



ENROLMENT POLICY

Introductory Statement

This policy was written by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Lourdes, Tullow in consultation with teachers and parents. This policy is set out in accordance with the provision in the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000, the Disabilities Bill 2005 and the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances. The Enrolment Policy of Scoil Mhuire Lourdes is, subject to the requirements imposed by law, the responsibility of the Board of Management under the general supervision of the Patron.

The purpose of this policy is;

- (a) Clearly defining the procedures involved in the Enrolment of pupil's in Scoil Naisiúnta Mhuire Lourdes and in the enrolment of pupils transferring from other schools.
- (b) To give parents background information pertaining to the school and to advise them of some of its policies.

Rationale

To conform with the Principles laid down in the Education Act 1998 and in particular Section 15 Subsection 2.

- (a) The Board shall publish, in such a manner as the board with the agreement of the patron considers appropriate, the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs, and ensure that as regards that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to school of the parents' choice are respected and such directions as may be made from time to time by the Minister, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons, concerned are complied with.
- (b) The Board shall have regard to the principles and requirements of a democratic society and have respect and promote respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life in society.
- (c) The Board shall have regard to the efficient use of resources, the public interest in the affairs of the school and accountability to students, their parents, the patron, staff and the community served by the school.
- (d) The Board shall use the resources provided to the school from monies provided by the Oireachtas to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with a disability or other Special Educational Needs, including where necessary, alteration of building and provision of appropriate equipment.

Legal Framework

Section 9 (j) of the Education Act 1998 specifies, that “A recognized school shall subject to this Act and in particular section 15 (2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”.

Section 15 (2) (d) states the Board of Management shall “publish The policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected”.

Section 27 (1) states that “A board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school” and (2) that “the procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the School having regard to the age and experience of the students, in association with their parents and teachers”.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 [Section 19 (1)] requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school’s “Admission Policy”. Section 19 (2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management, shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information “make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof”

The Equal Status Act, 2000 [Sections 5 & 7 (2)] prohibits discrimination on the grounds of “gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community” regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are limited exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious’ values [Section 7 (3)].

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School/ Ethos

The key principals which underpin our Enrolment/Admission Policy at Scoil Mhuire Lourdes are: -

- (1) Inlusiveness - We aim to ensure that the educational needs of all students, including any person with special educational needs, i.e. Students who have a disability - be it physical, emotional, mental - and also the educational needs of exceptionally able students are identified and catered for - within the possibilities of available resources and funding.
- (2) Equality - We aim to ensure that the Educational System is accountable to students, their parents and the state for the education provided.
- (3) Parental Choice: This Board of Management recognises the right of parents to send their children to a school of their choice.
- (4) Respect for Diversity: We aim to respect the diversity of values, beliefs, languages, ways of life which are now incorporated into Irish Society. We aim to respect its traditions also.

The ethos of Scoil Mhuire Lourdes is one which values and respects the contribution of the entire school community. It sets out to promote close working relations between school staff, management and parents all of whom work together for the benefit of the children. The school provides a curriculum and a working atmosphere to help each child develop her potential to the full. The school community believes in the holistic development of the child - academic, social, spiritual, psychological, emotional, moral, logical and linguistic, recognising that each child is unique and that it is the pupils right to have access to the entire range of education which the school provides. The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and supports them in that role.

While the school has a Roman Catholic ethos and Roman Catholic Management it welcomes female children of other or no denominations and asks parents to respect such.

Aims

Our holistic approach in the development and education of each child also aims;

- (1) To nurture a sense of personal identify, self-esteem and awareness of one's particular abilities, aptitudes and limitations, combined with a respect for the rights and beliefs of others.
- (2) To promote excellence and equality in the development of the educational potential of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged through economic, social, physical or mental factors.
- (3) To develop knowledge, skills and attitudes, a sense of inquiry, and the capacity to analyse issues critically and constructively.
- (4) To foster a spirit of self-reliance, innovation, initiative and imagination.
- (5) To promote physical and emotional health and well-being.
- (6) To create tolerant, caring and politically aware members of society.
- (7) To celebrate the uniqueness of the child and aim to ensure the development of the child's full potential. Equal importance is placed on what the child learns and to the process by which she learns it.

PROCEDURES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN

IN

SCOIL MUIRE LOURDES, TULLOW.

Application Procedures:

Parents wishing to enrol their daughter/s in Junior Infants for the new school year should do so by calling to the school at a time which is specified during the previous January. Notice of this enrolment-time will be advertised in advance in the Tullow Parish Newsletter ‘The Nationalist’ and Carlow People (Tullow Notes). The form will be date stamped on receipt by the school, and is attached as appendix 1 to this policy. Telephone calls or personal school visits concerning enrolment will be facilitated, but are not in themselves enrolment applications.

As this is an all-girls school, it is not open to any parent to apply to enrol a boy as student in Scoil Mhuire Lourdes.

Following this evaluation, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board, listing proposed enrolments for the forthcoming year. Once an enrolment list is approved by the Board, all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome, and if refused admission will be notified of their entitlement to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Please note:

Applications for admission to Junior Infant Class must be made at the very latest by the end of February of the year in which it is expected that the child will start school. The Board of Management strongly recommends that applicant children are at least four years of age on or before April 30th of the school commencement year.

Information Required:

The enrolment process is done by filling in a School Application Form. This form requires the following information: -

- Pupil’s name, address and date of birth.
- PPS Number
- Parents’ names, addresses, telephone numbers and occupation.
- Name of family Doctor.
- Any details of pupils’ medical condition which teachers need to know.
- Religion of Parents and child.
- Place of Baptism - if relevant.

Parents will be required to provide their child’s Birth Certificate (and Baptismal Certificate if not baptised in Tullow).

PRIMARY ONLINE DATABASE (POD) The Department of Education and Skills requires the following details about your child: Name, Address, Date of Birth, Nationality and PPS number. The school enters these details into the Primary Online Database (POD). For further information, you may access ‘POD Fair Processing Notice’ on the POD area of the Department’s website.

The Board of Management is bound by the D.E.S. “Rules for National Schools” and takes into account D.E.S. guidelines in relation to class size and/or staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, such as physical space or the health and welfare of children. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy. As a general principle, children will be enrolled on application, provided there is space available.

In the event that applications exceed the number of spaces available, the following prioritising criteria will apply:

Junior Infant Enrolment Criteria

Priority	Criterion
1	Priority is given to sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past. If the class is oversubscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.
2	Families whose primary residence is either (a) in the immediate areas of Tullow Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish or (b) in Tullow Parish within a 2-mile distance by road from the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then the furthest from the school under either (a) or (b) will be eliminated first.
3	Children of current teaching staff.
4	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this particular criterion, then those whose primary residence is furthest from the school will be eliminated first.
5	If space is still available, class numbers are completed from the Waiting List, which is compiled and ordered according to the date of the original application. The criteria are listed in order of priority when spaces are allocated under criterion 1 and space is still available, then criterion 2 comes into play and so on. This prioritization proceeds until all places have been allocated.
6.	If the class is still oversubscribed within the applications listed above, then the remaining places will be selected on the basis of age starting with the oldest.

Applications for entry in September to classes other than Junior Infants

Applications for entry at the start of the school year to classes other than Junior Infants may be submitted at any time. Names of applicants are placed on a waiting list, in order of date of application. Places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis; this means that as a place becomes available in a particular class, that place is allocated to the first child on the waiting list for that class

Pupils may **transfer** to the school, subject to the above, and in some cases, subject to the prior approval of the D.E.S. However, enrolment of children during the school year will depend on the availability of places in the requested class. The decision to enrol is at the discretion of the BOM, which will be mindful of the following:

- *The number of classrooms available
- *The size of available space in each classroom
- *The educational needs of children already enrolled
- *Multigrade classes if applicable
- *DES maximum class average directives

Transfer from another school

If transferring from another school, the Principal of Scoil Mhuire Lourdes may make contact with the Principal of that other school prior to the offering of a place.

Refusal to Enrol

The BOM reserves the right to refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances if, in the opinion of the BOM, there is evidence of an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff or school property, or if the applicant has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the applicant with an appropriate education.

Children enrolled in Scoil Mhuire Lourdes are required to co-operate with and support the school's policies including policies on Code of Behaviour (available in our policy booklet and on our website), Curriculum, Organisation and Management. The BOM places responsibility with Parents/Guardians for ensuring that their child/children co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way

Appeals

Where a Board of Management refuses to enrol a student in a school, the parents has a statutory entitlement under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, as amended, to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills.

<http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/Appeal-against-Permanent-Exclusion-Suspension-orRefusal-to-Enrol/>

In the event of any dispute, decisions regarding enrolment are the responsibility of the BOM. In this, the BOM is bound by the Rules for National Schools (D.E.S.)

Criteria for Enrolment to Senior Infants to 6th Classes

The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6 classes.

Priority	Criterion
1	Priority is given to sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past.
2	Families whose primary residence is either (a) in the immediate areas of Tullow Parish, starting closest to the and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish or (b) in Tullow Parish within a 2-mile distance by road from the school, or who are in the process of moving to either of these areas.
3	Children of parents who are past pupils of the school.
4	Children of current teaching staff.

Induction Procedures for Incoming Junior Infants

Parents/Guardians are notified by letter of the Induction Procedures for the incoming Jun. Infants for the following September.

Afternoons of the third week of June 2-3 p.m. are generally set aside for the purpose of providing an opportunity for parents/guardians to bring their children to the school to meet with teacher.

An information meeting outlining school policy will be held for all parents/guardians of incoming Jun. Infants in June. At this meeting the following is given to parents.

1. School Information Booklet (containing general information, policies etc.)
2. Information from D.E.S. re. Primary School Curriculum.
3. Information on Stay Safe Programme.
4. Activity Booklet containing tips for parents and activity sheets for pupils.
5. Book Bill.

Admission Day/Date

Junior Infants are admitted to and enrolled in the school on the first day of school after Summer holidays. Pupils transferring from other schools may be enrolled at any time of the year provided there is space. They are expected to bring all relevant school reports with them.

The Educational Welfare Act (2002) contains some specific new provisions in relation to the transfer of pupils including the requirement that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

In Relation to applications for the enrolment of children with Special Needs the Board of Management requests a copy of the child's medical and/or Psychological Report or where a report is not available, to request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist us in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required. Following receipt of the report(s), the Board assesses how the school can now meet the needs specified in the report. If the Board deems that further resources are required it will, prior to enrolment, request the Dept. of Education & Science to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report. These resources may include some or all of the following - Visiting teacher service, Resource Teacher for Special Needs, Special Needs Assistant, Specialised equipment or furniture, revamping of toilet facilities, transport services or other.

It may be necessary for the Board to decide to defer enrolment of a particular child, pending

- 1) the receipt of an assessment report, and / or
- (2) The provision of appropriate resources by the Dept. of Education & Science to meet the needs specified in the Psychological and/or Medical Report. Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the refusal by the Board of Management to enrol a child in the school may be appealed by Parent/Guardian.

The Principal will meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs. If necessary a full case conference involving all parties will be held which may include Parents, Principal, Class Teacher, Learning Support Teacher, Special Class Teacher, Resource Teacher for Special Needs or Psychologist as appropriate.

Tullow Parish Policy on Reception of First Communion, First Confession and Confirmation

It is the policy of the Priests of Tullow Parish, that where children are presented for the reception of the Sacraments here named, they must have followed the set Catechetics Programme in preparation for that Sacrament. Children commence this programme before Christmas. Therefore, they will need to be permanently resident and attending this school from that time.

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of the Policy and review and amend the Policy as required, with particular emphasis placed upon

- Effective management placed on application process
- Clarity and transparency relating to the process
- Applicants informed in good time re the status of their application, particularly in the case of refusal to enrol
- Positive Parental feedback

Monitoring Procedures

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management at the appropriate time. It will also be referred by the Principal for consideration by the full staff at the same time. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment in December each year and regularly thereafter until enrolment is complete. Where the Principal refuses admission to any applicant, by the authority delegated to him by the Board in line with this policy, any such refusal shall be communicated to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every three years or sooner if deemed appropriate. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2022.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of the BoM

Date: _____

