



Coláiste Chiaráin, Athlone

Admissions Policy: 1st Year Enrolment

2017/2018

Introduction

Coláiste Chiaráin will open on 1st September 2017, as a result of the amalgamation of St Aloysius College and St Joseph's College. The school will serve the educational needs of the community of Athlone and surrounding areas

Legal Framework

This policy abides by the relevant sections of the following Acts:

- Education Act (1998)
- Education Welfare Act (2000)
- Equal Status Act (2000)
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
- Data Protection Acts (1998 & 2003)

Guiding Principles

Coláiste Chiaráin will be a Voluntary Co-Educational Catholic Secondary School under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Elphin

In partnership with parents the College strives to educate their children in a manner which is consistent with the approach of Jesus and the vision of his Church. It aims to foster students' spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical and creative development and thereby develop their full potential.

The ethos of the school, as befitting its origins, is one where Christian values predominate whilst maintaining a deep respect for the diversity of traditions, values and beliefs found in the wider community.

Colaiste Chiarain, Athlone will endeavor 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 and celebrated in the community of the church throughout the liturgical year.
- Respect and facilitate the spiritual/human development of students from all religious traditions or faith stances. To support this, Religious Education is a core subject to Leaving Certificate. All students will follow the State Junior Certificate Religious Education Syllabus programme to exam level. Senior Cycle students will be afforded the opportunity if possible to follow the State Leaving Certificate Religious Education Syllabus to exam level or another

diocesan approved programme. Throughout the diversity of traditions, values and beliefs found in the wider community will be respected.

- 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.

The Admissions Policy ensures that the school supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school by:

- Respecting the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society.
- Acknowledging the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice, subject to the resources available to the school, including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources, financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission.

Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources. Where the resources cannot be secured, the school may refuse admission.

Resources

Coláiste Chiaráin is funded by the Department of Education & Skills and is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil-teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Section 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its enrolment, activities and programmes for any school year, the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it. This is established by the overall size of the school sanctioned by the D.E.S. and the Admissions Policy of the Board of Management.

In order to provide a better service for the needs of students, all parents are asked to pay a voluntary administration/enrolment contribution each year. The amount is determined by the Board

of Management in consultation with the Parents' Association on a regular basis. Among other items, this money is used for: photocopying, in-school exams administration, assessment tests, stationery and bus insurance. In addition, a fee for personal accident insurance may be paid by parents for their son/daughter. This insurance is optional.

From time to time, the senior management and the Parents Association may, with the permission of the Board of Management, engage in fundraising activities for specified development projects within the school which are not resourced or only resourced in part by the D.E.S.

Applications procedure to enrol in First Year

1. Primary schools in the catchment area of Coláiste Chiaráin, are visited in January prior to the year of enrolment. Application forms and prospectus are distributed during the visitation.
2. An "Open Night" for parents and their 6th class child takes place each school year in January.
3. Parents/Guardians of applicants are then invited to attend an information meeting where application procedures, the curriculum, school rules and ethos are outlined.
4. Time is allocated before and after this meeting, for accepting applications for enrolment.
5. Application forms, duly completed, should normally be returned on the Information Night or by the date specified on the form itself. The completed form should be accompanied by a birth certificate and any other relevant documents.
6. Parents/guardians of all applicants will be informed in writing of the school's decision within 21 school working days of the closing date for applications
7. Parents/guardians whose children have been offered a place in Coláiste Chiaráin must confirm their acceptance within 14 days of date of offer.

Entry Requirements

Enrolment is open to all students who satisfy the following criteria.

1. The applicant must have reached the age of 12 years by the 1st January in the calendar year following entry into Coláiste Chiaráin. (A Birth Cert must be presented).
2. It is expected that the student will have completed 6th class in Primary School or a verified equivalent in another jurisdiction
3. Acceptance of our school's "Code of Behaviour" and "ethos" upon offer of a place.
4. All students, once offered a place shall be required to sit an assessment test.

Offer of Places

The Principal, subject to the approval of the Board of Management, will decide on the admission of the applicant. For the most part, it is envisaged that enrolment on application will be automatic. Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places, available places will be allocated according to the following criteria:

1. Siblings of present or past students of St Aloysius College and St Joseph's College.
2. Applicants resident in the catchment area as defined by the Bus Éireann Transport Scheme.
3. Applicants who have attended other Primary schools that have been traditional feeder schools for St Aloysius College and St Joseph's College.
4. Sons and daughters of past students.
5. Sons and daughters of current staff members.

6. Applicants resident in the catchment area, who have applied outside the specified enrolment time.
7. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.

Excess of applicants

1. Only students whose applications have been received on time will be offered places in accordance with the criteria above.
2. Places will only be offered to students in a given category after all students in each previous category have been offered a place.
3. Where there are fewer places remaining than applicants in a given category, students will be offered places based on a lottery.
4. 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.
 - e. The waiting list will be terminated when the first term begins.

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.

Special Educational Needs

The Board of Management is supportive of the principle of inclusiveness, in particular in regard to students with a disability or other special educational needs in so far as is reasonably practicable and subject to the resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

We acknowledge that within our school population there are students who have special educational needs. Our special needs policy applies to particularly gifted students, disadvantaged students, students with learning difficulties and students with physical and other disabilities.

Parents/guardians of prospective students with special needs are advised to complete the application form and to contact the school separately in relation to the general/specific educational needs of the student involved. This involves informing the school of the need, the resources previously received from the D.E.S. and if possible, submitting copies of the various relevant items of correspondence with the D.E.S., psychologists, etc. to the school. Coláiste Chiaráin requires students' records from primary or previous schools. The school will use this information in its application to the Department of Education & Skills for additional resources to support students with special educational needs.

The school (e.g. the Principal/Deputy Principal/Special Needs Co-ordinator) will work with parents to discuss the child's needs and the school's capability to meet the child's needs.

The school reserves the right to refuse to enrol a student for which the school cannot cater, even with additional resources as provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

Appeals to a decision to refuse to enrol

- 6.1 The Board of Management of a recognised school shall not refuse to admit as a student in such school a child, in respect of whom an application to be so admitted has been made, except where such a refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognised school concerned published under section 15 (2) (d) of the Education Act 1998. Education (Welfare) Act 2000. (Section 19 (1).)
- 6.2 Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused, the parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills, (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d).) The parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the Board's decision, and the reasons why the student was not accepted should be clearly stated. The parents/guardians right to appeal should be restated on the application form provided. (Circular M48/01). The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (Circular M48/01).

An appeal may be made to: The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills, The Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street Dublin 1.

- 6.3 Parents/Guardians must inform the school in writing of the decision to appeal.

Note: Having regard to the desirability of resolving grievances within the school where possible, the parties to an appeal under section 29, i.e., the appellant and the school's Board of Management, will be asked to consider the matter in the first instance at local level to see if an accommodation can be reached. As a general rule, appeals will only be considered by an appeals committee under section 29 where the parties are unable to resolve the issue at local level. (Circular M48/01).

Miscellaneous

1. This policy is subject to annual review by the Board of Management. This review will take into account any relevant changes in legislation or directives from the Diocesan Trust
2. The Board of Management will publish this policy in accordance with Section 15(2)(D) of the Education Act (1998)
3. This Admissions Policy was approved by the Interim Board of Management of Coláiste Chiaráin on 23rd January 2017 in accordance with Section 15(2)(D) of the Education Act (1998)

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

4. This policy was approved by the school trustee, the Bishop of Elphin on the Feast of St Francis de Sales, 24th of January 2017 in accordance with Section 15(2)(D) of the Education Act (1998)

Signed _____ (Bishop of Elphin)