

# **Admission Policy of Scoil Naomh Iosaf**

**Riverstown Cork**

**Roll number:**

**13747F**

**Under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and  
Ross Most Rev. Fintan Gavin.**

## **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 Naomh Iosaf 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**

Scoil Naomh Iosaf is a Catholic co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross. We seek to educate children to their fullest potential within a Catholic ethos and environment. We strive to be an inclusive community which affirms and supports children of varied communities, origins and abilities.

Scoil Naomh Iosaf's ASD classrooms offer an educational setting to children who

have been diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We work to create a supportive and caring environment for each pupil, catering for the uniqueness of each pupil's personality.

We strive towards the integration of children from the ASD classrooms into mainstream education, having regard for levels of ability, available resources and the suitability for such integration.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Scoil Naomh Iosaf 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 Naomh Iosaf, Riverstown is a co-educational, Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross. The school follows the curriculum as set down by the Department of Education and Skills. In addition to 27 mainstream classes, ranging from junior infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class, the school has two classes for children with an ASD diagnosis. There are 43 teachers on the staff. The school is funded by the Department of Education and Skills.

Scoil Naomh Iosaf 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.

Scoil Naomh Iosaf is a school which has established two classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to these classes a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Scoil Naomh Iosaf, Riverstown 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 Naomh Iosaf, Riverstown 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.

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

Scoil Naomh Iosaf with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established two classes to provide an education exclusively for students who have an ASD diagnosis.

#### **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 Naomh Iosaf, Riverstown is a co-educational, Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Cork and Ross. The school follows the curriculum as set down by the Department of Education and Skills. In addition to 27 mainstream classes the school also has two classes for children with an ASD diagnosis.

The special classes attached to Scoil Naomh Iosaf provides an education exclusively for students with an ASD diagnosis 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 or does not fall within the average to mild general learning disability category. In the event that a placement in the ASD classroom setting isn't the correct educational setting, every effort will be made to secure an alternatively suitable educational setting for the child concerned. Please note that placements are always subject to review.

## **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:

### **Mainstream classes**

1. Brothers and sisters (including step-siblings and foster children) of children who have attended or are attending the school
2. Children living in Marble Park and St. Joseph's View
3. Children of current school staff
4. Children of past pupils (i.e. who attended the school for at least two years) and who are living in our catchment area, i.e. Electoral Division of Riverstown, Caherlag and Rathcooney. (to a maximum of 25% of available places.)
5. Children who are living in our catchment area as outlined at No. 4.
6. Children of past pupils who are not living in our catchment area.
7. Children who are not living in our catchment area.
8. Any applicant not covered in 1-7 above.

When the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated to children starting with the eldest. All applicants

will be listed in age order, the oldest to the youngest under each criteria and the place will be offered to the oldest child under criteria 1 first and in age order and criteria order subsequently.

In general, all pupils will have reached four and a half years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> (four years of age by March 1<sup>st</sup>) in the year of enrolment.

**Note:** Proof of address (In the form of a utility bill and within the last 3 months) must accompany applications by a family for the first child. Younger siblings will qualify for a place thereafter under Criterion 1 above.

The following criteria will be used to fill any available places within our ASD classes:

**ASD classes**

1. Pupils currently enrolled in the school
2. Brothers and sisters (including step-siblings and foster children) of children who have attended or are attending the school
3. Children living in Marble Park and St. Joseph's View
4. Children of current school staff
5. Children who are living in our catchment area, i.e. Electoral Divisions of Riverstown, Caherlag and Rathcooney.
6. Children who are not living in our catchment area.
7. Any applicant not covered in 1-6 above.

**Note 1:** If a place becomes available during the year, pupils from within the school with an ASD diagnosis and a recommendation for a placement in a special class will be given priority over children on the ASD waiting list. After consultation with staff and the S.E.N.O, places will always be allocated to those children with the most complex of needs and who are already on the internal ASD waiting list. On the allocation of places to the ASD class, the final decision will rest with the Board of Management.

**Note2:** The same time frame for applications to our ASD classes will be applied as above for mainstream classes and as outlined on the school's Annual Admissions Notice which is published on the school website.

**Note 3:** It is school policy to review the enrolment of the ASD classes annually. This review will include examining if children are deemed capable to integrate back into a mainstream setting fulltime. This is very much encouraged and supported by the National Council for Special Education and our Special Educational Needs Officer. This is regarded as a successful outcome of the programme and will only ever happen after due consideration and consultation. Parents will always be informed of any changes that may occur.

When the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated to children starting with the eldest. All applicants will be listed in age order, the oldest to the youngest under each criteria and the place will be offered to the oldest child under criteria 1 first and in age order and criteria order subsequently.

Each child enrolled in the ASD classrooms must have a definite diagnosis of Autism. A full current psychological and cognitive assessment which must specify autism/autistic spectrum disorder and a recommendation for a placement in an ASD class is required. The maximum class size is six pupils.

In general, all pupils will have reached four and a half years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> (four years of age by March 1<sup>st</sup>) in the year of enrolment.

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:

A lottery carried out by the principal and presided over by the chairperson, in the presence of these students' parents, shall decide who receives the place.

### **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 a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned and is within the average to mild ability range and the school can support the child's learning.
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- (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 having previously attended the school, with the exception of brothers and sisters (including step-siblings and foster children) of children who have attended or are attending the school.
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

## 7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Naomh Iosaf 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. Decisions will be given in writing within 21 days of the **closing date** for receipt of applications.

## 8. 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).

## **9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Naomh Iosaf, 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.

## **10. 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 Naomh Iosaf 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.

## **11. 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.

## **12. 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 Naomh Iosaf 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 Naomh Iosaf 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.

Any applicant offered a place and who intended accepting but did not return the relevant documents by the stated closing date in accordance with the school's policies, procedures, processes and timeframes shall lose their offer of a place. Should any applicant who has not taken up the place offered choose to re-apply within that particular academic year they can do so in writing by completing the necessary application form and submitting it to the school. That application shall be regarded as a new application and the child's name shall be added to the existing waiting list and assigned the next number on the list at the time of reapplication.

### **13. 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.

Any new applicants for Junior Infants received after the closing date as stated in the admissions notice cannot be included in the application process outlined here but will be added on to the end of the existing waiting list.

### **14. 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:

Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the school's Enrolment Policy and agreement with other schools. All such transfers depend on space being available within the school.

The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- Educational needs of children of a particular age
- Presence of children with special educational/behavioural needs
- The Department of Education and Skills maximum class average directives

Parents seeking to transfer their children from another school should contact the school to enquire of availability of spaces in the year group.

In the event of a place being available the parents can obtain the relevant documents from the school. Applications will be processed when the forms are completed and returned to the school.

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:

The procedures for admission of students who are not already admitted to the school remain the same as above if the application pertains to admission after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought.

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

The board of Scoil Naomh Iosaf 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.

### **16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for students whose 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:

The students who do not wish to partake in religious education in the school will remain in the class for the duration of the instruction but they will not be required to participate. The teacher will assign tasks which he/she will deem appropriate.

### **17. 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)(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.

