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# Admission Policy

***Scoil Áine  
Merlin Park  
Galway***

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## **1. Introductory Statement**

The Board of Management of Scoil Áine at Merlin Park hereby sets out its Admissions Policy to inform and assist students, parents, staff, the CAMHS inpatient and community teams, mainstream schools and other interested parties with the admission process. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2002 and 2004, Department Policy for Special Schools attached to CAMHS Units (2014) and the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 bearing in mind the specific context of Scoil Áine.

In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron, CAMHS inpatient and outpatient management and with parents of children currently attending the school. It will be published on the school's website and sent for approval by the patron. A hardcopy will be available, on request, to any person who requests.

## **2. Rationale**

The Admissions Policy is an efficient and effective system which enables parents/guardians/medical staff to request access for young people to School at Scoil Áine in order that they may continue education while receiving treatment.

This policy allows school staff to prioritise young people who are in the inpatient and CAMHS Connect day programme.

## **3. School Context**

Scoil Áine is a CAMHS School attached to the Merlin Park CAMHS inpatient unit, it is funded by the Department of Education and under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway. It provides education for young people between the ages of 10 and 18 who are:

### **3.1: In-patients (10 – 18-year-olds)**

All students between the ages of 10 and 18 are enrolled in the school regardless of their length of stay in hospital. Students will be taught in a manner which is most appropriate to:

- meeting their clinical and educational needs
- ensuring the most efficient and effective use of time
- ensuring health and safety considerations within the school and the hospital are met

### **3.2: Day patients (14 – 18-year-olds)**

All students between the ages of 14 and 18 can attend Scoil Áine as part of their day programme in the day hospital.

### **3.2: Day students who meet the school's admission criteria (12 – 18-year-olds)**

An essential pre-condition for acceptance to Scoil Áine, is that the student must be aged 12- 18 years and be receiving therapy through the CAMHS community teams. Referrals must be made to the principal of the school by the consultant of the relevant team. A key worker must be named and support must be available from the community team. The following types of referrals will be considered for admission as a day student:

- students who do not require in-patient admission; however, the consultant/referrer feels that the student's physical, emotional or psychological needs would be better addressed at Scoil Áine
- for a fixed-term period while they are attending therapy in CAMHS.
- students who have been recently discharged from the inpatient unit in Merlin Park and who would benefit from an extended period of time at Scoil Áine to facilitate a more carefully managed transition back to mainstream education
- Students who are being seen as out-patients by CAMHS who wishes the student to attend Scoil Áine for a specified period to support or facilitate transition to mainstream education
- Students who are missing mainstream education for longer periods of time due to frequent hospital admission or due to prolonged therapy, and would therefore benefit from attendance at Scoil Áine
- Students who require a fixed short, medium or long-term placement to support further assessment, a staged return to mainstream school or a link back into education or the wider community.

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

Within the context and parameters of DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Admission to School Act 2018 and the funding and resources available-the Admissions Policy of Scoil Áine underpins the key principles of inclusiveness and equality. Scoil Áine is a Roman Catholic School, which welcomes students of all faiths and none. Respect, equality of access and participation in the school is afforded to students holding a diversity of values and beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life. We welcome the rich contribution students from a multiplicity of cultures which adds to the social fabric and education in our school.

The school will not discriminate on any of the following grounds:

- the gender of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the civil status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the family status of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the sexual orientation of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the religion of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the disability of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- the Traveller community of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- 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.

We endeavour to provide high quality holistic education experiences in a caring and safe environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, emotional, moral and cultural needs of all our students are identified and addressed.

Students receive a personalised curriculum depending on their needs and planned next stages of education. Each young person is assessed individually in order to create a programme of education that is suitable for them.

**At the heart of every policy, we aim to;**

- Every young person in our school, whatever his or her personal circumstances can learn and achieve.
- Every young person in our school, whatever his or her self-perception and previous experiences, has academic and creative potential to become a valuable member of society.
- The key to learning at Scoil Áine lies within the quality of the relationships between pupils, family members, staff and the CAMHS teams.
- The success of our school is based on providing high quality holistic educational experiences for all the young people as they embark on their journey of healing and recovery.

## 5. School Details

<b>School Name</b>	Scoil Áine
<b>Telephone</b>	(091) info@scoilainegalway.ie
<b>Website</b>	
<b>Denomination</b>	Roman Catholic Schol
<b>Patron</b>	Bishop of Galway
<b>Staff</b>	4 teachers including the principal 4 SNA's School Secretary Part time Care Taker
<b>Opening Hours</b>	9:20am – 3:00pm
<b>Class Range</b>	Senior Primary (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Class) Post Primary (1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Year)
<b>School Curriculum</b>	Primary, as prescribed by DES (1999) Primary School Curriculum adapted to the requirements of students with medical needs. Post Primary, as prescribed by the DES adapted to the requirements of students with medical needs, State Exams facilitated.
<b>Funding</b>	Funded by DES, grants and monies vary, capitation is dependent on Admission.

## 6. Application Procedure

### 6.1: In-patient students

All young people who are inpatients in the CAMHS unit are offered education at Scoil Áine.

Every Monday morning and Wednesday morning and afternoon, the school and the CAMHS

Inpatient staff meet for a handover which supports Scoil Áine staff to ensure the inpatient young people are able to engage in education during that day/week.

**Handover includes information on:**

- If it is recommended the student comes to Scoil Áine for school or should remain in the unit for one-to-one tuition.
- If the young person has any leave or meetings with external professionals during the school day
- Any additional information regarding the young person's medical, social or psychological condition which might affect their attitude or their ability to learn (e.g. side effects of medication, specific physical requirements or constraints)
- A health and safety risk assessment (Appendix 1)

Parents/ guardians are informed about the school service by the following;

- Information in the inpatient admission form
- School Website
- School Brochure
- School Letter

### **6:2 Admissions Procedure for Day Hospital Young People**

All young people who are day patients at CAMHS Connect (Day hospital) are offered education at Scoil Áine if deemed suitable as part of their day programme.

The referrals are first discussed with the principal every Wednesday after the team meeting and a care plan is put in place to support each individual student while attending Scoil Áine.

A detailed handover is also given by the relevant key worker to school staff and the key worker is available to support the student throughout their placement. Parents/guardians are informed by the school by the key worker, brochure and after initial intake are offered a visit and tour of the school.

### **6.3: Admission Procedure for Day Students**

It is recommended that admission enquiries are made informally in the first instance by telephoning the principal. Where a vacancy exists and the student meets the admissions criteria, a formal referral (Appendix 2) will need to be made by the consultant from the CAMHS outpatient team outlining the reasons for the referral.

**The referrer should make clear:**

- the reason for the referral
- if the referral is for part-time or full-time attendance
- the anticipated length of admission to Scoil Áine
- if parental/carer agreement has been obtained
- the young person's view of the potential placement
- a health and safety risk assessment
- any relevant information obtained from the student's mainstream school

**The school will arrange a meeting involving:**

- the principal and key teacher
- the consultant or his/her representative
- the parent(s)/carer(s)

- the young person (for all or part of the meeting, as appropriate)
- professionals involved with the young person's health, education and welfare if appropriate

### **Admission Meeting**

**At the admission meeting a discussion will take place regarding:**

- the reasons for a student's admission to Scoil Áine
- the educational or other outcomes expected for the student during his/her period of admission
- support strategies being employed by Scoil Áine, the mainstream school, the referral team, the parents/carers and where appropriate, any outside agencies, to support the young person attaining their targets
- the initial period of admission, including the trial/assessment period
- the date of the first review meeting with the consultant where a decision will be reached as to the appropriateness of Scoil Áine or a return to mainstream provision

During the meeting the student and parent/carer will be informed of Scoil Áine policies and procedures including expectations, lunch, dress code and timings of the day. Parents/carers will be provided with the necessary paperwork and a tour of the school will be conducted. A plan will be circulated to all professionals involved with the student's welfare, and to the parent/carer(s).

### **7. Period of admission**

The period of admission may last anything from two weeks to several months. Normally, the initial assessment/ trail period will not exceed one half term. However, where appropriate, a trial admission can be extended depending on the recommendations of the staff at the review meeting.

### **8. School Roll**

Students admitted to Scoil Áine remain on their mainstream school's role and will be classified as dual role for census purposes. Very occasionally Scoil Áine is the young person's sole school. This only occurs with the express agreement of the Board of Management of Scoil Áine in consultation with the school principal.

### **9. Decision making and criteria for excess Applications**

Decisions relating to applications for admission are made by the Board in accordance with Scoil Áine Admissions Policy. As a general principle, young people will be enrolled on application, provided there is adequate resources to support their care and educational needs.

## **9.1. Criteria to be applied when there are student application in excess of places available:**

### **Priority Pupils:**

Inpatients and patients who are repeat admissions

Patients who are receiving treatment on a once off basis, the duration of which is unsure (less than one week) but have been referred as medically fit for school

Day patients in CAMHS Connect

Patients who are preparing for Junior and Leaving Certificate exams

### **Right of appeal**

In the event that a student is refused admission to Scoil Áine, the principal will contact or write to the professional making the referral, and where appropriate to the parent/carer(s) outlining the reason why the young person cannot be admitted.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student can appeal the decision.

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.

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.

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.

## Revision of Admissions Policy

This policy was ratified by the by the Board of Management of Scoil Áine on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management

Chairperson:

Brian O'Malley  
Brian O'Malley

Date: 30-01-2025

Principal:

Michelle O'Meara  
Michelle O'Meara

Date: 30-01-2025