

COLAISTE MUIRE,
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Admission Policy of Coláiste Muire Cobh

62180E

School Patron: PBST

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 30th 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 Colaiste Muire 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 Muire is a co-educational Catholic voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Presentation Brothers Schools Trust [PBST]. '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 Muire 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.

Colaiste Muire is a Catholic coeducational school that seeks to reflect the vision of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Ignatius Rice, founders of the Mercy Sisters and the Presentation Brothers. Both Founders saw education as a means of giving meaning and enrichment to life. Coláiste Muire is a community of students, staff, parents, chaplaincy and management who work together towards the common goal of preparing young people, for living life to the full, as committed Christians, as concerned and loving people and as responsible members of society.

Coláiste Muire aims to provide the best possible education for students in a caring, Christian environment. The highest standards of teaching, learning and behaviour are expected at all times. The school provides a comprehensive, holistic system of post-primary education for its students. This embraces spiritual, academic, practical and physical instruction, as specified by the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

The school also recognises the uniqueness of the individual and strives to co-operate with parents and the community in working towards our common goal.

3. Admission Statement

Colaiste Muire 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.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see section 5 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

5 Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school

Applications from students with special educational needs are welcome, provided the school can meet those needs adequately, subject to the limitations imposed by DES funding and resources. To ascertain the ability of Colaiste Muire to cater for the needs of such a student and to become familiar with their needs, it will be necessary to access the student's records and individual educational programme from the primary or other school well in advance of their entry to Colaiste Muire. The Colaiste will also require parental/legal guardian permission for access to any relevant medical or psychological reports. In the absence of such reports, parental/legal guardian permission will be required to request a National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) assessment or similar psychological assessment. The purpose of this assessment will be to assist us in establishing the educational needs of the applicant. Colaiste Muire in co-operation with the NEPS or other relevant authority, will inform the Department of Education and Science of whatever resources, equipment or personnel that will be required to cater for the special needs of the applicant. The Principal and/or relevant teacher will, as soon as possible, arrange to meet with the parents/legal guardians of the student to discuss the student's needs and the school's capacity to meet those needs. Applications from students with special educational needs are processed in the usual manner outlined above, subject to the details outlined in this paragraph.

6. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the 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. In the event that the placement of an application within a criterion is open to interpretation, a short meeting of the Board of Management will be held to determine how the application will be treated.

Places for First Year will be offered, up to a maximum of **100** applicants, using **the following 7 criteria in the following order.**

1. Children resident on Great Island, whose siblings or half siblings are present or past pupils of Coláiste Muire and who attended Colaiste Muire for a minimum duration of 1 school year. Legally fostered children meet the definition of sibling.
2. Children of the staff who are presently employed and hold a contract of employment of not less than 12 months duration with the Board of Management of Coláiste Muire.
3. Children resident on Great Island, attending a local primary school, i.e. Scoil Iosaef Naofa, St. Mary's N.S., Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh, Walterstown N.S., Gaelscoil Ui Eigearthaigh, and Cobh Mixed N.S., being the eldest* child, where eldest child is deemed to mean not having an older sibling or half-sibling eligible** to progress to mainstream post-primary school. (See Notes below)
4. Children resident on Great Island, whose parent/s is/are past pupil/s of the school.
5. Children resident on Great Island, who do not qualify in any of the above mentioned categories, and who attend a local primary school, i.e. Scoil Iosaef Naofa, St. Mary's N.S., Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh, Walterstown N.S., Gaelscoil Ui Eigearthaigh, Cobh Mixed N.S.
6. Children resident on Great Island, not attending a local primary school and who do not qualify in any of the above mentioned categories.
7. Children not resident on Great Island.

Notes:

*Eldest

Eldest child is deemed to mean **not** having an older sibling or half sibling, who is or was eligible to transfer to post-primary school on Great Island. Twins and other multiples who are the eldest sibling or half sibling are each treated as eldest child. A separate declaration **must** be signed by **both** parents/official guardian/s, where an applicant is designated as eldest child. In cases where the eldest child applied previously to Colaiste Muire under Criterion 3, was placed on the waiting list following the lottery process and was **not** offered a place, the next eldest child in the family will be treated as the eldest eligible.

**Eligible

Children ineligible to transfer to mainstream post-primary school refers to those children whose special educational needs are not provided for in mainstream post-primary schools on Great Island.

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:

In circumstances where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available within any criterion, the available places will be allocated by lottery. The names of any remaining applicants in that criterion will be placed on a numbered Waiting List, using the same lottery process. Similarly, the names of any applicants in each succeeding criterion will be added to this waiting list in order as drawn by lottery.

If a place becomes available through non-acceptance, cancellation or other cause, the place will be offered to applicants on the Waiting List in the number order as determined by the lottery process.

The lottery will be carried out under the direction of the Board of Management and supervised by a Commissioner of Oaths or Garda Officer.

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,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school (see also Section 15 below)
- (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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2), parents of a student having attended, the school will only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice.
- (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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Colaiste Muire 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 13] below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 14 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 17 below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Colaiste Muire 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 Colaiste Muire 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 data 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 Colaiste Muire 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 Colaiste Muire 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

The following criteria apply to an application for admission during the academic year:

The Board determines the maximum number of students in a mainstream class each year. Therefore, an application to be enrolled in a class that already has the set maximum amount of students in it, will be refused.

Overall capacity of the School.

That current optimum arrangements of students for teaching and learning purposes are maintained.

That a place exists in the relevant (e.g. age appropriate) class, taking all the relevant circumstances into account. Such circumstances include the maximum number of students in a mainstream class, the needs of the existing students, the overall number of students that the School can accommodate at the time the application is made.

An applicant will be enrolled in an age appropriate class, provided that the school is provided with a fully completed Student Transfer Request Form and Student Reference Form, regarding the applicant's attendance, disabilities, special needs, conduct, behaviour record and any other matters relating to the student's educational progress and conduct as School management may consider appropriate. The suitability of the subjects taught within the school timetable and the levels at which they are taught; and the subject options available to the student.

It is understood that it may not be possible to provide all the subject options or levels that the transfer applicant has had in her current/previous school, and that Colaiste Muire does not guarantee a place in any subject or course to a student who transfers during the school year or during the progress of a programme.

Coláiste Muire does not accept enrolments in respect of adult education.

Applicants have reached the minimum age (aged 12 on 1st January of their 1st Year).

Applicants will not be considered for enrolment into 6th Year after the end of September

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.

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:

- The Parent/Guardian or student (if over 18) seeking a transfer will be given the following documentation: Transfer Policy, Student Transfer Request Form, Student Reference Form and form of Consent,
- Parents/Guardians of children with special educational needs, please refer also to the section in this Enrolment Policy entitled Enrolment of Students with Special Educational Needs.
- The completed documents, as well as copies of the two most recent school reports, proof of residency on Great Island, and two passport photographs, must be returned to the school office. A written receipt will be issued.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will advise the applicant within 21 days of receipt of these documents whether an offer to enrol can be made or if the student is [to be] placed on a waiting list. If the maximum number of students, which the Board of Management has determined, is already enrolled in a Year Group, the applicant is [will be] added to the end of the current waiting list for the relevant year group. The waiting list for each year group is

kept on a file in the school office. The position on the waiting list will be communicated to the parent/guardian or student (if over 18) seeking a transfer.

- Waiting lists for 1st to 3rd year are kept until the end of 3rd year.
- Waiting lists for TY are kept until the end of the school year.
- Waiting lists for 5th and 6th year are kept until the 15th of September of the 6th (Leaving Certificate) year

If the offer to enrol for the purpose of transferring can be made, the student is provided with an enrolment form, and a form of agreement that they will respect the Catholic Ethos of Coláiste Muire and will observe the Code of Behaviour and all School Policies.

Formal enrolment is complete, when the Enrolment Form has been signed and returned to Coláiste Muire together with the original Birth certificate, PPSN, signed form of agreement that they will respect the Catholic Ethos of Coláiste Muire and will observe the Code of Behaviour and all School Policies.

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

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

The board of Colaiste Muire 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.

Notwithstanding the above provision, once a parent of a student has been offered and has accepted a place in the school, they will be invited to make a voluntary contribution of €65 per child per annum to cover twenty-four-hour personal accident insurance for all pupils and added services such as extra-curricular activities, sports activities, travel to extra-curricular activities, photocopying and other similar services for which the Department of Education and Skills does not provide funding.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Students at Junior Cycle level in Coláiste Muire are expected to study the timetabled DES Religious Education programme and to sit the State Examination Commission's Junior Cycle Religious Education examination at the end of 3rd Year. The specification for this programme is set by the DES and focuses on developing knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values to enable young people to come to an understanding of religion and its relevance to life, relationships, society and the wider world. The course is built around three interconnecting strands: Expressing Beliefs, Exploring Questions and Living our Values. No alternative subject will be offered for tuition at these times. At post Junior Cycle level, students are expected to participate in a non-examination focused Religious Education framework devised by the school.

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Colaiste Muire 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.

17. 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.

Approved by the Board of Management of Colaiste Muire on 30th June 2020

Signed: Mr. Sean Culhane