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Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire
Áth Fhirdia

Admission Policy of Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire

Roll No: 18099V
School Patron: Archbishop Eamon Martin

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 Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 25/09/2025. 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 na Trócaire'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.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is a Catholic, primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Armagh.
Since September 2022 parents have the option of enrolling boys and girls in Junior Infants in our school (subject to the availability of places) growing year on year to become a complete vertical co-educational school (Junior Infants to 6th class) by September 2029.

From September 2027 we will admit boys and girls to our Junior Infants classes, Senior Infants classes, 1st Classes, 2nd classes, 3rd Classes and 4th Classes.

From September 2027, Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is an all girls' school from Fifth Class to Sixth class and our school does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a boy applying for admission to those classes in this school.

"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 na Trócaire 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.

Our Mission Statement:

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire aims to provide quality learning experiences through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which will help each pupil develop his/her potential as a unique individual in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. We are committed to the teaching and values of the Catholic Church and the educational philosophy of the Sisters of Mercy informs our policies and daily practice.

Our School Ethos:

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is a Catholic Primary School reflecting and promoting the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Catholic Church. The school seeks to uphold and express the doctrines, moral teachings, practices and customs of the Catholic Church. This distinctive spirit and moral dimension permeate the core values of daily life in the school.

Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh, is the patron of Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire.

We are inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley who founded the religious congregation of the Sisters of Mercy in 1831. Mercy education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalized. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy education is committed to ongoing whole-school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the wider community.

A Roman Catholic School (which is established in connection with the Minister) aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.

The school strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy, attractive and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, emotional, imaginative, cultural and social needs of the pupils are nurtured.

The school is committed to the aims and principles of the Primary School Curriculum. We aim to provide quality learning experiences that are engaging, enriching and enjoyable through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

The Board of Management seeks to promote and foster an environment that encourages children to attend school regularly and to participate to the best of their ability in the life of the school.
A spirit of mutual respect is promoted within the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people and property.

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire seeks to be a warm and welcoming place respectful and accommodating of diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability. The school promotes gender equality and is an equal opportunities employer. We strive to provide an inclusive environment responsive to the needs of all pupils.

We value most highly our relationship with parents and the local community and seek to continue to work in partnership with parents to ensure the best interests of each child is provided for.
Teachers are encouraged to develop their personal and professional talents for the benefit of the pupils in whose education they play such a significant role. The work of ancillary staff is highly valued and makes a very valuable contribution to the process of education.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire 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 na Trócaire is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire 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 na Trócaire 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.

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

Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is a mainstream school. It does not have a Special Class(es) at present. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are catered for by their mainstream class teacher with the support of the Special Education Team. Children with special needs enrolling in Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to the Board of Management.

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

c) Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student 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

Note for parents: the inclusion of the above wording was mandated by the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018.

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:

a) Junior Infants to 4th Classes 2027/2028: Brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings and foster siblings) of existing or former pupils with priority going to the oldest.
b) All other classes 2027/2028: Sisters (including stepsisters and foster sisters) of existing or former pupils with priority going to the oldest.
c) Children from the Parish of Ardee and Collon, priority to parish children living closest to **this** school.
d) Children of those who are moving to the Parish (documentary evidence required).
e) Children from the adjacent parishes.
f) Transfers

g) In the event that there are more applicants within any category than there are available places, priority will be given to children within the particular category in order of age, starting with the oldest.

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:
Places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated.

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) 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/her family attending or having previously attended the school: - other than in the application of the selection criteria when we are over-subscribed as outlined in section 6 – based on 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 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire 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 na Trócaire, you must indicate

a) 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

b) 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 na Trócaire where

a) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
b) 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.
c) 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
d) 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 na Trócaire 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 na Trócaire 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 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 in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Application forms are available from the school office and for download from the school website. Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.

The parent(s) of a student must confirm, in writing, in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000, that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to them and

that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.

Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.

Places will be offered to children in classes where the maximum number of enrolment has not been reached. In the event of oversubscription, the criteria outlined in Section 6 will be employed to determine order of offers.

The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind Department of Education guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions. Other factors that may be considered are:

- Size of and available space in classrooms
- The educational needs of children of a particular age
- Multi-grade classes
- Presence of children with special educational needs

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:

Places will be offered to children in classes where the maximum number of enrolment has not been reached. In the event of oversubscription, the criteria outlined in Section 6 will be employed to determine order of offers. The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind Department of Education guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions. Other factors that may be considered are

- Size of and available space in classrooms
- The educational needs of children of a particular age
- Multi-grade classes
- Presence of children with special educational needs

In the event of there being more applications for the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students, whose applications for admission to Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire 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 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. Junior Infants, with the exception of students transferring from another school, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, Junior Infants normally start school at the start of Term 1.

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

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire 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

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents of a student have 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) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/Appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parents/guardians of 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.

19. 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.

Approval and Review Procedure:
This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Principal, staff (under the guidance of the principal) and by the Board of Management. Our admissions notice will be reviewed annually by the principal, staff and Board of Management.

This policy was originally ratified and signed by Niamh Black, Diocesan Secretary, on behalf of our Patron, Archbishop Eamon Martin on 21/09/2021 and was approved again by Niamh Black on behalf of the Patron on 25/09/2025.

It was updated in December 2022 as required by the Education (provision in respect of children with special education needs) Act 2022.

It is reviewed and updated annually by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na Trócaire as our school progresses year on year towards a complete vertical co-educational school.

Signed: Mrs Ger McCormack

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Mrs Deirdre Sweeney

Principal, Secretary Board of Management

Date: October 2026