

Admission Policy of: SCOIL PHROINSIAIS NAOFA

School Address: CLARA, CO. OFFALY

Roll number: 18406E

School Patron: Bishop Thomas Deenihan, Diocese 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 on [date]. 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 Phroinsiais 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.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa is a Catholic all boys primary school with a Catholic ethos.

"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, 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 Phroinsiais 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.

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa is a Catholic School which strives to provide a safe, caring and learning environment.

All beliefs are respected and each member of the school community is treated equally.

Respect for all members of staff, pupils and wider community is fostered and we hope our school will be regarded as a centre of excellence where pupils will develop to their full potential and have many happy memories of their time spent here.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Phroinsiais 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 Phroinsiais Naofa is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa is a school which has established three special education classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students on the autistic spectrum and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of 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 required to do so by the Council.

Scoil Phroinsiais 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.

Scoil Phroinsiais 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. 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 Phroinsiais Naofa provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa provides an education exclusively for students on the autistic spectrum and may refuse admission to a student, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school

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

Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three classes to provide an education exclusively for students with on the autistic spectrum

Criteria for Admissions for Special Education

1. A multi - disciplinary report with a diagnosis of a qualifying ASD DSMIV V or ICD 10 with a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to mainstream school.
2. A diagnosis made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.
3. A recent recommendation (within two years of the proposed admission date) provided by the above professional indicating that a placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school is warranted. A needs analysis / recommendation in respect of each child will also be required in order to provide the best education possible for the child.
4. Suitable resources as per DES guidelines available/in place at the school in order to meet the pupils needs as outlined in the report/s.

5 (A) 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:

Priority	Criterion
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1	Priority is given to siblings of current students already in the school and brothers of students attending Scoil Bhríde.
2	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Clara Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school within the Parish.

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:

For Criterion 1, priority will be decided based on age with older children being offered places in the first instance and therefore if necessary a Birth Certificate will be requested and in the case of twins, both will be accepted by way of exception.

For Criterion 2, priority will be based on proximity to the school.

5 (B) Oversubscription for Special Education Classes

Priority	Criterion
1	Students already in the school who have been given a new qualifying ASD diagnosis with a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school.
2	Brothers of current students in the school.
3	All other applicants closest to the school who have a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school.

6 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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (i) an early intervention class, or

(II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;

(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:

- admission to (a) a special school or (b) 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 and/or

(d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;

(e) a requirement that a student, or his 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 the school wishing to include a selection criterion 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.

(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 the very latest, by the end of February of the year in which it is expected that the child will start school (as per 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).

7 Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Phroinsiais 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 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.

8 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).

9 Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa, the applicant must indicate—

(i) whether or not an offer of admission has been accepted for another school or schools. If such an offer has been accepted, details must be provided of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools based on an application is pending, and if so, details must be provided of the other school or schools concerned.

10 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 Phroinsiais 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.

11 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).

12 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 Phroinsiais 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 Phroinsiais 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.

13 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 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.

14 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 senior infants to sixth class are as follows:

:Pupils may be able to transfer to Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa subject to space being available in the relevant class group-Scoil Phroinsiais Naofa adheres to a class size of 28 pupils per class, based on the current staffing circular from the Department of Education and Skills (Circular 18/2020)

:Applications forms are available from the school secretary or to download from our school website at www.stfrancisbns.ie

Failure to complete forms fully will result in refusal to admit the applicant.

The following criteria, listed in order of priority, will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places

Priority	Criterion
1	Priority is given to brothers of current students and brothers of students attending Scoil Bhríde.
2	Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Clara Parish, starting closest to the school and radiating outwards from the school.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection categories, the following arrangement will apply: Priority will be decided based on age, with older children being offered places in the first instance.

15 Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The board of Scoil Phroinsiais 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

16 Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

17 Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due 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.

Review of Policy

The Admissions Policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management, staff, parents and the student body.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16/10/23.

Signed: Mary Ledwith Date: 16/10/23
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: M. Bourke Date: 16/10/23
(Principal) Date for Review: April