



Admission Policy of Scoil Bernadette
May 10th May 2020- Amended December 2022 (EPSEN Act Commencement)

Amended and ratified and approved by the Patron October 2025

School Address: Bonnington, Montenotte, Cork, T23 TK31.

Roll number: 18458A

School Patron: The Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross

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 Bernadette has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of students attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 25th of 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 the Scoil Bernadette 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

The school's ethos is Christian and in this atmosphere the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth of the students is developed. The motto of our school is "Learning for

Living” and we aim to give every student the skills to be able to live as independent a life as they possibly can, foster friendships and feel part of a school community that cares for them.

3. Admission Statement

Scoil Bernadette 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 ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, ‘civil status 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 Bernadette will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Scoil Bernadette 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.

Scoil Bernadette is a special school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister.

4. Categories of Special Educational Need catered for in the school

Scoil Bernadette is a school designated by the Department of Education and Skills for students with a primary diagnosis of **Mild General Learning Disability**. The Board of Management, acting on the advice of the Admissions Board, will consider applications from students who fall within this range (i.e. a score of between 50 and 70 on a standardised test of intelligence) for cognitive or adaptive functioning tests. This decision will be based on a number of criteria that must be met:

- Students have psychological reports that have been completed within 2 years from the date of the Admissions meeting.

- The reports are from nationally recognised professionals and state IQ scores clearly from the nationally recognised IQ testing systems.(NEPs recommended)The Psychological report recommends enrolment in a special school for children with Mild General Learning Disability.
- All decisions will be made in consultation with the relevant Special Education Needs Organiser and assigned school Psychologist.
- The student's IQ scores range **or** adaptive functioning scores falls clearly within the Mild General Learning Disability range (50-70)

(Addition made in September 2025 as required under [Circular 0039/2025](#))

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a Special School

for **Mild General Learning Disability** when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

Diagnosis of special educational needs (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report)

AND

A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

A letter from the **NCSE** confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a Special School for **Mild General Learning Disability**

i.e. *"Preliminary Determination of Eligibility to a Special School Placement"*

(Please contact your assigned SENO about this letter - More information is available on the [NCSE website](#))

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/guardian 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

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:

Scoil Bernadette is a special school which caters for students of second-level age (12-19) with a primary diagnosis of Mild General Learning Disability. Students with a Mild General Learning Disability automatically transfer from our school sister Scoil Éanna to Scoil Bernadette. Once the students from Scoil Éanna have been given their place, if the number of applicants exceeds the number of places, the following criteria will apply in priority order once students have met the criteria as set out in section 4.

1. Students from our sister school (Scoil Eanna)
2. siblings of existing students
3. students from other special schools/classes
4. Students from mainstream schools

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 further places remain, and the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places each applicant is given a number on a lottery basis. Names will be drawn at random by our advising psychologist at the Admissions Meeting from applicants that have met the criteria set out in Section 4. The first names pulled out will be placed at the top and offered a place, and when all available places have been allocated, names will continue to be drawn and their place on the waiting list recorded. Each applicant will be informed of their place number on the waiting list in writing. This waiting list will be kept for the remainder of the academic year and any places that become available during the year will be offered in order to the student at the top of this list as places become available. At the end of the academic year this waiting list will be disposed of and the new admissions process will resume the 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) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (b) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (c) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (d) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school.

This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.

8. Decisions on applications

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

- The 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 [section 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in the school's 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 Scoil Bernadette, 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, parent/guardian must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not the parent/guardian has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, parent/guardian 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 Bernadette 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/guardian 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 Scoil Bernadette were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid only for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Scoil Bernadette 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 are as follows:

- Students seeking admission to the school must meet the criteria set out in Section 4.
- They must indicate what year group they are seeking admission for and fill in an application form.
- The Admissions Board will determine if there are places available within the year group.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

- Students seeking admission to the school must meet the criteria set out in Section 4.
- They must indicate what year group they are seeking admission for and fill in an application form.
- They must indicate a reason why the application is being made during, rather than prior to, the commencement of the school year.
- The Admissions Board will determine if there are places available within the year group.

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

The Board of Management of Scoil Bernadette 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 parent/guardian or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has 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:

- Students will be allocated alternative work within the classroom while religious instruction is taking place

or

- Students will be reassigned to another classroom while religious instruction is taking place.

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.

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.

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.

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.