Admission Policy of Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich
Bóthar Chill Droichid, Maigh Nuad, Co. Chill Dara
Roll number: 20058T
Catchment area – Maynooth Parish
School Patron/s: Archbishop of Dublin

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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 13/11/2026. 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 Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one month 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

Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

"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 Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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

- We strive to create a happy, Christian and co-operative environment in which every child will reach their full potential.
- We wish them to leave our care with high self-esteem and self-confidence.
- We wish them to have respect for their culture and environment.
- We hope they will be responsible citizens both now and in the future.

In the context of the rules and programmes of the DES, the rights of the Patron is laid out in the Education Act, and the money and resources available to the school Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich supports the following principles:

(i) Inclusivity, especially re: registering children with a disability or with special education needs

(ii) Equality in getting a place in the school and taking part fully in school life

(iii) Parents' right to register their child

(iv) Respect for different values, religions, traditions, languages and ways of life

While recognising the rights of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the BoM of Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich must also recognise the rights of the existing school community, and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgments, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of the children.

Policy of Total Early Immersion

In our school, we implement a policy of Total Early Immersion. From the first day in Junior Infants, only Irish is spoken to the children until the beginning of the second term in Senior Infants. English is not spoken or taught until then.

3. Admission Statement

Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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

j) Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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.

k) Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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.

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.

All denominational schools

Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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 of Catholic denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Schools with Special Education Classes

Gaelscoil uí Fhiaich is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, which provides an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) as specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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. Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

Any special class opened in Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich will operate through the medium of Irish.

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

Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with ASD.

Any special class opened in Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich will operate through the medium of Irish.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

- Professional report(s) outlining: • Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report)

  AND
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

  AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

  AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism

NB – The above must be submitted when applying for a school place.

In the event that the special class 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:

(Children who are 4 years and 6 months old by the 1st September on the year of entry in the following order)

(1) Current pupils of the school in mainstream classes with the eldest given priority.

(2) Sibling of a current pupil of the school with the eldest given priority.

(3) Children who have attained a level of fluency in the Irish language indicative of what would be expected of a student who uses the Irish language as a normal means of communication in a non-educational environment, taking into account any special educational needs of the student concerned and that the said fluency would be likely to regress were the student not admitted to an Irish language school, with the eldest given priority.*

(4) Children resident in the parish with the eldest given priority.

(5) Children of current school employees with the eldest given priority.

(6) Children residing outside the parish with the eldest given priority.

**Parents/guardians must provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate a level of fluency in Irish to the board. See further information in the relevant document available from the 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), the following arrangement will apply:

- The oldest applicant will be chosen. If two or more applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent person present.

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) if the special class is oversubscribed please see section 4 above

c) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

All denominational schools

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

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) Children who are 4 years and 6 months old by the 1st September on the year of entry and who have attained a level of fluency in the Irish language indicative of what would be expected of a student who uses the Irish language as a normal means of communication in a non-educational environment, taking into account any special educational needs of the student concerned and that the said fluency would be likely to regress were the student not admitted to an Irish language school. *****

b) Siblings of current and past-pupils including step-siblings, adopted and fostered children who are 4 years and 6 months by the 1st September on the year of entry who are resident in the parish (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

c) Children resident in the parish or siblings of current pupils residing outside the parish including step-siblings, adopted and fostered children who are 4 years and 6 months by the 1st September on the year of entry (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

d) Children of current school employees (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

e) Children residing outside the parish (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

***** Where a parent wishes their child to be considered under the 'level of fluency in the Irish language' provision above, that parent is invited to provide evidence to prove/ display the fluency to the Board of Management's representatives.

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:

- The oldest applicant will be chosen. If two or more applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent person present.

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) 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;
(other than in relation to:
admission to an Irish language school, in accordance with the provisions of section 62(9) of the act)- see (a) in section 6)

(d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;

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

(f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
(other than, siblings of a student attending the school– see (b) in section 6)

(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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see section 18 below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich where—

(i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
(ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
(iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
(iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

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 Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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 Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admission policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Enrolment in Classes other than Junior Infants

Pupils may be enrolled in classes other than Junior Infants if there is space in the class and if they fulfil the required criteria above subject to Board of Management approval. The School will look for any assessments / school reports of the child from the parents.

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:

Transferring to Junior Infants

If the situation arises that a child applies to transfer into Junior Infants, it must be ascertained that there is a space available and that there is no longer anyone from the waiting list who wishes to take the place.

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

The Board of Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich 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 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 parent 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.

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.

When you accept a place in this school, the Board of Management understand that you are supporting and accepting this policy.



Caoimhe Ní Chuinn
Cathaoirleach
Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich



Déaglán Ó Drisceoil

Príomhoide