

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís
ADMISSIONS POLICY
2020/21

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is a Catholic All-Boys voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust, formerly the Irish Christian Brothers.

Characteristic Spirit

The terms of this Admissions Policy have been informed by the *Vision, Mission and Five Key Elements* of the *Edmund Rice Schools' Charter*:

- (a) Vision: *promoting full personal and social development in caring Christian communities of learning and teaching*
- (b) Mission: *to provide Catholic Education in the Edmund Rice Tradition*
- (c) The Five Key Elements:
 - *Nurturing Faith, Christian spirituality & Gospel based values*
 - *Promoting partnership in the school community*
 - *Excelling in teaching & learning*
 - *Creating a caring school community*
 - *Inspiring transformational leadership*

For further information on the Edmund Rice Schools Trust and the ERST Charter, see www.erst.ie

In Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, the ERST Charter values are underpinned by a philosophy of education that has at its centre the unique dignity of the human person as a child of God. We see the interaction of people from different backgrounds—spiritual, ethnic, language, race—as a gift that will enrich the community of the school and promote the growth and learning of all. We value each student and their family. We welcome and are sensitive to each student, seeking to respond to their individual needs through:

The Curriculum: We provide a broad range of subject areas, encouraging students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and decision-making.

Pastoral Care: We support and challenge our students to make the most of their time in school, providing them with extra support and care where necessary and working in partnership with parents and guardians.

Faith Development: We have a special commitment to development of the spiritual dimension of the lives of our school community. Faith formation and the Religious Education programme play a key role.

We hope that the gospel values inherent in the culture of the school will be internalised in the values, attitudes and behaviours of all members of the school community, and will find expression in their respect and care for one another. The school is open to and welcomes all who share this vision and wish to benefit from it.

The characteristic spirit of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is reflected in the manner in which we live out our Christian ethos every day in the school. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is a Catholic school where every student is valued equally and given a genuine experience of belonging. Our school is open to the admission of pupils of all faiths and none. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís celebrates diversity and values difference, and every student is cherished for his uniqueness and individuality. The presence of children from other denominations is seen as an enrichment of the educational experience offered by the school and as a practical expression of our commitment to inclusivity. We strive to create a school atmosphere where faith and Christian values of respect, justice and integrity are nurtured. A feature of our school is the warm, welcoming atmosphere where positive relationships between our staff, parents and students are highly valued and of utmost importance to us.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is committed to the moral, social and spiritual development of each student and all students are encouraged to strive for excellence in all areas of life. We want them to be the best they can be. Academic excellence and participation in sport and the arts are strongly fostered and encouraged. The Catholic ethos of the school is reflected in many ways.

- The ethos of the school is alive and active in what we do every day.
- In Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, Religious Education is a core subject on the school curriculum and an integral part of the school, and students encounter our Christian values during R.E. classes.
- Prayer and sacramental experience play an important role in our school. We celebrate together to mark key times throughout the year.
- Mass is celebrated at the Sixth year graduation and we have many liturgical services throughout the school year.
- A retreat is undertaken by all Transition Year students and is also available to our 6th years.
- Students are encouraged to live out the spirit of Edmund Rice by playing an active role in responding to the needs of others.
- Charity work is an integral part of how we as a school foster a sense of care, compassion and community. An awareness of social issues and action for social justice is at the forefront of our response to our ethos as an Edmund Rice School. We undertake an immersion trip to Zambia every second year to work with the children in Masabuka. We have associations with many local charities such as St. Vincent de Paul, Focus Ireland, Concern and Pieta House. Through working with and experiencing the work of these various charities students are encouraged and challenged to become agents of social change.
- Catholic Schools Week is celebrated each year in our school and is a time of special importance in our school calendar.
- Edmund Rice Day is celebrated every year in May.

Operating Context

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís operates within the legal context of

- Relevant sections of:
 - Education Act 1998
 - Education Welfare Act 2000
 - Equal Status Act 2000-2011
 - Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004

- Disability Act 2005
- Education Act (Miscellaneous Provisions) 2007
- Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018
- Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003: The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts. Data provided to Meánscoil Iognáid Rís in respect of an application for admission is subject to the terms and provisions of the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003). We rely on Parents/Guardians to provide us with accurate and complete information and to update us in relation to any changes in the information provided. Should you wish to update or access your child's personal data, you should write to the School Principal.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís, also operates within the regulatory, legal and financial context of:

- The regulations of the Department of Education and Skills
- The rights of trustees as set out in the *Education Act, 1998*
- The Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter
- The Articles of Management of Catholic Secondary Schools
- The regulations of the Department of Education and Skills and the curricular programmes so prescribed which may be amended from time to time in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the *Education Act, 1998*.
- The funding and resources available to the school at any given time. The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of grants and teacher allocations from the Department of Education and Skills, voluntary contributions, and occasional fundraising. Implementation of the school plan and school policy has due regard to the resources and funding available.

Within this operating context, Meánscoil Iognáid Rís is a school that

- Is inclusive in intake
- Supports the principle of equality of access to and participation in education
- Recognises and supports the rights of parents to choose with regard to admission in secondary school
- Welcomes students with different values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life and seeks to meet their particular needs, subject only to available resources and support for the ethos of the school.

Meánscoil Iognáid Rís accepts pupils from a very wide catchment area and values the resulting mix of town and country. It is the policy of the Board of Management to maintain this balance of town and country. Each year a maximum of **174** boys are accepted into each Year Group with the exception of Fourth Year (Transition Year) where, subject to annual review, a maximum of 144 students applies. The school welcomes all boys who apply including pupils with special educational needs.

Application Process

How does the process of offering places work?

Students whose applications have been received on time will be offered places according to the criteria below. Places will only be offered to students in a given category after all students in each previous category have been offered a place. Where there are fewer places remaining than applicants in a given category, students will be offered places based on a lottery. More details of the lottery are given below.

1. How to Apply for places in First Year:

- (a) **Boys intending to transfer from St Corban's Primary School, Naas:** *Declaration of Interest Forms* will be distributed to these pupils when they are in Fourth Class. Boys' names will be entered on the *Application List* for the relevant school year when these forms are returned.
- (b) **All other boys:** *Declaration of Interest Forms* are available from the school and the website. On return of the completed *Declaration of Interest Form* your son's name will be recorded on the *Application List* for the relevant school-year. It will be noted that placement on the *Application List* is not a guarantee of a place.

2. Final Date for placement on *Application List* each year: 1st October

In order to be eligible under the criteria published below, the closing date for placing a boy's name on the *Application List* for a particular school-year is the **1st October** of the preceding school-year, when the pupil would normally be in Sixth Class. (For example, 1st October 2019 for admission in September 2020). **All those who apply after this date are placed at the bottom of the Application List in Category 6 (see below) irrespective of the criteria published below.**

3. Enrolment Process

By 13th October each year, formal Application Forms will be sent out to all those on the *Application List* for the following school year. The final date for return of these Application Forms will be 27th October each year. Parents will be notified not later than 1st December each year as to whether their son has secured a place or whether their son's name is on the Waiting List for a place.

4. Enrolment Criteria

In the event of the school receiving more applications for places than are available, places will be allocated according to the following criteria and in the following order (with those in Category One getting first priority):

1. (a) **Sixth Class boys of St. Corban's Primary School, Naas, who have attended that school for the previous three years i.e. 4th, 5th & 6th Class and**

(b) **Boys of St Corban's Primary School, who were registered pupils in that school in Third Class but transferred to a recognised Special School while in Fourth, Fifth or Sixth Class**

2. *Brothers of past or present pupils of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís;*
3. *Sons of serving staff of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís;*
4. *Sons of past-pupils of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís*
5. *All other boys who have applied from a primary school listed in Appendix 1*
6. *All other applicants*

How is the lottery conducted?

Where there are fewer places than applicants in a given category, a lottery will apply in allocating places within that category.

The lottery will be supervised by **at least 2 of:**

- a nominee of the Board of Management
- the Principal,
- a nominee of the Parent Council.

All applicants within the category will have their names entered for the lottery and names will be drawn until all places are filled. Twins and triplets will be treated as a single application, although both names or all 3 names will be entered in the lottery. If the name of one is drawn, the others will automatically be allocated places.

When all places are filled, names of applicants in this category will continue to be drawn to establish the order of applicants on the waiting list.

Names of all other applicants will also be drawn in strict order of the categories above to determine each applicant's place on the waiting list.

If a vacancy arises and an applicant is offered a place from the waiting list, the place will be offered to the applicant highest on the list. If for any reason a place is not accepted that place will then be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.

5. Withdrawal of an offer of a place:

The offer of a place may be withdrawn if:

- the place is not accepted in writing by the date specified in the letter offering the place [see Section 5 above]
- it subsequently emerges that information furnished in the application form was false and the false information resulted in the offer of a place which would not have been offered otherwise.
- The applicant, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, does not confirm that they are aware of the characteristic spirit of the school [see section on characteristic spirit above].
- The applicant, in conjunction with their parents/guardians, does not confirm acceptance of the school's Code of Behaviour
- The applicant fails to sit an Assessment Test, the date for which will be communicated in writing to the parents/guardians of the students accepted for admission at the school. This Assessment Test is not an entrance examination as the student has already been allocated a place in the school. Where an applicant cannot sit the test for good reason on the date specified, an alternative date will be arranged.

6. Applications for places in other Year Groups or during the school year

- a. In the case of First Year, those still on the Waiting List at the beginning of the new school year will be offered places as they become available during the course of that year and in the same order as on the original First Year Waiting List
- b. At the end of first year, parents of boys still on the Waiting List will be requested to indicate in writing whether they wish their sons' names to remain on the List. Those who request to stay on the Waiting List will be offered places during second & third year as they come available in the same order as on the original First Year waiting list.
- c. In the case of new applicants to any year in Junior Cycle, their names will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list for the relevant school-year and will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis in the event of a place coming available.
- d. All waiting lists for Junior Cycle expire at the end of Third Year. However, parents of boys on the waiting list who wish to be considered for Senior Cycle must apply formally and separately for a senior cycle place.
- e. Applications to 4th Year (Transition Year) will be dealt with in the following manner: The maximum number in Transition Year will be subject to annual review. The maximum number for September 2020 will be 144 boys. Existing students of the school will have first call on places in 4th Year (pending successful interview and school record) and all new applicants will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis but also pending success at interview.
- f. The maximum number in a subject-group in 5th & 6th year will be 30 students but 24 for practical subjects. Existing students coming into 5th Year will have first call on places in the various subject-groups and it will be only after existing pupils are facilitated that new applicants will be considered. Applications to 5th & 6th Year will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis.

- g. In all cases of students applying to any year-group under this section, the school will require to see a copy of recent school reports and a reference from the former school.
- h. Only in very exceptional circumstances will applications to repeat the Leaving Certificate be accepted. The principal will have the right to decide on the merits of any application and in the case of a refusal, the parents (or in the case of a student over 18 years of age, the student himself) will have a right to appeal the decision of the principal to the Board of Management.

7. Students with Special/Additional Needs:

- a. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís welcomes all students including those with additional needs and will use the resources, both financial and personnel, provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or additional educational needs so that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably practicable.
- b. While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the ability of Meánscoil Iognáid Rís to accept students with particular needs is dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills.
- c. Meánscoil Iognáid Rís welcomes applications from students with additional educational needs unless the nature and degree of those needs is such that to enrol the student concerned would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated. Only in very exceptional circumstances will the Board refuse an application on these grounds. However, all applications for places are subject to the *Enrolment Criteria* as outlined in Section 4 and Section 5 of the Admissions Policy.
- d. The Board of Management must be made aware of any additional needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where possible.
- e. Parents are requested to outline the details of a child's additional educational needs on the Application Form which is sent out to parents during October of the previous school year. However, parents are welcome to consult with the school at any time before the formal enrolment procedures commence.
- f. The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, will assess how the needs of the student can be met.
- g. The Principal may request a meeting with the parents of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs. Equally, the parents of the student are most welcome to meet with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.
- h. As soon as is practicable after a parent/guardian has provided all the relevant information, the principal shall take a decision either to accept the student or in the case where the principal has grave concern, refer the application to the Board of Management for determination. In such cases, the parents of the student will be invited to attend the meeting of the Board.

8. Appeal Process: Parents whose son is refused a place have a right of appeal to the Board of Management and if refused a place by the Board have a right of appeal to the Department of Education & Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998

9. Acceptance of Code of Behaviour: In all cases, a condition of admission to the school will be a signed agreement to the school's Code of Behaviour by the parents or guardians of the student.

10. **Data Protection:** The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003. Personal data supplied on Declaration of Interest Forms will be used solely for the purposes of student enrolment. Further information on the role of the school as a Data Controller will be issued when students are being offered places and will be available on the school web-site www.naascbs.ie
11. **Consultation and Review:** This policy has been drawn up by the Board. It is operative for the First Year intake in the school year 2020/21. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually. Submission for such review are welcome and should be forwarded to the Board by the end of April 2020
12. **Review of Admissions Policy:** This policy is subject to review by the Board of Management. The up-to-date Admissions Policy is available at the school and is published on the school web-site at www.naascbs.ie

This Admissions Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16th May 2019. The publication of this Policy has the agreement of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust, dated 8th April 2019 as per Section 15, Education Act 1998).