

Coláiste Mhuire Admission Policy



Introduction

The Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire is publishing this document as the official Admission and Participation Policy for the school, as approved by the school's patron; Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board.

Copies of this policy are available at all times at the school and are available on request to any person who applies for enrolment to the school. The policy is also available on the school web-site www.Colaistemhuirekk.ie

Factual Information

Name of School: Coláiste Mhuire.

School Address: Johnstown, Co. Kilkenny.

Contact: Phone 056 8831135,

e-mail info@colaistemhuirekk.ie,

School Patron: Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board. (KCETB)

Coláiste Mhuire follows all Department of Education and Skills (DES) curricular and other programmes, pursuant to section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998, which may be changed from time to time subject to the direction of the Minister.

The key principles outlined in the Education Act underpin our Admissions Policy. These are:

- Inclusiveness, particularly reasonable provision and accommodation for students with disability or other special needs.
- Equality with respect to maximum access and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school.
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Coláiste Mhuire depends on the DES and on KCETB for grants and teacher resources and operates within all DES rules and regulations and the relevant law. Therefore, all aspects of this policy are within the context and parameters of the funding and resources available and provided by the DES.

Mission Statement (Characteristic Spirit)

Coláiste Mhuire Johnstown is a modern second level school whose central purpose is the moral, spiritual, intellectual, social and personal development of students in the context of delivering the curriculum prescribed by the Minister of Education and Skills in an atmosphere of care and concern.

SCOPE

This policy operates in respect of admissions to the school in the following circumstances:

- Students applying for a place in first year
- Students from outside of the school applying for a place in any other year group or programme
- Students applying to repeat any year of any programme within the school, including repeating the Leaving Certificate
- Students from within the school applying for a place in the curricular programmes *Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) or Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)*

RATIONALE

This policy aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner
- make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it

THE FOLLOWING WILL APPLY TO ALL APPLICANTS:

Coláiste Mhuire welcomes all eligible students who apply, including those with special needs, and acknowledges the right of parents to send their child to the school of their choice. The School is aware of the principles and requirements of a democratic society and will both respect and promote respect for social diversity as regards values, beliefs, traditions, religion, ethnicity, special educational needs (unless the needs cannot be met by the school, as outlined above), disability, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, sexual orientation, family or social status.

The School is also aware of its obligation not to discriminate on any of the grounds as listed under the relevant equality legislation (section 3 of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2004), as it applies to schools.

Coláiste Mhuire is required by law to have regard for efficient use of resources and is aware of its obligation to provide for maximum accessibility of students.

Admission to Coláiste Mhuire Johnstown or to a particular course/activity is subject, in the first instance to a place being available. The Board of Management shall not refuse to admit as a student in respect of whom an application to be admitted has been made, except where such refusal is in accordance with the Admission Policy.

Admission is subject to the following conditions:

- The educational attainment of the student must be such that there is a reasonable prospect that he/she will be able to access the curriculum.
- The school reserves the right to refuse a place to applicants whose behaviour it considers would be detrimental to the rights of other children. Attendance at the school is conditional on adherence to the school's Code of Behaviour.
- The school requires parents/guardians to confirm in writing that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the Code. A copy of the Code is available on request and is on the school's website.
- That in the professional judgement of the School Authority (i.e. the C.E. or officer delegated to act on his/her behalf) and following an interview (if deemed appropriate) the student is deemed suitable for admission to the school or course/activity.
- That in the professional judgement of the school authority, the student, in respect of previous education, training or experience, is considered likely to benefit from attendance.
- That the participation of the student/applicant will contribute positively to the school or the course activity and not infringe in any way upon the opportunities or rights of other students or staff.
- Ability of the school to accommodate numbers.
 - Maximum of 110 students in 1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year.
 - Maximum of 110 students in Transition Year. In TY a max base class of 30 students. If numbers fall between 70 and 90 students three base classes will be set up.

While all students are encouraged to participate in the Transition Year Programme in Coláiste Mhuire, interviews may have to be part of the selection process to determine the suitability of students to the programme.
 - Access to Leaving Certificate Programmes will be based on space available in base classes in 5th and 6th year. Students enrolled in 5th Year will not be permitted to transfer into Transition Year due to class base sizes.
 - Maximum of 15 students per class in 5L and 6L Leaving Certificate Applied. LCA will require a minimum of 10 students to allow the course to run. Management will do all possible to facilitate the programme. This may result in joining both groups where the curriculum allows.

Students will be interviewed to determine their suitability to the programme.
 - Entry to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) requires students to have a particular combination of subjects, as laid down by the Department of Education & Skills and all students who qualify for LCVP in Coláiste Mhuire are required to participate in this programme.
- The provision by the DES of the requisite supports and resources that will enable the student to attend the school safely and enable the school to provide an education that is appropriate to the child's abilities and needs.
- Parents/guardians who accept the offer of a place are advised that their child's needs, can only be met to the extent of the resources available. Coláiste Mhuire reserves the

right to withdraw at any stage the offer of a place in the event of it being unable to meet the educational, psychological or physical needs of the child. The concerns of parents/guardians in this regard should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Principal or Principal.

- Applications will not be accepted from students who have not exhausted current Section 29 appeals and are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004’.
- All disputes in relation to admission will be referred to Kilkenny/Carlow ETB.

Admissions Procedure into First Year

- The Principal/School personnel will visit primary schools in the catchment area in September/October to address prospective students.
- Primary school fifth and sixth class students attend school for an open day.
- Advertisements are placed in the local press/parish newsletters inviting applications for admission prior to the holding of the Open Night in mid-October.
- Admission to Coláiste Mhuire is a two-stage process; Stage One- Application Form, Stage Two-Enrolment Form
- Following the open night parents/guardian will complete an application form. This application form is the first stage of a two-stage process.
- At stage two the school will send out an enrolment form where further detail will be requested. Completed enrolment forms and relevant reports must be returned by a set date in November/December.
- Assessment tests are held in February to give an indication of students’ needs. Students are placed in mixed ability classes from first year.
- Common introductory courses are offered across a range of subjects in 1st year, students may then be placed into Higher Level or Ordinary Level classes in these subjects.
- Academic ability is not a determinant of admission (Circular M.51/93).

Information to be provided to Coláiste Mhuire

Parents/Guardians seeking to enrol a pupil must complete the Application for Enrolment Form. The parent/guardian of a child who applies for the child’s admission to the school is obliged to provide such information as may be prescribed by the Minister. Information relevant to admission to Coláiste Mhuire includes

- The student’s full name and address, date of birth (copy of the students Birth Certificate), gender.
- The Students PPS number
- The names, address(es) and phone number(s) of parents/guardians, and where appropriate phone number for place of work
- The name and address of any person, other than the parent/guardian, who may be notified in the case of an emergency affecting the student and the relationship of that person to the student, for example, a grandparent or a childminder
- Any schools attended by the student, with dates of admission and leaving and the designation of the class from which he or she left

- A note of any factors adversely affecting the student's educational potential, attainment or needs (e.g. behavioural considerations, educational/medical/psychological reports)
- Details on the student's health record as would affect his or her participation in school
- Where appropriate, results (with dates) of any assessments undertaken by the student or information about the student's emotional and social development
- a general paragraph where the parent/guardian can fill in any other information he/she considers relevant to the child's attendance in a new school.
- The school will also require the relevant information from the child's previous school as outlined in the Education (Welfare) Act.

Successful applicants will be offered a place within 28 days of the closing date for applications. The school reserves the right to operate a waiting list should the number of applicants exceed the number of places available. Late applicants will automatically be placed on this list.

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal, initially to the ETB and then to the Secretary General of the DES, under section 29 of the 1998 Education Act in the event that an application is refused.

Allocation of place in first year

A maximum of 110 students will be enrolled in First Year. In the event of Coláiste Mhuire receiving more applications than can be accommodated, preference will be given to students where home address is within the school's designated transport catchment area. More specifically this school normally caters for students from the following national schools:-

St Kierans National School Johnstown, Urlingford National School, Cross-Patrick National School, Cullohill National School, Galmoy National School, Freshford National School, Clontubrid National School, Gathabawn National School, Gortnahoe National School, Lisdowney National School

Any remaining places will be allocated to:

- (a) Siblings of a student at the present time.
- (b) Son/daughter of a member of staff.
- (c) Siblings of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire.
- (d) Sons/daughters of past pupils (i.e. past pupils who have completed Junior Cycle and/or Senior Cycle in Coláiste Mhuire Johnstown).
- (e) Other Schools by tradition: Durrow National School, Tullaroan National School, Ballyragget Boys School & Ballyragget Girls School, Clinstown National School, Ballysloe National School.
- (f) A lottery will apply to all other available places.

Note:

If demand exceeds capacity i.e. the total number of applicants in a given category is greater than the 110 places available, places will be allocated within that category by means of a 'lottery' style random process.

Random Process

In the event of a random process being applied, it will be overseen by the Principal and will be witnessed by a representative of the Board of Management and a representative of the Parents' Association. The name of each student entitled to participate in the random process will be placed in a drum. The Principal will draw names from the drum, one by one, until the drum is empty. The order in which the names are drawn will be recorded on a numbered list and places will be offered in that order until available places are filled.

In the case of one or more siblings applying for admission in the same year, the name of each sibling will be entered in the random process separately. If the name of any of the siblings is drawn, places will be offered to all the siblings, provided so doing does not exceed our maximum number of available places (110).

Waiting List

When the available places have been filled, a 'waiting list' will be drawn up, the order of which will be determined by means of the random process applied to remaining students in the above order of categories to which remaining applicants belong.

4. Late Applications

Enrolment forms received after the closing date will be added to the waiting list according to date of receipt of application following those already on the list from the random process.

The Board of Management's decision in relation to any aspect of enrolment is final but subject to the outcome of any appeals in the context of Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

This facilitates students to benefit from the optimum subject choices available. It is a condition of admission that Parents/Guardians and child give a written commitment to abide by the Code of Behaviour.

TRANSFERS REQUESTS

Parents/guardians who wish their child to transfer from another second level school or who wish to exercise their lawful preference to educate their child in a school of their choice must make their request in writing. A request may also be made by a student over eighteen years of age on his or her own behalf.

Coláiste Mhuire will not accept transfers into an exam year (3rd, 6th, LCA2) once the academic year has commenced.

The parents/guardians and student must attend a meeting with the Principal of Coláiste Mhuire who will require copies of the student's last two school reports and a reference from the Principal of the student's original school. The Principal of the student's original school

will inform the Principal of Coláiste Mhuire of any problems relating to school attendance that the student had and such other matters relating to the student's educational progress as he/she considers appropriate or as may be prescribed by the Minister.

The wishes of parents/guardians will be met only if they are compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and avoid unreasonable public expenditure.

Procedure

1. Following initial contact with the school, intending applicants will be required to meet with the Principal accompanied by parents or guardians.
2. Applicants should complete the Transfer application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.
3. Applicants will be required to provide details about the second-level education in their previous school(s) including copies of their two most recent school reports that set out the results of in-house examinations. Where an applicant has attended more than one second-level school they may be required, at the discretion of the Board, to submit reports from each school and copies of the results of any State examinations.

Enrolment criteria

1. The applicant and his family must agree, in writing, to allow the principal to seek all records relating to the applicant from his previous school(s).
2. Enrolment is subject to the applicant's subject choices being available (on the curriculum and not exceeding maximum class size) and not exceeding the maximum number in a year group.
3. All students entering the school must supply a copy of their Birth Certificate.
4. The school reserves the right to refuse to admit a student in circumstances as outlined below.

Grounds for Refusal to admit a Student

- Applications will not be accepted from students who have not exhausted current Section 29 appeals and are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004'.
- The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:
 - The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education or
 - In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

Ultimately, the right to refuse admission is a matter for the Board of Management, who must balance the rights of the individual alongside the rights of the school community in line with legislation.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Where a student is refused admission to the school or to a specific programme within the school, they have the right to appeal this decision to the Board of Management, or under Section 29 of the Education Act, to the Secretary General of the Dept of Education & Skills.

Entry to specific subjects

In first year, students will:

1. Choose their preferred subjects along with their core subjects prior to starting school.
2. Partake in a five-week taster programme. At the end of the five weeks they will choose their preferred subjects.

Every effort will be made by management to accommodate student selection. In the event of classes being over subscribed the initial subject choice selection will be revisited.

If the above procedures do not resolve an over-supply situation then a lottery will be held.

In fifth Year

Entry to specific subjects will be determined by the subject choice process, where students indicate their preferred options and the school allocates classes. A subject will only be offered if there are a minimum number of applicants for it. In normal circumstances this will be a minimum of 12 students. Other criteria to be used include:

1. The student's previous performance at that subject relative to the other applicants
2. The student's results in State examinations (where available) will also be considered.
3. If this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the school may survey the student's previous teacher(s) about his suitability for the subject or alternative subjects and the school may also take into account the availability of other suitable subjects.
4. If above procedures do not resolve an over-supply situation then a lottery will be held.

Entry to specific subject levels

This will be primarily determined by the student's results in the relevant State Examination. The student's performance at this subject up to this application and their performance in this subject relative to other applicants will also be taken into account.

Admission to repeat a year:

All such applications are subject to Dept of Education & Skills Circular Letter M2/95. Applications will be considered in the light of the class size and overall enrolment restrictions set out elsewhere in this policy. Applications must be in writing and must state the relevant Circular and the particular clause(s) being invoked in support of the application and must be accompanied by supporting documentation, as appropriate. The school must be satisfied that the applicant, in light of the special circumstances that gave rise to the application, applied himself to the best of his ability. The application to repeat the year will only be successful subject to all first-time applicants having been accommodated.

Admission to repeat the Leaving Certificate

Coláiste Mhuire does not operate a repeat Leaving Certificate Programme. It does not provide any additional teaching to cover material normally covered in year 1 of the Leaving Certificate Programme. Students who apply to repeat the Leaving Certificate will be considered in the context of places available in the relevant subjects, the overall programme and overall enrolment within the school. The student's previous academic record, application to studies, behaviour record and attendance will also be taken into account.

Procedure for admission to repeat the Leaving Certificate

1. All students must apply by a particular date. This date falls Three Days after the first round offers from the CAO. This occurs in late August.
2. Students will only be accepted if there is space in the year group and if the school is able to offer a comprehensive range of subjects. Many subjects may already be fully subscribed.
3. Students offered a place must accept their offer by the date specified by the school.
4. Repeat students must follow the school's Code of Behaviour and Uniform Policy.
5. All students will be interviewed prior to a decision being reached on an offer to repeat. Any student refused a place in the school will be informed and any refusal can be appealed to the Board of Management.
6. The school reserves the right to refuse admission to repeat the Leaving Certificate.

Repeat students from other schools will have to attend a meeting with management.

Admission and participation of students with disabilities or other special educational needs

Coláiste Mhuire welcomes students with special education needs unless the nature and degree of these needs is such that to enrol the student would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated. While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to select a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with special needs is dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Hence the Board of Management reserves the right to postpone admission until such resources have been provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

It is school policy to ask for copies of all relevant psychological and relevant medical reports prior to registration. The purpose of having these reports is to enable the school to assess the student's needs. Parents of students with special needs should inform the school as early as possible so that an application may be made to the Department of Education and Skills to have the resources necessary to meet the special needs of the student at the commencement of the school year. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school of the full details of their child's special needs well in advance of making an application to enrol. Coláiste Mhuire will do all that is reasonably possible to secure the resources to meet the needs of these students.

Admission of Students to the Centre for Young People with Autism

Coláiste Mhuire has in place a dedicated Centre for Young People with Autism. Students enrolling in the Centre must firstly be eligible for admission to the school in line with our ASD enrolment policy. Under the direction off the SENO, Coláiste Mhuire will fill vacancies in the ASD unit above their capped numbers providing all necessary resources are provided.

In accordance with DES regulations each unit in a centre can accommodate a maximum of 6 students. These places will be allocated in line with our general admission policy and Coláiste Mhuire's ASD enrolment policy.

Applications for students to enrol in and be accommodated in the Centre will be accepted if the Parents/Guardians:

- a) Complete an enrolment form.
- b) Provide an Educational Psychologist report, recommending that the child's needs can best be met by attendance at a Centre for Young People with Autism attached to a second level school.
- c) Can provide evidence that the child has been diagnosed with mild to moderate learning difficulties. The classroom is not in a position to accommodate children with severe or profound learning difficulties.
- d) Provide a report from the student's primary school outlining the student's academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs and outlining the current extent of social integration.
- e) Provide any other reports e.g. Speech and Language Therapy or Occupational Therapy
- f) Signed a consent form granting the school permission to access any relevant reports from previous schools attended.

Enrolment Procedure

- a) All vacancies in the ASD support class will be filled, according to the chronological order of applications, from the date of receipt of completed enrolment form and reports, subject to the above conditions being met.
- b) Where there are more applicants than places, national schools in the local catchment area will have priority.
- c) Students who meet the criteria for enrolment but are not offered a place for September will remain on the waiting list in the event that a vacancy should arise during the school year.
- d) Students must be capable of being integrated into mainstream classes for the majority of time.

Parental Responsibility

As part of the application process parents/guardians are required to sign an undertaking to comply with, and also agree to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with, the School's code of behaviour. Refusal to agree to this undertaking is a ground for refusing admission to the school.

The parent/guardian of a child who has made an application for admission to the school is required to furnish such reasonable information as may be required by the school. The parent/guardian is also required to authorise the School to use all information supplied for all *bona fide* school purposes.

Policy on suspension and expulsion

Minor breaches of school rules will be dealt with by the teacher or class teacher and sanctions such as detention, extra work, afterschool detention or withdrawal of privileges may be imposed.

More serious breaches of discipline will be referred to and dealt with by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal and may lead to sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from the school.