



# **Admission Policy**

of

# **Radharc na Mara School**

# **Galway**

**Roll number: 20554I**

**School Patron: Bishop of Galway**

## **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 28<sup>th</sup> September 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 Radharc na Mara'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**

Radharc na Mara is a mainstream, Catholic, co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway. We aim to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.



## MISSION STATEMENT

### Mission Statement

#### *“Dream, Believe, Achieve”*

In our school, each child is equally valued and cherished. The educational, emotional, physical, creative, and spiritual needs of the child are at the centre of the curriculum. We stimulate their curiosity for learning to prepare them for second level education and beyond by imparting an awareness of the possibilities and opportunities life offers them.

#### Each child is encouraged to *Dream*

In our school, we strive to create an environment of respect and inclusion, and we support religious, ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity among all. Each child is taught what it means to be a global citizen, that we should all strive for the good of others, and that we are all called to experience the love of God by following the gospel values, in keeping with the Catholic ethos.

#### Each child is encouraged to *Believe*

In our school, we strive to create an enhanced learning environment, by providing a more inclusive curriculum and by addressing a range of learning styles. Each child is given the opportunity to engage with the wider community through participation in a wide range of diverse programmes. At Radharc na Mara School each child is encouraged to reach their full potential.

#### Each child is encouraged to *Achieve*.



## AIMS

Our school aims to provide each child with a balanced education to enable each child to develop his/ her skills to live a full life as a child regardless of ability

This is provided in a caring and kind environment where each child learns to treat each other with dignity, respect, justice & patience

The school provides a Catholic and Christian education for each child while it recognises and respects other faiths and religions

## CATHOLIC ETHOS

Radharc na Mara, a Roman Catholic School (which is established in connection with the Minister of Education) aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic school provides Religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.

## 3. Admission Statement

**Radharc na Mara 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 Traveler 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 'Traveler community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.**

Radharc na Mara is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Radharc na Mara 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 (Roman Catholic) and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

Radharc na Mara School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established classes to provide an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders who meet DSM-IV/V or ICD-10 criteria and who have on their Professional Report a Special ASD Class Placement recommendation from the diagnosing psychologist. The school may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified. The maximum class size is six pupils per class. Please see below for selection criteria in the event of oversubscription. If a place is offered to a child and subsequently accepted, parents must then fill in the NCSE's Notification of Enrolment Form which will be forwarded to the SENO on behalf of pupil enrolled in the class. This form is available on the website [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

##### **Radharc na Mara welcomes the enrolment of children with special needs.**

In the case of a child with specific special educational needs, the BOM may request copies of medical and/or psychological reports in order to assess the school's ability to appropriately provide for the education of the child. In such cases, a meeting may be held with the child's parents and all personnel involved in the care of the child. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the needs of the child and to profile the support services required. Following this meeting and on receipt of all relevant reports, the BOM will assess how the school can meet the needs identified.

Where the Board deems that further resources such as visiting teacher service, special education teacher, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or



furniture, are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the Department of Education and Skills to provide these resources.

The school will meet the parents to discuss the school's suitability for the child. If necessary, a full case conference may be called including parents, class teacher, SET, psychologist and social workers as appropriate.

Radharc na Mara will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its 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 requested to do so by the Council. Radharc na Mara School will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

## 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) Where a student is less than 4 years of age on the 1 September of the school year concerned.
- c) 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

**4.1** The Board has determined the admission criteria to be applied by the Principal in accordance with the updated Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018.

**4.2** Parents/legal guardians seeking to enroll their child in Junior Infants are requested to present the completed Junior Infant Application Form, an original Birth Certificate and an original proof of address to our school secretary by the closing date. These documents must be hand-delivered and will be copied for our records. Application forms and documents sent by post or email will not be accepted.

**4.3** Parents/legal guardians may be asked for a certified translation of documents if they are not in English or Irish.

**4.4** By making the application, permission is given to the Board to verify the information provided. Where the Board has a query, it may seek clarification by examining public records and/or making local and other enquiries.



**4.5** Failure to disclose all information or an incomplete/inaccurate Enrolment Form constitutes an **invalid Enrolment Application**.

**4.6** The special classes attached to Radharc na Mara School provides an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders who meet DSM-IV/V or ICD-10 criteria and who have on their Professional Report a Special ASD Class Placement recommendation from the diagnosing psychologist 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 (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)**

**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. Children (including step-siblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled in the school – priority to oldest
2. Children living within the parishes of Mervue and Ballybane – priority to oldest
3. Children of current school staff – priority to oldest
4. Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an OS map) if the child is normally resident outside the parish/ agreed catchment area

In the event that the ASD special classes are 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 who are enrolled in the mainstream school priority eldest;
2. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in an ASD Class in the school, priority eldest;
3. Applicants with siblings currently enrolled in the school (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address), priority eldest;
4. Applicants residing in the parish, priority eldest;



5. Applicants whose parents are past pupils of the school, priority eldest;
6. Applicants who have a parent who is a staff member, priority eldest;
7. Applicants residing outside the parish, priority eldest.

**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:**

If the maximum number of admissions is reached in any one of the categories outlined above, a selection process will apply whereby places will be offered to complete applications beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in that category and proceeding in descending order of age from the oldest to the youngest until all remaining available places have been filled.

If during this selection process, two or more applicants have the same date of birth, the school will apply a random selection process to these applicants only, in order to establish to whom places in that category will be offered. This random selection process will be witnessed by the Board of Management.

A waiting list for unsuccessful applications will be compiled and applicants will be placed on the list in the order of priority as set out above. Where a vacancy becomes available, applicants on the waiting list will be offered a place in accordance with the order of priority the applicant has been placed on the list. A place on the waiting list expires on 30th September of the year of admission.

Incomplete applications will not be considered, and applicants will not be placed on the waiting list.

In a particular year, an applicant may fulfil the enrolment criteria and be offered a place, and parents of the applicant may accept the place. If subsequently the applicant's parents decide not to send their child to school that particular year, the applicant's place cannot be deferred. Instead, the applicant must reapply for the following year and will be offered a place if they fulfil the enrolment criteria for that following year.



## 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.
  - (b) the payment of fees or contributions 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;
- other than, in the case of siblings of a student attending or having attended the school.
- (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. 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 Radharc na Mara 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 15 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 16 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 Radharc na Mara 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 Radharc na Mara 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.**

## **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 Radharc na Mara 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 Radharc na Mara 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.

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 or after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought are as follows:

The Board of Management will accept transfers into the school subject to the terms of D.E.S. Circular 24/02, and to the following:

- 1) that the pupil has already been enrolled in another school or is receiving home tuition under the DES/NEWB Tús/Child and Family Agency approved guidelines;**
- 2) that the pupil is transferring to an age-appropriate class and;**
- 3) that there is a space in a class at that level for the pupil wishing to transfer**

In the event of the number of transfer applications being greater than the number of places available in any given class group, the allocation criteria outlined in Section 6 above will be used to determine the order that these places will be offered---

Where the Board of Management is unable to offer the pupil seeking a transfer a place in the school, the pupil will be placed on a waiting list.

In a case where a student has been excluded from another primary school, an application for enrolment will not be considered until all pastoral and disciplinary avenues have been explored with that school up to and including a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998.



The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to a student with a history of behavioural issues which they deem may negatively impact on the health and safety of existing students and staff members.

The Board of Management of Radharc na Mara School respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled.

Consequently, the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each class, bearing in mind:

- Health and Safety Concerns regarding Staff and Children
- Available classroom space
- Multi-grade classes
- Educational needs of the children
- Presence of children with special needs
- Department of Education and Science class size directives
- Appropriate Supports and Resources are available
- Time of school year

The school will only accept pupils into classes after the commencement of the school year if they satisfy the conditions 1-3 above and they are transferring from another school outside of county Galway.

Pupils already resident in county Galway who wish to transfer to this school, may only enroll at Radharc na Mara School at the beginning of the school year.

Failure to provide any documents referred to above will mean an application is incomplete.

A separate form must be completed for each applicant, if applicable.

Acceptance by the school office of the application does not mean that same will be processed.

Applications which are incomplete, not signed, not dated and/or do not include the required documentation will not be processed.

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



**The board of Radharc na Mara 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**

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents have requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

**A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s), class teacher and 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 may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.



## **Right of appeal**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(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. Data Protection**

The school acknowledges its obligations as a data controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information obtained for the purposes of allocating places in the school to students will only be used and disclosed in a manner which is compatible with this purpose. Only such personal data as are relevant and necessary for the performance of this function will be retained. The school undertakes to ensure that such information is processed fairly, that it is kept safe, secure, accurate, complete, and up to date. Individuals have the right to have any inaccurate information rectified or erased. All data submitted as part of the admissions process will be destroyed within twelve months of the end of the school year the application is for (as opposed to the receipt of the application). A copy of all personal data obtained and kept as part of the admissions process will be made available to the subject of such data on receipt of a written request to the chairperson of the board of management.



Radharc na Mara Primary School

Chairperson

Principal

Patrick F. Kelly

Keith Joyce