

## **Admission Policy of Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh**

**School Address: Edoxtown, Rathfeigh, Tara, Co.Meath, C15 F220**

**Roll number: 17964K**

**School Patron: Bishop of Meath**

### **1. Introduction**

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron. 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 Naofa, Rathfeigh 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 Naofa, Rathfeigh 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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- \*a living relationship with God and with other people; and

- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- 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 characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S. 15(2) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

### **Mission Statement**

Cherishing childhood as the foundation of life by providing education in an open, nurturing, challenging and affirming environment that respects the uniqueness of each individual as they relate to each other, their teachers, their family, their community and their God.

### **School Motto**

“Great Oaks from Little Acorns Grow”

## **3. Admission Statement**

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

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

### **All denominational schools**

Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## **4. Enrolment of Children with Special Needs**

Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh endeavours to be an inclusive school, where equality of access is valued and where pupils are encouraged to participate to the full extent of their abilities. The school welcomes applications from children with special educational needs. Such applications will be processed in accordance with the provisions of this policy. Pupils with SEN will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the DES and /or N.C.S.E.. The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report. The purpose of the report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and physical needs of the child and to profile the support services that may be required.

**Note for schools:** The act does not require schools and special classes providing for a category or categories of special educational needs to change their current status. The current arrangements in relation to the category or categories of special educational needs provided by schools will continue as in previous years unless otherwise directed by the NCSE or the Department.

## **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 Naofa, Rathfeigh is a Roman Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic Faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## **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:

Where the number of applications for Junior Infants exceeds the number of places available, the Board of Management will offer places in the priority order of 1 through to 5 of the categories outlined below in order to determine admission into Junior Infants.

Category 1: Siblings of present pupils

Category 2: Applicants whose primary residence is in the parish of Rathfeigh and Skryne

Category 3: All other applicants

**The maximum intake of Junior Infant pupils for the 2024/25 school year is 20.**

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:

- If the maximum number of admissions is reached in any one of the categories outlined above, a selection process will apply whereby places will be offered to complete applications beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in that category and proceeding in descending order of age from the oldest to the youngest until all remaining available places have been filled. If during this selection process, two or more applicants have the same date of birth, the school will apply a random selection process to these applicants only, in order to establish to whom places in that category will be offered. This random selection process will be witnessed by the Principal and another staff member and/or a member of the Parents' Association.
- A waiting list for unsuccessful applications will be compiled and applicants will be placed on the list in order of priority as set out above. Where a vacancy becomes available, applicants on the waiting list will be offered a place in accordance with the order of priority the applicant has been placed on the list. A place on the waiting list expires on the 30<sup>th</sup> September of the year of admission.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered, and applicants will not be placed on the waiting list.
- In a particular year, an applicant may fulfil the enrolment criteria and be offered a place, and parents of the applicant may accept the place. If subsequently the applicant's parents decide not to send their child to Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh that particular year, the applicant's place cannot be deferred. Instead the applicant must reapply for the following year and will be offered a place if they fulfil the enrolment criteria for that following year.

## **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;
- (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 the case of this school (Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh) as this is included in the Selection criteria (Category 1 and Category 2) in Section 6 above.
- (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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

## **8. Decisions on applications**

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh 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 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 Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh, 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 Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh 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.

## **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 Naofa, Rathfeigh 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 Naofa, Rathfeigh 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.

## **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.

## **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:

The Board of Management have the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class for applications for enrolment into classes that already exist. The above criteria for enrolment will then be considered.

It is advised that parents who seek enrolment for child/children or who seek to transfer a child/children from another school should apply to Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh in advance of the commencement of the school year

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 an application being received for immediate enrolment/pupil transfer the Board will endeavour to facilitate such enrolment subject to the capacity constraints of the school at that time and the Department of Education and Science's general policy on enrolment. The Principal reserves the right to contact the school from which the pupil is transferring to request such information as he/she deems necessary (The contacting of another school for information on the pupil will only happen after the child is enrolled in Scoil Mhuire Nofa, Rathfeigh).

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The Board of Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Rathfeigh 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.

**Note:** Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

### **17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who 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:

- Students will complete other curricular work assigned by the class teacher during religious instruction time for all other pupils **OR**
- Students will complete other curricular work assigned by the class teacher in another teacher's classroom during religious instruction time for all other pupils.

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) and the student 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, 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 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.

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Chairperson of the Board of Management

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Principal

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Date

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Date