

Admission Policy of Mayo Abbey N.S.

School Address: Lehanagh, Mayo Abbey, Claremorris, Co. Mayo

Roll number:14205U

School Patron: Archbishop Francis Duffy

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 of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 25/09/2020. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Mayo Abbey N.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 annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

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.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Mayo Abbey N.S. is a Catholic, co-educational, primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Tuam.

"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 school 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 Mayo Abbey N.S. 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.

Believing in the value, dignity, and uniqueness of each individual as a child of God we recognize the right of each child to a quality education that will lead him/her to personal, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual maturity. We believe that this type of education best takes place in the context of a catholic faith community.

In Mayo Abbey N.S. we endeavour to cater for the full and harmonious development of each child. The full development of children cannot take place in isolation. If children are to know and value themselves and form objective standards of judgement and behaviour they must learn through experience, to live and co-operate with other children and with adults. Gradually they will become familiar with the complex nature of the society of which they are a part.

As a formal agent of education within the catholic community, the school models and transmits a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God, Mary and in the life death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are very conscious of the special position of the school in the life of the parish. Children are prepared for the reception of the sacraments of penance, the Eucharist and Confirmation in accordance with arrangements in the diocese. Children are encouraged to participate fully in church liturgy, choir and serving mass.

Prayer is an important feature of the school day and religious education is provided for pupils in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church.

The schools code of discipline reflects the Christian values promoted in the school, with an emphasis on forgiveness, reconciliation, new beginnings and hope. Teachers are sensitive to the needs and particular circumstances of the pupils in their care.

We acknowledge that the family unit is the first shaper of values and attitudes. Parents are the child's primary educators and the life of the home is the most potent factor in his/her development during the primary school years. This school should be an extension of a good home where the child can develop spiritually, morally, intellectually, aesthetically and physically to his/her full potential. It should be a safe, comfortable and warm environment with a friendly atmosphere. Teachers see themselves "in loco parentis" and aim to treat the children in their care, as would a good parent. Close co-operation between home and school is essential, with parents and teachers supporting each other in their children's education; if children are to receive maximum benefit from their school days.

Here in Mayo Abbey N.S. children will be brought into contact with the best of Irish and local culture. Each child has a right to understand, appreciate, enjoy and participate in the richness of their Irish heritage. We strongly encourage all children to take part, with pride, in Irish dancing, music, gaelic games and activities pertaining to Irish culture.

In Mayo Abbey we are especially proud of our local history and endeavour to instil this pride in the children of our school. Every effort will be made to give them a deep knowledge and appreciation of the history of Mayo Abbey and of the beauty and potential of the local environment.

A spirit of mutual respect and tolerance is promoted in the school community. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect others, regardless of religious, cultural, social, environmental or ethnic backgrounds. Indeed, it is important that respect is shown to every person involved with the school. This includes teachers, children and visitors to the school. Ancillary staff in the school are highly valued and esteemed. It is recognized that their work makes a valuable contribution to the process of education.

We recognize that it is important that each child develop to his/her full potential. We seek to develop children spiritually and morally and to foster in each child an ethical sense that will enable them to acquire values on which to base choices and form attitudes. We endeavour to equip children with the knowledge and skills that will serve them not only in their lives as children, but also later as adults. We feel it is important to develop their capacity for creative expression and response, and to promote their emotional and physical development. Children must experience love and encouragement; be held in high esteem and yet subject to discipline and guidance. They should experience enjoyment and have facilities and time for play. They must be active agents in their own education, which is appropriate to their needs and potential.

In a rapidly changing society, effective intrapersonal skills and skills in communication are essential for personal, social and educational fulfilment. The ability to think critically, to apply learning and to develop flexibility and creativity are also important factors in the success of the child's life. It is important to develop these skills and abilities to that children may cope successfully with change. We wish to instil a love of learning that will remain with children throughout their lives and would hope that pupils will remember their days in Mayo Abbey N.S. as truly being the happiest days of their lives.

3. Admission Statement

Mayo Abbey N.S. 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.

Mayo Abbey N.S. 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 of 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.

Mayo Abbey N.S. will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) if the Education Act.

Mayo Abbey N.S. is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who has applied for a place in the school in accordance with section 7A of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Mayo Abbey N.S. 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.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school

This section is not applicable to our school

5. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) below for further details)
- b) a 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

Mayo Abbey N.S. is a Roman Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

Selection Criteria

- a) Siblings (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address of children already enrolled).
- b) Children living within the parish.
- c) Children of current school staff.
- d) Children whose home address is closest to the school (as measured by a straight line on an O.S. map) if the child is normally resident outside of the parish/agreed catchment area.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

Additional criteria of the age of the pupils will be considered and priority given to older children.

7. What will not be considered or taken into account

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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at—
 - (I) an early intervention class, or
 - (II) an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time;
- (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) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criterion based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school
- (g) 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).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Mayo Abbey N.S. 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 [section 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, 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 waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 18](#) below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Mayo Abbey N.S. 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.

11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Mayo Abbey N.S. where—

- (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; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 10](#) above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

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. Should they wish to do so, a board may 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).

13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Mayo Abbey N.S. were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Mayo Abbey N.S. is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

14. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than 3 weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Applicant students will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant student will be added to the waiting list in accordance with section 13 of this policy.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- Other pupils may be enrolled during the school year if newly resident in the area.
- Parents of these pupils must fill in an enrolment form and return with a copy of the child(ren)'s birth certificate(s).
- Parents are also asked to provide written reports, test results, attendance records etc. from the school(s) previously attended by the pupil(s) to elicit information that will be helpful to the school to plan for their admission
- The school may contact previous school(s) attended to elicit the above information.
- Parents/Guardians are given a copy of the school procedure documents.
- In cases where the pupil has S.E.N. the school must be furnished with any relevant documents or information pertaining to the pupil's needs to ensure provision of resources.

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:

- Students to enrol at the beginning of a new term following the procedures outlined above.
- Decisions in relation to enrolment are made by the B.O.M. in accordance with the school's Admission Policy.
- In so far as is practicable pupils will be enrolled on application, provided that there is space available and having due regard for the Healthy and Safety of all pupils.

The B.O.M. is bound by the DES "Rules for National Schools".

16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The board of Mayo Abbey N.S. or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

- (a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- (b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents 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:

- A written request should be made to the Principal of the school.
- A meeting will be arranged with the parents/guardians to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

18. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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.