

# **Admission Policy of the Class for Children with Specific Learning Difficulty Dyslexia**

## **‘The Reading Class’**

**Ratified January 2024**

**School Patron: Bishop Michael Duignan**

This Admissions Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education Act (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management (BoM) has consulted with school staff, the school Patron and parents of children attending the school.

It is worth noting that Scoil Chaitríona Senior 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.

Scoil Chaitríona Senior will comply with any direction served on the Patron or the Board of Management, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.’

### **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 (BOM) of the school has consulted with school staff, the school Patron and with parents of children attending the school.

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 the admissions process to the Reading Class are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published on the school's website. This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

### **Scoil Chaitríona Senior Mission Statement**

We are a co-educational, Catholic Primary School which serves to provide a caring, secure and happy atmosphere, where the intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral and emotional needs of each child is fulfilled, supported by a professional staff in partnership with parents and the wider community. ‘Believe, Achieve, Succeed’.

Scoil Chaitríona Senior will support this vision through ensuring that all learners in the Reading Class

- are safe and feel valued in our school

- benefit from an educational and learning environment that is developmentally appropriate to their individual needs
- are effectively supported to raise their attainment and achieve their full potential
- are actively engaged, as appropriate, in evaluating the quality and impact of their learning experiences

Specific Learning Difficulty Dyslexia refers to a specific category of learning disability characterised by a difficulty in the acquisition of basic skills in reading, spelling and/or writing. These specific difficulties are unexpected in relation to an individual's other abilities and educational experiences. SLD is typically characterised by inefficient information processing, working memory, rapid naming and automaticity of basic skills. SLD can also have an impact on organisation, motor skills and sequencing. SLD affects about 10% of the population. There is a varying degree of severity. (Dyslexia Task Force, 2001)

It is important to note that the severity of dyslexia can vary among individuals. The diagnosis and classification of learning disabilities are determined through comprehensive assessments conducted by qualified professionals, such as psychologists, educational specialists and other specialists in the field of learning disabilities.

### **Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

Scoil Chaitriona Senior is a Catholic, co-educational, senior primary school with special classes under the patronage of Bishop Michael Duignan, Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh & Kilfenora.

“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 Scoil Chaitriona Senior 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 Scoil Chaitriona Senior 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.

Our Mission Statement reads: Believe, Succeed, Achieve: Mól an Óige.

Addressing and responding to the diversity of needs and learners through active participation in learning, cultures and communities is a central feature of our school ethos.

Removing and reducing the barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of structures and arrangements are explicitly planned for and executed to ensure continuity and progression of learners.

A holistic approach is evident in where all aspects of the pupils are developed; Morally, Spiritually, Physically, Emotionally, Academically, Culturally and Musically. Prayer is a feature of the school day.

A safe, happy, respectful learning and working environment is created and maintained through the Rights and Responsibilities Charter (for pupils) and the Professional Codes of Conduct (for teachers)

and upheld by respectful communication. High professional standards are supported by the Board of Management.

There is a demonstrated commitment by all in Scoil Chaitríona Senior to welcome and nurture each other.

Developing a sense of belonging and empathy through the supportive culture and environment where each individual has a sense of purpose is achieved.

The best interests of the pupils and the child's voice are at the heart of the decision making process.

Creating engaging, rich learner experiences and specific learner outcomes (concepts, skills and dispositions) drive the work of the school through strong and trustworthy relationships.

There is a deep commitment to continued personal development and Wellbeing in Scoil Chaitríona and a focus on lifelong learning.

Contributions to the education and development of all staff, families and the wider community are appreciated and celebrated.

Developing critical thinkers, engaged learners, problem solvers and global citizens in a supportive and challenging environment through inquiry based teaching approaches, initiatives and research based interventions is our shared purpose.

## **2. Admission Statement**

Scoil Chaitríona Senior Class for children with Dyslexia 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

## **3. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the class and Criteria for Admission**

Enrolment in the Scoil Chaitríona Senior Reading Class is contingent upon meeting specific criteria. The following guidelines outline the necessary steps for admission:

Diagnosis:

The Educational Psychologist has clearly identified Specific Learning Difficulty/ Dyslexia (SLD), as defined by the Department of Education and Science, as the primary difficulty of the child.

Criteria for enrolment:

A pupil enrolled in a special class for pupils with SLD/ Dyslexia must meet each of the following criteria:

- A recommendation from a psychologist that a place in the Reading Class would be a suitable placement
- The child will have a delay in reading, writing or spelling, which places him/her at or below the second percentile.
- The child will be of at least average intelligence, with a Full-Scale IQ greater than 90
- The child should have completed Second Class in Primary School before entry into the class.

Additional Information:

- The number of places available each year will vary depending on the number of children discharged from the class. The maximum number of places available at any one time is 9.
- The class caters for pupils from 3rd to 6th class.
- Children in special classes automatically qualify for an Irish Exemption (Circular 0054/ 2022)

#### **4. The Application Process**

- Contact the school to complete the 'expression of interest form' for enrollment in the Reading Class. Expressions of interest are accepted from the parents and/or school.
- The expression of interest form will be sent from Scoil Chaitríona Senior's school office; allow up to seven working days for receipt.
- Return the completed expression of interest form to the principal within the allocated time frame, before the Admissions notice deadline (annually changing, check [www.senior.renmoreschool.com](http://www.senior.renmoreschool.com)).
- If eligible, an enrolment form will be provided without prejudice; allow up to seven working days for receipt.
- The parent(s) and school complete the relevant sections of the application form. Submit the completed application form and supporting documents during the designated application period.
- Acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy is a condition of enrolment.
- If a child is eligible, and applying to both the Reading class and the DLD / SSLD class in a given year, the child will be offered the most suitable placement as deemed by the Admissions Meeting Committee.
- The Admissions committee will review the application and make a recommendation to the Board of Management (BOM) for approval.
- Only the BOM has the authority to offer a place in the school.
- All offers of admission are subject to the approval of the Special Education Needs Office (SENO)
- Schools and referral agents will be notified in writing regarding final placement decisions.
- The pupil transferring to the special class in Scoil Chaitríona Senior will remain on the POD of their referring school. The placement in Scoil Chaitríona Senior is for up to two years duration. At the end of the placement, the pupil will either return to their original school or transfer to secondary school.

## **5. Documentation Requirements**

Documentation: The application must be accompanied by relevant documentation, as outlined by the NCSE guidelines.

This will include:

- the child's recent Educational Psychology report, diagnosis confirmation of dyslexia;
  - and all other reports by medical professionals who have completed assessments.
  - a combined class and special education teacher report form,
  - a parental consent form.
  - the Continuum of Support for the current and previous school year, including the log of actions
- Five copies of each document must be provided for the admissions meeting.

## **6. Review and Evaluation of Applications**

Admissions Team Review: The school's admissions team, in compliance with the Admissions Act and NCSE guidelines, will review the submitted applications and associated documents. The admissions team will carefully consider the child's needs and the school's capacity to meet those needs effectively.

## **7. Decisions on applications**

The maximum number of children in the class will not exceed the NCSE recommendation of 1 teacher: 9 pupils

All decisions on applications for admission to Scoil Chaitríona Senior's Reading Class 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 the section below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period).

## **8. Notifying applicant of decision**

- Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.
- Parents/ guardians must accept/decline an offer of a place in the special class in writing.
- If a student is not offered a place in the special class, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing 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 panel for the school year concerned.
- Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision.
- A condition of enrolment is the acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

- For successful applicants, before commencing in the school, a school visit may be arranged (at the discretion of the school) in order for the child and parent/s to meet with the teacher, walk through the building etc.

*\*Please note that school transport is not guaranteed in all areas and this is at the discretion of Bus Éireann and The Department of Education and Skills.*

## **9. Circumstances in which offer may not be made or may be withdrawn**

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Scoil Chaitríona Senior Class for pupils with Dyslexia

- (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.

## **10. Sharing of data with other schools; NCSE; Bus Éireann**

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

The 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).

When a pupil has been offered a place in the special class, relevant data will be shared as per the requirements from the NCSE, eg: Form 7 and the Application for School Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs.

## **11. Procedures for admission of students during the school year**

- (a) The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school are as follows:

Applications for enrollment during the school year will be considered subject to school policy and available space. Such applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

(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:

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a panel of students who were unsuccessful due to the class being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought

Placement on the panel of Scoil Chaitriona Senior Class for children with Dyslexia is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the section criteria in accordance with this admission policy

## **12. Reviews/appeals**

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 special class 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 special class 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 special class 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.

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 11 the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education.

### **13. Point of Contact for Queries/Applications to the Reading Class**

School Name: Scoil Chaitríona Senior

Address: Renmore Avenue, Renmore, Galway H91 N5H6

Phone: 091 753613

Website: <https://senior.renmoreschool.com/>

Email: [seniorreadingclass@renmoreschool.com](mailto:seniorreadingclass@renmoreschool.com)

**14. Timelines for Admission to the Reading Class:** See the school website for the Annual Admissions' Notice. Failure to respond by the specified date may result in the placement being offered to another applicant.

### **15. Placement Reviews and Discharge from the Reading Class**

- Children's progress will be reviewed throughout each year and the Reading Class teacher will give regular feedback to the parents.
- Where a child leaves the Reading Class during the academic year, this needs to be communicated to the SENO and School Transport Provider (if applicable) by the SEN Coordinator.
- Feedback of assessment results and recommendations will be given to parents by the Reading Class teacher prior to discharge.
- A post-placement meeting between the Reading Class teacher and the teachers working with the child will be arranged in the first half-term of the child's return to mainstream.