



Admission Policy of Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon

School Address: Rathpeacon, Mallow Road, Cork. T23 F799.

Roll Number: 17360B

School Patron: Bishop William Crean, Bishop of Cloyne Diocese, Cork

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/guardians of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on September 3rd 2020. It was amended as required by Circular 75/2022 on February 9th 2023. It was further amended to allow for the provision of a Special Class for autistic learners, and approved by the Board of Management on 8th of April 2025 and the Patron on 30th of April 2025. The policy was amended in respect of Circular 39/2025 and approved by the Board of Management on 3rd of July 2025. It was approved by the Patron on 19th September 2025. The policy is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon'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 to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Cloyne Diocese, Bishop William Crean.

"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

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrine, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon shall uphold and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school,

Our Mission Statement

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon is a Catholic primary school. We have a long tradition of educational excellence and are committed to providing a school experience which best meets the needs of each member of the school community.

The school encourages the values that are at the heart of the Christian faith. We instil and encourage:

- The love of God in Christ for each individual
- Grace and forgiveness
- Peace and reconciliation
- Honesty and diligence
- Distinguishing between right and wrong, good and evil
- Tolerance of differences
- Kindness and generosity
- Caring and co-operation
- Service and personal responsibility

The school seeks to develop a sense of these Christian values hand in hand with the curriculum and to maintain Christian standards of behaviour throughout the school day in the classroom, the playground and the school community.

School Emblem and Motto

We have adopted the sunflower or ‘lus na gréine’ as our school symbol. You will see sunflowers on display in many prominent areas throughout the school.

The school staff encourage the children in their care to emulate the sunflower as a bright, upright and unique influence. Children who are seen as a positive inspiration to others may be awarded with our ‘Sunflower Award.’

We recognise that success in school gives each child a sense of achievement, raises confidence and self-esteem and fosters an enthusiasm for further learning and endeavour. We seek to enthuse, to inspire - to 'spreag an óige.'

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following grounds:

- (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 Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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 the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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.

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, which provides an education exclusively for pupils with a category of Special Educational Needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a pupil who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon is a mainstream school with a Special Class established in May 2025. The Special Class was established to provide an education exclusively for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism meeting DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 diagnostic criteria, irrespective of cognitive ability.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who do not have a diagnosis of Autism (DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11) are catered for by their mainstream class teacher with the support of the SEN team.

Eligibility for Enrolment in the Special Class:

Children are eligible for enrolment in a Special Class for Autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional Report(s) (Psychologist/Psychiatrist/Multi-Disciplinary) clearly stating:

- (a) Diagnosis of Autism meeting the criteria for DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11

AND

- (b) A demonstration of the understanding of the complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional report(s)

AND

- (c) 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

- (d) A letter from the National Council for Special Education (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

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) parent/guardian of a student, when required by the Principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- c) Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- d) **Special Education Class:** The Special Class attached to Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon provides an education for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism meeting the DSM IV/V or ICD

10/11 diagnostic criteria and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the pupil concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in the class.

Note:

1. The Department of Education and Youth specifies that the maximum number of pupils in a Special Class for children with Autism is six. The Eligibility Criteria for enrolment to the Special Class, as set out in Section 4, **must be provided** with the application for consideration for enrolment to the Special Class.
2. In the case of an application for admission to a class other than the intake group i.e. Junior Infants, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate class and/or classroom and will have regard for any relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size (currently 23:1), staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation (including physical space), educational needs of children of a particular age, the presence of children with special educational and / or behavioural needs and the health and welfare of the children already enrolled in the particular class/classroom.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school or 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.

1. Siblings of present and past pupils
2. Children of staff members
3. Children whose homes are in the following catchment areas:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rathpeacon • Sweeney's Hill • Monard • Boreen Dearg • Carhoo • Killeendaniel • Kilcully from Rathpeacon N.S. as far as Kilcully Bridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kilbarry - as far as Garvey's Bridge (including Fr. Roger's Park.) • Kilnap - as far as Garvey's Bridge. • Tweedmount • Lower Coolowen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Killeens • Blackstone Bridge • Kilcronan • Rahaniskey • Larchfield • Parklands • Onslow Gardens • Commons Road as far as Fitz's Boreen
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4. Children of past pupils
5. Children whose homes are outside of the catchment areas listed above.

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:

- Where demand exceeds availability of places in Category 3 and Category 5, the proximity of the child's home to the school, as determined by the Board of Management, takes precedence.
- Where two or more students tie for a place in any category listed above, priority will be given to the oldest child.

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 (howsoever described) 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/guardians;
- a requirement that a student, or his or her parents/guardians, 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 other than, in the case of siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or parents/guardians of a student having attended 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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 Admission 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 Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon, 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 Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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/guardian 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.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another Board of Management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) 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 Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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 Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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. See Section 6 above.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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

14. Late Applications

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

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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

(i) 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:

Parents/guardians should request an Application for Admission Form from the school office by phoning 021-4394265 or emailing office.rathpeaconns@gmail.com by the date set out in the annual Admissions Notice.

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon reserves the right to refuse admission where a Section 29 Appeal has been invoked in another school and is in progress.

(ii) 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:

Parents/guardians should request an Application for Admission Form from the school office by phoning 021-4394265 or emailing office.rathpeaconns@gmail.com and return the form within the date specified.

Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon reserves the right to refuse admission where a Section 29 Appeal has been invoked in another school and is in progress.

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

The Board of Management of Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon 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)/guardian(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. An agreement is drawn up and signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

18. Reviews/Appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent/guardian of the student, may request the Board of Management 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 Youth.

The Board of Management 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 of 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/guardian 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 Youth.

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 Youth.

This Admissions Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 30th of April 2020. It was approved by the Patron on September 3rd, 2020.

The policy was amended as required by Circular 75/2022 in December 2022 and approved by the Board of Management at its meeting of February 9th 2023.

This policy was amended to allow for the provision of a Special Class for autistic learners, and approved by the Board of Management on 8th of April 2025.

The policy was amended in respect of Circular 39/2025 and approved by the Board of Management on 3rd of July 2025. It was approved by the Patron on 19th September 2025.

An original signed copy is on file in the school office.

Signed: *Fiona Monahan*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 3rd July 2025

Signed: *Susanna O'Neill*

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 3rd July 2025

Patron Approved 19/09/2025

Michael Walsh

DEO Cloyne