



## ADMISSION POLICY OF SCOIL DARA

SCHOOL ADDRESS: Church Street, Kilcock, co. Kildare W23WT26

ROLL NUMBER: 61691B

SCHOOL PATRON: CEIST CLG

### 1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on [date]. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Scoil Dara'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 Scoil Dara

Scoil Dara is a Catholic co-educational voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust).

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Scoil Dara 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.

“Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims to promote:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, 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

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.

Catholic education is therefore a lifelong process of human growth and development which has been at the heart of the Church's mission since Jesus Christ urged his disciples to 'go teach all nations'. The person of Christ is the core of Catholic education.

Scoil Dara draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The charism of founder Nano Nagle of the Presentation Order who began this school is of very significant importance in the life of the school.

As a CEIST school, Scoil Dara values teaching as one of the most important of all human activities. Our school seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes, and bears witness to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the CEIST Charter. These are encapsulated in the core values which are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools.

- ***Promoting Spiritual and Human Development***
- ***Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning***
- ***Showing Respect for Every Person***
- ***Creating Community***
- ***Being Just and Responsible***

Scoil Dara is inspired by the words of Jesus Christ to his disciples, “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full” (Jn 10:10). Because of this, Scoil Dara provides a rich, holistic education in the Catholic tradition where engagement with and development of the whole person; the intellectual, moral, religious, physical, spiritual and psychological are at the core of our practice.

Education has as its goal the formation of a human person who is free, rational and mature in relationships. Scoil Dara offers educational opportunities which promote excellence so that students can respond responsibly and creatively to their own lives, the lives of others and to the earth, which is our common home.

In Scoil Dara the dignity and uniqueness of every human being as a child of God is acknowledged and affirmed. The Catholic school is an inclusive community, ideally built on love and formed by the interaction and collaboration of its various components: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the Board of Management. Catholic schools are also outward looking. They are connected to their local parish and Diocese and other local organisations which enrich the life of the school. Our school draws on the rich resources of the local community and, in turn, contributes to the life of the local community.

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is central to our curriculum. Alongside Religious Education, the school supports the formation in faith of our students through many school-based experiences of prayer and ritual. All students' spiritual growth is further enhanced through such areas as sport, language, nature, art, poetry and music.

### **Mission Statement**

The community of the school works in a holistic manner to ensure that dependence is gradually replaced by responsibility for self, society and the world. The dignity to each student, staff member and parent is honoured and reflected in school policies and structures. While educational excellence is promoted, it is the needs of the learner that direct the development of the school. The school promotes a spirit of service and care.

Scoil Dara is a student-centred school, where support is given to each student to:

- recognise their belonging to a community of support and care.
- experience success
- feel affirmed in achieving their individual best
- value hard work, positive effort and creativity
- receive encouragement toward attaining their goals
- access support and guidance in their personal, academic and social development
- grow in confidence and self-awareness
- endeavour to become the best that they can be
- offer support and care for others
- identify their innate attributes and skills and strive to develop them
- understand the responsibilities associated with community involvement and inclusion, respecting all other members of the school community

### 3. Admission Statement

Scoil Dara 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 Dara is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

Scoil Dara 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.

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

Scoil Dara with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, will establish in September 2022 a class to provide an education exclusively for students who have one or more of the following special educational needs: Autism/ Autistic Spectrum Disorders. The diagnosis must be confirmed by professional psychological reports within the last twelve months confirming the special educational need and the recommendation for the special class

### 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

Information regarding the commencement of the enrolment procedure are communicated on the school website, via the feeder primary schools and published in the local parish newsletter each year.

All applicants must fully complete the relevant official Enrolment Application form (available from the school office and website; year specific) and submit it with all supporting documentation and signatures by the deadline as stated on the form. Late applications will only be considered where places remain available.

The commencement date for submission of completed application forms for First Year is the first Thursday in October each year. The school will not accept any forms submitted before this date and accepts no responsibility for any forms prior to the commencement date for submission. The enrolment deadline is 21 days after enrolment opens.

Application forms will only be processed when fully completed and accompanied by all supporting/requested documentation. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that the application is complete before submission to the school. It is also the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that they complete the application process before the deadline. The submission of an enrolment application form is not a guarantee of an offer of enrolment.

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

The special class attached to Scoil Dara 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

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission to mainstream/special class, 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:

1. Siblings of students currently enrolled in and attending Scoil Dara
2. Students from feeder primary schools (see list below) whose parent's / guardian's principal private residence is in the Kilcock School Planning area (see map attached)
3. Students whose parent's / guardian's principal private residence is in the Kilcock School Planning area but do not attend a local feeder primary school (see map attached)
4. All other applicants

The Feeder Primary schools for Scoil Dara based on the Kilcock School Planning area (see map attached) are:

- Scoil Choca Naofa
- St. Josephs National School Kilcock
- Scoil Ui Riada
- Newtown National School

- Coole National School
- St. Joseph's National school Mulhussey
- Tiermohan National School
- St Mary's National school Enfield
- Moynalvey National School

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), Scoil Dara will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications. This random lottery will be witnessed by an independent observer i.e. a member of an Garda Síochána, Peace Commissioner etc.

In the case of siblings (ie. twins/triplets/siblings within a family group) – when a twin sibling is drawn in a lottery, then the other twin/triplet shall automatically be offered the next available place. Where Scoil Dara is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, the applicant will receive a place on the waiting list beneath applicants whose applications were received by the closing date for applications. Late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school.

## **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
- the payment of fees or contributions to the school
- a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude
- 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; with the exception of a sibling of a student currently attending 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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

## 8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Dara 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 Dara 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

(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 Dara 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

- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 9 above.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

## **12. Sharing of Data with other schools**

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 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 Dara 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 Dara 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.

Scoil Dara does not have a historical waiting 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 not 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.

#### **15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year**

This section of the policy applies to students who are or who have been enrolled in another school and wish to make an application to enrol in Scoil Dara. In general, it is the policy of the Board of Management of Scoil Dara not to accept transfers during the school year.

However, the Board of Management will consider an application where:

1. The student has already moved into the catchment

An offer of transfer enrolment from the Board of Management is subject to all of the following:

- The availability of places in the year group and specific subjects
- Conformity with all of the selection criteria per the admission into first year
- Proof/evidence of residence in the catchment area
- The ability of the school to ensure continuity of study of subjects and levels
- The acceptance and full compliance with the Code of Behaviour by the student and the parent/guardians
- The acceptance and full compliance with the Uniform Code by the student and the parent/guardians
- The exhaustion of all disciplinary proceedings, including any Section 29 appeals with the school where they are currently or have been enrolled

The submission of a fully completed transfer application form. Forms will not be processed until they are complete.

Initially, the Principal processes the fully completed transfer application form and requested documentation. The Principal then determines whether the applicant meets the criteria (see above)

for consideration by the Board of Management, for example; residence in catchment area, availability of a place in relevant classes etc.

If the transfer enrolment criteria are not met, then the Principal will inform the parents/guardians that the application has been unsuccessful. Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal this decision by writing to the Board of Management.

The parents/guardians will be informed of the date for the next Board of Management meeting. The Principal will present such considered transfers applications to the Board of Management. The Board of Management will consider the application.

The Board of Management will decide whether to:

- refuse enrolment
- offer to admit the student immediately
- defer an offer of enrolment if the Board is of the view that it would more appropriate to wait until the beginning of the next term/year. This is to minimise disruption to the existing students of Scoil Dara and to facilitate the student's smooth transition into Scoil Dara.

Parents/guardians will be notified within 7 days to the Board's decision. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment (see section on Right to Refuse Enrolment).

Important Notes for Applicants:

- Transfer Application forms are available from the office of Scoil Dara.
- Only fully completed applications will be processed.
- Transfer applications will be processed within 21 days, excluding school holiday periods when the school is closed.
- Transfer applications posted to the school during school holidays will be processed within 21 days of the school reopening.

Where a student, who has left Scoil Dara voluntarily to take up employment or to attend another educational establishment, subsequently makes a formal application for re-admission to Scoil Dara, the Board of Management shall, upon review, decide as to whether or not to readmit the student to the school. Such an application will be processed in the same manner as a transfer enrolment application.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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

In accordance with section 64 of the Education Act 1998, The board of Scoil Dara or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions 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

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Scoil Dara without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how that request may be accommodated by the school.

## 18. 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, 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.

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Scoil Dara on: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## Kilcock School Planning Area

