

**Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa,  
Ballyroan,  
Co. Laois**

**Roll number: 20485P  
Enrolment Policy**

Scoil Eoin Phóil Naofa, Ballyroan, Co. Laois is a rural, mixed school situated approximately six and a half miles from Portlaoise and approximately two miles from Abbeyleix.

It is a Catholic School within the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin and is under the patronage of His Lordship Bishop Denis Nulty.

At present seven mainstream classroom teachers and three full time Special Education Teachers are employed in the school.

**Further relevant information:**

- The official school hours are between the times 8.50a.m. and 2.30 p.m.
- The school uniform consists of a crested navy v-neck jumper, sky blue shirt, navy tie and navy trousers. Girls may wear a skirt/pinafore/trousers with the crested school jumper/cardigan. Junior and Senior Infants children are permitted to only wear the school tracksuit (see below).
- For Physical Education activities, games and some school trips a school tracksuit is necessary. This comprises of a crested navy top, a light blue polo t shirt and plain navy bottoms.

See attached Enrolment Form and Code of Conduct.

The school depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills. Therefore, school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act.

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Skills regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of,

- Inclusiveness;
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

**Procedures:**

1. Parents seeking to enrol their child(ren) in Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the school) to the school by the last day in school before we reak for the February mid-term each year and ensure that they have carefully studied and noted the school's Code of Conduct booklet.
2. Parents of successful applicants will be notified by post, 21 days from the closing date of applications. (closing date being the last day in school that we break for the February mid-term.)
3. The names of the children for whom Enrolment Application Forms have not been successful will be placed on a class waiting list.
4. Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accnt, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances alone.
5. (A) While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children.  
(B) Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:
  - Size of/ available space of classrooms.
  - Educational needs of children of a particular age.
  - Presence of children with special educational / behavioural needs.
  - DES maximum class average directives. (This is currently a maximum average of 26 children)
6. In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/standard exceeding the number of places available preceding or during the school year (due to the Board of Management being unable to provide suitable accommodation, or recruit the required teaching staff) the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment;
  - In accordance with the Board of Managements Health and Safety Policy, there shall be no more than 26 pupils on average in any classroom.
  - All applicants for Junior Infants must have reached four years of age before the start of the school year that they wish to attend.

- Should the number of children seeking enrolment in Junior Infants exceed the number of places available, children that turn 4 on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> March in the year they wish to enrol will be given priority according to the following criteria:
  - Siblings (including step-siblings, resident at the same address) of children already enrolled - priority to the oldest.
  - Children living within the parish – priority to the oldest.
  - Children of current school staff – priority to the oldest.
  - Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an OS map) if the child is normally resident outside the parish/agreed catchment area.

In the event of being unable to enrol a child(ren) from the first three points above in any given class at the beginning of a year, or mid-year, such children will receive priority (in order of the above) for the subsequent school year over other children on the class waiting list.

7. Other pupils are enrolled during the year if newly resident in the area.

8. Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment policy.

9. Prospective parents are welcome, having arranged a suitable time with either the Principal/Class teacher, to come and visit the school.

10. Children who have moved house may be enrolled during the school year subject to the enrolment policy as long as the school has a place for them. All records from former schools must be received. Children transferring from another primary school will also be accepted, having established the reason for transfer, and only at the beginning of each quarter, unless otherwise advised by the Department of Education and Skills. Acceptance of a child is always subject to the Board of Management approval, following receipt of a completed Application form and relevant documents from the parents.

10. Children with Special Needs: It is the policy of this school that no child will be refused on the basis of special needs.

If a parent requests that the school accepts a child with specific needs or a severe behavioural problem or other, who might normally attend a Special School, a number of requests will be made of the parents.

These requests shall be made in the interests of the child, to ascertain if the school can meet the needs of the child and the expectations of the parents.

We will also take into consideration the needs of the other children in the school and the need to ensure, as far as possible that their education is not put at risk.

In order to see if we can meet the needs of the child, the following requests shall be made:

- The school should meet the parents to discuss the child's needs and the schools capability to meet those needs.
- The Board of Management will require a medical report and psychological assessment if a recommendation was made that the child should be placed in a mainstream school and would benefit more in such a placement. Where such a report is not available the Board of Management will require that the child be assessed immediately.

The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report the Board of Management should after due consideration request the Department of Education and Skills to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological or medical report.

It shall be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a particular child pending:

- a) Receipt of a (current) assessment report and
- b) The provision of appropriate resources by the Department of Education and Skills to meet the needs specified in the psychological and/or medical report.

Integration of a child with learning difficulties or challenging behaviour, necessitates certain resources, by way of additional staff, such as a care assistant, or a special needs assistant, visiting teacher, allocation of time of resource teacher for special needs, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.

A request should be made to the Department of Education and Skills or to the Health Board to provide whatever resources are necessary to integrate the child into the mainstream education without the education of the child, or the education or safety of other children in the school being put at risk.

When suitable resources have been provided, the Board of Management will accept any such child into the school.

Accepting any child is conditional on the parents accepting the policies of the school in relation to Code of Behaviour, School Ethos etc, on behalf of their child/children.

**Right to Refuse:**

Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa will make every effort to uphold inclusiveness of all children, parental choice in relation to school, and respect for the diversity of values, faith, traditions and languages. It expects any parents enrolling a child to be made aware of the operating context of the school, and the various policies on behaviour, discipline, bullying, medicine etc. of the school. As a relatively small school, it is not possible for children of different faiths to be withdrawn from class while religious education is being taught. If parents do not want their children to be taught the Catholic faith, arrangements can be made for these children to work independently within the classroom while religious education is being taught. The Board of Management expects that any particular problems will be resolved by agreement and discussion.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to the school in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances would be for example:

- Where it is clear that the enrolment of the child in the school would make it extremely difficult for the Board of Management to uphold “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” (Education Act 1998 Section 15.2b)
- Where it is clear that the parents intend to undermine the policies of the school in regard to behaviour, discipline, bullying and other serious matters.

The following procedure will be followed:

1. In such circumstances the Board of Management will firstly try to reach agreement with the parents by discussion.
2. If the matter is not resolved the Board of Management will inform the Patron and request an outside facilitator be appointed.
3. If the matter is still not resolved the Board will make its determination and inform the Patron.
4. The Board will also inform the parents of their right to appeal the matter to the Department of Education.

**Right to appeal:**

Parents have a right to appeal a refusal by a school to enrol a student under Section 29 of the Education Act. Following such a decision, the school will advise parents of this right to appeal and its associated timeframe. Application forms are available from the school.

**Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.****Introduction:**

Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 gives parents (and students who have reached the age of 18) the right to appeal certain decisions made by a school Board of Management, or a person acting on behalf of the Board, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

**Decisions that may be appealed:**

Currently, Section 29 of the Education Act provides that the following decision may be appealed

1. Permanent exclusion from a school.
2. Suspension for a period, which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.
3. Refusal to enrol.

It should be noted that the procedures have been designed to deal specifically with the three issues identified above. The procedures are not designed for and cannot be invoked to deal with matters that do not come within these three categories. Furthermore an appeal to the Secretary General under the Section 29 cannot be made, and will not be accepted, until all procedures at local level have been exhausted. In effect, the matter that is the subject of the appeal will have had to be referred to the Board of Management of the School and the Board will have to issue its decision in the matter.

**Timeframe for making appeals:**

Appeals must be generally made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or the student. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right to appeal and associated time frame when informing them of any of the above categories of decisions.

**Procedure to be followed:**

The detailed procedures that apply to all appeals to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 are outlined in the appendix to Circular 22/2002. There are three layers to these procedures:

- a) Both parties will be asked in the first instance to see if an accommodation can be reached at local level.
- b) Should that fail, and where the Appeals Committee considers that it may be possible to facilitate agreement between the appellant and the school, a facilitator will be appointed to contact the parties at the earliest opportunity.
- c) Finally an appeal may be referred for hearing by an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education and Science.

Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/ Board of Management's Code of Conduct as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The Board of Management places Parents/Guardians responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education Rules for National Schools, a child may be suspended.

**Review:**

This Enrolment Policy will be reviewed in two years' time or as deemed appropriate.

**Ratification:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson Board of Management



