

**Coláiste Mhuire, Askeaton**

**Enrolment Policy**

**2017/2018**

## Rationale

This Enrolment Policy is designed to provide fair, transparent and effective criteria for admission of students to Coláiste Mhuire, Askeaton, in compliance with legislative requirements.

The **Enrolment Policy** of Coláiste Mhuire has been drawn up in accordance with the:

- ◆ Education Act 1998
- ◆ The Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- ◆ Equal Status Act 2000
- ◆ VEC Education (Amendment) Act 2001
- ◆ EPSEN Act 2004

Within the context and parameters of DES regulations and programmes and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- ◆ Parental/Student choice
- ◆ Inclusiveness
- ◆ Equality of access to and participation in the school
- ◆ Respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.
- ◆ The ability of the school to provide an appropriate education for individual applicants if resources are provided.
- ◆ Accountability to applicants for enrolment, their parents, the LCETB staff and the community served by the school.
- ◆ Providing all relevant information as required by the Department of Education and Skills.

## School Profile

Askeaton has been a centre of education for over two hundred years. Coláiste Mhuire was established in 1994 under the auspices of County Limerick V.E.C and continues a tradition of second level education provided in Askeaton since 1940. Following the amalgamation of County Limerick VEC with City of Limerick VEC and Clare VEC in 2013, Coláiste Mhuire is now under the auspices of Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board (LCETB).

The school is multi-denominational, accepting all religions and none. Coláiste Mhuire has a modern well-equipped campus. It offers a broad range of subjects and syllabi at both Junior and Senior Cycle. The staff of Coláiste Mhuire is caring and supportive and strives to provide a nurturing environment in the school.

Coláiste Mhuire has the image of the East Window from the town's Franciscan Friary as its emblem. This fifteenth century window is an exceptional example of the lancet form. As an East Window, it was designed to welcome the rays of the rising sun – the new day, new life, renewed hope. Six hundred years later Coláiste Mhuire seeks to enlighten as well as educate its students as it endeavours to imbue them with a sense of optimism and hope. Laborare Est Orare – To Work is to Pray.

## **Mission Statement**

The school's mission is to provide a learning environment that promotes the educational, emotional, spiritual, psychological and moral welfare of each student while encouraging the cooperation and assistance of the parents/guardians of the student.

In Coláiste Mhuire we are committed to equality of opportunity for all and we recognise that each student has unique gifts. We endeavour to foster and encourage the growth and development of these gifts by encouraging each student to participate to the fullest possible extent in the social, cultural and sporting activities of the school.

Our aim is that on completion of their formal second level education, our students will emerge as self-disciplined, responsible and well adjusted citizens, capable of playing an active and positive role in modern society.

## **Enrolment of First Year Students**

The school aims to provide an integrated and an inclusive education. Coláiste Mhuire welcomes all students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education. It is our objective, having regard to the efficient use of resources, to provide equality of access for all.

Each year the Board of Management may have to decide in advance the number of First Year students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education, having regard to the facilities, personnel, and resources. The maximum enrolment for 1<sup>st</sup> yr 2017/2018 is **90**. (*This is subject to change, at the discretion of the Board of Management, depending on resources and staffing allocation.*)

Our procedures for application are in keeping with the characteristic spirit of the school as expressed in the Mission Statement and they comply with all relevant current legislation.

### **Students who are eligible for admission into First Year must:**

- Have reached the required age: 12 on 1st January in the calendar year following the child's entry into First Year.
- Have completed sixth standard in Primary School, or equivalent.
- Be willing to accept the school ethos.
- Be willing, with parents/guardians to accept the school's Code of Behaviour. Confirmation in writing, is required, that parents/guardians and student accept the Code of Behaviour.
- Be willing to take an Aptitude Evaluation which is used for the purposes of assessing educational need. It is not used as a criterion for enrolment.

**All applicants will be offered a place subject to:**

- Meeting eligibility requirements
- Compliance with the enrolment procedures
- The availability of places

**In the event of the school having more applications than places available, the offer of a place will be determined in compliance with the following criteria:-**

1. Those applicants with siblings already in the school.
2. Those applicants coming within the catchment area; NOTE the catchment area should be defined by the areas served by the national schools that traditionally send their students to the school. (See appendix 1)
3. The children of staff.
4. Thereafter on a lottery basis. In the event of a lottery the parents / guardians of the relevant students will be invited to witness the lottery. The lottery will be carried out in the school under the direction of the principal.

**Enrolment Procedures for Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Years**

- Prior to the Open Night, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal visits the primary schools served by Coláiste Mhuire to meet with the Principal and the teachers and students of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Classes. A “Pack” which includes general information on Coláiste Mhuire, the Enrolment Policy and an Enrolment Form is given to each student in 6<sup>th</sup> class.
- Parents/Guardians are informed of The Open night through local press, on the school website, in local newsletters, local churches and by word of mouth.
- The Open Night is held in Coláiste Mhuire in early October for parents/guardians and prospective students. This meeting includes an address from the Principal and an opportunity to view the facilities and to meet with management and staff.
- An invitation to this meeting is also extended to Principals and Staff of Primary Schools served by Coláiste Mhuire and to representatives of businesses and industries in the areas served by Coláiste Mhuire.
- The enrolment form must be completed with all relevant information including any current Educational, Social, Behavioural or Psychological reports. Evidence of exemption from Irish is required where appropriate. Exemption from the study of Irish must be in accordance with the Department of Education and Skill’s guidelines.
- An original Birth Certificate will also be requested. A copy of this is taken for our files and the original returned to parents/guardians.
- Where the student is in the Care of the HSE a meeting between the School, the HSE, the Foster Carers and any other relevant statutory stakeholders will take place in advance of enrolment to ascertain if the school can meet the student’s needs.

- Enrolment forms to be returned by the due date specified. Decisions regarding enrolment will be notified as soon as is practicable but not later than 21 days after the closing date.
- Details of arrangements for the Aptitude Evaluation are communicated to all parents/guardians of 6<sup>th</sup> Class pupils in January.
- A “reminder” is sent to Parents/Guardians through the Principals of all primary schools served by Coláiste Mhuire during the week prior to the Aptitude Evaluation
- Aptitude Evaluation Day takes place in early February.
- A meeting for parents/guardians of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Years takes place in March. Students are also required to attend this meeting. Subject Options are discussed at this meeting.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must read, explain and sign The Code of Behaviour with their child.
- All students must be enrolled by the closing date. The school will confirm in writing whether the student is admitted or not. In the case of students with special needs, the Board, having received the relevant information, will make a decision and inform the parents in writing of the decision.

## **Application to apply to Transition Year**

Students who wish to take Transition Year will be asked to either complete an application form and/or sit an interview. A list of suitable candidates will be compiled. A letter will be issued to these students’ Parents/Guardians offering a place in Transition Year. The Parents / Guardians will then have to accept or decline the place.

The limit on the number of students in Transition Year is 60. *(This is subject to change, at the discretion of the Board of Management, depending on resources and staffing allocation.)*

For entry into Transition Year students are required to:

- Complete third year
- Have a commitment to good behaviour, hard work and study.
- Be committed to applying him/herself fully to Transition Year and to what it has to offer( e.g. to co-operate and participate in all events)
- Pay the deposit prior to beginning Transition Year.

A student’s suitability for Transition Year and the suitability of the programme to the student will be considered during the application process. Students who are unsuccessful in their application for a place on the Transition Year Programme have the right to appeal this decision to the Principal. They should appeal within seven days of the refusal of a place on the Transition Year Programme.

## **Transfers**

The parents / guardians of students requesting a transfer from another post-primary school will be supplied with this enrolment policy and are required to:

- Complete a Transfer Application Form, and include any current Educational, Social, Behavioural or Psychological reports. Evidence of exemption from Irish is required where appropriate. An original Birth Certificate will also be requested. A copy of this is taken for our files and the original returned to parents/guardians.
- Agree to their current Principal filling in a Student Enquiry Form. This will also involve a follow up telephone call with the School Principal from the current/past school to discuss the particular circumstances of the transfer application and current needs of the student.
- Provide copies of school reports from the previous school.
- Meet the Principal, Deputy Principal accompanied by the student to discuss previous progress and ongoing commitment to study and good behaviour.
- Be willing to accept the school ethos.
- Be willing to accept the school's Code of Behaviour. Confirmation in writing, is required, that parents/guardians and the student accept the Code of Behaviour.
- Where the student is in the Care of the HSE, a meeting between the School, the HSE, the Foster Carers and any other relevant statutory stakeholders will take place in advance of enrolment to ascertain if the school can meet the student's needs.

Subject to class sizes, subject choices and available resources, the school will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to our school. Depending on academic ability/progress, consideration may be given to repeating the academic year.

Transfer applications will be considered by applying the following criteria:

***Whether or not a transfer application:***

- Is in agreement with school Enrolment Policy.
- Is in the best interest of the student.
- In the best interest of the school.
- Is of educational benefit to the student.
- Has made available all relevant information from the former school.
- Necessitates a consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer.

With the best interest of the student in mind and considering the issues relating to the transfer which may include subject choices, class sizes and available resources, the Board of Management may decide to refuse to enrol at the time of application and advise his/her parents/guardians to reapply if they so wish at the start of the following school year.

The Board may refuse the transfer application

- If the board is satisfied that there is a threat of violence towards another student or member of staff in their current school.
- If it is satisfied that there is a history of the applicant's involvement in violent behaviour toward staff or students.
- If the board is satisfied that there is a history of theft from other students or from the school.
- If the Board is satisfied that the transfer is not in the best interest of the student.
- If the board is satisfied that the transfer is not in the best interest of Coláiste Mhuire.
- If the board is satisfied that there is a history of bullying towards other students or staff.
- If the board is satisfied that there is any history of possession, using and/or supplying illegal substances to others.
- If there is any history of the perpetration of sexual assault.

## **Requests to repeat a year**

### **Repeat Leaving Certificate Students**

Applicants who completed their Leaving Certificate in the school will be interviewed by the Principal/Deputy Principal to assess their suitability for the course. Other applicants will be considered as transfer students. Applications to repeat should be made by September 1st.

### **Adults over 18: Mature Students and Repeat Leaving Cert**

- It is the policy of LCETB and any School or Centre of Adult Education, under its auspices, where persons over the age of 18 years apply to enrol in a programme of study which may entail contact with persons deemed to be vulnerable by reason of age, disability etc. to seek both a reference and consent for Garda vetting.
- A reference will be sought from two people one of whom must be your current or most recent employer/School Principal. Contact with referees may include written and telephone contact. The Applicant must be directly known to the referee but not related. Each applicant will be asked to complete the relevant consent form for Garda Vetting and to nominate two referees whom the school will ask to complete a Reference request form. It is the responsibility of the applicant to seek the consent of the referee in advance of making an application for such a reference to be sought.

## **Requests to repeat a year other than Leaving Certificate.**

Applications to repeat a year will be considered in accordance with the criteria set out in the Department of Education Circular Letter M2/95 *Repeat of a Year of Post-Primary*. Applications should be submitted by March 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

## **Special Needs**

The Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire welcomes students with special educational needs including students who are exceptionally able or talented. The Board will have regard to its responsibilities under Section 9 of The Education Act 1998 and the provisions of The Equal Status Act, 2000. (See Appendix 2)

It is our policy to meet with the parents/guardians of incoming students with special needs, accompanied by the student himself/herself, well in advance of enrolment to assess the child's particular needs.

To assess the needs of these students the school accesses the student's records from primary school well in advance of entry into the school. This will involve requesting a copy of the student's medical/psychological or individual educational report if available. The school may deem it necessary to request immediate assessment in order to assist it in establishing the educational requirements of the student relevant to his/her special needs. If the student has not been previously assessed, the written consent of the parents for a test will be required. Failure to provide such permission may result in the refusal to enrol in the school.

In making provision for special need students the following information is also required: Has the student had access to any of the following resources:-

- Special Needs assistant or classroom assistant
- Special Class
- Help, for specific needs, from any resource teacher
- Assistance with behavioural modification
- Psychological assessment. Report to be provided.
- Any additional resources to help with their special needs.
- Help in areas including, visual impairment, hearing impairment, general learning disability or emotional disturbance.
- Any resource in relation to travel or mobility, etc.

If an expert report is provided, it should include a workable strategy for addressing the needs, allowing for the resources available.

Through the Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board, the school makes early application to the Department of Education and Science for appropriate resources e.g. special needs assistant, specialised equipment, transport etc. Where adequate resources are not forthcoming from the DES the school may have to postpone enrolment until the DES puts such resources in place. The Board of Management will do all it possibly can to identify, plan and provide for a student with special needs or for a student with a disability seeking enrolment to the school.

The school will use the resources, both financial and personnel resources, provided by the Department of Education and Skills, to make reasonable provision and



accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost and that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonable practicable. While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with particular needs are dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills.

Final confirmation of a place may in exceptional cases be given when the Department of Education and Skills/School confirm that the necessary resources are in place.

N.B. It may take some time for the Department of Education and Skills to process such applications. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making application.

## **Appeals**

The Board of Management wishes to state that it reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment in exceptional circumstances, such as for example where a student poses an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the students and staff of the school and/or to school property or where a student may present with such a degree of special need that even with additional resources by the Department of Education and Skills, the school would not be able to reasonably accommodate the student concerned. Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the refusal by a school to enrol a student under Section 29 of the Education Act. The Parents' of any student who is refused enrolment will be given a copy of this Policy within seven days of such refusal.

In the case of Coláiste Mhuire which is established and maintained by the Limerick & Clare Education & Training Board (LCETB), an appeal against the decision of the Board of Management shall be made, in the first instance, to the LCETB and thereafter to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

### **Appeal to the LCETB**

The school Principal will notify of the right of appeal to the LCETB with respect to a decision by the Board of the school to:

- refuse to enrol a child.
- suspend a pupil for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 days in any school year.
- permanently exclude a pupil.

An appeal by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, will generally not be admitted unless it is made within fourteen calendar days since the decision of the Board was communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing. Appeals should be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Application Form available from the LCETB.

## Appeal to Secretary General of the DES

If the appellant remains unhappy with the outcome of the appeal process he/she has an entitlement to make an appeal directly to the Secretary General of the DES and may be done by contacting the DES' Appeals Administration Unit'.

*NOTE:* This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16/06/16. This policy is effective for the school year 2017/2018 and replaces all previous enrolment policies.

Please return completed Application Forms to:

The Principal,  
Colaiste Mhuire,  
Askeaton,  
Co. Limerick.


Tel. 061-392368, Fax. 061-398331, E-mail: [colaistemhuire.ias@eircom.net](mailto:colaistemhuire.ias@eircom.net)

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16/06/16.

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date of next review: June 2017

Signed: 

Principal

## **Appendix 1**

### **Feeder Schools**

Askeaton N.S.

Ballyhahill N.S.

Ballybrown N.S.

Ballysteen N.S.

Cappagh N.S.

Coolcappa N.S.

Foynes N.S.

Glin N.S.

Kilcolman N.S.

Kilcornan N.S.

Kildimo N.S.

Loughill N.S.

Scoil Mhuire, Pallaskenry

Shanagolden N.S.

## **Appendix 2**

### **ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

#### **Section 9 of the Education Act 1998:**

A recognised school shall provide education to students which is appropriate to their abilities and needs and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, it shall use its available resources to ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for.

#### **The Education Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 define disability as:**

- The total or partial absences of a person's bodily or mental functions, including the absence of a part of a person's body.
- The presence in the body of organisms causing, or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness,
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body.
- A condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction or
- A condition, disease or illness which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour.