



SCOIL BARRA ADMISSIONS POLICY – OCTOBER 2020

Introductory Statement:

Scoil Barra's Admissions Policy was initially formulated in 2004 following consultation with the school community. The Admissions Policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management ('BOM') at its meeting on the 29th Nov. 2004. Subsequently, following consultation with the school community, regular revisions of the Admissions Policy have been undertaken by the BOM in response to changing requirements and legal developments.

The relevant dates and timelines for Scoil Barra'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 relevant Annual Admission Notice. 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.

Policy Mission Statement:

Scoil Barra's Admissions Policy seeks to preserve and enhance the characteristic spirit and ethos of the school. The Admissions Policy is formulated in support of, and having regard to, other school policies, including its Code of Behaviour, Safety, Health and Welfare Statement, Child Safeguarding Statement and Support 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 Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998), the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Acts and the Education [Admissions to Schools] Act 2018. The BOM trusts that this policy will enhance parents' understanding of the process for enrolment.

Aims of the Policy:

- 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, Support Teachers for pupils with Special Educational Needs. 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.

Admission Statement:

Scoil Barra 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 Barra 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 Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Enrolment application procedure:

1. Parents who wish to apply to enrol their child in Scoil Barra must use the official application form.
2. Application will only be accepted during the application dates outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice. Applications for admission to the Junior Infants classes must be received by the school on or before the '**Closing Date**'. The '**Closing Date**' shall be as specified in the Annual Admissions Notice. 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 31st May preceding the September in respect to which the application for enrolment into Junior Infants relates.
 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 required to accept in writing the school's Code of Behaviour as a condition of the admissions process.
 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 in accordance with the name on the official birth certificate as per Rules for National Schools.

****Please note: Regarding School Admission Forms:**

In accordance with new legislation on School Admissions, our Admission Form will be posted on the Scoil Barra website on the 1st October each year. It will be a form specific to the following school year, e.g. '**Application for Admission - Junior Infants 2021**'. Although there is a three week period within which applications are accepted, the form itself will remain on the site until the end of the school year to facilitate late applicants. (Please see section on 'Late Applications' in this Policy).

Applications for pupils transferring from another school will now be made on a separate form '**Application for Admission – Transfer Application for School Year:.....**' and will be permanently accessible on the school website.

These forms are also available in hard copy from the School Secretary's Office or can be sent by post upon request.

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** as specified in the Annual Admissions Notice. 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 provided the maximum number of places filled by this criterion does not exceed 25 per cent of the available places.**
- 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 provided the maximum number of places filled by this criterion combined with the places filled under criterion 4 does not exceed 25 per cent of the available places.**
- 8. Children not living within the Parish**

It should be noted that siblings include step siblings.

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) 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).

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. 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.

In accepting an offer of admission from Scoil Barra 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.

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.

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.

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 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.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of 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.

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. The School's Annual Admissions Notice containing the relevant information on dates etc., will be communicated 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). Parents are invited to visit the school along with their child(ren) during the allocated time in Enrolment Week to meet with the Principal.

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 meet with the Junior Infant teachers 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, support 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, support 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.
3. The special class attached to Scoil Barra provides an education exclusively for students with DLD (Developmental Language Disorder) and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class. Please see Enrolment Policy for Special Language Classes, South Lee Area.

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):

Scoil Barra with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with DLD (Developmental Language Disorder) [formerly known as SLI (Speech and Language Impairment), formerly known as SSLD (Specific Speech and Language Disorder)]. 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 Admissions Policy, and in some cases, the approval of the DES. The full terms and conditions applying to this Admissions 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 should be read in conjunction with this Admissions Policy. Written confirmation by parent(s) 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 is a requirement of this Admissions Policy. The BOM reserves the right to refuse a child's enrolment in Scoil Barra if his/her Parents refuse to accept [in writing] the Code of Behaviour in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

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: Children will not be required to participate in religious instruction, but due to supervision requirements will remain with their class for this time.

Data Protection (GDPR)/Sharing of Data with other schools:

This policy was compiled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (2016), The Data Protection Act 2018 and Scoil Barra's Data Protection Policy. All data managed in the development of this policy and in the execution of the enrolment process will be handled per policy and best practice.

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.

Review and Implementation:

This Admissions 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 Admissions Policy, as approved by the BOM, is provided on request to the Patron. The Admissions Policy is available on the school's website (www.scoilbarra.ie). The Admissions Policy is emailed to all Staff members and to the Parents and Friends' Association Committee. In addition, hard copies of the Admissions Policy are issued upon request to staff members and to parents. Availability of the Admissions 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

Policy Review and Update:

Policy	Version	Approved by the BOM - Date	Signed by the Chairperson
Admissions Policy	17	30 th April 2020	

Scoil Barra**Roll Number:** 19771J**Patron:** Diocese of Cork and Ross

Version Tracking: Scoil Barra Admissions/Enrolment Policy	
Version Number	Date of Ratification
1	29 th Nov 2004
2	23 rd Oct 2006
3	18 th Sept 2007
4	28 th Jan 2008
5	20 th Oct 2008
6	8 th June 2009
7	1 st March 2010
8	12 th March 2012
9	10 th June 2013
10	9 th June 2014
11	14 th Sept 2015
12	7 th Dec 2015
13	24 th Oct 2016
14	23 rd Oct 2017
15	4 th Feb 2019
16	18 th Nov 2019
17	30 th April 2020