

## **SCOIL BARRA ENROLMENT POLICY**

### **Introductory Statement:**

Scoil Barra's Enrolment Policy was initially formulated in 2004 following consultation with the school community. The Enrolment Policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management ('**BOM**') at its meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2004. Subsequently, following consultation with the school community, regular revisions of the Enrolment Policy have been undertaken by the BOM in response to changing requirements and legal developments. The Enrolment Policy was reviewed, updated and formally ratified at BOM meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2006, 18<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2007, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008, 20<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2008, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014, 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2015, 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2015, 24<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2016 and 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2017.

### **Policy Mission Statement:**

Scoil Barra's Enrolment Policy seeks to preserve and enhance the characteristic spirit and ethos of the school. The Enrolment Policy is formulated in support of, and having regard to, other school policies, including its Code of Behaviour, Safety, Health and Welfare Statement, Child Protection Policy and Learning Support & Resource Teaching Policy Framework.

### **School Vision Statement:**

In Scoil Barra, we are committed to nurturing the full potential of all who work and learn in our school community ... in a positive, inclusive, safe and happy environment.

### **Catholic Ethos:**

As a Roman Catholic School, we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a Roman Catholic School, we provide Religious Education for Roman Catholic pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and we promote the formation of Roman Catholic pupils in the Roman Catholic Faith.

### **Rationale:**

The BOM of Scoil Barra hereby sets out its Enrolment Policy in accordance with the provisions of Section 15(2) of the Education Act (1998), the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Acts. The BOM trusts that in so doing, parents will understand the process for enrolment.

### **Aims:**

- a) To provide guidance and information to all concerned with enrolment and participation matters in the school, in particular to the parents/guardians ('**Parents**') of prospective pupils.
- b) To ensure that all applications for enrolment are dealt with in a fair, transparent and verifiable manner.
- c) To establish criteria under which applications are considered.
- d) To ensure that the school has access to the information and documentation deemed necessary for the completion of the enrolment process.

### ***General Information:***

Founded in 1985, Scoil Barra is a Roman Catholic Co-educational Primary School recognised by the Department of Education and Skills ('DES') as a mixed primary School. It is under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Cork and Ross ('the Patron'). The full range of classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, including the Special Language Class, are taught the curricular programmes prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998). Teaching staff allocation is as provided for under DES Circulars and regulations regarding staffing appointments and retentions and includes the school Principal, Mainstream Class Teachers, Special Language Class Teacher, Resource Teachers for Special Needs Pupils, Learning Support and Language Support Teachers. The typical school day operates from 9.00 to 13.40 (Junior & Senior Infants) and to 14.40 p.m. (First to Sixth Classes). Scoil Barra depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the DES and National Council for Special Education ('NCSE') and it operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the DES and in accordance with Patron requirements. All school policies must have regard to the resources and funding available to the school from the DES/NCSE and to Patron requirements.

### ***Guiding Principles relating to Enrolment/Admission:***

Within the context and parameters of DES and Patron requirements and the funding and resources available to it, Scoil Barra supports the following guiding principles as they relate to enrolment:

- inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need;
- equality of access and participation in the school;
- parental choice in relation to enrolment;
- respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

### **Enrolment application procedure:**

1. Parents who wish to apply to enrol their child in Scoil Barra must use the official application form.
2. Applications for admission to the Junior Infants classes must be received by the school on or before the '**Closing Date**'. The '**Closing Date**' shall mean 15.00 on the third Friday of the November of the school year preceding the school year in respect of which the application for enrolment relates to.  
Applications for Enrolment to Junior Infants received after the Closing Date will only be considered for enrolment if/when there are additional places available and only after all applications on the waiting list have first been offered a place. Late applications will be ranked in order of date of receipt of the applications.
3. A child will not be enrolled in Junior Infants in Scoil Barra unless s/he is four years of age on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> May preceding the September in respect of which the application for enrolment into Junior Infants relates to.
4. The application form for enrolment into Junior Infants requires among other things information relating to current address. In due course, if an applicant is being offered a place in one of Scoil Barra's Junior Infants classes then proof of the child's main place of residence will be required. As part of the acceptance process a utility bill in the name of one of the Parents making the application which must be dated no later than 3 months prior to the closing date must be provided. If the utility bill is not provided as part of the acceptance of offer process then the priority ranking based on 'living within the parish' criterion will be withdrawn and the application will be re-ranked to reflect this and may therefore result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.
5. The application form must also be accompanied by a birth certificate. It is essential that a copy of the birth certificate is enclosed with the application form. In any event, the offer of a place is strictly conditional on the Birth Certificate being provided as part of the Acceptance of Offer process.

6. The application form must be fully completed, dated & signed by the Parents.
7. Parents will be deemed to have accepted the school's Code of Behaviour by accepting a place in Scoil Barra.
8. An incomplete application will not be considered, it will be automatically rejected and a place will not be offered nor will a place be allocated on a waiting list.
9. If it subsequently transpires that any incorrect information or documentation was furnished, this will render the offer of a place *void ab initio*. This means that even if a place is offered, it will be withdrawn if any incorrect information and/or documentation was provided.
10. If the application for enrolment is successful, the pupil shall be enrolled as per the name on the official birth certificate as per Rules for National Schools.

***Decision-Making:***

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment of pupils are made by the BoM in accordance with the enrolment policy. The BOM will notify parents in writing of its decision within 21 days of the **Closing Date**. Decisions in respect of applications for enrolment in all other classes will be given in writing to the Parents within 21 days of receipt of the completed application form.

When deciding on enrolment matters, the BOM must have regard to Patron requirements and to relevant DES guidelines in relation to class size, staffing provision and/or any other relevant requirements/issues concerning accommodation, including physical space, optimisation of the teaching/learning process and the health and welfare of children, including appropriate supervision.

The BOM has engaged in extensive consultation regarding enrolment matters. In addition, there is now full utilisation of all existing classrooms. The BOM has decided that the total intake for Junior Infants is limited to 56 pupils i.e. it will operate two Junior Infants classes of 28 pupils each.

In the event that the number of applications for enrolment into junior infants exceeds the number of available places, the following order of priority will apply to applications received on or before the Closing Date.

- 1. Siblings of currently enrolled pupils***
- 2. Children of current Scoil Barra staff members***
- 3. Siblings of past pupils of Scoil Barra living within the parish of Ballincollig ('the Parish')***
- 4. Children of past pupils living within the Parish***
- 5. Children living within the Parish***
- 6. Siblings of past pupils of Scoil Barra not living within the Parish***
- 7. Children of past pupils not living within the Parish***
- 8. Children not living within the Parish***

It should be noted that siblings include step siblings.

In the event of there being more applications than spaces available in any of the above categories, priority will be given to applicants within the particular category in order of age, starting with the oldest. By way of example, if there are still places available in the school having accepted all applications in categories 1, 2 and 3 above, then those available places will be filled from those applications in category 4 according to the age of the child, with the older applicant given priority. No application from category 5 would be considered until such time as all category 4 applications have been exhausted.

Names of unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, in accordance with the ranking determined by the above criteria, and such applicants may be offered a place in Junior Infants if/when a place becomes available.

If/when a place in the Junior Infants' Class is offered, the Parents must accept the place in writing no later than the date stipulated in the letter of offer. A copy of a utility bill and Birth Certificate as previously outlined will also be required. A deposit of €50 will also be required as part of the acceptance process. This deposit will be set off against the cost of the Junior Infants' books. Parents of successful applicants will be required to complete

additional Consent/Agreement and Information Forms. If the school does not receive the written acceptance by the stipulated date, it will be taken that the place is not being accepted and it will be reallocated.

**Appeals:** Unsuccessful applications for enrolment may be appealed to the Secretary General of the DES in accordance with Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Parents of unsuccessful applicants are informed in writing of their right to appeal. Details on appealing decisions on enrolment under Section 29 of the Education Act are available on the DES website at [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

Applicants offered a place who choose to defer enrolment until the following year are not guaranteed an automatic right to a place the following year. The enrolment application for the following year will be considered in the context of the criteria laid down in the enrolment policy applicable to the school year in question.

### ***Enrolment Week for Junior Infants***

In order to facilitate the enrolment process and to assist parents in the decision making process regarding the selection of a school for their child's primary education, an Enrolment Week usually takes place in the week of the Closing Date for applications. Communication regarding dates and times of Enrolment Week will be by means of family note (to every family with a child already attending Scoil Barra), notices and advertisements in the Parish Newsletter and the Parishioner, and notification on the school website ([www.scoilbarra.ie](http://www.scoilbarra.ie)). Parents are invited to visit the school along with their child(ren) during the allocated time in Enrolment Week to meet with the Principal. In addition to Enrolment Week, parents are welcome to enrol their child at any other time before the Closing Date for Applications.

### ***Admissions Day***

Junior Infants, starting primary school for the first time, are admitted to Scoil Barra on a day decided by the BoM, usually during the first week of September.

### ***Induction Process:***

The Induction Process operated by Scoil Barra is intended to facilitate the transition of the pupil from home to school so as to ensure that the child's first experience of the school is both pleasant and positive. In this regard, a special meeting for parents of the new Junior Infants is organised during the last term of the prior school year, usually towards the end of May/start of June. At this meeting parents are given a special booklet, 'Scoil Barra Junior Infants/New Pupil Guidelines' which details information relating to the school and its operation, including suggestions relating to the transition of the child from home to school, and outlines the school's Code of Good Behaviour, Administration of Medication Policy and Request Form, Homework Policy and Internet Acceptable Use policy. At this meeting, parents are also informed of the Induction Process which normally follows the following pattern

- New Junior Infants are invited to 'attend' school for a one-hour visit during the last week of June. They will usually go to their 'own' room and meet with their Junior Infant teacher for the following school year.
- In September, the 'new' Junior Infants attend school on their first day from 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon.
- From their second day and for the remainder of the week, the pupils attend school from 9.00a.m. to 12 noon.
- For the second week, pupils attend school from 9.00a.m. to 12.40 p.m.
- With effect from the third week in September, the Junior Infants attend school for the full, 'normal' school day i.e. 9.00a.m. to 1.40p.m.

Experience has shown that the above approach is most conducive to a young child adapting positively at a reasonable pace to the demands and challenges of Primary School life.

### ***Enrolment of Pupils with Special Needs:***

The BoM accepts applications for enrolment from Parents in respect of children who have special needs. In order for the BoM to properly consider what is in the best interest of the child and the additional resources/equipment the school might need in order to facilitate the child's attendance at Scoil Barra, the following are required:

1. A copy of the child's medical and/or psychological reports and/or any other relevant reports
2. Where such reports are not available, the BoM reserves the right to request that the pupil be assessed immediately. The purpose of such an assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required
3. Where the BoM deems that further resources are required, it may request the Special Education Needs Organiser to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the medical/psychological/other report. These resources may include, for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or others
4. Prior to enrolment a meeting will be arranged with the child's Parents and/or the Special Education Needs Organiser to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. If considered necessary, a full conference involving all parties will be held which may include Parents, Principal, class teacher, learning/language support teacher, special class teacher, resource teacher for special needs, speech therapist/psychologist/psychiatrist, Special Education Needs Organiser or any other as appropriate.

### ***Refusal to Enrol***

1. In exceptional circumstances, the BoM may refuse to enrol a pupil because the pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources being made available from the DES/NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the child with an appropriate education.
2. The BoM also reserves the right to refuse admission in exceptional circumstances where the child poses unacceptable risk(s) to other pupils, staff and/or school property.

It is the BoM's intention to limit such refusals to rare and exceptional circumstances, and Parents of pupils so refused will be advised of their right to appeal the BoM's decision as outlined above.

### ***Enrolment to Scoil Barra's Special Language Class (also referred to as the Specific Speech and Language Disorder Class and as the Specific Language Impairment Class):***

Enrolment to Scoil Barra's Special Language Class is subject to a separate enrolment policy and process, details of which are available on request from the school.

### ***Pupils Transferring to Scoil Barra***

The BoM will allow and facilitate the enrolment of pupils who wish to transfer to Scoil Barra from another school at any time during the school year subject to available space, the Rules for National Schools, the terms of this Enrolment Policy, and in some cases, the approval of the DES. The full terms and conditions applying to this Enrolment Policy will apply equally to all applicants seeking to transfer into Scoil Barra but subject to the following amendments and variations. When deciding on Enrolment Transfer matters, the BOM has to have regard to relevant DES guidelines in relation to class size and staffing provisions and/or any other relevant requirements/issues concerning accommodation, including physical space available, optimisation of the teaching/learning process, and the health and welfare of children, including their appropriate supervision. Having regard to these matters and to the current DES Staffing Schedule, the BoM has limited the total number of pupils to

be enrolled in any class in Scoil Barra to a maximum of 28. Transfer of pupils into classes which already have 28 or more pupils, will not be facilitated.

Parents who wish to transfer their child to Scoil Barra from another school will be required to complete and present an application for enrolment on the official application form. If all required information and documentation is provided, there is eligibility to be enrolled and if there is a space available in the class required, the child will be enrolled as per the guidelines outlined above. If a space is not available at the time of the application and provided all required information and documentation is provided, there is eligibility to be enrolled, the application for enrolment will be retained on file for a period of one year from the date of receipt of the valid application form. **If a space becomes available within that period, the place shall be offered to the first ranked applicant based on date of receipt of the application form. For the avoidance of any doubt, pupils who are on a Waiting List for transfer into Scoil Barra are ranked based on date of receipt of a completed and valid application.** To extend an application for enrolment beyond the one year limit as referred to above, parents must submit a letter indicating that they wish to keep the application open for a further year.

It should be noted that the Education Welfare Act (2000) contains specific provisions in relation to the transfer of pupils, including the requirement that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools. In addition, the Parents will provide copies of all relevant school/assessment and attendance reports.

### **Code of Behaviour:**

Scoil Barra's Code of Behaviour (appended hereto) should be read in conjunction with this Enrolment Policy. Written acceptance by Parents of the school's Code of Behaviour is a requirement of this Enrolment Policy. The BoM reserves the right to refuse a child's enrolment in Scoil Barra if his/her Parents refuse to accept the Code of Behaviour.

### **Review and Implementation:**

This Enrolment Policy is subject to review at the discretion of the BOM and will be kept under on-going review.

### ***Communication and Ratification:***

A copy of this Enrolment Policy, as approved by the BOM, is provided on request to the Patron. The Enrolment Policy is available on the school's website ([www.scoilbarra.ie](http://www.scoilbarra.ie)). The Enrolment Policy is e-mailed to all Staff members and to the Parents and Friends' Association Committee. In addition, hard copies of the Enrolment Policy are issued upon request to staff members and to parents. Availability of the Enrolment Policy is notified to parents of currently enrolled pupils by means of Family Note. A copy of same is provided on request to prospective parents and to parents of currently enrolled pupils

This revised Enrolment Policy was reviewed, formally approved and ratified by the BOM at its meeting on the 23rd Oct. 2017.

Signed on behalf of the BOM:

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**Paddy Staunton, Chairperson of the Board of Management.**

**Dated: 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2017.**

