



Admission policy of Scoil Áine Naofa, Loch Cútra

**School Address: Lough Cutra,
Gort, Co. Galway.**

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Roll number:17475S

School Patron: Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh & Kilfenora.

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. The existing policy in the school was consulted and updated.

The policy was approved by the School Patron on September 2020 and on amendment in January 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 Áine Naofa 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.

Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Scoil Áine Naofa .is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh & Kilfenora.

“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, a living relationship with God and with other people; and

- b. including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; 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 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 Áine 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.

Mission Statement

- **We hold as central, respect for the dignity of every child.**
- **As a Catholic school we uphold the teaching of Christian values educating the child for life.**
- **We strive to maximize the potential of each child by developing self-esteem, consideration for others and a critical evaluation of life.**
- **We acknowledge that education is a partnership and we endeavour to maintain strong links with parents and see them as the primary educators for their children.**
- **We will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement with the Board of Management of Scoil Aine Naofa.**
- **We value a spirit of co-operation and a happy learning environment and welcome partnership with the wider community.**
- **We aspire towards developing right attitudes toward justice and tolerance and we respect diverging views of minorities within our school.**
- **Scoil Áine Naofa will promote gender equality amongst teachers and pupils**

Admission Statement

- **Scoil Áine Naofa will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its 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 requested to do so by the Council.**
- **Scoil Áine Naofa will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).**

Scoil Áine Naofa will not discriminate in its admission of a pupil to the school on any of the following:

- the gender ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the civil status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the family status ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,

- the sexual orientation ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the religion ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the disability ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the ground of race of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned,
- the Traveller community ground of the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned, or
- the ground that the pupil or the applicant in respect of the pupil concerned has special educational needs unless the Board of Management determines that those needs cannot be met by the school.

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.

Admission Date

- The Admission date for Junior Infants is the first day back after the summer holidays (it may be a date at the end of August or the beginning of September).
- New parents of pupils enrolling in Junior Infants are normally invited to attend an open evening, usually held in the second term of the school year.
- New children enrolling in Junior Infants are invited to attend an Induction Day in June, to familiarize themselves with the school environment.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs in Mainstream:

- In relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs, the Board of Management reserves the right to request a copy of the child’s medical and/or psychological report or where such a report is not available, will request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of this report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.
- Following receipt of the report, the Board of Management will assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. Where the Board of Management deems that further resources are required, it will request the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. These resources may include, for example, access to a visiting teacher service, special needs assistant (SNA), specialised equipment/furniture, transport service or other.
- The school will meet with the parents of the child and the SENO to discuss the child’s needs and the school’s suitability/capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held.

Code of Behaviour

Children enrolled in Scoil Áine Naofa, Loch Cútra are required to cooperate with and support the school’s Code of Behaviour along with all other policies on curriculum, organization and management.

Special Class

Scoil Áine Naofa is a school which has established a class, 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.

Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the special class

Scoil Áine Naofa, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with a diagnosis of Autism (ASD).

Enrolment of Children in the Special Class for Autism

Criteria for Selection:

- Diagnosis of Autism (ASD)
- Suitability for potential integration in mainstream classes.
- Cognitive ability-criteria for enrolment is a Mild General Learning Disability and Autism.
- Recommendation of Psychologist for placement in Special Class
- Appropriate placement for child based on up to date information from Psychologist and current relevant education providers.
- Class quota not reached: quota is 6 pupils per class
- Suitability of child integrating with established dynamics of classroom, having regard for the need and maintenance of the programme of the already enrolled infants.
- Health and Safety of children and staff.
- Placement observation recommendation.

Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- the school is oversubscribed (please see below for further details)
- 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 pupil.
- there are exceptional circumstances (see page 6)

Oversubscription

Due to small classroom sizes, oversubscription of Scoil Áine Naofa will be when the maximum pupils in classrooms reach 28 pupils.

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:

- 1. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;*
- 2. Children residing in the parish, priority eldest;*
- 3. Children of staff members, priority eldest;*
- 4. Children of past pupils (1. Siblings, 2. Parents/grandparents), priority eldest;*
- 5. Random selection (independently verified).*

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:

(Priority to eldest in accordance with the above criteria – or as determined by BoM)

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 pupil's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—an early intervention class
- the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- a pupil's academic ability, skills or aptitude; (other than in relation to:
- admission to the special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned.

- the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a pupil's parents;
- a requirement that a pupil, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- 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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school. Please note in relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, this criteria only applies to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice
- 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).

Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Áine Naofa will be based on the following:

- Our school's Admission Policy
- The school's Annual Admission Notice (where applicable)
- 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 note that 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.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Board of Management of Scoil Áine Naofa, Loch Cútra, reserves the right to refuse enrolment to a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- a) The pupil has special educational needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, Scoil Áine Naofa cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.
- b) In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, to the school staff or school property.
(see appeals procedure below).

Code of Behaviour

Children enrolled in Scoil Áine Naofa, Loch Cútra are required to cooperate with and support the school's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organization and management.

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 below for further details).

Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Aine Naofa , 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.

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 Áine Naofa where

- it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- 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
- 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
- an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in the section above.

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:

- an application for admission to the school has been received,
- an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- 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).

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 Áine Naofa 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 Aine Naofa 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.

Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the Annual Admissions 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 four 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.

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:

- *Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.*
- *Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.*

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:

- *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 Áine Naofa 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 Áine Naofa 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.*

Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The Board of Management of Scoil Aine Naofa 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 pupil to the school, or
- b. the admission or continued enrolment of a pupil in the school.

Arrangements regarding pupils not attending religious instruction

Our school is of a Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school.

We respect the decision of parents to withdraw their child/children from taking part in the religious education curriculum, religious ceremonies, school Masses, etc.

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the pupil attend the school without attending religious instruction (etc.) in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. In the meeting, the availability of supervision determines how this request could be accommodated.

Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

- The parents/guardians of the pupil, 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.

Right of appeal

- Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parents/guardians 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 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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Áine Naofa at a meeting on 4th November 2020 and revised and re-ratified on 11th January 2023.

Signed: *David Greene*

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Amy Mulherrins*

School Principal

