

## **Admission Policy of Scoil Diarmada**

**School Address: Garter Farm, Athy Road, Castledermot, Co Kildare R14 FX 46**

**Roll number: 19786W**

**School Patron/s: Archdiocese of Dublin**

### **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 Nov 16th 2021. 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 Diarmada 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 Diarmada is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of the Dublin Diocese.

"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 Diarmada 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.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Scoil Diarmada 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.

### **Schools with special education class(es)**

Scoil Diarmada is a school which has established a class, 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 the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

Scoil Diarmada, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with 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) 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.
- c) Where a student is less than 4 years of age prior to the start of the school year concerned.
- d) The specialised class for children with autism attached to Scoil Diarmada provides an education exclusively for students with autism and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student does not have the specified category of additional educational needs provided for in this class.

## **6. Oversubscription**

### **a) Mainstream Classes - Junior Infants**

Scoil Diarmada has 50 places available for junior infant enrolment in each academic year.

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:

#### Priority Criteria

1. Priority is given to siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in Scoil Diarmada and/or children resident in the parish of Castledermot .If the class is over subscribed on the basis of this criterion, then places will be allocated on the basis of age, starting with the oldest applicant, until all places are allocated i.e.The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.
2. Children of staff.The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.
3. Applicant children living outside the parish of Castledermot.The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

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 draw of names from a hat will be held witnessed by the school principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management.

### **b) Specialised Class for Children with Autism**

### Criteria for Enrolment in A.S.D Class

Subject to sufficient places being made available in the ASD class, the criteria for enrolment to the ASD class, incorporating the Dept. of Education and HSE policies are as follows:

1. An Application to Enrol to ASD Class Form provided by the school should be fully completed by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child.
2. This Application to Enrol to ASD Class Form should be accompanied by a copy of the original birth certificate and all other supporting documentation as referred to in the section "Procedure for Enrolment"
3. A recent psychological assessment ( dated within 24 months of the closing date for applications to enrol) which should include a report from a member of a multidisciplinary team .A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, social worker and a physiotherapist. Please note all reports in operation on a child should be provided. The withholding of reports and pertinent information will invalidate an enrolment application at any time.
4. Report from the child's current educational setting if relevant.
5. The child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-V or ICD10 or equivalent by the psychologist or member of the multidisciplinary team. This diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure, completed by a psychologist registered with a relevant Irish governing body and may include a cognitive assessment.
6. The psychological report must have a recommendation that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child and outlines the complex or severe learning needs that require the support of a special class.
7. All children must be 5 years of age on or before the 31st of December of the incoming school year and 12 or turning 13 during their last academic year (6th Class)
8. The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

9. An observation appointment of the child in the child's current educational setting may be organised before the closing date for applications. If the child is not attending preschool or another educational setting, the child may be observed in the home setting or brought to the school if this is not possible.
10. An Acceptance Form as issued by the school must be returned to the school within the required time period.

**Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space is not available.**

If the specialised class for children with autism is oversubscribed the school will apply the following selection criteria to students. These will be applied in the order listed below to applications received within the timeline as set out in the school's annual admission notice for the class for children with autism.

#### Priority Criteria

1. Applicant students who are already enrolled in Scoil Diarmada, siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in Scoil Diarmada and/or children resident in the parish of Castledermot who are within the age range suitable for the class. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.
2. Children of staff. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking
3. Applicant children living outside the parish of Castledermot. The eldest child will have priority in this ranking.

In the event that the number of children in any category exceeds the number of places available, places will be offered or added to a waiting list **on the basis of the eldest child having priority.**

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 draw of names from a hat will be held witnessed by the school principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management.

## 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 preschool 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) 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 Diarmada 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 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 Diarmada, 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 are 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 Diarmada 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 Diarmada 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 Diarmada 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:

Criteria for Enrolment to Senior Infant to Sixth Classes.

Please note that the cut off age for applications of enrolment is 13 on the date of application for enrolment. The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6 classes.

Priority Criterion

1. Priority is given to brothers and sisters of children already in the school or who have attended the school in the past.

2. Families whose primary residence is in the immediate areas of Castledermot Parish, starting closest to the and radiating outwards from the school or who are in the process of moving to the parish.

3. Children of parents who are past pupils of the school.

All children enrolled are expected to comply with and support the school's Code of Behaviour, as well as the school's designated policies on Curriculum, Organisation and Management.

Transfers from other schools within the academic year: The Board of Management will consider applications in relation to children who wish to transfer from other schools. Acceptance of transfers will also be subject to space being available and subject to the approval of the D.E.S.

Criteria The Board of Management in considering such applications takes account of :

- (i) the constitutional rights of children to an education and the rights of parents to send their child to a school of their choice.
- (ii) the reasons given by parents for the change.
- (iii) the space that is available in classrooms to accommodate the children. Scoil Diarmada acknowledges the obligation that the Board of Management has to the community to facilitate people that are in closer proximity to the school than any other schools. Appeals Procedure In line with Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, parents who are dissatisfied with the outcome.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Scoil Diarmada 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**

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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, 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.

### **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 within three weeks from the date of receipt of the notice of refusal.

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.