



## **Admission Policy of Doora National School**

**School Address Doora, Clarecastle, Co. Clare**

**School Website: [doorans.scoilnet.ie](http://doorans.scoilnet.ie)**

**Roll number: 18696Q**

**School Patron: Bishop Fintan Monahan**

### **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 May 12th 2020. 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 Doora National School'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 on request to any person who requests it.

### **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

Doora National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe. "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, a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- b) including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and
- d) resurrection of Jesus; and
- e) 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 Doora National School 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 of Doora National School**

Our hope for the children attending our school is that they will be:

- literate and numerate
- resourceful and resilient
- independent and confident
- respectful and responsible
- able to relate well to others and having the skills necessary to embrace life's opportunities.

We strive to achieve this by creating a caring atmosphere where fairness, equality and mutual respect are central, where individual differences and learning styles are recognised and where a broad and balanced curriculum is available to all.

As a Roman Catholic school we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of the child, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual including a living relationship with God and people in their Community.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Doora National School 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.

Doora National School 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 the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Doora NS 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.

Doora NS 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 class**

Doora National School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established two classes 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

Doora National School 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.

*Note for Parents: the inclusion of the above wording was mandated by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.*

The special classes attached to Doora National School provides an education exclusively for students with Autism 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.

## 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. *Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;*
2. *Children residing in the parish, priority eldest;*
3. *Children of staff members, priority eldest;*
4. *Siblings of past pupils*
5. *Children of past parents, priority eldest; \*\**
6. *Grandchildren of past parents, priority eldest; \*\**
7. *Random selection (independently verified).*

***\*\*These criteria may only be applied to a maximum of 25% of the available places***

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:

Priority to eldest in accordance with the above criteria.

## 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; **other than** in relation to admission to our special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- (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; other than those who qualify for selection on criteria 1, 4 and 5 in Section 6 above.
- (g) 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 Doora National School 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 Doora National School 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 Doora National School 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 Doora National School 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 Doora National School 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, available space and the provision of information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress.*

*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 Doora National School 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 Doora National School 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.*

**Junior Infants, with the exception of students transferring from another school, may only be admitted to the school prior to September 29<sup>th</sup>.**

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

The Board of Management of Doora National School 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 a Catholic ethos and, in keeping with that ethos, children of all or no other faith are welcome to apply to this school.

We respect the decision of parents to withdraw their child/children from taking part in the religious education curriculum, religious ceremonies, school Masses, etc.

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 parents/guardians 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 parents/guardians of the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.



Mr. Ross Darmody  
Principal  
Doora National School  
Doora  
Clarecastle  
Co. Clare

04<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Roll No: 18696Q

Re: Policy Documents – Admission Policy

Dear Ross,

Thank you for the attached Policy Documents which we received from your school.

On behalf of the Patron, I would like to acknowledge receipt of the documents and commend the Board of Management, Principal and Staff on the work undertaken to complete it.

I am now returning the approved policy to you.

Should you have any further queries on the document, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

*Linda Fleming*

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Linda Fleming  
Education Advisor

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.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Doora National School on 17th June 2020.

The policy was reviewed & changed to take account of the opening of a second Autism Class in September 2022.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Review & Ratification date: 04/12/2023

The contents of this policy have been approved by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.

## Appendix 1:

# Enrolment in Autism Class Procedures

The decision to provide a special class for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Doora NS was taken by the Board of Management of the school in 2017, following consultation with the staff. This class was known as 'Bloom'. In August 2022, a second Autism Class opened, referred to as 'Snowdrop'. The decision to open a second class was to cater for an increasing level of need from the area.

Note:

1. All placements will be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child.
2. The maximum class size is 6 pupils.
3. This school policy has regard and is contingent on the funding, resources, services and space available.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- That each individual child will grow to his/ her potential and that the education provided will prepare each child for life to the best of his/ her ability.
- To provide a broad curriculum that will encourage and facilitate the holistic development of each child to reach his/her full potential.
- To provide an appropriate, quality driven education service to each child within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to pupils with educational needs.
- To create a friendly, cheerful, open environment where pupils can interact in a free and secure manner and where positive relationships with others are fostered and maintained.
- To address the challenges experienced by pupils with ASD and to liaise with, co-operate and consult with parents with regard to their child's education.
- To strive towards the inclusion of the children in Bloom & Snowdrop in mainstream education, with regard to levels of general learning abilities, available resources and suitability for such inclusion.
- To focus positively on the abilities and strengths of each child while recognising and supporting areas of need.

## **Enrolment Procedure**

Subject to sufficient places being made available in Bloom, the process for Enrolment is as follows:

1. Upon request, an Application Form is issued to parents/guardians for completion on or before the closing date. This Application Form must be accompanied by:

- A recent psychological assessment or report from a multidisciplinary team (e.g. Children's Disability Network Team, Clare Children's Services) which confirms a primary diagnosis of ASD without significant intellectual impairment using the DSM-V

AND

- a recommendation by a member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the school.

2. On receipt of a fully completed Autism Class Application Form, the child is then placed on an 'Applications' file. Entry in this "Applications" file secures a place on list of applicants. However, it does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school. The closing date for applications for the next school year will be outlined in the school's Admission Notice.

3. The Children's Disability Network Team/Clare Children's' Services. or other multi-disciplinary team, as deemed appropriate by the Admissions Team, may be asked to furnish additional and/ or up-to-date information if available.

4. Applications with the relevant reports will then be submitted for review to the Admissions Team. The autism class admissions team will consist of the Principal and Special Class Teacher(s). This meeting will take place shortly after the closing date for applications.

### **Factors taken into consideration are:**

1. Diagnosis – Child must be diagnosed as being on the A.S.D. spectrum with a recommendation for placement in a special class attached to mainstream.

2. Integration - Child must be capable of integrating into mainstream, even at a minimum level, at an appropriate age level.

3. Appropriateness – Child must be capable of accessing the Primary School Curriculum.

4. The child must be at least 4 years old on or before September 1st on the year of enrolment.

The school acknowledges that all children with ASD present with differing profiles. For this reason, all applications must be considered individually. The receipt of the enrolment application forms, psychological report and written recommendation is not a guarantee of enrolment.

If the number of children on the waiting list exceeds the number of places available and Bloom/Snowdrop is deemed to be the most appropriate placement for these children, then the following selection criteria will apply:

- Pupils currently enrolled in our mainstream school and seeking to transfer to the A.S.D. class, priority eldest.
- Brothers and sisters of existing pupils.
- Children of current school staff.
- Children living within the parish.
- Children living outside of the parish boundaries but within a 16 km radius of the school.

Parents are notified of a placement within 21 days of the closing date provided that all relevant documents have been received and must respond in writing within 14 days of the date of the placement offer. If not successful in securing a placement there is a right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act of 1998.

Parents must complete the Bloom/Snowdrop Enrolment Registration Form on accepting a placement. Once enrolled in Bloom or Snowdrop, pupils and parents are required to support and co-operate with all organisational, curricular and pastoral policies of the school.

### **The first year will be used to: -**

1. Assess the child's education needs.
2. Develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) to address identified needs.
3. Assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.

Taking into account the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding available, the school supports the principles of; • Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special education need.

- Equality of access and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- Respect for the diversity of values and beliefs.

- Traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria. Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if;

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
- Sufficient classroom space is not available.
- The Admissions Team decide that the school is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child.

Taking all of the above into account, and based on the advice of the enrolment team of the Autism Class, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

## **SUPPORT BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

Please note that a guarantee of support by outside agencies such as the H.S.E. cannot be provided. Children who require speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc will be dependent on the local H.S.E. services. The school will collaborate with H.S.E. staff as much as possible but the assistance of parents may be required to follow up.

## **Inclusion & Integration into Mainstream Classes**

The level of inclusion/ integration that a child receives is collectively decided upon by the personnel who work with the child each day e.g. teachers, SNAs, Principal. The point at which integration into a mainstream class happens needs to be carefully considered and will happen gradually in the early stages. The views of other professionals such as psychologists, speech & language therapists and occupational therapists will be taken into account. However, the decision of the school is final.

## **Discharge Policy**

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils once they have completed 6th Class and/or reached the age of thirteen after September 30th in any year. This means a June discharge in the following year. The onus will be on the parents to negotiate the placement with a suitable post-primary School. Doora National School will facilitate all transfer of records/reports as well as assist with any information required with regard to students. Discharge from the ASD Class may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

