

Coláiste Chiaráin



Neart le chéile

Admission Policy of Coláiste Chiaráin

Summerhill, Athlone, Co. Roscommon

Roll number: 68325L

School Patron: Bishop of Elphin

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 29/08/2020. 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 Chiaráin'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 Chiaráin is a Catholic co-educational voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Bishop of Elphin.

“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 Chiaráin 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 Chiarain, Athlone will endeavour to:

- Provide students with a Catholic education that has a sound spiritual, faith, academic and practical content.
- Nourish the building up of a personal relationship with God according to catholic wisdom as lived out in the community of the church.
- Respect and facilitate the spiritual/human development of students from all religious traditions or faith stances. To support this, religion is a core subject to Leaving Certificate and all students follow the Junior Certificate Religious Education Syllabus programme.
- Assist students to reach their full potential by encouraging the talents and gifts unique to each one.
- Develop a sense of self-respect and responsibility among students for themselves and for those whom they can serve, and to foster a sense of community within the school.
- Foster an environment which enables staff and students to promote quality teaching and learning in an atmosphere which is enriching for everybody.
- Inspire students to respect and love their cultural and religious heritage and develop as responsible citizens.
- Encourage students to be creative in their use of leisure through the extra-curricular activities offered.

3. Admission Statement

Coláiste Chiaráin 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 Chiaráin is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Coláiste Chiaráin is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

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

Coláiste Chiaráin, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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

The special class attached to Coláiste Chiaráin provides an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

In order to identify the specified category of special educational need of the student, the following is required:

- Each applicant must have a definite diagnosis of Autism and their primary diagnosis is Autism according to the DSM IV/V or ICD 10.
- Applicants must have a professional recommendation by a Psychologist, Psychiatrist or multidisciplinary team for placement in the Autism unit. These reports must have been completed within 2 years prior to the date of enrolment.
- Reports from all previous schools attended including current Student Support File or Individual Education Plan for applicant.

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

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

Selection criteria

1. Siblings of present or past students of Coláiste Chiaráin.
2. Applicants who have attended the following feeder primary schools:
Ardkeen National School, Ballybay Central National School, Ballinteleva National School, Brideswell National School, Camcloon National School, Carrick National School, Curraghboy, Castlesampson National School, Clonown National School, Cloonakilla National School, Cornafulla, National School, Dean Kelly National School, Feevagh National School, Glanduff National School, Lecarrow Community National School Newtown National School, St. Ciaran's National School, Moore St. Peters National School, St Ronan's National School, Summerhill National School
3. Applicants who have attended other feeder primary schools:
Athlone Mixed National School, Baylin National School
Coosan National School, Cornamaddy National School
Creagh National School, Lismoil National School
Rahara National School, Scoil na gCeithre Máistrí
St Marys National School
4. Sons and daughters of current staff members.
5. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.

ASD Special Class Selection Criteria

1. Current students enrolled in the school
2. Siblings of present or past students of Coláiste Chiaráin.
3. Applicants who have attended feeder primary schools at (2) above
4. Applicants who have attended other feeder Primary schools at (3) above
5. Sons and daughters of current staff members.
6. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.
7. All other applicants

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:

Where there are fewer places remaining than applicants in a given category, students will be offered places based on a lottery.

The lottery will be conducted as follows:

- a. The lottery will be supervised by at least three of – A member of the Garda Síochána, the Principal, the Chairperson of the Board of Management, the Chairperson of the Parents Association.
- b. Names will be drawn until all places are filled.
- c. When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the waiting list.
- d. If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.

Late applications will be considered in order of receipt of application subject to the above criteria. Late applicants into any year will only be considered after all on-time applications have been processed

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; other than in relation to a PLC run by a school in respect of those courses
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude; other than in relation to:
admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned.
- (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;
- (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 Coláiste Chiaráin 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 Chiaráin, 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 Chiaráin where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission

on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.

- (iii) the parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 10](#) above.

12. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of 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 Coláiste Chiaráin 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 Chiaráin 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 procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

An application for student transfer to Coláiste Chiaráin from another secondary school must be submitted on the *Application Form for Student Transfer* available upon request from the school. Application forms must be completed in full. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.

It is school policy that enrolment is normally only considered for First Year. However, in certain exceptional circumstances the school will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer.

Where an applicant has attended more than one second level school they must submit all requested reports and files from each school. The application for a place in the school will not be deemed to be complete and will not be considered where no such reports are provided.

Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any ongoing statutory procedures in accordance with the Education act 1998 or the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Decisions on application for admission to any other year other than first year will be decided using the following criteria:

- The student transfer is within the terms of the school's Admissions Policy.
- A fully completed application form is received, including all relevant information from the student's former school
- The transfer is of educational benefit to the student.
- The transfer does not impact on the Health and Safety of members of the school community.
- Due account is taken of the availability of space in the school or in specific classes, the suitability/availability of the subjects taught and the levels at which they are taught and the subject options available to the student. The maximum class size is 30 for general subjects, 24 for practical and science and 20 for Home Economics.

Where a student is considered for a place, the Principal will consult with the student's parents/guardians, his/her former school and the Education Welfare Officer if necessary. The final decision to approve transfer will be made by the Board of Management. The school will advise applicants of the outcome of their application within two weeks of the board of management decision.

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:

No transfer applications will be accepted after the beginning of the school year to start in that school year, except in exceptional circumstances.

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

The board of (name of school) 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

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