

**SCOIL THOMÁIS, LAUREL LODGE,
CASTLEKNOCK, DUBLIN 15**

Admission Policy of Scoil Thomáis

**Laurel Lodge, Castleknock, Dublin 15
Rolla: 19769w**

Patron: Catholic Archbishop of Dublin



ADMISSION POLICY

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 Scoil Thomáis consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 13th July 2020. It will be published on the school's website and is available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Scoil Thomáis admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which will be 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** will be published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of the School

Scoil Thomáis is a Catholic co-educational (boys & girls) primary school with a Catholic Ethos under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin.

“Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and*
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and*
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and*
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,*

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

*In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of **Scoil Thomáis** 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. (CPSMA)*

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Scoil Thomáis is a vertical primary school providing education for boys and girls aged 4 -13 years in classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

Scoil Thomáis currently has staffing of 41 teachers (@ Dec 2019) as follows: 27 X Mainstream Class Teachers, 12 X Special Education Teachers and an Administrative Principal and Administrative Deputy Principal.

The school has an allocation of Special Needs Assistants to assist with pupils with special/care needs. The Board of Management employs secretarial and caretaking staff who support the administration, maintenance, security and upkeep of the school.

Scoil Thomáis operates under the Rules for National Schools and Department of Education and Skills (DES) guidelines.

The school is staffed in accordance with the schedule laid out each school year by the DES. The school is funded by annual grants from the DES. This funding is supplemented each school year with contributions by parents for school supplies, pupil activities/tours and school fundraising for identified projects and developments.

Scoil Thomáis follows the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education (DES), which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Section 9 & 30 of the Education Act 1998. Pupils enrolled in the school are expected to participate in all aspects of the (secular) curriculum which includes the following subjects: English, Gaeilge, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Visual Arts, Music, Drama, SPHE and Physical Education. Pupils are expected to co-operate with the school Code Behaviour.

The school provides Religious Education (RE) for pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and pupils participate in the *Grow in Love Programme for Religious Education* (unless parents request non-participation in Religious Instruction). Catholic pupils participating in the religious education curriculum may also attend Mass and sacramental services in the church arranged in association with the Parish.

Mission Statement of Scoil Thomáis:

Our mission is to promote the fullest possible development of each child socially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually so that he/she may lead a full enjoyable life as a child, be prepared to avail of further education, be able to contribute to society as an adult and enjoy leisure time. We hope that pupils in Scoil Thomáis will enjoy their learning experiences in our school over the course of their time with us.

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3. Admission Statement

Scoil Thomáis 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.

Scoil Thomáis 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.

Scoil Thomáis 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 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

Scoil Thomáis does not operate a specific special class for SEN pupils - all such pupils are integrated into mainstream classes and may be allocated additional supports as sanctioned by the Department of Education

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5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see *Section 6* below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

Scoil Thomáis is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription for Admission

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:

CATEGORY 1: Places will be Allocated within this group In Date Of Birth Order (Oldest First)

- **Siblings of children currently enrolled in Scoil Thomáis,** aged 4 years with date of birth on/before 1st April of year of application to start school
- **Children who are resident in the Parish of St Thomáis the Apostle on date of enrolment,** aged 4 years with date of birth on/before 1st April of year of application to start school.
- **Children of permanent or non-casual school staff,** aged 4 years with date of birth on/before 1st April of year of application to start school.

CATEGORY 2: Places will be allocated within this group in In Date Of Birth Order (Oldest First)

- **Children who are NOT resident in the ~~in the~~ Parish of St Thomáis the Apostle on date of enrolment,** aged 4 years with date of birth on/before 1st April of year of application to start school

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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:

- **Not applicable as places will be allocated in birth order - oldest first**

IMPORTANT NOTE regarding LATE APPLICATIONS –

Applications for enrolment for junior infants intake received after registration process is completed in January of the year of school entry may be accepted and dealt with in accordance with the notice in *Section 14* of this policy.

7. What will not be Considered or Taken into Account

In accordance with section 62(7) (e) of the Education Act, Scoil Thomáis will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a child on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- a. a child'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 child's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- d. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a child's parents;
- e. a requirement that a child or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- f. a child's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his/her family attending or having previously attended the school; (except siblings currently enrolled – *Section 6*)
- 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 for Admission

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Thomais will be based on the following:

- **Scoil Thomáis Admission Policy**
- **Scoil Thomáis Annual Admission Notice** (where applicable)
- **Information provided by the applicant on Scoil Thomáis official Admission Application Form** received during the period specified in the annual admission notice for receiving applications

Decisions on **Late Applications** - see *Section 14*

Decisions on **Applications for Classes other than Junior Infants** - see *Section 15*

Selection criteria that are not included in Scoil Thomáis Admission Policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in the school.

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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 child is not offered a place in Scoil Thomáis, the reasons for the decision will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the child's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the child'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*

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Thomáis 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 Scoil Thomáis where

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is **false or misleading**.
****Note: Declaration on Admission Application Form in relation to required documentation**
- (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 child, 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/her and that he/she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child;** 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.

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Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a Patron or another Board of Management with a list of the children in relation to whom

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

13. Waiting List in the Event of Oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of children whose applications for admission to Scoil Thomáis were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Scoil Thomáis is in the order of priority assigned to 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 children on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which applicants 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 Scoil Thomáis 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 3 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 applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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After the initial rounds of offers of places to those who have applied with the specified timeframe have been completed, and in the event of further places becoming available (due to withdrawals or change of mind), the BOM reserves the right to prioritise at this stage, offers to late applicants from CATEGORY 1 in cases where there is a valid reason for not completing an application for admission within the January timeframe stated in the Admission Notice.

15. Procedures for Admissions to classes (other than Junior Infants) and for Admissions during the School Year

Scoil Thomáis will admit pupils seeking transfer from other primary schools during the school year in exceptional circumstances ie where a family relocates into Laurel Lodge Parish and it is not practicable to attend previous school.

Parents/Guardians seeking admission for a child into Senior Infants – 6th Class

(i) applicants seeking to transfer a child to Scoil Thomáis from other primary schools within the State or from outside the State are accepted in accordance with Scoil Thomáis Admissions Policy and are subject to the availability of places in particular classes and verification of documentation and information.

It is advised that all such applicants should apply in advance of the commencement of the school year. In such cases applications are accepted from January preceding the start of the new school year.

(ii) Scoil Thomáis pupils returning from approved specialised education placements (ie Reading / Language Unit) in another mainstream school are re-admitted upon application.

(iii) Pupils seeking admission or re-admission following placement in a special school or non-mainstream educational setting will be admitted subject to the availability of places and subject to an accompanying report from professional services involved with the child demonstrating that the child can meaningfully integrate into and benefit from a mainstream education setting. In such cases and as deemed necessary Scoil Thomáis will seek to have the educational supports ie SNA/ Assistive Technology in place in advance of the enrolment of the child.

16. Declaration in Relation to the Non-Charging of Fees

The BoM of Scoil Thomáis 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 child to the school, or (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a child in the school.

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17. Arrangements regarding Non-Attendance at Religious Instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parents have requested that their child attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such pupils: A written request should be made to the Principal of the school.

A meeting will be arranged with the parent/s to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. (CPSMA)

18. Reviews/Appeals

Review of Decisions by the Board of Management (BoM):

The parent of a child may request the BoM to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998. Appeals to Scoil Thomais BOM must be made in writing within **15** school days of receipt of notification.

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 BoM 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 BoM 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 BoM 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 a child 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 BoM **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management). Appeal in writing within 15 school days of receipt of notification

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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 BoM prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management). Appeal in writing within 15 school days of receipt of notification

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. www.education.ie

This Admission Policy has been approved by the Patron (CPSMA) July 2020 and ratified by Scoil Thomáis Board of Management on 17th August 2020 – and is noted in the BOM minutes of this date.

Signed: *Brian Kealy*, Chairperson BOM

Signed: *Mary McGarry*, Principal

Dated this 17th August 2020

FINAL CPSMA APPROVED