immediately in writing and provide information needed to update the application. Failure to do so may render an application invalid, and may result in the applicant being refused admission to the school, or may result in an earlier decision to enrol the applicant being revoked.

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

The Board of Scoil Mhuire or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, charge Admissions 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. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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 to 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.

18. Arrangements regarding opting out of Religious Instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Scoil Mhuire without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how that request may be accommodated by the school.



Chairperson Liam Martin

Date.....19/12/23.....

Date for Review.....December 24.....