**Scoil Chiaráin**

**Enrolment Policy**

**Scoil Chiaráin**

**Friendship and Learning**

Board of Management

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**Admission Policy of Scoil Chiaráin**

**St. Canice's Road,**

**Glasnevin,**

**Dublin 11**

**D11 VK634**

**Roll number: 19325J**

**School Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin**

**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 22nd January 2024. 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 Chiaráin's 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.

The Board of Management is setting out its policy in that by doing so parents and professionals will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson, Con Sweeney, and the Principal, Kathleen Dodd will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

**2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

Scoil Chiaráin is a specialist school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. In operation since 1970, the school is recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as a school which offers specialist education to boys and girls aged five to 18 years, at both primary and post primary level, from the area of North Dublin, city and county. The school caters for children with a diagnosed mild general learning disability. Our aim is to help children to develop socially and educationally to the maximum of their potential in a stimulating and caring environment. The school aims to provide the widest range of appropriate learning experiences at every stage of development.

Our purpose is to provide a suitable education programme to meet individual and group needs of our students to enable them to gain as high a level of independence as possible.

 The school is staffed by 19 experienced teachers, 16 special needs assistants, 6 part-time subject specialist teachers and 21 bus escorts. Many of these staff members hold additional qualifications for this specialist work. The Health Service Executive (HSE) employs a Speech & Language therapist three days a week and an Occupational therapist two days per week to work with students within the school. The National Educational Psychological Service NEP’s provide a limited service. An Art Therapist is also employed by the Board of Management on a part-time basis.

**Our Mission statement states:**

*Scoil Chiaráin provides a specialist curriculum. It strives to maximize the learning skills, social skills, self worth and sense of independence of its pupils.*

There is a caring, co-operative, sharing and learning culture which is positively endorsed by the whole school community and fully supported by school management.

Scoil Chiaráin seeks to forge links with the wider community through its contact with mainstream and other specialist schools, community services and with the centres of teacher education.

Scoil Chiaráin is a school whose ethos is Christian in the Catholic tradition, open and welcoming to those of other religions. The principles of equality, participation and respect for difference ensure that in Scoil Chiaráin all members of the community are valued and have a role in its development.

“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 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 Chiaráin 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

**3. Admission Statement**

This enrolment policy outlines the procedure to be followed involving the parents and guardians of the referred pupil, the referral agency, the school from which the child is transferring and the Principal and designated staff of Scoil Chiaráin, in accordance with legislative requirements.

Scoil Chiaráin will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

        the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

        the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

        the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

       the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

* the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

        the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

        the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

        the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or

         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 Chiaráin 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Scoil Chiaráin is a school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Scoil Chiaráin 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 Chiaráin will comply with any direction served on the board or
the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b)

**4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in Scoil Chiaráin**

Scoil Chiaráin is a specialist school under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. In operation since 1970, the school is recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as a school which offers a specialist education to pupils at both primary and post primary level, from the area of North Dublin, city and county.

The school caters for girls and boys, from five to eighteen who have been diagnosed by a qualified psychologist, with a mild general learning disability and for whom a specialist education is recommended.

**5. Admission of Students**

To meet the needs of students, the number of students per class is limited (6 – 13 pupils) and a wide variety of teaching methodologies and educational equipment is employed in the teaching and learning process. Training in the basic skills of social competence forms an integral part of the school programme at all levels. Children are divided into classes according to age and at present (2021/2022) we have four classes in primary and eight in the post-primary section.

Only children diagnosed by a suitably qualified psychologist, with a mild general learning disability (MGLD) and who are residing in North Dublin city or county will be considered for enrolment. Children with additional needs including ASD, S&L disorders, physical & sensory disabilities and medical conditions will be eligible for consideration and enrolment

A child with significant emotional/behavioural problems may be turned down if it is believed that his/her enrolment would impact negatively on the safety, welfare or learning of other pupils.

The following is required to proceed with the enrolment process:

i)             a letter of application with application form

ii)            a recent Psychological assessment report (not more than two years old) identifying a clear diagnosis of a mild general learning disability, to include the full scale IQ (FSIQ) and the special educational needs of the pupil along with a statement of resources/intervention needed to meet such needs. The report should state clearly that a school for children with a mild general learning disability is recommended for the student.

This school shall admit each student with a diagnosis of a mild general learning disability and a recommendation from an educational psychologist for a school for children with a mild general learning disability seeking admission except where

         sanction has **not** been received from the NCSE to enrol the pupil

* the school is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
* 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.

To meet the individual needs of the pupils the number of students per class is limited (6-13 pupils). Children are divided into classes according to age. If a class is full then students will not be enrolled but their name will be placed on the waiting list.

Scoil Chiaráin is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

**6. How applications will be dealt in cases of 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:

* eligible pupils who have been given a school placement will be given priority

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:

* where applications exceed the maximum number of places available, priority consideration will be given to

i)             students with no educational provision,

ii)            those who cannot benefit further within mainstream schools

  iii)           and those with the greatest need for immediate support

* Students where all of the above apply will be placed in a lottery with an independent party present.
* In accordance with the DES pupil teacher ratio for schools within this category, and the Board of Management recommendation, the maximum number of places available in the primary section of the school will be 36 pupils and 100 post primary places, making a total of 136. For operational reasons, the number of primary classes will not be less than four.

       The Board of Management may consider offering additional places if demand exceeds available places and the school has adequate personnel to meet the needs of additional students. No class will exceed 13 students.

**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 Scoil Chiaráin:

         a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,

         the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;

         the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student’s parents;

       a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;

       a student’s connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;

        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 31st January 2025 only).

**8. Decisions on applications**

 All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Chiaráin 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 Psychological Report, (other relevant professional reports such as those from a Psychiatrist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist) and letter of application received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

* sanction from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for resources

(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.)

Applications to the NCSE will be made by the school for resources and school transport for students who are eligible to apply for a place in school Chiaráin. Should the pupil not meet the criteria for resources from the NCSE then the student may not be enrolled in the school.

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**

A referral may be made in writing to Scoil Chiaráin by a parent, guardian, psychologist or school principal and must be received by the school, by the last working day in January for consideration for the following September.

Once a referral has been received, the principal opens a new file in the pupil’s name and includes an Application Progress Form.

The parents or guardians of the referred pupil may be invited to visit the school to help them make an informed decision about the proposed placement.

The principal ensures that a complete record is in place before discussions can take place on the appropriateness of the referral.

An educational report from the school or preschool in which the child is currently enrolled will be sought and added to the child’s file, as with all other reports as maybe deemed necessary in each individual case e.g Speech and Language, medical, social, psychiatric etc.

If the outcome of formal assessment procedures is unclear or complex, it may be appropriate for a teacher from Scoil Chiaráin to observe the child in his/her current educational setting and to meet personnel who work with him/her.

Following consideration of the reports, if the Board of Management considers that additional resources are required to meet the particular educational/special needs of the child, an application will be made to the DES, via the Special Educational Needs Organiser to provide the same. A case-conference may be called to discuss the needs of a particular child if appropriate. Placement may depend on the provision of specialist resources.

When all necessary documentation is in place, the application for a place in Scoil Chiaráin will be considered in relation to the number of places and resources available.

 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 Chiaráin, 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.

 Successful applications are submitted to the Board of Management for ratification.

**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 Chiaráin where:

             it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.

            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.

             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

* 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:

1. the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
2. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
3. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
4. 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 Chiaráin 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 Chiaráin 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, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

The application procedures referred to above will apply.

 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 application procedures referred to above apply.

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

The board of Scoil Chiaráin or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

          an application for admission of a student to the school, or

          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 parent~~s~~ 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.

**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.

**19. Progression at the school and continued participation in Scoil Chiaráin**

While it is envisaged that most students will remain in Scoil Chiaráin until they complete their education at 18 years of age, some students may require further assessment to assist with planning for their future support or to determine if Scoil Chiaráin is the most appropriate setting to meet their educational needs.

 Assessment may be carried out by the school’s NEPS psychologist or a student may be referred to another appropriate agency. Parents/Guardians’ permission will always be sought before such a referral is made.

If the recommendation is made that the child transfer to another specialist facility, the school will make every effort to support families to make the transition.

If a student is found to be functioning within the high moderate range of learning disability, parents and professionals will discuss the most appropriate placement for the student – this could be to remain in Scoil Chiaráin if the student is benefitting from the programme or the decision could be made to transfer to a specialist moderate GLD facility. The needs of each child will be considered separately.

**20. Curriculum**

 Our mission statement states:

 *Scoil Chiaráin provides a specialist curriculum. It strives to maximise the learning skills, social skills, self-worth and sense of independence of its pupils.*

 At primary level, the Revised Primary Curriculum is modified to cater for individual needs in so far as possible. Group and individual teaching is used to develop perceptual and cognitive abilities. Special emphasis is placed on sensory training and the acquisition of basic skills in communication, speech and language, reading, writing and number. The level and pace of learning is designed to meet individual learning needs. The Stay Safe Programme is covered at appropriate levels for each class throughout the year.

 At post-primary level there is a practical bias to programmes. The Stay Safe Programme is also covered throughout the year in an age appropriate manner. Home Economics is taught to all students in blocks of classes. In addition to the continued development of oracy, literacy and numeracy, special emphasis on prevocational guidance directs senior cycle students to ensure a greater sense of awareness and responsibility to work, leisure and post-school life. A wide variety of subject options reflects the range available in post-primary schools and these are conducted at a suitable level for students.

The school has an active sports and social education programme which encourages pupil participation in inter-school competitions in football, basketball, swimming and athletics. Senior students may go on an annual holiday to an Adventure Centre to participate in additional water and land based sports when appropriate.

The Curriculum in Scoil Chiaráin is wide and expansive and is organised under the following headings:

       Development of Motor Skills – PE, Games, Athletics, Swimming and Cycling

       Communication and Language – including ICT

        Mathematics

        Social Person & Health Education (SPHE) – including Relationship & Sexuality Education, Substance Misuse and Stay Safe Programmes and some students participate in a work experience programme for school leavers.

        Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) – including environmental

 studies, science & technology, history, geography, horticulture and CPSE (Civic, Social and Political Education)

       Creative Arts – including woodwork, art, drama, music and dance

       Religious Formation – including preparation for sacraments

While the programme offered reflects the provision in mainstream post-primary schools, our students do not participate in Junior or Leaving Certificate exams. This would not be a fair measure of their achievements. Our school currently provides for Junior Cycle Level 2 and QQI Awards in a wide range of subjects according to each student’s ability and interest. Work is continually assessed and built up into a portfolio of work which is examined by an external examiner on completion of the course. A National Certificate is awarded detailing each student’s achievements and is presented at our Annual Awards Ceremony.

The educational provision within the school depends on the grants and staffing resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and we operate within the regulations laid down, from time to time by the Department. The school is classified as a primary school and so adheres to the annual calendar for primary schools.