

COLÁISTE MUIRE
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Admission Policy



2024/25



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís
Edmund Rice Schools Trust

Admission Policy of Coláiste Mhuire

School Address: College Street, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

Roll number: 63270K

School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust

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 the 20th. September 2023. 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 Mhuire 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 Mhuire is a Catholic all boys voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust.

‘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 Mhuire 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.”

The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the ERST Charter. The five characteristics of an Edmund Rice school underpin the operation of our Edmund Rice Secondary School, namely:

- Promoting partnership means that at Coláiste Mhuire we make everyone feel welcome, build a Christian community with a shared vision and mission, recognise the voice of staff, students and parents and are involved in our community
- Excellence in teaching and learning means that at Coláiste Mhuire we have high expectations of our teachers and students, nurture the development of all aspects of our lives, respond to a changing world, use technology responsibly and creatively to enhance our learning and promote learning as a lifelong enterprise
- Creating a caring school community means that at Coláiste Mhuire we show care and compassion as exemplified in the life of Jesus, respect and celebrate the dignity of each

person, seek to help those who are disadvantaged or in need in society and speak up for those whose voice is not heard

- Inspiring transformational leadership means that at Coláiste Mhuire we motivate people to work towards the vision of Blessed Edmund, inspire the minds and hearts of our students to have courage and confidence to stand up for what we believe in, lead by giving good example and take responsibility for our actions.

Coláiste Mhuire, Board of Management, parents, staff and students, working together as a school community within the resources available, aim to provide a Catholic education in the best possible environment to cater for the cultural, educational, moral, physical, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions of all its students.

Coláiste Mhuire is committed to excellence. The school provides a caring and disciplined environment in which all students are challenged to reach their academic and personal potential.

We show special concern for the disadvantaged and we make every effort to ensure that the uniqueness and dignity of each person is respected, and responded to, especially through the pastoral care system in Coláiste Mhuire.

We realise too, that we must cater for the changing needs of today's world and, towards that end, we frequently review our various programmes.

Being keenly aware of the ever increasing effect of outside influences on the lives of our students, we are even more concerned to maintain Catholic values and practices.

The faith development of our students is given priority through an extensive and creative Religious Education programme. The programme provided is religious education, not religious instruction. Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values means that at Coláiste Mhuire we live our Catholic Faith, experience God, respect the beliefs and values of each member of the school community and work for social and ecological justice.

3. Mission Statement

Coláiste Mhuire 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 Mhuire is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Coláiste Mhuire is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

Coláiste Mhuire 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 of the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

Coláiste Mhuire welcomes students with additional educational needs and will use all resources made available by the Department of Education to make every reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or additional educational needs.

Coláiste Mhuire will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Coláiste Mhuire will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b). Coláiste Mhuire with the approval of the Minister for Education, has established **one class** to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism. The school may refuse admission to this class, where the applicant does not have the specified category of special educational need provided for in this class.

In order to identify the specified category of special educational need, each prospective student must meet the following criteria as set out by the Department of Education:

- Recent professional report (within 2 years) from a psychologist or psychiatrist
 - have a diagnosis of Autism in accordance with DSM V / ICD 10 criteria
 - have complex or severe learning needs that require the support of a special class (detailed in the report)
 - clear recommendation for an Autism special class as part of mainstream second-level education from a psychologist, psychiatrist or multidisciplinary team
- The class will only cater for children who are 12 years of age or more on the 1st September of the school year in question, unless there is specific approval from the Department of Education for a particular student who is outside this age limit.
 - Under guidelines from the Department of Education, the number of places in this autism special class is limited to **six** students. **(One class of six students)**
 - In the event that the class is oversubscribed, the school will allocate places in accordance with the same established procedures as outlined in section 6 of this document.

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 Mhuire provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

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

The special class attached to Coláiste Mhuire provides an education exclusively for students with Autism 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.

6. Oversubscription

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:

In the event that applications for admission exceed the number specified in the annual admission notice, the Board of Management will allocate places in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Siblings of present pupils of Coláiste Mhuire
2. Siblings of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire who have been enrolled in the school within three academic years of applicants enrolment into First Year
3. Sons of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire (up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available)
4. Applicants from feeder schools
5. 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 the school is oversubscribed under any of the above criteria, the allocation of the remaining places will be determined by lottery.

The lottery will be supervised by at least 2 of:

- a nominee of the Board of Management who is not a member of the Board of Management
- the Principal and/or Deputy Principal
- a nominee of the Parent Council

The lottery will be conducted as follows:

a) Where there are applications for more than one member of the same family, the success of one member in the lottery will automatically entitle the other family member(s) to the allocation of a place.

b) Names will be drawn until all places are filled.

When all places are filled, unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by post. The unsuccessful applicant is requested to notify Coláiste Mhuire in writing to inform Coláiste Mhuire of their wish to be placed on a waiting list. The lottery system will determine the numerical order of the waiting list.

List of Primary Feeder Schools

All Saints	Dalystown	Rathowen
Ballinagore	Dysart	Scoil Mhuire
Ballynacargy	Rathwire/Edmonton	Sonna
Boher	Killucan	St. Colmans, Bellview
Castletown Geoghegan	Educate Together	St. Ernans, Delvin
Castletown-Finea	Empor	St. Etchens, Kinnegad
Clonard	Gael Scoil	St. Kennys
Collinstown	Gainstown	St. Mary's Collinstown
Clonmellon	Loughegar	St. Mary's Raharney
Coole	Loughnavalley	St. Michael's Castlepollard
Coralstown	Milltown	St. Tolas, Delvin
Crowenstown	Moyvalley	Taughmon
Curraghmore	Multyfarnham	The Downs
Presentation	Oldcastle	

Oversubscription of Coláiste Mhuire's Autism Class

If the number of children on the list of applicants exceeds the number of places available the following ranked criteria will apply.

1. Siblings of present pupils of Coláiste Mhuire
2. Siblings of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire who have been enrolled in the school within three academic years of applicants enrolment into First Year
3. Sons of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire (up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available)
4. Applicants from feeder schools
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b) Names will be drawn until all places are filled.

When all places are filled, unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by post. The unsuccessful applicant is requested to notify Coláiste Mhuire in writing to inform Coláiste Mhuire of their wish to be placed on a waiting list. The lottery system will determine the numerical order of the waiting list.

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;

(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 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 (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 having attended, a school may 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.

(h) All applications must be accompanied by a birth certificate for verification purposes.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Coláiste Mhuire 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 Mhuire, 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 are 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.

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 Mhuire 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 certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

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 Mhuire 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 Mhuire 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.

15. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled and attended another post-primary school, in or outside, Coláiste Mhuire, Mullingar. 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:

Coláiste Mhuire will make every reasonable effort to facilitate a student seeking a transfer to Coláiste Mhuire. The Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, will decide on an application for admission to any other year other than First Year by applying the following criteria:

1. There must be an available place after the general admissions criteria have been applied
2. It is in agreement with the Coláiste Mhuire Admissions Policy
3. The transfer must be in the best interest of the student

4. The transfer must be of educational benefit to the student (e.g. it may not be possible to offer the student certain subject combinations, a place in a certain programme etc.)
5. The Coláiste Mhuire Application Form must be completed in full
6. The Code of Behaviour must be signed and returned.

In arriving at a decision the Principal will consult with the student's parents/guardians, his former school(s) and the educational welfare officer. The Principal or Deputy Principal may invite parents/guardians of the student to attend a meeting to discuss the academic support needed to assist such a transfer and ensure the student achieves their full potential in Coláiste Mhuire.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, the Principal shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof. (Education Welfare Act 2000 (Section 19 (3))).

It is not the policy of the school to accept transfer applications from students who are already enrolled in local post-primary schools after 1st May, preceding the academic year for which the student is seeking to join. Transfers into any student year group after 1st. May will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Admission of Transfer Students

In the event that applications for admission exceed the number of available places in that year group, the Board of Management will allocate places in accordance with the following procedure:

- Siblings of present pupils of Coláiste Mhuire
- Siblings of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire
- Sons of past pupils of Coláiste Mhuire (up to a maximum of 25% of the total places available.)
- Applicants from feeder schools
- All other applicants

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 Mhuire 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 Mhuire is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this student transfer policy. The waiting list will terminate at the end of the academic year for which it was created.

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.

Where a year group is oversubscribed under any of the above criteria, the allocation of the remaining places will be determined by lottery. The lottery will be supervised by at least 2 of:

- a nominee of the Board of Management who is not a member of the Board of Management
- Principal and/or Deputy Principal
- a nominee of the Parents Council.

Any application for admission to a year group that is submitted after the deadline of the 1st. May, and considered to meet the criteria outlined above where that year group is oversubscribed, will be added to the last place available on the waiting list already based on the date of application.

Transfer Students may find at the point when their transfer has been processed that some subjects are at capacity. Subject choices will be made from classes with the space to admit new students.

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

The Board of Coláiste Mhuire or any persons acting on its behalf will not 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

The following are the school's arrangements for parents of students and students (over 18) who have 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.

Parents of students and students (over 18) who wish to opt out of RE class should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss their options. Throughout this process the constitutional right of the parent/student (over 18 years) will be respected by the school.

The 1998 Education Act states that schools are required to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students (Section 9 (d)). At Coláiste Mhuire the allocated time on the timetable for Religious Education responds to this. Students who opt out of RE class are required to use this time to study material relating to their own religious tradition or belief, for example sacred texts. Students of no religious faith, who opt out of RE class, are required to study relevant literature or philosophical texts. A list of suggested texts can be provided by the school. In line with the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter, Coláiste Mhuire places great importance on the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his own personal journey which will be encouraged and respected. Students who opt out of RE class will not be offered extra tuition or study periods.

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 and must be received by the Board of Management not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with section 9 of this policy.

Such a review must be requested in writing to the Board of Management within 21 days from the date stated on the letter of refusal. On receipt of a request to review the decision by the Board will be communicated to the parent of the student, within 21 days from the date stated on the letter requesting a review of the decision.

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. This request must be received by the Board of Management not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the Board of Management not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with section 9 of this policy.

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. This request must be received by the Board of Management not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with section 9 of this policy).

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. This request must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with section 9 of this policy).

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.

Coláiste Mhuire

An Muileann gCearr



Admission Policy Amendment

In light of the introduction of an Autism Specific Special Class, this policy was revised to include Section 4 and the Board of Management adopted it on 28th November 2024, subject to NCSE approval.

Signed:

Maura Mahon

**Maura Mahon,
Chairperson of the Board of Management.**

Date:

28/11/2024