



Aims of Primary Education

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of the school staff and Board of management, I welcome you and your child, as they begin on their journey through school. We hope that the child, parents/guardians, teachers and all in our school community work together to ensure a happy and fulfilling experience for your child.

You, the parents provide the primary motivation in the formation of your child's character. Without parental help and interest, children can struggle to reach their potential. It is worth remembering that children spend only 25% of each day attending school during the school year. Remember that parents and teachers ultimately share the same objective, the good of the child.

The aim of this booklet is primarily one of information. This information is central to the progress of each and every child through our school in a satisfactory manner. We would ask you to read carefully through its contents and hope that it will clearly illustrate the expectations on all members of the school community at Scoil Íosa.

At this school the staff will do their utmost to give your child as broad an education as possible, but teachers and parents must work together if the pupils are to reach their true potential. From time to time conflict can occur. In most cases this conflict is avoidable and happens as a result of misunderstanding and of being unaware of school policies in general. We hope that this booklet will go some distance towards alleviating the possible causes of conflict and misunderstanding and will ultimately ensure that each child receives the enjoyable and fulfilling education to which they are entitled.

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- To enable each child to lead a full life as a child.
- To help each child to develop self-discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- To help each child to think closely and act independently.
- To cultivate in the child a sense of self-worth and belonging- thereby enhancing self-esteem.
- To equip each child to avail himself/herself of further education.
- To prepare him/her to live a full and useful life as an adult.

In addition to the above, our school also aims:

- To help the child to be independent, tolerant, kind and co-operative.
- To strive to ensure a good command of the Irish language and a basic understanding of its place in our heritage.
- To provide the children with a knowledge and understanding of appropriate mathematical concepts and operations.
- To respect and care for and to develop an appreciation in the child of the environment.
- To develop a knowledge and appreciation of our heritage through the study of history and geography.
- To ensure a sound moral and spiritual development



SECTION 2

1. Your Role as Parents

All reference to parents in this booklet are intended to be inclusive of all of our parent body.

It goes without saying that the influence of parents and of the home environment makes an immeasurable contribution to a child's educational progress and development. Scoil Iosa encourages all parents to take an active role in their child's education. The following are some areas in which you, as parents and primary educators can assist:

- Talk to your child about school for some time each day. Show an interest in all areas of their schooling.
- Look at your child's exercise books; check his/her homework journal, making sure that the work is done neatly and carefully. Check the school bag for letters sent home from school.
- Ensure that clothes are labelled and books covered and named.
- Set acceptable guidelines for viewing television and playing games on computer consoles at home. Give priority to time spent at homework. Actively encourage your child to read. Try to develop an interest in books in your child. Allow children to see reading as a recreational activity and not as a chore. Read with your child and show an interest in what they are reading.
- Create opportunities for writing. Simple informal exercises such as writing to a pen pal, relative or friend would suffice. Praise and show an interest in pieces of writing produced in school by the children.
- Develop in your child basic skills such as tying shoelaces, buttons etc. Encourage your child in the use of handkerchief, toilet training, washing of hands and good general hygiene practices.
- Demonstrate to your child your interest in their progress and your support of their education.



2. Home School Links

There are many examples in practice, of effective communication existing between the teachers and parents of our school. This co-operation and support is an essential ingredient in your child's education. It is our policy to keep parents informed of events and developments at school. As such a newsletter is issued at regular intervals. It is important that you check your child's schoolbag regularly for notes. If left unchecked children may produce these weeks after they are relevant, if at all.

Parent Teacher Contacts

It is vitally important that there is a good understanding between parents and teachers. Both share a common goal of providing the best for the children. To facilitate this, it is essential that communication between home and school is kept regular and constructive.

- The primary way in which this is facilitated is through the child's homework journal. It is school policy that each child has a standard homework journal. Parents and teachers are invited to comment in this, on issues of concern regarding their children, should the need arise. The teachers will use the homework journal as a first point of contact between the school and the home regarding a child's behaviour and progress.
- Informal parent teacher contact is also a very important way of addressing potential problems or concerns at an early stage. This may be done by way of a phone call to the school secretary to arrange a convenient time to meet your child's teacher. Should your child be experiencing a particular problem it is essential that you communicate this to the teacher. Letting the teachers know will allow them to help your child to cope. It must be noted, however that while the school welcomes parents, the teacher's work should not be interrupted unnecessarily. Making an appointment will allow the teacher either to make arrangements for the supervision of the class, in the interests of safety, or to have the class settled with work to do, so that the teacher can then give you full attention. As with a meeting set up by the teacher, it is essential that the subject matter be outlined, to allow the teacher to prepare properly for the meeting.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

During the course of the first term, all parents are invited to the school to discuss their child's progress, attitude, behaviour and level of attainment with the class teacher and if relevant, the learning support teacher. Parent/Teacher consultations are a two way process and are an essential component of the school year. Times of meetings are agreed in advance of the meeting. All parents should endeavour to attend. In the event of the time/date not being suitable an

alternative arrangement will always be facilitated. In order to gain full value for the time spent in consultation with the teacher during the formal parent teacher consultations, it is advisable that parents should give some thought to the important areas of their child's schooling. A good guideline would be to consider the following questions in preparation for the consultation:

- How do you feel that your child is progressing in school, socially and academically?
- What subjects do they particularly enjoy?
- Is your child experiencing difficulties or problems with any area of school?
- Does your child enjoy school?
- How does your child get on with their classmates?
- What are his/her interests?
- Are you satisfied with his/her progress?
- Is the teacher happy with his/her progress?
- How can you help with furthering the satisfactory progress of your child?
- Is his/her homework satisfactorily completed at all times?
- Is the child's behaviour satisfactory?
- Is there any event outside of the school which is negatively impacting on your child, socially, emotionally or academically?

From time to time, the teacher, in consultation with the Principal and Learning Support teacher, may recommend that your child should undergo assessment within the provisions of the educational support services. Please do not be alarmed, should this be the case, as this is used purely for the benefit of the child with a view to improving the educational provision within the school. While the parent has the right to refuse such intervention, we strongly encourage parents to co operate in such instances.



3. School Day

School Opens	9.00a.m.
Classes Commence	9.15a.m.
Morning Break	11.00a.m.
Classes Resume	11.10 a.m.
Lunch	1.00p.m.
Classes Resume	1.30p.m.
Infants Finish	1.55p.m.
School Finishes	2.55p.m.

There are times when children arrive at school before the school day begins, while some children remain after school closing time waiting to be collected. It is very important that parents understand where the responsibility of the school lies in this matter. Due to legal requirements, the school has no responsibility for children arriving before the official opening time or remaining in the school grounds after school. The school does not undertake responsibility for children during the time when they are travelling to school, or going home from school, regardless of the chosen mode of transport (car, bus, bicycle, on foot).

Please note that infants finish at 1.55p.m. and must be collected at this time, as the infant teachers may be assigned to other duties during this time. In line with the recommendations of the schools insurers, parents will be informed of the opening and closing times in writing as part of a school newsletter, at the beginning of each term.

4. School Uniform

Each child is required to wear the school uniform. As well as for reasons of practicality, it also helps to foster a sense of pride in the school and helps the child to feel part of it.

The present school uniform consists of:

Boys	Girls
Grey Trousers	Grey skirt, trousers or pinafore (under jumper)
Blue polo shirt	Blue polo shirt.
Navy blue round neck jumper	Navy blue round neck jumper.
	Navy socks

The children should wear flat heeled shoes/boots or sneakers only.

The official school tracksuit is available locally and consists of:
 Navy Blue Tracksuit top with school name.
 Navy Blue Tracksuit bottom /pants.

School Uniform must be worn at all times unless advised otherwise by the class teacher. All clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labelled. A standard school tracksuit should be worn for P.E activities. Tracksuits pants should be plain navy in colour and not explicitly branded. No stripes or visible logos should be worn.



5. Lunch

Healthy Eating Policy.

As we are inundated with data and statistics regarding issues such as childhood diabetes and childhood obesity, the importance of appropriate diet cannot be understated. With this in mind, the school has adopted a healthy eating policy. It is essential that, in order for this policy to be effective, we must attain co-operation from our parent body. While not dictating the contents of your child's lunchbox, please be aware of the important facets of a healthy diet and do not include high sugar foods. Chocolate bars and treats, should be periodical rather than the norm and it is suggested that healthy foods particularly fruit, yoghurt, yoghurt drinks should be included. Crisps, sweets and high sugar juices should be discouraged. Under no circumstances should "fizzy drinks" be included as part of your child's lunch. Bear in mind that, what we give our children now will determine in no small way, their health as they grow and develop.

6. School Books

Pupils must treat schoolbooks with respect. This applies to all schoolbooks, whether personal property of the child, school library books or books provided on loan to the pupils. The school must be reimbursed for any books damaged or returned in a state that renders them unsuitable for use in the following year.

Books must be covered and kept clean, tidy and presentable. Logos or stickers should not be put onto textbooks or copybooks and all damage should be repaired immediately.

Pupils should make every reasonable effort to have all books by the first day of term one. To facilitate this booklists are given to children before the summer holidays. As well as books, the booklist may direct parents towards other stationery requirements such as pencils, pens, erasers etc.



7. Money Matters.

We try to ensure that the financial burden put on parents is fair and equitable.

- At various times during the year the teachers will request money to offset expenses incurred. These contributions include those towards photocopying, art, dance classes, Sports days. It is also strongly recommended that all parents should avail of the personal accident insurance policy. Please settle all money matters promptly in order to save time and to assist the school in running as efficiently as possible. Enclose all moneys in a sealed envelope with the child's name and class clearly written on the outside. This will ensure safe transaction.
- Periodically entertainment programmes are provided for the children, which may require an admission charge. The children will be notified in good time should this be the case.
- The school may organise a School Book Fair from time to time to coincide with World Book Day ceremonies. Generally this takes place in term 2. At present we engage an outside service provider to assist in this venture. Over the course of the book fair, appropriate books are available for purchase by the children. We encourage parents to ensure that the children are engaged in reading activities and participation in events such as the book fair is a very positive step in this direction.
- The school also facilitates a saving scheme for all pupils in the under the auspices of the local Credit Union. All children are encouraged to participate in the scheme. Officials from the local Credit Union visit the school every two weeks to enable the children to lodge money to their savings card. Please note that while we do promote good savings habits among the children, participation in the scheme is not mandatory and at the parents discretion.



SECTION 3

Health and Safety Accidents and Illness.

If a child is injured or becomes ill in school, parents will be contacted by telephone. To facilitate this the school should be provided with relevant contact telephone numbers where parents or persons nominated by the parents can be contacted. These telephone numbers are initially provided on enrolment. The school must be informed of any changes to contact information as a matter of urgency. In the event of the school being unable to make contact with parents / nominees, the need to take the child to a doctor may arise. Contact information is electronically stored and will not be used for other than the purpose indicated to parents. The school will observe its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act regarding any or all information pertaining to school staff, pupils, parents or members of the Board of Management

If your child shows signs of illness, fever etc at home, please do not send them to school as the ailment may be passed on to classmates, teachers or others in school. A sick child cannot perform adequately in school and more often than not suffers needlessly by being in school. A considerate approach is expected from parents in this regard.

- The class teacher (with each change of class) must be informed if your child has a medical complaint, allergy or any other problem, which might affect his/her performance at school.
- Parents should realise the importance of a good nights sleep, if the child is to be alert and open to learning.
- Children should be encouraged to exercise good hygiene practices.
- Special attention should be paid to the cleanliness of hair. The school should be informed if you find it necessary to treat your child's hair for nits, head lice etc. The co-operation of all parents is requested in this matter. Cases of other infectious conditions such as impetigo, ringworm etc. should be made known to the school.

Transport to and from school is a matter for parents and does not involve the school. Children should be collected promptly after school. Where parents are delayed or unable to pick up their children at the usual time, arrangements should be made with someone else, well known to the children, to collect them.

- The school bears no responsibility for children remaining in the schoolyard at the end of the school day while waiting for parents or for buses to collect them.
- Infants go home at 1.55. They should always know with whom they are going home. To avoid stress and confusion on the children, the teacher should be advised of any change to such arrangements.
- The school holds insurance to cover its legal liability for accidental bodily injury to students but claims made by parents in such circumstances will only be met where negligence on the part of the school is proven. However, a Personal Accident Scheme is available to students and it is advisable for parents to avail of this. A circular outlining detail of such a scheme is made available to parents at the beginning of each school year.
- Parents who give their children permission to leave the school grounds unaccompanied should advise in writing in all such cases.
- Motorists should exercise extreme care when approaching or leaving the school grounds.
- Parents should be aware of the risks of exposure to the sun's rays. It is advisable that children should wear sun protection on days when there is a risk of sunburn.
- Aerosol deodorants are not allowed under any circumstances. Parents should ensure that the older children use a 'roll on' deodorant should the need arise.

Accidents

If an accident occurs or if a child is injured inside or outside the classroom our policy is:-

- If the accident is of a minor nature, the teacher administers basic first aid.
- Serious injuries e.g. suspected fractures, nasty cuts that may require stitches etc. parents or contact person is informed and the pupil should be taken to the family doctor/ accident & emergency. In cases where the emergency contact person cannot be reached, the injured child may be taken by the school authorities to receive appropriate medical attention.
- If a child complains of stomach, head or toothache, his/her parents will be informed as soon as possible and arrangements made to take him/her home.

As part of our Health and Safety policy parents may receive a questionnaire at the beginning of each school year, which they should fill and return immediately to the school. This should be returned promptly.

As part of our school policy document, the Board of Management has formulated a detailed Health and Safety Policy Statement. Parents may view this by arrangement.

Policy on Administration of Medicines

Teachers do not accept the responsibility for administering medication to pupils during the school day.

From time to time, parents request that the school dispense medicines that need to be administered at regular intervals to children.

These requests fall into two categories:

- Children who require emergency medication on a long term basis because of the chronic nature of their illness (for example, asthma and epilepsy).
- Children who are suffering from casual ailments (coughs, colds etc.)

Generally, no member of staff will administer medicine to children. However it is important to note that individuals can also be found liable for failing to treat an injury. Where teachers are compelled to administer any form of medication, these must be appropriately trained/instructed in the administration of the treatment at the parents expense.

In general parents are responsible for the administration of medicine to their children and if a child needs a dose of medicine at lunchtime, the child should return home for this or the parent should come to school to administer the medicine.

For casual ailments it is often possible for doses of medication to be given outside school hours. The school does not administer medicines for casual ailments.

Allergies / Long Term Illness

- Any long-term illness, for example asthma, and details on any child whose health might give cause for concern or a child's allergy to any form of medication should be notified in writing by the parent. Such information should be supplied on enrolment or whenever the allergy is discovered by the parents and is recorded in the back of the Accident Report Book.

Long Term or Emergency Medication

For the school to agree to assist in administering long term medication:

- Parents must write to the school, giving authorisation for medicines to be administered to their children. This needs to include instructions regarding the quantity and frequency of administration.
- The medicines must be brought into school in a properly labelled container which states :
 - (a) The name of the medicine.
 - (b) The dosage.
 - (c) The time of administration.
- Where possible the medicine should be self-administered under the supervision of an adult. Medicines will be kept in a secure place by staff in accordance with safety requirements.
- Where long term needs for emergency medication exist, the school will require specific guidance on the nature of the likely emergency and how to cope with it while awaiting paramedical assistance. This medication should be of the smallest dose possible to ensure recovery until a medical expert take over. At no time should an emergency dose be such that it could harm the child if inappropriately administered.

Detailed written instructions should be sent to the school and the parent/guardian should liaise with their child's class teacher and at least one other member of staff who may in the event of the first staff member being

Parents should outline clearly in writing, what can and can't be done in a particular emergency situation, with particular reference to what may be a risk to the child. If the emergency is likely to be of a serious nature, emergency contact numbers must be given where an adult is available at all times. When in doubt, the school will contact parents/guardians



Extract from School Policy on Behaviour and Discipline

Each child has the right to education in a relatively disruption free environment. To achieve this the school should be a well ordered and disciplined place. Our school makes every effort to make the school a safe place, which should be enjoyable, and non-threatening for each and every child. In striving to achieve this, it is essential that each pupil play his or her part. We appeal to parents to discuss the provisions of our discipline policy with the children, in order to help them to work towards the desired level of responsibility.

Aims of Scoil Íosa Behaviour and Discipline Policy

- To establish clearly defined and meaningful rules for the whole school.
- To promote a pleasant and happy atmosphere within the school.
- To foster an atmosphere which is favourable to learning. Effective learning requires a high level of attentiveness in class.
- To develop a sense of responsibility in the children within the school and with regard to school-related activities.
- To encourage the children to have respect for people and for the environment.
- To seek the support and co-operation of parents in the implementation of a fair and effective code of discipline.
- To promote the concept of mutual respect in the children. Respect for property, others, themselves, their teachers and the environment.

Every pupil is expected to :-

- Behave in a responsible manner towards the school and others showing consideration, respect and courtesy for all pupils, their teachers and all other adults at all times.
- Show respect for the property of others and of the school at all times.
- Behave in a way that will emphasise the good name of family and school at all times.

The following provisions are made to aid the effective implementation of the school discipline policy:

The reasons for the school rules need to be discussed with the children regularly and the importance of adherence to them should be emphasised

- on a formal and informal basis. This may form a major facet of the school S.P.H.E. programme.
- Sanctions should be graded, fair, consistent and acceptable to the pupils, teachers and parents.
- The school policy on behaviour and discipline is available for viewing to parents by request

Behaviour in Class

It is expected that:

- Pupils should co-operate with instructions by the teacher at all times.
- Pupils should ensure that their behaviour in class does not interfere with their colleagues learning or progress. Courtesy, respect, consideration and honesty are the basis of acceptable classroom behaviour – this allows others to learn in a safe, secure environment.
- Pupils should ensure that they have the books, copies, pencils, biros etc. required to do their work properly each day.
- Pupils are expected to enter and leave the classroom in an orderly fashion at all times.
- Pupils should listen to, and show respect for their teachers at all times.
- Classrooms should be kept tidy and clear of litter.
- Swearing or bad language should never be used in school.
- Chewing gum is forbidden in school.

Behaviour in the Playground

- Pupils should recognise the rights of all children in the playground.
- Pupils should not behave in a way that endangers themselves or others.
- Pupils should remain within the playground boundaries at all times during breaks

- Pupils should remain in their designated play areas as instructed by the teacher.
- Pupils should not interfere with other children at play.
- Pupils should try to ensure that no child is excluded from play in such a manner as to cause upset.
- Pupils should co-operate with instructions given by the teacher on duty.
- Pupils are expected to keep the playground litter free. Litterbins are provided and should be used.
- No glass bottles allowed in the schoolyard.
- The use of bad language, swearing etc is not allowed.
- Chewing Gum is not allowed in school at any time.
- Carbonated (fizzy) drinks are not allowed in school at any time.
- Children are not allowed to take mobile phones, or other electronic equipment to school.
- Crisp packets must never be brought to school.

Procedures for dealing with Misbehaviour

While many of the minor breaches of discipline can be dealt with quickly and effectively, there may be need for further disciplinary action if a child continues to misbehave or is guilty of serious misbehaviour .

- The class teacher or the person in charge deals with the situation and imposes a Sanction/Sanctions.
- The misdemeanour is recorded in the homework diary.
- The class teacher may consult with the parents of the child with the intention of addressing the difficulty. Parental co-operation is vital in this regard and as such is expected.
- If the problem persists or in the case of serious misbehaviour it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents, teacher and Principal to monitor the situation, always with the aim of helping the child and upholding the rights of other pupils to learn in a safe, disruption free environment.

- A written record will be kept for instances of serious misbehaviour and of advice given to the child.
- Improvement in behaviour will also be recorded.

Sanctions

Sanctions are necessary to register disapproval of the nature and incidence of misbehaviour and, as far as possible, are appropriate to the misdemeanour. The seriousness of the misdemeanour will determine the level of sanction.

Levels of Sanction

- Reasoning with the pupil.
- Verbal reprimand from the teacher.
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Loss of privileges including some playground time.
- Prescribing additional work.
- Changing seating arrangements in the classroom.
- A note or comment on the child's homework journal to be signed by parents.
- Referral to the Principal.
- Regular report to the Principal.
- A daily record of behaviour may be kept on a form which must be signed weekly by the teacher, principal and parent.

Parents invited to meet the teacher and principal to discuss behaviour

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical abuse conducted by an individual or group against others. It is an area of great concern to the school staff and Board of Management. Bullying can take many forms and is very difficult to detect. The root cause may be low self-esteem and / or peer pressure. Children suffer needlessly as a result of being bullied. Unfortunately in most cases they suffer in silence, as they are either too ashamed or too scared to confide in an adult about their difficulty. Being bullied can force children to become withdrawn or unusually quiet, school work suffers and in many cases efforts are made to avoid coming to school by pretence of illness etc. In extreme cases the problem may lead to a change of personality and a withdrawal of the child from extra curricular activities. Children may suffer nightmares or headaches and bedwetting may occur. As you can imagine we are appealing to all parents to be vigilant in their efforts to point out to their children the consequences of bullying behaviour. This is not an area that we can work on alone. It is important that the school be notified should any pupil suffer in this regard. All notification will be dealt with in a very thorough and sensitive manner.

We aim to:-

- Foster a positive school climate, which focuses on respect for the individual as clearly outlined in our school ethos.
- Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils and parents.
- Encourage children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour by establishing a climate in which it is safe to tell.
- Ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under supervision.
- Develop procedures for noting, reporting and investigating incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Work with and through parents in controlling bullying behaviour.

Implementation of the Policy

- Parents are requested to make their children aware of the unacceptable nature of bullying behaviour and to report such behaviour.
- Each term children are made aware of the unacceptability of bullying behaviour and encouraged to report it. This is done on a formal basis in all classes as part of our school S.P.H.E programme.
- Occasionally bullying behaviour is discussed informally in class.

- All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial will be noted, investigated and dealt with by the teachers. All incidents will be conducted with sensitivity and with due rights to all the pupils concerned.
- Serious cases of bullying behaviour will be referred to the Principal.
- The teacher or Principal will inform parents of the victims and those responsible for the bullying behaviour. The matter will then be discussed at a convenient time.
- As bullying may continue outside of school hours, it is school policy that when a complaint has been fully investigated and the school authorities are satisfied that the allegations are true and well founded, the parents of both parties will meet with the school Principal. It is hoped that such a meeting will clarify the school policy and will make all concerned aware of their responsibilities in this regard.
- Where cases remain unresolved at school level the matter will be referred to the School's Board of Management.

School Programme

By equipping children with a range of social skills, we can help to lessen the risk of being bullied. As a school community we will continue to provide opportunities for those children with low self-esteem, to increase their confidence and self-worth.

By providing opportunities for children to discuss issues such as; the need for rules, dealing with conflict, the right to be different, the right to be ourselves, an anti-bullying climate will hopefully be developed. Fostering a sense of responsibility will also serve to promote good social behaviour. Everybody is equally valued and we treat others, as we would like them to treat us. Silence allows people to suffer. We learn to speak out when we know we should.



ENROLMENT POLICY.

Introduction

The Board of Management of Scoil Íosa hereby sets out its Enrolment and Admissions policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Board trusts that by doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

All decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management of the school

Rationale.

This policy sets out to ensure that fair and appropriate procedures are in place to assist the school in:

- Making decisions in an open and transparent manner, in line with the Ethos and Mission statement of the school giving due regard to legislative requirements.
- Making an accurate assessment of the capacity of the school to adequately provide for the education of all children therein, bearing in mind issues of maximum individual class size and giving consideration to health and safety of all children currently enrolled in the school.
- Putting in place a framework, which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school.

Legal Framework

Section 9(j) of the Education Act 1998 states that 'A recognised school shall...subject to this act and in particular section 15(2) (d), establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school'

Section 15 (2) (d) states that the Board of Management shall 'publish ...the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected'.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 (Section 19(1)) requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the schools Admission Policy. Section 19(2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school, while Section 19(3) requires that the Board of Management shall as soon as possible (but no later than 21 days) after receiving such information, 'make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof'

The Equal Status Act 2000 (Sections 5 & 7(2)), prohibits discrimination on the grounds of 'gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community' regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction. There are exceptions regarding single-sex schools and schools promoting particular religious values (Section 7(3)).

Admission Criteria

It is the policy of Scoil Íosa that where there is availability of places, all children are considered for enrolment regardless of ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, family or social status, or disability. However the Board of Management reserves the right of admission if such admissions contravene published guidelines on class sizes. All admissions are made giving due regard to the rights of the teaching staff and of all children currently enrolled in the school.

1. Parents seeking to enrol their children in Scoil Íosa Ballyhaunis are requested to return a completed enrolment form (available through the school office, on request) with an original birth certificate to the school by 31st May each year, or immediately, in the case of applications for enrolment during the course of the school year.

2. While recognising the rights of parents regarding enrolment of their child and choice of school, the Board of Management also bears the responsibility to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular those children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements where the Board of Management will be guided by the principles of Natural Justice and will act in the best interests of all children. The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children appropriate in each individual classroom. This will be determined by the following factors:

- Physical Space available in the classroom.
- The Educational needs of the children relative to age.
- Whether classes are multi grade.
- The presence of children with special/behavioural needs.
- DES maximum class size – The current maximum class size, as determined by the Board of Management is 27 children in 1st-6th class and 22 in Infant classes. (On any class reaching this maximum enrolment, no further children will be admitted under any circumstances.)
- The safety of each individual child.

3. Children enrolling in this school must be at least four years on or before March 31st of the year of admission to Junior Infants. Children whose fourth birthday falls after the first day of the school year of application to enrol in Junior Infants will not be considered for enrolment under any circumstances until September of the following school year.

4. Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the rules governing National Schools, as well as our own schools enrolment policy and local agreements with other schools. References and reports detailing behaviour, attitude, special intervention (resource/learning support etc.) will be required as part of the enrolment application. These documents must be considered by the Board of Management in any application.

It may be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a particular child pending: -

- (a) The receipt of an assessment report, and, or medical report or where such a report is not available, to request that the child be assessed immediately.
 - (b) The provision/transfer of appropriate resources by the Department of Education & Science to meet the needs specified in the psychological and / or medical report.
5. Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The Board of Management places parents/guardians responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in a manner appropriate and acceptable to all within the school community. A declaration of intent to adhere to school policies and code of acceptable behaviour will be included for parental agreement on the enrolment form in line with the provisions of the Education Welfare Act (2000). This declaration will be signed on the Childs behalf prior to submission for Board of Management approval. Enrolment in the school cannot proceed without receipt of all required documentation as laid down in this policy. No exceptions will be made to these requirements. Parents who may, for any reason, have difficulties in agreement with the content of enrolment documentation, and refuse to sign, may be advised to seek alternative schooling, which will address their specific requirements.

The following criteria must be considered in any enrolment application:

- Brothers and Sisters of pupils currently enrolled in Scoil Íosa.
- Children living within the parish boundary / Scoil Íosa catchment area. (Parents may be requested to provide proof of address in the form of utility bills or letter from landlord/local authority)
- Children of school staff.

- The availability of a place in the class appropriate to the child based on the class maximum size as determined by the Board of Management (currently 27 pupils in classes 1st-6th and 22 pupils in infant classes) Whether the school can guarantee the safety of the child based on the needs of the individual children.

7. Scoil Íosa welcomes children with special needs in line with current DES guidelines on inclusive education. In cases where parents wish to enrol children with special needs, all information must be made available to the school regarding special interventions required by the child in order to maximise educational opportunities for the prospective pupil. Parents will at all times be made aware of the constraints under which main stream schools operate in attempting to access such interventions for pupils with special needs. The Board of Management must be provided with the necessary professional reports (Psychological, O.T., Speech and language etc) so that all relevant supports may be accessed before the child becomes a pupil at the school. Notwithstanding the availability of such resources as provided for special needs of pupils (resource/learning-literacy support, SNA), parents who are not satisfied with the level of educational provision available in our school will be advised to consider a special school / Mainstream with ASD unit which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with special educational needs.

After consideration for enrolment to the school, parents will be informed in writing of the decision of the Board of Management within 21 days of receipt of application for enrolment. In the case of Junior Infant pupils enrolling to commence school at the beginning of the school year, parents will be informed of the Board of Management decision within 21 days of the final date of enrolment, (normally May 31st). At this time a pupil profile form detailing information such as illness/allergies, emergency contact numbers etc., should be filled in and returned to the school. The information contained therein will be electronically stored on the school data base, shall be treated with the utmost confidence, and shall be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Data Protection Act (Amendment) 2003.

In cases where due to the maximum class size having been reached and as a consequence it being necessary to refuse admission to the school, the children in question will be placed on a wait list for admission, should a place in the relevant class become available. Incomplete applications where relevant reports are withheld/omitted may delay placement on the wait list pending receipt of such information.

The following criteria, (in the following order of priority) will be applied in the allocation of places from the wait list:

1. Children of school staff
2. Children resident within Ballyhaunis Parish boundary/Scoil Íosa catchment area.
3. Brothers and sisters of children already enrolled in the school.

Where there is no availability of places in Scoil Íosa, it is policy to advise parents of the availability of school places in any one of eight alternative local schools as per written advice from the DES which states that where there is no availability of spaces in Scoil Íosa, the board of management should issue such advice.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

This policy will be monitored by the Board of Management on an ongoing basis. It will be revisited and reviewed regularly in the light of experience. Where changes or amendments are deemed necessary, these will be achieved on a consultative basis giving consideration to the views and professional opinions of the school teaching staff.

*Revised and updated May 2019.
Without prejudice.*