

**SCOIL MUIRE AGUS ÍDE
NEWCASTLE WEST,
CO. LIMERICK.**

Admissions Policy

Introduction

The name of our school is Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, Boherbuí, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick, Contact may be made with the school in writing, or by telephone to the school office at 069 - 62443, or by faxing the school at 069 - 61497. The school's e-mail address is smi@scoilmuireaguside.com.

The Board of Management is setting out this Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, section 15 2(d) and it trusts that, by doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the up-to-date School Prospectus which is available from the School Secretary.

The Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

School Profile

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is a co-educational Voluntary Catholic Secondary School and was formed in 1992 with the amalgamation of Scoil Mhuire, a convent secondary school run by the Sisters of Mercy and St. Ita's Secondary School for boys. The school has a Board of Trustees and a Board of Management and it follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998. It operates within the regulations laid down by the DES, which may be amended from time to time.

Management

The Trustees appoint the school's Board of Management. The eight members come from the following constituencies:

Trustee Appointees	:	3
Bishop's Nominee	:	1
Parents	:	2
Teachers	:	2

The Board's term of office is three years and the chairperson of the Board is appointed by the Trustees. The Principal serves as Secretary of the Board of Management.

Mission Statement/Philosophy of Education

Our mission statement outlines our educational philosophy in full. In brief we aspire to help our students to take their place in society as educated, mature and committed Christians. We want our school to be not only a centre of academic excellence but also a caring community where personal faith is nurtured and developed.

We aim to create a caring environment in which everyone recognises the value of each individual and encourages an awareness of, and a response to, the needs of others. We aim to foster an appetite for learning and to develop self-discipline, initiative, responsibility and perseverance. We also aim to involve our students in the life-long process of education and to ensure that everyone achieves some degree of success in life. We value all kinds of achievement and we work to promote a school culture, which values diversity and nurtures an ethos of respect for self, others, and the wider community.

The School Programme

Every effort is made here in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde to offer students a broad and enriching educational experience. In addition to the usual Junior Cert and Leaving Cert Programmes we also offer presently a Transition Year option and the LCVP Programme. In recent years we have introduced the new CSPE curriculum at Junior level and also we have an established SPHE programme. The management and staff keep themselves informed of current educational developments for the benefit of the students. The school offers many short modules such as a Study Skills Seminar and actively promotes Drug Awareness and Anti-Bullying

Awareness for all students. The students are also involved in a wide variety of games such as Gaelic Football for boys and girls, hurling, camogie, rugby, soccer, and basketball. The school respects the sporting backgrounds of all the students who come to us.

Representative Associations

The Parents Association represents the parent body and meets with the school Principal and other staff representatives when required.

The Senior Students Council represents the student body and they also meet regularly. They meet at least once a term with the Principal and Year Heads. A designated member of staff co-ordinates the various activities of the Council and is present at all their meetings.

Within the parameters set down by the DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the Trustees/Board of Management as set out in the Education Act 1998 (Section 15 (1), (2)), the religious and educational philosophy set out above and the funding, resources and places available, the Board of Management support the following general principles:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs.
- Equality of access to and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school.
- Respect for the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and the ways of life in Irish society.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Scoil Mhuire agus Íde Admissions Policy welcomes all students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education. The school aims to provide an integrated and an inclusive education.

Each year the Board of Management may have to decide in advance the number of First Year students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education having regard to the facilities, personnel, plant and resources.

On application, the parents/guardians will be informed of the number of classes/students the school proposes to enrol. All those who present themselves for enrolment will be required to sit an entrance assessment prior to entry.

Students who are eligible for Admission

- Those having reached the required age: 12 on the 1st. of January in the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year.
- Those having completed Sixth Class in Primary School.
- Those who are willing, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, to accept the school ethos.
- Those who are willing, with parents/guardians, to accept the school Code of Behaviour. Confirmation in writing is required, that parents/guardians and students accept the Code of Behaviour.

Selection Criteria

In the event of the school having more applications than places available, the following criteria may be lawfully followed in selecting students (in order of priority):

- Students from school's community and catchment area.
- Students whose father or mother is a member of staff in the school.
- Students who have a brother or sister already in the school or whose siblings were past pupils of the school.
- Students whose parents were past pupils
- Students of the religious faith which is promoted in the founding intention of the school
- Length of residence of the area

Students with Special Educational Needs

Applications from students with special needs are welcome. Such applications must be accompanied by appropriate medical or psychological assessments. These assessments will be carefully reviewed by the school's Special Needs Teacher(s) who will then inform the Principal whether the school is in a position to meet those needs and that the admission is in keeping with the School's Special Needs Policy.

While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with particular needs are dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Science. Applications from students with special needs are processed in the usual manner outlined above, subject to the details and conditions outlined in this paragraph.

School management and parents must cooperate, from the earliest possible time, to establish the special educational needs of the student, the resources required to meet those needs and the submission of a well researched request to the Department of Education and Science/Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) seeking the allocation of appropriate resources. Parents are encouraged to contact the school well in advance of the admissions process should they feel that their son/daughter has special education needs as considerable delays have been experienced in the past by schools in receiving a response from the Department of Education and Science to requests for special resources.

In making provision for special educational need students the following information is required:

Has the student had access to any of the following resources:

- Special Needs Assistant or classroom assistant?
- Special class?
- Help, for specific needs, from any resource teacher?
- Assistance with behavioural modification?
- Psychological assessment? Report to be provided.
- Any additional resources to help with their special needs?
- Help in areas including, visual impairment, hearing impairment, general learning disability or emotional disturbance.
- Any resources in relation to travel or mobility?

If an expert report is provided, it should include a workable strategy for addressing the needs, taking into account the available resources in the school.

The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, will then assess how the needs of the special needs students can be met.

Final confirmation of a place may, in exceptional cases, be withheld until the Department of Education and Science confirms that the necessary resources are to be allocated.

Code of Behaviour

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde has a detailed Code of Behaviour, which is issued to all new students and their parents/guardians on entry. This Code is also available from the school office on request. It outlines the system of rewards and sanctions the school operates to promote a climate which facilitates the teaching and learning that is at the heart of the school's educational mission. It also outlines the procedures the school follows when it proves necessary to suspend or exclude a student. At the discretion of the Principal some students may be required to apply for readmission to the school following serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour. Those students may be asked to re-apply during the month of May, for admission to the school for the following academic year. It further outlines the Appeals Procedures available to parents/guardians who may wish to use it. Prospective students and their parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the school's Code of Behaviour, which they are required to accept and sign. They are further expected to support the school in its enforcement.

Transfer of Students from other schools

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to our school. In the case of students wishing to transfer to Scoil Mhuire agus Íde from another second-level school for any reason whatsoever, information concerning the prospective student's attendance record, educational progress to date, behaviour record and impact on the learning environment for other students in the classroom will be required. The school the student is leaving will be contacted for this information. The application for admission to SMI will be judged in the light of this information and subject to a vacancy in a

suitable class. If the school considers that the student may have special educational needs, then an appropriate psychological assessment must be provided to the school and the enrolment application will be considered in the light of that assessment and subject to the details outlined in this paragraph.

The final decision with regard to the enrolment of students in SMI and with regard to all matters covered in this Admissions Policy lies with the Board of Management and they will decide on applications for admission to any other year other than First Year by applying the following criteria:

All relevant information (mentioned above) having been made available from the applicant's previous school, the Board will decide whether or not a transfer

- is in agreement with the school's Admission Policy.
- is in the best interest of the student.
- is in the best interest of the school.
- is of educational benefit to the student.

It may be necessary for a consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer to take place.

When a student is considered for a place, the decision will be taken by the Board of Management, in consultation with the student's parents/guardians, his former school, the Education Welfare Officer, whether such a place may be offered, immediately, or whether it may be better to wait until the beginning of the next academic year.

Enrolment Procedure

An Open Day is organised each year for Sixth Class pupils in the Primary Schools in our catchment area where they can view the school in operation. This is followed shortly afterwards by an Information Evening where parents and prospective students are invited to come and visit the school and its facilities and meet with the Principal and staff members. This is a vital part of our enrolment process and parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting.

Parents/Guardians of all students are requested to pay an annual financial support contribution to cover the cost of stationery, printing, postage, bus trips etc. Contact, in confidence, should be made with the Principal should you require special consideration in relation to this request.

On completion of the enrolment process a request may be made for all relevant information to be made available from the student's previous school, including such matters as special education needs etc. This will assist the school in making appropriate education provision for each student.

Appeals

Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused, the parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d).) The parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the Board's decision and the reasons why the student was not accepted should be clearly stated. The parents/guardians right to appeal should be restated and the application form provided. (Circular M48/01). The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (Circular M48/01).

An appeal may be made to: *The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, the Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.*

Notes:

1. Parents/Guardians must be informed that an appeal should be made in writing on the Application Form provided.
2. Parents/Guardians must inform the school in writing of the decision to appeal.
3. Having regard to the desirability of resolving grievances within the school where possible, the parties to an appeal under Section 29, i.e. the appellant and the school's Board of Management, will be asked to consider the matter in the first instance at local level to see if an accommodation can be reached. As a general rule, appeals will only be considered by an appeals committee under Section 29 where the parties are unable to resolve the issue at local level. (Circular M48/01).

Monitoring, Review, Evaluation

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Principal and Board of Management. It will be subject to review and evaluation in keeping with the Whole School Planning Process.

Timeframe for Implementation

- The policy was ratified by the Board of management on 8/02/07 and will come into effect from September 2007. The Policy was reviewed and amended in September 2009 following consultation with the various stakeholders in the school's community and was further amended in September 2010 and this was ratified by the Board of Management on 28th September, 2010.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of the policy through the list of policies sent to parents of newly enrolling students, during Information Evenings for intending new students and the policy itself is available on request to any parent/guardian who wishes to enrol a student in the school.

APPENDICES TO INCLUDE:

- Application Form
- Student Information Form
- Application Form for International Students