



Maree N.S.

Maree, Oranmore, Co. Galway

Admission Policy of Maree National School.

**Maree, Oranmore, Co Galway
H91PK19.**

Roll number: 18089S

School Patron: Bishop Michael Duignan

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 September 2023. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Maree National School's admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Maree N.S. is an inclusive Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway.

“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 Maree N.S. 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. Prayer is a feature of the school day. Maree N.S. is a Catholic Primary School concerned with the spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual development of a child, in a warm, caring environment, in partnership with parents, parish and community.

Our Mission

We, at Scoil Mhuire Maree, aim to provide a warm, caring, safe environment where our pupils will be enabled to develop to their full potential, socially, emotionally, morally, spiritually and academically. We aim to retain the qualities and values our school had in the past while adapting to the many positive changes in policy methodologies etc. of the future. Maree NS is a co-educational primary school. The children don't wear a uniform and we aim to encourage each child's uniqueness and individual expression. Children are encouraged to come to school in clothing that is both functional and practical in order for them to take part in the daily activities taking place during the school day.

3. *Admission Statement*

Maree National School 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.

- Maree 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 educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.
- Maree 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.

Primary schools receiving applications from applicants of a minority religion

Maree National School is a Catholic 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.

4. Admission of Students

The Board is bound by the Department of Education and Skills Rules for National Schools and Education (Welfare) Act 2000: Pupils may only be enrolled from the age of four years and upwards though compulsory attendance shall not apply until the age of six years.

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –
the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 below for further details)

- a) 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.
- b) Maree National School 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
- c) Where a student is less than 4 years of age on the last day of December in the year prior to commencing school.

Each applicant must include a photocopy of their passport or birth certificate with their application.

Oversubscription

The Board will have regard to relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of the children. 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. Proof of address will be sought for those who require enrolment under the catchment area parameter.

At least two forms of proof of address will be sought and under certain circumstances the Board of Management may request further proof if deemed necessary. Some proofs of address may include the following:

- A copy of a recent paper utility bill (these must be dated within three months of the date of application and be in the name of one or both parents/guardians only) e.g. Electricity Bill, Gas Bill, Landline Telephone Bill (Mobile phone bill not accepted)
- Copy of current car/home insurance
- Top of a recent bank statement (showing the account holder name, address and date)
- Recent correspondence for State Agency/ Government department
- Proof of grant of planning permission
- Proof of purchase of residential property issued by a solicitor.
- Proof of tenancy agreement by a tenancy agency or a solicitor. (Please note: An agreement between a landlord and tenant will not be accepted)

The Board of Management reserve the right to refuse enrolment if they are not satisfied that the child(ren) concerned are residing in the catchment area at the time of the application.

Junior Infants Admissions

Admission Criteria are as follows:

1. Applicant students who are siblings of children currently enrolled in the school
2. Children of current staff
3. Children living within the school catchment area
4. Children of past pupils (to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice)
5. Children living within the two neighbouring parishes i.e. Clarenbridge and Oranmore
6. Children outside of the categories above

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), a lottery system will take place.

Should applications be received outside of the enrolment period, applications will be added to the waiting list in date order. The above list will not apply.

Admission to classes other than Junior Infants

The Board will adhere to relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of the children. Children will be placed in the class most appropriate to their age and in line with policy.

If the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below. It will be applied to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice for other year groups. Students must be moving to the next year group if the application is for September or to the same year if applying to move during the school year (excluding very exceptional circumstances).

1. Children who were previously enrolled in the school but for geographical purposes (e.g. family relocation) were unable to remain enrolled for a period of time.
2. Applicant students who are siblings of children currently enrolled in the school
3. Children of current staff
4. Children living within the school catchment area
5. Children of past pupils (to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice)
6. Children living within the two neighbouring parishes i.e. Clarenbridge and Oranmore
7. Children outside the categories above

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), children will be placed in date order on the waiting list and offered places accordingly.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

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

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, 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 or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; (other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2) parents having attended, a school may only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice)
- (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)

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Maree National School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see section 13 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 14 below in relation to applications for places in classes other than Junior Infants.)

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.

8. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing (by email) 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 (by email) 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 17 below for further details).

9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Maree National School, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and are 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.

The school would request that any information relating to your child's needs (physical, medical or educational) be made known to the school as soon as possible after acceptance of a place.

10. 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 Maree National School where—

(i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.

(ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.

(iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or

(iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 9 above.

11. 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.

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

This 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)

12. 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 Maree National School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Maree National School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places which may 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.

13. 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.

14. Procedures for admission of students to other classes and during the school year

(a) The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students at the start of the academic year, who are not already admitted to the school to classes other than the school's intake group are as follows:

The Board will adhere to relevant Department of Education and Skills guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation, including physical space and the health and welfare of the children when considering applications from children wishing to transfer from other schools during the school year.

(b) 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:

Pupils may be enrolled during the school year if newly resident in the catchment area. Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules for National Schools, Education Welfare Act (i.e. enrolment will take place at the beginning of each quarter or at the discretion of the principal), as well as our own school Admissions Policy and local agreement with other schools. It is a requirement of the Board of Management that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools.

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

The board of Maree National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made so that the school is as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and ethos permeate the school day, children of other faiths or none, where request is made in writing, will be excused from attendance at formal religious instruction classes and specifically Catholic liturgies. In so far as is possible, in consultation with parents, suitable alternative arrangements will be made in order to facilitate this. It will not be possible however to provide religious instruction in other faiths. Children may be assigned work to complete independently in the classroom and parents have the option of providing headphones which the child may wear for the duration of the religion lesson.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

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

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

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.

September 2023 V1