Admission Policy of Scoil Chaitríona Naofa (Oristown)

School Address: Oristown, Kells, Co Meath

Roll number: 18174J

School Patron: Most Reverend Dr Tom Deenihan

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 22/10/2024. 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 Chaitríona Naofa'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.

Notices may also be placed in the parish newsletter, local Play Schools and at the school entrance to notify parents that the school is accepting enrolment applications for the coming year. All applications must be fully completed for consideration.

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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

(a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
(b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
(c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
(d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

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

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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.

Mission Statement and General Objectives of Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown

We endeavour to create a caring atmosphere in our school where every child is helped to achieve his/her full potential through a holistic approach to education in partnership with the Community. The school is committed to the promotion of the Catholic faith and values. We promote an awareness of our own culture and heritage, while respecting the culture and heritage of others. We endeavour to enthuse the child with a zest for learning and life, a healthy respect for all people and the world around him/her, thus enabling him/her to become a responsible citizen.

General Objectives of Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown

1. Enable pupils to enjoy school.
2. Develop each pupil's self-confidence.
3. Promote a tendency to make reasoned judgements / choices.
4. Encourage and develop appropriate leisure activities.
5. Enable pupils to be aware of and to understand their environment.
6. Prepare each pupil to avail of appropriate further education
7. Encourage self-expression in as many media as possible and to the limit of each pupils' ability.
8. Achieve the highest possible level of academic excellence.
9. Train pupils in habits of industry and perseverance.
10. Teach pupils to behave in an acceptable manner.
11. Train pupils in the art of critical listening.
12. Encourage attitudes and habits related to spiritual fulfilment.
13. Encourage a high standard of oral expression in English and Irish.
14. Promote a spirit of co-operation (a) within the school (b) with parents and others involved in the school.
15. Encourage involvement of pupils in social and religious activities of the community.
16. Encourage involvement of parents in social and religious activities of the community.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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 the of catholic religious denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown, will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the council."

"Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998.

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

Scoil Chaitríona Naofa,Oristown is not a Special School or a Mainstream School with a Special Class attached.

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 Chaitríona Naofa is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic faith 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:

1) Siblings of currently enrolled pupils
2) Those permanently resident within the Catholic Parish boundary of Oristown .
3) Applicants who reside in the neighbouring parishes of Kells, Bohermeen, Castletown and Carlanstown, and whose residence is within a 4km radius of the school (distance between school eircode and home eircode determined using Google maps facility)

4) All remaining applicants

Where the number of applicants in any of the above categories exceeds the remaining number of places available, the available places will be allocated to applicants within that category beginning with the eldest and proceeding in descending order of age until all remaining places have been allotted/allocated. In the event that more than one tied applicant has the same date of birth lots will be drawn (under independent review) for the last remaining place. In the event that twins are tied for that last remaining place the school will exceed its stated maximum enrolment in the class by one so that both may be admitted, by way of exemption.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

(a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;

(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;

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission not

(g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

(h) 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.

(i) 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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.

The school will have regard for the relevant DES guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of children.

The school is bound by the DES Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does not apply until the age of 6 years. Children applying to enrol in Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown must have reached the age of 4 years by August 31st of the year they will commence 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 Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown, 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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.
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) a 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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.
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 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

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:

Applications for enrolment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy and available space in the required classroom. At the moment Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown adheres to a maximum average class size of 23 pupils per classroom, based on the current staffing circular from the Department of Education and Skills (Circular 18/2020).

Such applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis but will normally only be considered for admission on the first day of each new term unless the applicant is newly resident in the area.

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:

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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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 Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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.

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

This rule applies to <u>all</u> schools.

Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown 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

Our school is of Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parent(s)/guardian(s) have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction (etc.)

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) of the student, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, 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.

19: Implementation and Review:

This policy will be reviewed as deemed necessary by the Board of Management.

20 Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona Naofa, Oristown on 7th October 2024

Signed: *Alf Martyn* (Chairperson)

Owen Creevey (Principal)