

Admission Policy of Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa



School Address: Coast Rd, Bettystown, Co. Meath, A92 H762

Roll number: 20216L

School Patron: Rev. Thomas Deenihan

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, the Equal Status Act 2000 and Circular 0080/2024. 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.

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 Oilibhéir Naofa admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website and displayed in the foyer 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 Oilibhéir Naofa is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of 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:

Meath Diocesan Education Office

Approved

Signed: *M. Melvin*

Date: *19/3/20*



- (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 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 Oilibhéir Naofa 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

At Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa, a Junior co-educational school in the Catholic tradition, we nurture hearts and inspire minds by fostering a community built on trust, kindness, empathy and joy.

We are committed to creating a welcoming environment where every person is respected and valued, where diversity is celebrated and happiness is actively promoted.

Together, with the support of parents and caregivers, we strive to enable all students to reach their full potential through a rich variety of educational experiences and activities.

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa is a co-educational Catholic Junior Primary School.

This school is an inclusive school and welcomes all children with priority given to children of the Catholic Parish of Laytown/Mornington. It is a Parish based school.

3. Admission Statement

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

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, 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.

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

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Section 20 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) as amended by the Education (Provision in Respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022 provides for a new function for the NCSE to coordinate and manage the admission of children to special classes and special schools.

The Department and the NCSE consider that the following additional measures will support the forward planning of special education provision both for schools and families of children and young people with special educational needs.

These measures are as follows:

- In order to ensure that the NCSE has access to information on all children and young people who may require a special class or special school place, parents/guardians should notify the NCSE prior to making an application for admission to a special class and/or special school.
- This notification together with the submission of the child or young person's relevant reports should occur as early as is possible.
- **Parents/guardians should notify the NCSE (SENO) before 1 October where a child or young person requires a special class or special school place for the following school year to facilitate NCSE planning and to ensure that the NCSE and the Department is provided with sufficient time to plan and provide for additional special class and special school capacity.**

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established five Autism classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism.

In accordance with the Department's Circular Letter 02/05 and NCSE Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes for Boards of Management and Principals of Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2024), children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application: Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report) AND
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same.

Criteria for Admission to our Autism classes:

1. A fully complete application form for enrolment and all available reports have been submitted to the school by the parents/guardian, within the timeframe specified in the Admission Notice pertaining to the upcoming school year.
2. The child must have a multidisciplinary report and a professional recommendation as outlined above.
3. A sanction letter from the NCSE (SENO) to support their admission application for the autism class confirming that the child meets the requirements for enrolment to that setting.
4. The school has an available place within the appropriate Autism class.

Children with special needs enrolling in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided to the school by the Department of Education and Youth to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management may request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or request that the child be assessed immediately in order to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child and to profile the support services required. The Board of Management will endeavour to have all resources and support in place before the child is admitted to the school. This may include visiting teacher service, resource teacher, special needs assistants, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services.

The school may meet with the parents of the child to discuss the school's suitability for the child as appropriate. If necessary a full case conference may be called including parents, class teacher, learning support teacher, resource teacher and psychologist or social workers as appropriate.

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

Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student, a person who is not of Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special classes attached to Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and 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.

6. 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:

In so far as it is practicable, all children of Junior School age who apply for a place in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa will be enrolled in the school. Children must be at least four years of age on or before the 30th April in the year of entry. Children over the age of nine on June 30th in the year of entry are not considered for enrolment at 2nd class level.

Places in mainstream classes will be decided based on the following criteria:

1. Siblings of pupils currently enrolled in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa or Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh. Siblings shall be taken to include step-siblings, half-siblings or foster children resident at the same address.
2. Children living in the Parish in the Bettystown / Laytown area.
3. Children living in the Parish in the Mornington/ Donacarney area.
4. All other children from outside the parish boundary.

Places in the autism classes will be decided based on the following criteria:

1. Pupils currently enrolled in the school who have been formally diagnosed with autism, who have a sanction letter from the SENO confirming that the child requires placement in an Autism class.
2. Siblings of pupils currently enrolled in our school / Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh at the time of application and who also meet the essential criteria mentioned above.
3. Pupils living in the Parish in the Bettystown / Laytown with the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.
4. Pupils living in the Parish in the Mornington/ Donacarney with the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.
5. Pupils living outside the parish boundary with the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

Note: In the event of any dispute, the locality will be determined by the address on the Eircode finder website: <https://finder.eircode.ie/#/> (e.g. Laytown, Bettystown, Mornington, Donacarney etc.)

Proof of address (dated within 6 months of admission application) will be required as part of the enrolment process.

Documents accepted as proof of address:

- A current utility bill (such as a gas, electricity or telephone or mobile phone bill)
- A current car or home insurance policy
- A document issued by a government department
- A copy of your Tax Credit Certificate (TCC)
- A Statement of Liability (previously P21) from Revenue
- A social insurance document
- A letter from your employer or licensed employment agency stating that you have recently arrived in Ireland and have started work but cannot yet provide evidence of your Irish address (you will have to provide evidence of your address at a later date)

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 of there being more applicants than available places within the above criteria, applicants will be prioritised beginning with the oldest and places will be allocated by age. If two or more students are tied for a place (share the same date of birth) this school will award that place by a lottery draw. In the event that twins (multiple births) are tied for the last remaining place, both/all will be admitted to SON, by way of exception.

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 (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
other than in relation 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, 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 attending or having previously attended the school;
other than in relation to 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 our 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa 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

(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 18 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Oilibhéir 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.

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 Oilibhéir Naofa 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.

12. 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—

- (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;
- (iv) 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 Oilibhéir 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 Oilibhéir 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.

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 no 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 as set out in Section 13.

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:

Pupils may transfer to the school during the school year subject to school policy, available space and in some cases the approval of the DEY. Applications to transfer from local schools will be dealt with in consultation with the SENO.

In so far as it is practicable, all children of Junior School age who apply for a place in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa will be enrolled in the school. Classes within our school will be deemed to be full when we have a classroom enrolment of 23 pupils in mainstream classes and 6 pupils per class in relation to the Autism classes.

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:

Where spaces are available applications for enrolment will be processed within three weeks of application form being received.

Children with special needs enrolling in Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa after the commencement of the school year will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided to the school by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Scoil Oilibhéir 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 student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction 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 parents, and the student where appropriate, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent 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 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 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.

This policy was approved by the school patron in March 2026.