



## **Policy of Enrolment**

### **General Information**

The enrolment policy of Scoil Chormaic has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 in order to assist parents in enrolment matters. This policy has been developed within the context and parameters of the Department of Education & Skills regulations, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act 1998 and the funding and resources available.

Scoil Chormaic supports the principles of:

- Inclusive access to an appropriate broad curriculum
- Equality of access and participation in all areas of school life
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment, provided that the pupil meets the criteria set out in this policy and the capacity of the school.
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and way of life in society.

The Chairperson of the Board and/or Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

**School Name:**Scoil Chormaic

**School Address:** Golden Road,  
Cashel,  
Co. Tipperary

**Telephone No.:**062 61338

**Denominational Character:** Multi-Denominational

**Name of Patron:** Tipperary Association for Special Needs

**Total Number of staff in the School:**

1 Principal – Lorraine Lowry  
31 class teachers  
52 SNA's  
2 Special Subject Teachers  
4 auxiliary staff (Secretary, Nurse, Caretaker, Cook)

## **Background**

Scoil Chormaic is a co-educational day school under the Department of Education and the patronage of the Tipperary Association for Special Needs catering for students with a Mild General Learning Disability and those with a diagnosis of Autism.

The Pre-school caters for children in a pre-school setting, aged 3-5 years, with a diagnosis of Autism according to the D.S.M-V. At present the pre-school is located off campus in a building named Scoil na nOg. For enrolment in Scoil na nOg children must have had their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday on or before date of entry. They can remain in Scoil na nOg for the academic year of their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday but must finish before reaching their 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.

For placement in Scoil Chormaic children must be 4 years of age prior to enrolment for entry in to Junior Infant in September of year of enrolment. Scoil Chormaic has classes designated to students with a diagnosis of Autism. To the extent that I.Q. scores may be used as an indicator of intelligence, children with a mild general learning disability are described as having an I.Q. Range of 50 - 69. The students with Autism eligible for enrolment must have an I.Q. Range within these scores. In exceptional circumstances, we do offer placement to students in the Borderline and above range of - taking into account the pervasiveness and degree of severity of their Autism symptoms. For those in the Borderline range and above who have severity of symptoms impacting on their ability to cope in a mainstream setting or special class attached to a main stream school we deem Scoil Chormaic to be viable educational service and therefore offer placement. Any parent who has a child with a diagnosis of Autism can apply for admission for their child and the application will be considered with regard to the capability/capacity of the school to meet the needs of the child.

The main body of the school caters for students with a General Learning Disability in the Mild range. In some exceptional cases where it is deemed in the best interest of the student and the profile of the other students, Scoil Chormaic may also accommodate children who do not fall into the Mild range:

- (a) High moderate with adaptive skill functioning in the Mild range.
- (b) Borderline students who in accordance with the D.E.S. Circular no. 8/99 are eligible for a placement in a designated Mild Special School.
- (c) Children who following a Multi Disciplinary Team assessment have educational needs best met in a non mainstream setting, provided that it is deemed by the Board of Management that we can meet the educational and developmental needs of the child given our resources.

Children who fall into the above categories have a wide range of presentation that may be accompanied by an additional diagnosis. In light of this, best practice requires a multi-disciplinary team assessment to fully determine the most appropriate placement. The Board of Management reserves the right to request this should the Principal feel it is required.

Scoil Chormaic is not designated, staffed or resourced to meet other specific educational disability needs, e.g.

- (a) Children with moderate to severe intellectual disability excluding students with a high moderate I.Q. with adaptive skill functioning in the Mild range. There must be a recommendation from the Multi-Disciplinary team or Psychologist that the child's educational needs would best be met in the mild school setting,
- (b) Children with high medical needs.

Each child is considered as an individual and the decision as to the suitability of the pupil for placement in the school is taken following consideration of a wide range of issues, including parents view, relevant professional opinions, a child's commitment, resources available to the child at point of entry, medical needs, social needs and emotional needs.

**The following is considered in each application:**

- (a) The specific needs of the student/applicant and the capacity of the school to meet individual needs.
- (b) The capacity of the programmes in Scoil Chormaic to assist the student in reaching their potential.
- (c) The capacity of the programmes to meet the parent's expectations regarding educational and other outcomes for the child.
- (d) The availability of a place in a classroom suitable to the needs of the child dependent on class groupings
- (e) The staffing levels and resources of the school available on application.
- (f) The needs of the whole school population at time of application.
- (g) The health and safety requirements of the existing student cohort.
- (h) The health and safety requirements of the staff.

Applications are processed during the academic year prior to enrolment. In some exceptional circumstances applications may be accepted during the academic year. Decisions regarding enrolment are made by the school Principal in discussions with all relevant professionals. The school Principal will be assisted and advised by all these professionals. Parents' views and opinions are listened to and respected. The Principal will then use professional knowledge and experience, consult with the Board of Management and formulate a professional opinion regarding each application and advise parents/guardians regarding same.

**The Enrolment Practice of the School**

The Tipperary Association for Special Needs - our patron body, the Board of Management of Scoil Chormaic, Principal and staff believe that there are children with mild learning disability and/or diagnosis of A.S.D whose needs - educational, physiological, psychological, safety, need for a sense of belonging, need for self esteem and a need for self actualization (developing his/her own potential) are best met within a specialised setting such as Scoil Chormaic. In light of this statement, once a child has been identified as having a mild learning disability and/or a diagnosis of Autism by a clinical or educational psychologist and the parents wish for their child to be enrolled in

Scoil Chormaic, we will consider their application for admission i.e. Consult relevant professionals, meet with parents to discuss the needs of their child and what services we can offer to meet those needs.

In the event of parents/Guardians wishing for their child to be placed in Scoil Chormaic without an identified mild learning disability, entry will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. These exceptional circumstances will be discussed with the Special Education Needs Officer and the Principal. Subsequently the Principal will take the decision to admit the student or not, depending on an agreement with the Special Educational Needs Officer. We view the role of the psychologist as being extremely vital in

- (a) Assessment
- (b) Advising and recommending the school placement.

Transferring to our school from a mainstream school is a very serious step and should be treated as such, however, we believe that the main function of the psychologist is to assess the child and that when it comes to choosing a special school placement, no one person or party should have this decision, it is a collaborative decision, bearing in mind recommendations of the psychologist.

The Board of Management reserves the right not to admit a child unless it believes it can meet the educational and holistic needs of the child without impeding on the existing students. The Board of Management has the responsibility to ensure that every effort is made to apply for any resources needed to be able to offer a place to any child with a mild learning disability, whatever additional problems they may have e.g. Physical or emotional within the school catchment area.

If our school is unable to offer a placement parents may wish to appeal the decision of the Board by taking a Section 29 appeal as outlined in the Education Act.

Also unsuccessful applications may be referred to other facilities or may have their names placed on a waiting list pending further places becoming available.

#### **In the event that demand exceeds places**

In the event that Scoil Chormaic is oversubscribed i.e. the number of children seeking to enrol exceeds the available places the following priority criteria will apply:

##### Priority will be given to

- Siblings of children who are already enrolled in Scoil Chormaic (including step-siblings)
- Scoil na nOg preschool students seeking enrolment will have priority over other preschools.
- Children of members of staff
- Earliest date of application ( i.e. first come first served)
- Pre-school placements will be offered by earliest date of application on the waiting list, with supporting diagnostic reports from psychology and taking

parental choice into consideration, where Scoil na nOg is the nearest pre-school available.

Provided we reach a consensus of opinion that Scoil Chormaic is the most appropriate school placement to meet the needs of the child the application process is as follows:

### **Application Process**

The enrolment policy is available on the school website [www.scoilchormaic.ie](http://www.scoilchormaic.ie). A copy of the enrolment policy will be made available upon request for those who cannot access the school website.

- Applications for enrolment are made in writing by filling in the Scoil Chormaic Request for Enrolment form (see Appendix A). Submission of an application does not however guarantee a place.
  
- On receipt of written application, parents/guardians will be required to provide the following:
  1. A psychological Assessment – which determines the nature of the pupil's disability/I.Q. The assessment must be completed within 2 years of the proposed date of entry to the school.
  2. Any additional Reports or assessments from pupil's present/previous school or from other relevant professionals which can provide assistance in determining appropriate provision for the pupil.
  3. Permission to consult with the pupil's previous school and/or any other professional in relation to the pupil.

### **Decision of Acceptance**

In the event of a place being offered to a pupil, the parent/guardian will be furnished with forms from the National Council for Special Education for enrolment in a special school to complete, along with forms for the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) regarding school transport and any additional resources that may be deemed appropriate/necessary. The decision to accept a new student is then forwarded to the Special Education Needs Officer, along with the relevant documentation as stated above. The bus inspector will initiate contact with parent/guardian in relation to school transport.

### **Review Process**

Best practice deems it important to engage in ongoing review of placement, as children grow and develop their strengths and needs can change. It is imperative to monitor this to ensure their educational placement is the most enriching and appropriate setting for them. In Scoil Chormaic we regularly review individual's placement, and may request an update of assessments by the multi-disciplinary team. On reviewing placement, if it is felt by the principal that the current profile of the student means that Scoil Chormaic is no longer the most appropriate setting, she reserves the right to conduct a review of placement meeting with parents/carers/guardians.

**If a place is accepted in Scoil Chormaic it is understood that the parent/guardian and student are agreeing to the following;**

- An acceptance to adhere to the school policies and rules particularly in relation to the code of behaviour, Health and Safety and Child Protection.
- An undertaking by parents/guardians to ensure regular attendance
- A willingness to disclose any information and services that involve a pupil that may assist the school in providing appropriate supports, or assist in the pupils' integration in to Scoil Chormaic.
- An undertaking by parents/guardians (or designated person) to be available in cases of emergency.
- An undertaking by parents/guardians (or designated person) to work in partnership with Scoil Chormaic in the best interest of the pupil

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and to the patron if requested.

Signed:

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix A**

**Request for Enrolment**

**Scoil Chormaic year 20\_\_/20\_\_**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Name of student</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Address</b>

<b>Diagnosis:</b>	<b>Psychological report</b>
<b>School currently attending</b>	<b>Contact details of School</b>

<b>Names of Parents/Guardians</b>	<b>Contact phone number</b>	<b>Address (If different to above)</b>

I give permission to consult with the student's previous school and/or other relevant professionals

**Signature :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note:**

Submission of an application form **does not** guarantee a place

In the event of a place being offered to a student, the parent/guardian will be furnished

with forms from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for enrolment in a special school

