

Admission Policy of Coláiste Mhuire

School Address: Ballygar, Co. Galway

Roll number: 62900M

School Patron/s: Local Community



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 23rd June 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 Coláiste Mhuire'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

Coláiste Mhuire is a co-educational Catholic voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the local community.

'*Catholic Ethos*' in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary 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 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 Coláiste Mhuire 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.

Coláiste Mhuire is a lay, co-educational, voluntary Catholic Secondary School. We aim to provide a quality teaching and learning experience which fosters the development of the whole person.

We aim to enable each pupil to achieve his/her full potential and to prepare him/her for further education, training and employment. We aim to hand on the Christian faith and values.

The school emphasises politeness, courtesy, co-operation and respect for self, others and property as fundamental principles of behaviour. Coláiste Mhuire is committed to providing an atmosphere of tolerance and openness which respects the dignity of every member of the school community and in which each one can feel valued. Every member of the school community has the right to happiness and the right to learn. No one has the right to take these away from them. This fundamental principle forms the foundation of all the school rules and of the Code of Behaviour. Acceptance of a place at Coláiste Mhuire is taken as acceptance of this ethos.

3. Admission Statement

Coláiste Mhuire 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.

Coláiste Mhuire is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

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

Coláiste Mhuire is an inclusive mainstream school. We are committed to providing excellence in teaching and learning for everyone. Students with Additional Learning Needs are catered for according to the Special Education Teaching Model (Circular 0014/2017 & Circular 008/2019). Students and are also subject to the same enrolment procedures as all other students. To ensure that the needs of students, with additional educational needs, are catered for we ask that parents/guardians engage with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). We also ask that they furnish us with all available previous educational records and assessments to ensure we provide the highest standard of education possible for their child. This will allow the SENCO to apply to the Department of Education & Skills for any additional resources and supports that may be required for the student.

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

Coláiste Mhuire is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

6. Oversubscription

The Board of Management will decide the acceptable number of students to be admitted into First Year. This figure will depend on the overall number of students in the school and the capacity for which the school can cater for in any given year. It will also be contingent on resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills and the provision and suitability of necessary accommodation, in any given year.

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:

1. Students attending feeder primary schools.
2. Brothers and sisters attending Coláiste Mhuire.
3. Brothers and sisters of past students who attended Coláiste Mhuire.
4. Sons and daughters of school staff employed by the school at the time of enrolment.
5. Sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters of past students who completed all of their second level education at Coláiste Mhuire and who are attending the feeder primary schools. (This criterion applies to a maximum of 25% of places only)

Feeder Schools:

Athleague, Ballaghlea, Ballyforan, Ballygar, Ballintleva, Castlefrench, Creggs, Feevagh, Fuerty, Mount Talbot, Tisrara and Windfield.

Students will be allocated a class in First Year by the Principal.

Please do not ask to move class as refusal may cause offence.

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:

A random selection process will apply. An Admissions Committee, approved by the board, will complete the random selection. If a twin/triplet is drawn the other siblings will be automatically offered a place. The offer of a place will be made subject to the parents/guardians formally accepting in writing the offer of a place within the required timeframe. It will be understood that you no longer wish to enrol your son/daughter in the school if you fail to accept the offer on time and in writing.

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:

- (i) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (ii) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school other than in relation to the fee charged for the PLC course;
- (iii) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (iv) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (v) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission other than in the case of admission to a PLC;
- (vi) 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 siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or parents/grandparents having

attended the school (to a maximum of 25% of available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice);

(vii) 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 Coláiste Mhuire 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 Coláiste Mhuire 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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 Coláiste Mhuire 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.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of

the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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. 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).

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 Coláiste Mhuire 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 Coláiste Mhuire 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 not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants 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 will be added to the waiting list.

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

All applications to transfer into the school must be made to the school's board of management. The board delegates to the principal the process of allocating places during school closures.

All transfer applicants will be interviewed by school management. All transfer applications must be accompanied by a letter setting out **clearly** the reasons for the application and the following documentation:

1. Completed application form.
2. The two most recent reports from the student's previous school.
3. A written report detailing behaviour, attendance and punctuality and contribution to school life from the applicant's previous school.

Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of on-going disciplinary proceedings in another school that includes any on-going statutory procedures in accordance with the Education Acts.

The board of management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

Enrolment to Transition Year

All students who have completed Junior Cycle are eligible to apply for a place in Transition Year. The Board of Management will decide, based on available resources, the number of places being allocated to Transition Year in any given academic year. If Transition Year is oversubscribed certain factors will be considered as outlined in the school's Transition Year Admission Policy.

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

The board of Coláiste Mhuire or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only to our PLC.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Coláiste Mhuire without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, 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.