



Admission policy

Admission Policy of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh N.S.)

School Address: Creagh,
Ballinasloe,
Co. Galway,
H53PT32

Roll number: 17198S

School Patron/s: Bishop Michael Duignan
Bishop of Clonfert

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 in June 2021. It is published on the school's website (creaghnsnsonline.com) and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh N.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

In our school, we endeavour to ensure that all pupils are enabled to develop personally, socially and academically in a safe climate which fosters positive attitudes, develops a sense of citizenship, shows care and respect for each individual and for our environment and recognises and values difference and human and cultural diversity. Our policies encourages the promotion of self-esteem and self-confidence in our pupils and we seek to nurture each child's ability to relate to others in the community in a positive and creative way.

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
- b) A living relationship with God and with other people
- c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus
- d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

The purpose of a Catholic school is to assist parents in providing an education for their children, which is inspired by the Gospel. A Catholic school is essentially a community of faith, in which:

- The values of the Gospel influence the manner in which the school is managed as well as the relationships among teachers and between teachers and their pupils
- Religious education is taught with the same professionalism as would be expected for any other subject and resourced accordingly
- Children of other faiths and none are welcomed on a basis of equality and included fully in the life of the school community, with absolute respect for their own religious faith, but without compromising the religious ethos of the school
- Personal and liturgical prayer are encouraged and facilitated.
- Communications with parents and messages on social media make reference from time to time to the faith dimension of the school, just as they do to other activities

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other school policies, including our Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding statement and Policy, Anti Bullying Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy etc. Such school policies are available on the school website and a hard copy will be made available on request via the school office.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh N.S) Mission Statement;

Our school aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, support staff and Board of Management work in partnership, where each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for his / her uniqueness and facilitated to reach his / her full potential in a positive, supportive and Christian atmosphere.

General School Information

Official Opening Hours: 9.30 a.m.-2.10 p.m. – (Junior & Senior Infants)
9.20 a.m.- 3.00 p.m. (1st Class – 6th Class)

School's Denominational Character: Roman Catholic School under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Clonfert: Bishop. Michael Duignan.

School Staff: 1 Administrative Principal
16 Mainstream Class Teachers
8 S.E.N. Teachers
1 E.A.L. Teacher

1 Teacher for C.L.A.S.S.
6 Special Needs Assistants
3 Teachers on the Covid Supply Panel
1 Secretary
1 Caretaker

Board of Management 2021/2023:

Frank Gallagher (Chairperson)
Áine Ni Cholleráin Bleahene (Acting Principal)
Miriam Commerford,
Rita Moore
Carmel Stack
Aidan Curley
Caroline Gallagher
Fr. John Garvey

Classes:

Mixed school with a full range of classes from Junior Infants
- Sixth.
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- Our school will communicate its enrolment dates via the Admission's Notice to the wider community through school newsletters, the school website and the parish bulletin. Enrolment date will not be earlier than 1st January of the year of enrolment.
- The date for Junior Infants to start school shall usually be the beginning of September of the year of enrolment.
- Cut off date for receipt of Enrolment Application Forms shall be according to the date on the annual Admission's Notice.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál (Creagh N.S) will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
or
- the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál is a co-educational Primary school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic 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.

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

- Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál embraces the philosophy of inclusiveness and endeavours to reflect that philosophy in the admission of pupils with disabilities or other special educational needs. The school welcomes applications from children with special educational needs. Such applications will be processed in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- Pupils with special educational needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
- In order to assist the school in establishing the educational and physical needs of a successful applicant, relevant to his/her ability or special needs, and to profile the support services required the school requests that parent(s) of the pupils accepted for enrolment;
 - Inform the school of any special needs as early as possible and
 - Ensure that copies of relevant professional reports are provided so that provision can be made for that applicant's welfare and educational progress.
 - Where a report is not available and in the event that an applicant is accepted for an enrolment, a request will be made that the successful applicant be assessed immediately. Following receipt of the report, the Board of Management will assess how the school can meet the needs as specified therein.
 - Where the Board of Management deems that further resources are required, it will request the DES and or NCSE and or HSE to provide resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the medical and or psychological report(s).
 - The Principal may, in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) or the DES Inspector, meet with the parent(s) of the child to discuss the child's needs. This meeting is not a condition of enrolment

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

Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál is a Co-educational 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:

- **Child must be 4 years of age on or before the 31st March of the year of**

enrolment and if transferring must be age appropriate to their grade.

- On the first admission of a child to an Irish National School the parents/guardians must supply our school with satisfactory documentary evidence of the birth date of the child i.e. Long Form Birth/Adoption Certificate.
- As a general principle, and in so far as practicable, having regard to our school's enrolment policy, children will be enrolled provided there is:
 - Place/Space available
 - Department of Education and Science guidelines in relation to class size or staffing provision are adhered to.
 - That the physical space and/or health and welfare of children are not compromised.

Selection Criteria:

1.1 Children living in our catchment area

{Our catchment area is defined as starting at Bridge Street, Ballinasloe and continuing in a general easterly direction to incorporate all the townlands, streets and estates in the Parish of Creagh. It also includes the townland of Culliagh in the Parish of Moore, a traditional catchment area for the school}.

1.2 Children with siblings already in the school.

1.3 Children whose family have traditionally attended our school, eg. Parents/Grandparents

1.4 All other applications : This category will also include pupils who while living in our catchment area enrolled in another primary school and who subsequently seek to transfer to our school.

Junior Infants Admissions

While recognising the right of parents to seek to enrol their child to a school of their choice, in order to ensure the safety and educational needs of pupils, the Board of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál reserves the right to determine the maximum class sizes. The Board of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál has determined the maximum number of applicants who can be enrolled in Junior Infants each academic year as 60.

Bearing in mind;

- Overall school capacity
- Availability of space in classrooms
- Maximum class sizes
- Health and safety requirements
- Availability of staff, resources, facilities and grants
- Educational needs of existing pupils enrolled in the school
- The DES/Patron requirements

While the maximum number of applicants that can be enrolled in in each Junior Infant class has been decided by the Board of Management as 27. The Board reserves the right to change this number should relevant circumstances change.

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:

For Admissions to Junior Infants:

- If the maximum number of admissions is reached as outlined above, a selection process will apply whereby places will be offered to complete applications beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in that category and proceeding in descending order of age from the oldest to the youngest until all remaining available places have been filled.
- If during this selection process, two or more applicants have the same date of birth, the school will apply a random selection process to these applicants only in order to establish to whom places in that category will be offered.
- A waiting list for unsuccessful applications will be compiled and applicants will be placed on the list in the order of priority as set out above.
- Where a vacancy becomes available, applicants on the waiting list will be offered a place in accordance with the order of priority the applicant has been placed on the list. Incomplete applications will not be considered and applicants will not be placed on the waiting list.
- In a particular year, an applicant may fulfil the enrolment criteria and be offered a place. The parents of the applicant may accept this place and subsequently decide not to send their child to school that particular year. In this instance the applicant's place cannot be deferred. Instead, the applicant must reapply the following year and will be offered a place if they fulfil the enrolment criteria for that following year.

For Admissions to other classes:

- If there are two or more students tied for a place within categories; and the admissions have been submitted during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned; the school will apply a random selection process to these applicants only in order to establish to whom places in that category will be offered.
- If there are two or more students tied for a place within categories; and the admissions have been submitted after the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned; these will be admitted according to the date in which they seek admission.
- If a child transfers into the catchment area during the school year (not including children transferring from other schools within the local area) and a placement becomes available in the school, that child will be prioritised for admission over children from other categories awaiting admission.

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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (I) an early intervention class, or
 - (II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (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 or her family attending or having previously attended the school;
(other than
 - (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and
 - (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, Creagh N.S. may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).
- (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 Gan Smál will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the 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 [school name], 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 Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál 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 Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál 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 Gan Smál 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 admissions 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:

- **An application for a place in Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál will only be considered should a vacancy exist.**
- The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of pupils enrolled in each class as 27. (please see section 6 above which outlines criteria for enrolment)
- The Board reserves the right to change this number should relevant circumstances change.

Should a vacancy exist the applicant will be enrolled in an age appropriate class provided that:

- (1) The school is provided with a fully completed, signed and dated enrolment application form which is available from the school office and the school's website together with all required documentation.
- (2) The applicant will be required to provide all relevant reports and references from the school from which the applicant proposes to transfer or the school last attended by the applicant.
- (3) Failure to provide the documents referred to above will mean an application is incomplete.
- (4) A separate form must be completed for each applicant.
- (5) Acceptance by the school office of an application does not mean that same will be processed. Applications that are incomplete, not signed/dated and do not include the required documentation will not be processed.
- (6) Submitting inaccurate information on form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn and the place being reallocated. In the case of a placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list.
- (7) Written notification of the decision regarding the application will be issued to the parent(s) of the applicant within 21 days of receipt of the fully completed, signed and dated application form provided all requested documentation has also been provided.
- (8) Parent(s) of applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school in writing of the acceptance of the place, by completing and returning to the school an admission acceptance form within 10 days. Failure to do so will result in the place being forfeited and reallocated.
- (9) Any contact or lobbying of school personnel or Board of Management members regarding admission will disqualify an applicant.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

- Children will be assigned other/ non religious school work by the class teacher which can be completed independently during religious instruction time.
- Those who do wish to receive the Sacraments of Confession, Communion or Confirmation are exempt.
- Parents may choose that children not attend school masses or church celebrations. In this case supervision and alternative work will be arranged in the school building. Alternatively, parents may wish their child(ren) join their class/school in the church without partaking in prayers, Communion etc. All pupils are welcome to attend the church should they wish to do so.
- Arrangements are made in collaboration and consultation with parents

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.