



ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy is reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and is subject to change.

INTRODUCTION

Colaiste Muire, Ennis is a recognised post-primary school for girls under the Education Act (1998) and it operates under the relevant legislation, under ministerial regulations and the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills (D.E.S). The Board of Management of Colaiste Muire, Ennis is setting out this admissions policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act (1998), Section 15 2(d), and the ethos of the school. The Board of Management trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management and the principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management in the administration of the admissions policy, will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

In this policy 'parent' will be taken to mean 'parent or guardian'.

MISSION STATEMENT

'Colaiste Muire is committed to developing a dynamic Christian school community which fosters spiritual and personal development. We strive for academic excellence and seek to nurture a sense of self worth, while having a particular concern for the needs of the academically and socially disadvantaged'.

1 General Information

1.1	School Name:	Colaiste Muire
	School Address:	College Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
	Phone Number:	065-6829497
	Fax Number:	065-6828605
	E-mail:	cmennis@eircom.net
	Website:	www.colaiSTEMuire.ie

- 1.2 The school is a single-sex voluntary Catholic school for girls under the (Patron) trusteeship of CEIST.
- 1.3 The school is managed by a Board of Management appointed to a three-year term of office. The Board of Management is appointed by the trustees and is composed of four members nominated by the trustees, two nominees of the parents and two teaching staff members nominated by the teaching staff.

The principal, while not a member, is secretary to the Board of Management and attends all meetings without voting rights.

The school is committed to the principles which underpin the Education Act (1998), the Education (Welfare) Act (2000) and the Equal Status Acts (2000-2008) and other relevant legislation.

- 1.4 In-School Management: Principal: Ms. Jean Pound
 Deputy Principal: Ms. Geraldine Lydon
- 1.5 The school has a Parents' Council and a Students' Council.
- 1.6 Opening Hours: 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
After 4.00 p.m. the school is open only to those students who are present at supervised activities e.g. study, sport, orchestra, or other extra-curricular activities.
- 1.7 Curriculum
We provide a broad-based education with a relevant and balanced curriculum subject to resource provision by the Department of Education and Skills. Classes are organised on the basis of mixed ability. Students study all of the following subjects in First Year: Religious Education; Irish; English; Mathematics; History; Geography; French or German; Science; Business Studies; Choir; Physical Education (P.E.); Civic, Social and Political Education (C.S.P.E.); Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) and one of the following, Art; Music; Home Economics; Technology; Technical Graphics; Second Language.

Every effort is made to facilitate this choice within the constraints of recognised class size limits, available resources and the limitations of the timetable. One of the chosen subjects must be a language, however exceptions may be made for students who are in receipt of resource teaching

or learning support, following full consultation with parents/guardians. Please see section four of this document.

In the Senior Cycle, all students must take seven Leaving Certificate subjects in addition to our programme of non-examination subjects. Exceptions are made only for students who qualify for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with the regulations of the D.E.S. A reduced curriculum may also be considered upon the recommendation of an educational psychologist, the school's learning support department or Guidance Counsellor following full consultation with parents/guardians. The school will not be in a position to provide alternate tuition in such circumstance unless such resources have been allocated by the D.E.S.

In Fourth Year, students study Religious Education; Information Technology; Physical Education (P.E.); Career Guidance; Irish, English and Mathematics; French or German; together with three other subjects from History; Geography; Biology; Chemistry; Physics; Art; Business; Accounting; Technology, Economics; Home Economics; Construction Studies; Japanese; Music. Choir is also optional. All these subjects are offered to the extent that resources allow.

The school follows the curricular programme for Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes as 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 school also offers the option of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Leaving Certificate Applied programme and the Transition Year programme, subject to demand in a given year and to the efficient use of available space and resources as funded by the D.E.S.

The school also offers a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities which may vary from year to year (see prospectus and school website).

1.8 Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling is an integral part of the experience of students in Colaiste Muire. The school employs one guidance counsellor who provides educational and guidance counselling to class groups and on a one-to-one basis, insofar as resources allow. In addition a part-time counsellor also provides personal counselling on a one-to-one basis. This will take place upon referral by the student herself, school personnel or parents/guardians.

As with all services of the school, guidance and counselling is provided in line with Department of Education and Skills' Child Protection Guidelines which have been adopted in full by the Board of Management. The Principal has been appointed as the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Principal as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person to operate their functions in accordance with the guidelines.

Communication:

Each student has a homework journal which may be used for two-way communication between home and school. Students keep a record of homework in their journal.

Information Evenings are held for third year parents/students regarding subject choices and Transition Year Programme.

Reports are issued for the Christmas, Easter and Summer terms. Summer reports are not issued for students in Junior and Leaving Certificate years.

A parent/teacher meeting is held once a year for each year group. Parents may also make appointments to meet with the relevant personnel (e.g. subject teacher, class tutor, Year Head etc.) as necessary.

1.10 Funding

The school depends on grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills and it operates within the regulations (circulars) laid down from time to time by the D.E.S. At all times, the implementation of the school plan and school policies must have regard to the resources and funding available.

The school seeks extra funding in the form of a voluntary contribution from parents on an annual basis in order to supplement D.E.S. funding. These contributions are used to provide resources and facilities for the education of the students covering expenses directly related to Technology, Science, Locker Fee, Photocopying, art materials, insurance etc. In addition, the school also engages in fundraising activities to supplement D.E.S. funding. This fundraising often arises from the activities of the Parents' Association and from time to time, the Board of Management will set up a sub-committee specifically for this purpose.

1.11 Within the context and parameters of the D.E.S. regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron, as set out in the Education Act 1998, the Religious and Educational Ethos of the school and the funding and resources available from the D.E.S. the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs;
- Equality of access and participation in the school;
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment in the context of the criteria laid down by the Board of Management;
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

2. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- 2.1 The Board of Management shall determine annually the number of student places available for admission for the following school year. The determining factors in this decision would include:

- (a) Department of Education and Skills provision of staff;
- (b) Department of Education and Skills provision of resources to meet the needs of students with special needs.
- (c) Department of Education and Skills provision of physical space in relation to classroom accommodation and health and safety of students.

- 2.2 Applications must be made to the Principal, Colaiste Muire, College Road, Ennis, Co. Clare on the official school application form for the year of entry.

The inclusion of false information in the application will lead to the withdrawal of an offer of a place at any time.

The opening date for receipt of applications is 5th January 2016. The closing date is the 22nd January 2016. No application received after the 22nd January 2016 howsoever arising will be considered. Accordingly, applications received by post or otherwise prior to that date, and submitted on the official application form for the year of entry, will be deemed to have been received on the 5th January.

- 2.3 The Board of Management will notify the general public of the availability of this policy by submitting a notice for publication in (1) parish newsletters

within the catchment area (see section 3.2), (2) the local newspaper and (3) the school website (www.colaistemuire.ie) Copies of the policy and application forms will also be distributed to primary schools within the catchment area.

- 2.4 For the purpose of Section 19 of the Education Welfare Act (see appendix) the date of the provision of relevant information by the parents is deemed to be the 22nd January. Parents will therefore be notified in writing of the decision to offer or not to offer a place.

If a place is being offered, the letter of notification will require a written confirmation if the place is being taken up. This written confirmation must be received by the school by 4 p.m. on 5th February 2016. Should no such confirmation be received by this time, the place will be forfeited and offered to the next girl on the waiting list.

It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to contact the school office if they change address or if they have not received a letter from the school by the 4th February 2016.

- 2.5 The following information is required from parents prior to enrolment:

- Daughter's name, age, date of birth, P.P.S.N. (Personal Public Service Number), address and birth certificate.
- Parents' or guardians' names, addresses, telephone numbers (home, mobile and emergency contact number and email).
- Details of relevant medical conditions.
- Details of disabilities or any special educational needs of student.
- Religious denomination.
- Previous and current schools attended by the student.
- Reasons for transfer of student, if applicable, together with information and records from previous (present) school.
- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding student custody, access arrangements and court orders pertaining to the student.
- Other information that may be required by the school or the Department of Education and Skills and as specified in the application form for the given year.
- Non refundable booking deposit €25.

3. ALLOCATION OF PLACES

- **the number of places available for First Years in 2016/17 is 150.**

3.1 Decisions made in relation to allocation of places are in accordance with:

- (a) Criteria laid by the Board of Management.
- (b) Department of Education and Skills rules; secondary students must be aged 12 on 1st January in the calendar year following the student's entry into First Year (Birth Certificate is required).
- (c) Prior to registration and admission to the school, the parent(s) shall be required, as a condition of such registration and admission, to confirm in writing that they have read:
 - (i) The school's mission statement and that it is acceptable to them;
 - (ii) The school's code of behaviour and that they will make all reasonable effort to ensure that their daughter will comply with the code. Parents are asked to sign a statement affirming their support of this code on an annual basis.

3.2 **Criteria in order of priority** for allocation of places

(These will apply if application received prior to the closing date exceed the number of available places as determined by the Board of Management).

1. Sisters of present/past students (provided application is in by due date).
2. Daughters of eligible staff of the school (provided application is in by due date). (Staff members will be deemed to be eligible if they are in the employment of the Board of Management on a non-casual basis, during normal school hours, for at least six months, and are reasonably expected to be still employed by the Board of Management at the time their daughter commences in Colaiste Muire.
3. Daughters of past students (provided application is in by due date).
4. Girls currently (at the time of application) enrolled in sixth class in a primary school within the catchment area of the County of Clare (provided application is in by due date).

For the purpose of this admissions policy the catchment area is deemed to be the County of Clare.

Procedure that will apply when the number of applicants from within the catchment area exceeds the number of remaining available places.

In the event that the number of applications from girls attending schools within the above-defined catchment area exceeds the number of remaining available places, these places will be allocated on the basis of a lottery confined to applications from girls attending primary schools within the above-defined catchment area. This lottery will be supervised by two observers, external to the school. In this circumstance, girls (from within the catchment area) who are not allocated a place at this stage, will be placed on a numbered waiting list in the order in which they were drawn in the lottery. Subsequent places on the waiting list will be filled in the order in which applicants are drawn in a lottery of all remaining valid applicants. Parents shall be informed of their daughter's place on the waiting list.

Procedure that will apply when the number of applicants from within the catchment area is less than the number of remaining available places:

In the event that places remain having allocated places to girls attending schools within the catchment area, all other applications received prior to the closing date will be allocated places on the basis of a lottery, supervised by two observers, external to the school. Applicants who do not receive a place at this stage will be placed on a numbered waiting list in the order in which they were drawn in the lottery. Parents shall be informed of their daughter's place on the waiting list.

In all cases, when a lottery is being conducted, applications received on behalf of twins, triplets or sisters from the same family unit will be treated as one applicant. This will neither increase nor reduce the chances of any applicant being offered a place.

- 3.3 Any application deemed to be in accordance with this policy, but received subsequent to the closing date and before the commencement of the academic year, will be allocated a place if available or will be added to the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis

4. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Colaiste Muire welcomes students with special needs and will use the financial and human resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost so that these students are free to participate in the life in the school in so far as it is reasonably practicable.

While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with particular needs is dependent on the supply or resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills.

Colaiste Muire welcomes applications from students with special educational 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 concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.

The Board of Management must be made aware of any special needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where possible.

Parents are requested to outline the details of a child's special educational needs on the application form.

The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met.

Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled.

The Principal may request a meeting with the parents of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs.

The parent of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.

N.B. It may take some time for the Department of Education and Skills to process such applications. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making an application.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent/guardian has provided all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof. (Education Welfare Act – Section 19 (3))

The Board of Management will therefore:

- Request that the school Principal meet the parents/guardians to discuss the student's needs and the school's capability to meet those needs.
- Request a copy of the student's medical/psychological report/individual educational report if available
and/or
- Request immediate assessment.
- Apply, prior to enrolment, to the D.E.S. for the resources necessary to meet the needs of the student e.g. a special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, learning support, transport etc.

5 ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM OTHER SECOND-LEVEL SCHOOLS

5.1 The following information is required from parents prior to enrolment:

- Student's name, age, date of birth, P.P.S.N. (Personal Public Service Number), address and birth certificate.
- Parents' or guardians' names, addresses, telephone numbers (home, mobile and emergency).
- Details of relevant medical conditions.
- Details of disabilities or any special educational needs of student.
- Religious denomination.
- Previous schools attended by the student.
- Reasons for transfer of student together with information and records from previous/present school e.g. reports, references, curricular needs, subject choice.
- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding student custody, access arrangements and court orders pertaining to the student.
- Other information that may be required by the school or the Department of Education and Skills and as specified in the application form for the given year.

5.2 In the event that the Board of Management is satisfied, based on the reports received, that there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant will comply with the schools' code of behaviour and the school's policy in relation to curriculum, the following criteria will also apply:

1. Space in a particular year. (In the case of a student wishing to enrol in the school at the start of an academic year, the Board of Management will have to establish the number of places in the given year having ensured

that all existing students of the school can be catered for within each year group).

2. The ability of the school to meet the needs of the student.
3. Waiting lists of successful candidates will be formed on a first-come, first-served basis (based on the date of receipt of a valid application).

5.3 Parents will be informed of the school's expectations regarding attendance and registration. Parents will also be informed of the date by which the student is expected to attend school to secure her place. Should the student not attend school by this time, and an acceptable reason has not been provided by her parents, the school will no longer hold the place which may then be allocated to another applicant.

6 THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ENROLMENT

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:

1. The student has special needs such that, even with the additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or school property.

7. APPEALS

Parents/Guardians whose daughter has not been allocated a place in Colaiste Muire may appeal this decision in the first instance to the Board of Management and subsequently, if necessary, to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998).

Appeals to the Board of Management must be made within 21 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians.

The appeals to the Department of Education and Skills must be made within 42 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. The appeals application form can be downloaded from the website www.education.ie or obtained from the school office.

The final decision with regard to the enrolment of a girl in Colaiste Muire and with regard to all matters covered in this Admissions Policy, lies with the Board of Management. The Board of Management will review this policy periodically.

APPENDIX

Education Welfare Act – Section 19

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 refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognised school concerned published under section 15 (2) (d) of the Act of 1998.
2. The parent of a child who has made an application referred to in subsection (1) shall provide the recognised school concerned such information as may be prescribed by the Minister.
3. As soon as practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent has provided, in accordance with subsection (2), such information as may be prescribed by the Minister thereunder, the Board of Management of the school concerned shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof.

Equal Status Act – Section 7 (3) (C)

“An educational establishment does not discriminate where the establishment is a school providing primary or post-primary education and the objective of the school is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values, it admits persons of a particular religious denomination in preference to others or it refuses to admit a person who is not of that denomination and, in the case of a refusal, it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school”.

Date ratified: _____
December 2015

Signed: _____
Mr. Michael Byrne,
Chairperson, Board of Management.