



Caragh National School
Patron
Most Reverend
Denis Nulty
Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin

Admission Policy

Caragh National School, Co. Kildare
18654A Charity No: 20124816

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 in May 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 Caragh National School 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 & General Objectives of the School

Caragh National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos. The Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin is the Patron of this school.

'Catholic schools are communities which are open, welcoming and inclusive.

Therefore, Catholic schools may include children who adhere to other religions or other stances for living. While mindful of their duty to educate in the distinctive beliefs, values, and practices of the Catholic community, teachers will bear witness to an attitude of respect for and appreciation of all'.

'The Catholic Preschool & Primary Religious Education Curriculum p15'

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:

- the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and 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 Caragh 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

Caragh National School is a place for all students to evolve as individuals, in a safe, supportive and respectful environment for all learning abilities.

We help our students to become healthy and valuable members of society prepared for the future.

School Vision

We must communicate the Christian message in a manner appropriate to the child's age, their stage of development, and their own personal life experience. We want to develop one's spirituality in the context of one's own religion and in the understanding of other religious beliefs.

At Caragh we wish to provide a range of learning experiences to fulfil the potential and develop the confidence of each child in our care. We are ambitious for all children.

We aim to develop moral qualities of respect, truthfulness, fair play, compassion and consideration of others.

We hope to nurture and expand children's ways of interpreting and expressing the environment around them thus becoming more aware and more appreciative of the world in which they live.

The school is committed to its status as a green school. We hope the children continue their huge involvement in protecting the environment and in maintaining this prestigious award.

Caragh is a multi-cultural school that welcomes and embraces difference and uniqueness. We wish to give each child a sense of personal and cultural identity, with a respect for and a tolerance of other cultures and differences.

We are very committed to physical education. We enjoy participating in a range of team and individual sports through which we help promote healthy living.

The school grounds is a place where each child should be able to mix comfortably at an interclass and an intra-class level, where happiness, security and self-worth and both pre-requisites and outcomes. The issues around bullying must be approached from various perspectives.

We envisage a staff and a community that is sensitive to the emotional development of our children. We want our children to be compassionate, sensitive to others and freely expressive of their individual opinions.

The children at Caragh want the school to be a place "... *where everyone is equal.*

Where children can speak their minds, Where there is no bullying." They envisage a place where:

- *".. everyone is happy. Where you are not scared to tell if you have a problem."*
- *"I want my school to be a place where there is always fun."*
- *"I want a school where there is no pushing or fighting or things like that."*
- *"School should be a place where you feel you belong."*
- *"School should be a place where you feel safe, happy and trusted."*

Caragh school aims to provide the child with the academic, social and spiritual qualities that will form the foundation of their adult life.

3. Admission Statement

Caragh NS 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.

Caragh National School 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 needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Caragh National School 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.

Caragh NS 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 of Roman Catholic faith 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.

Caragh National School is not a Special School and is not a Mainstream School with a Special Education Class.

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission *except* where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see 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.

All denominational Schools

Caragh NS 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:

Selection Criteria for Junior Infants

The Board of Management of Caragh NS will apply the following criteria should the number of applications exceed the number of places available.

1. Children who are four years of age before September 1st, and who normally reside in the school's catchment area as defined. *Appendix 1 Catchment Area*

2. Children who are four years of age before September 1st, and who have siblings or step-siblings attending the school.

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 place), the following arrangements will apply:

- If the number of applicants at 1 or 2 above is greater than the number of places available, a cut-off point based on **age** will be applied. This cut-off point, if required will be determined by the number of eligible pupils accepting places. If required, proximity to the school may also be used as a criterion if there are two or more students tied for a place in our school.

Policy Considerations

The Board of Management of Caragh National School reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene Departmental guidelines on class size, etc.

The Board of Management of Caragh National School, in its Policy of Admissions, 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

7. What will not be considered

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/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.
- g) The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school.

8. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Caragh NS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice
- 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 sections below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period)

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 further sections below for details).

10. Acceptance of an Offer of a place by an Applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Caragh NS parents/ guardians 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 Caragh NS 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 the previous section.

12. Sharing 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 Lists 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 Caragh NS 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 Caragh NS 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 above.

15. Procedures for Admission of Students to Other Years and during the school year

The following criteria will be applied if there is a surplus of applications for available places in the Senior Infants to 6 classes.

1. Children who normally reside in the school's catchment area as defined.
2. Children who have siblings or step siblings attending the school.

If the number of applicants at 1 or 2, above is greater than the number of places available, a cut-off point based on **age** will be applied. This cut-off point, if required will be determined by the number of eligible pupils accepting places. If required, proximity to the school may also be used as a criterion if there are two or more students tied for a place in our school.

Parents wishing to enrol children to classes SI to 6th should make application on standard form. Places will be designated subject to issues outlined in this policy. 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.

Pupil Transfer from other Primary Schools

The Board of Management advises that pupils from other primary schools may transfer to Caragh NS, at any time during the school year, subject to school policy, **available places** and in some cases, the approval of the Department of Education and Skills.

If a vacancy exists, the Principal shall then admit and enrol the pupil(s).

The Principal, who has been delegated authority to act on behalf of the Board of Management in such matters, will request a transfer certificate from the school the pupil(s) previously attended.

The Principal will also request that copies of Progress Reports and information concerning attendance, be made available to Caragh NS.

In the case of applications for enrolment in the school year other than as provided for above, the following criteria apply:

That a place exists in an age appropriate class. The availability of a place, in a class will be determined in the overall context taking all relevant circumstances into account, including, but not limited to the following;

- Overall number of pupils which the school can accommodate at the time the application is made
- Physical space

16. Declaration in relation to the Non-Charging of fees

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Caragh NS 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

A written request should be made to the principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) 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.

Ratification

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on

Kathy McGovern
Chairperson Board of Management

Date

Alan Hobbins
Principal

Date

