



# Scoil Mhuire Creeslough Admission Policy

Admission Policy ratified by Bishop Alan Mc Guckian- March 2023. Updated and approved on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

# **Admission Policy**

## **Scoil Mhuire**



**Creeslough, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal**  
**Roll number: 18371L**

**School Patron: Rev Bishop Alan Mc Guckian**

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. 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 the Scoil Mhuire 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 is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Raphoe Rev Alan Mc Guckian.

“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 Mhuire 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.

Each pupil, through positive learning experiences, will be stimulated to achieve their full potential, face life confidently and find fulfilment in an ever-changing world. Scoil Mhuire, Creeslough is a Catholic school which nurtures a positive, co-operative educational environment.

### **Aims**

- 1. To enable our pupils to live full lives as children
- 2. To equip them with the skills to avail of future and lifelong learning
- 3. To prepare them to live full and fruitful lives as adults in society

Scoil Mhuire, Creeslough, is a Catholic school where Catholic values and teachings are taught and respected. Our philosophy is based on the notion of each individual being created in the image of the likeness of God.

Although Scoil Mhuire is a school with a Catholic ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions. As a Christian community, we aim to be a warm and welcoming place, respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability. We accept pupils from all faiths and none.

Scoil Mhuire will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community through guiding the pupils in the values of respect for people and by nurturing their qualities of good citizenship. Respect for all is embodied and evident in all aspects of our school life through our love of learning, our love of our language, our music, our sports and in our appreciation of the nature that surrounds us.

We strive for continuous improvement in all aspects of school life.

Scoil Mhuire strives to develop everyone`s potential, pupils, staff, and parents alike. Each child is treated as an individual and the support and encouragement they need to flourish is provided

for them in Scoil Mhuire. We strive to create a safe, secure and positive learning environment where everyone feels valued and has a contribution to make.

We are proud of our parish and community involvement which has scaffolded and supported our school. We recognise the importance of parents as partners in education and work closely with them to support our pupils.

Scoil Mhuire's School Motto is

**Ag Foghlaim Le Chéile**

### **3. Admission Statement**

Scoil Mhuire 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 will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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 Mhuire will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

#### **All denominational schools**

Scoil Mhuire is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic 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.

#### **Schools with special education class(es)**

Scoil Mhuire is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs as specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

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

##### **In the case of a mainstream school with SEN class attached**

Scoil Mhuire with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism/ Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

- Each child must have a full current Psychological & Cognitive Assessment, which must specify a diagnosis of 'Autism' i.e. DSMV or ICD10 and a recommendation for a special class placement in a mainstream school from such a professional report.
- The parents/guardians must fill in and return a School Enrolment form as for all pupils. All relevant reports and assessments must be given to the school once the child has been offered a place in the school.
- The Department of Education states that the ratio for each class is a maximum six pupils to one teacher and two SNAs. There must be more than three pupils to access the second SNA. Places are subject to the approval and sanction of the local SENO.
- Priority will be given to children enrolled in mainstream classes in the school.
- The pupil resides in the catchment area.

### **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 is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic religion where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

**School with special education class(es)**

The special class attached to Scoil Mhuire N.S. provides an education exclusively for students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders, 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 (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)**

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:

Decisions in relation to applications are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children and are made by the Board of Management in accordance with school policy. As a general principle, and in so far as is practicable having regard to the school's enrolment policy, the children shall be enrolled on application, providing there is space available.

**Scoil Mhuire is bound by the rules for National Schools which states that a child may not be allowed to attend or be enrolled in a National School before the fourth anniversary of his birth. (Rule 64.1)**

Criteria used in decision making by the BOM in relation to excess enrolment are:

- Children from the Parish and the bordering parishes
- Ages of the children
- Siblings of pupils already in the school
- Guidelines from the DES in relation to class size, staffing provision and accommodation
- Physical space

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 oversubscribed, the order of priority (within each of the priority categories above) is determined by the date of birth of each child, with priority to the oldest.**

## 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:

There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below)

- (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 the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on  
(1) 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 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 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 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, 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, 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 Mhuire 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 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.

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.

## **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

In keeping with the Education Welfare Act 2000, a parent may transfer his/her child from one National School to another, at any time of the year, either with the consent of the Minister or when the transfer is made because of a change in the ordinary residence of the child. This is also subject to school policy and available space.

The following procedures will apply.

- The enrolment form must be filled in and returned with a copy of the child's birth cert.
- The school will communicate with the child's previous school to acquire any relevant information about the child.
- The parent will apply in writing for a place in the requested class.
- The Board of Management will make the final decision.
- The child will be enrolled during the school year if the parents sign up to the school's Code of Behaviour and the child adheres to agree to it.

The Board of Management have the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class for applications for enrolment in Senior Infants to Sixth Class. The above criteria for enrolment will then be considered.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Scoil Mhuire 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**

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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parents/guardians of 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, 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.