

Coláiste Chiaráin – Admission Policy



Celbridge Road, Leixlip, Co Kildare

Roll number: 91371B

**School Patrons: Presentation Sisters (CEIST), Archbishop of Dublin,
Kildare/Wicklow Education Training Board**

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 Coláiste Chiaráin 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 29th August 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 Chiaráin 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 - Leixlip Community School is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Presentation Sisters (CEIST) and Kildare & Wicklow ETB.

Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened in September 1980 as a green field school to serve the community of Leixlip. The values of Kildare Wicklow ETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of Archbishop of Dublin and the Presentation Sisters (CEIST) and are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Coláiste Chiaráin - Leixlip Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach her/his full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) constructed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, our school Coláiste Chiaráin - Leixlip Community School provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Our school, Coláiste Chiaráin - Leixlip Community School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In Coláiste Chiaráin - Leixlip Community School, we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others and our environment.

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 which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with Autism 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.

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
- c) In the opinion of the Board of Management in line with Health and Safety legislation, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or school property.

The special class attached to Coláiste Chiaráin provides an education exclusively for students with Autism and whose cognitive functioning has been established to be in the moderate to average range 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.

- Parents/Guardians are asked to indicate that they are applying for a place in the Special Class for students with Autism) on the application form along with the Criteria A – E (as detailed above) which applies.
- When making an application to the AS class, it is understood and accepted that the parent/applicant understands that they are applying for a special designated class **only. This is not an application for a mainstream place.**
- An application to our AS class is an application for this specific educational setting only.
- Whilst registered in the AS class it is the school's educational approach to integrate students into mainstream classes where appropriate.
- Students in the AS class will participate in all school activities.
- Coláiste Chiaráin's AS class is not a high dependency unit/ classes/ setting and students will not be in a restricted environment.
- Students will be registered with the relevant year group, 1st – 6th year.
- Students registered in the AS class subject to fulfilling the application criteria may apply for the optional Transition Year Programme.
- The class has a maximum of **six students** for all years. This is the total number of students in the class.
- **The school will not exceed this number.**
- Any form of communication i.e., phone call, conversation with members of the Resource Department, discussion with Special Education Needs Officer (SENO), meeting with any members of staff, visit to the school, or recommendation from any external agency or person does not equate to “a reasonable expectation” that a place in our AS class will be offered to an applicant. Such scenarios do not equate to an application to the school.

Required Criteria for Consideration for Application for our AS Class

- The school has referred to the *NCSE “Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes for Boards of Management and Principals of Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2016. Page 3”* when considering applications for the ASD class.
- Only those students with a diagnosis of Autism, whose cognitive functioning has been established to be in the moderate to average range

AND

who has a formal recommendation from an educational psychologist i.e National Educational Psychological services (NEPS) or relevant recognised psychological services for a post-primary special class.

will be considered.

- Applicants to the AS class must have a definitive diagnosis of autism whose cognitive functioning has been established in the moderate to average range at the time of their application.
- Applicants to the AS class must have a definitive formal recommendation for a post-primary special class setting at the time of their application.
- Coláiste Chiaráin will not accept formal educational psychological assessments and reports which recommend multiple educational settings for a student with a diagnosis of Autism.
- The school will only consider applications for the AS class that includes a clear and definitive statement advising / recommending / supporting a special class setting at post-primary level.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse the consideration of an application for the AS class without this formal report.
- Coláiste Chiaráin requests that such reports with a definitive and formal recommendation for a specialized post-primary AS class must have been conducted within the last two years.
- The applicant will be contacted by the school following their application and will be requested to send in the required reports/assessments to support/verify the application.
 - This request is in keeping with the school's obligation to adhere to the NCSE guidelines on Special classes (*Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes for Boards of Management and Principals of Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2016*).
- By applying for a place in the AS class parents & guardians authorise Coláiste Chiaráin to contact the stated present primary school in advance of any consideration of the application to confirm and assess the information in the submitted educational/psychological reports from the parents/guardians presented to the school following their application. This is in keeping with the NCSE "*Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes for Boards of Management and Principals of Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2016. Page 4*".

- The school must verify with the NCSE for its Department of Education allocation and resources that students who may be considered for application in this class are eligible for registration in the class hence the request for this information on application.
- Coláiste Chiaráin cannot consider applications to the AS class who do not have a formal and definitive recommendation for a post primary special class.
- This recommendation must have been made within the last two years.
- Failure to fulfill the requirements or present evidence of a formal recommendation for a post-primary special class and a formal diagnosis of autism will result in the refusal of an application.
- Refusal of an application means refusal to consider an application.
- Refusal to consider an application will result in a refusal to enrol.
- Because of the particular requirements in the running of the AS class, and as a result of the lack of available places in the North Kildare and Lucan area, in the event of oversubscription for available places from any criteria category for our AS class, a lottery will be conducted under the supervision of an Independent Assessor to draw up a waiting list for our AS class. In attendance at this lottery will be the Principal or Deputy Principal(s), a member of the Board of Management and a representative from the Parents Association.
- As a place in our AS class becomes available the school will offer this place to the student on the waiting list.
- **This waiting list is for the AS class only.**
- The available places will be offered and allocated in the waiting list order starting with Criteria A, B, C, D, E and so on until all available places have been allocated.
- Late applications (F) from any criteria category will be processed at the end of this process.

Contact with DES & NCSE

- In relation to registration of students with Special Education Needs contact may be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special need resources to which the student may be entitled.
- The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met.

- In consultation with parents/guardians Coláiste Chiaráin may request the Department of Education and Skills to provide necessary resources e.g. special needs assistant, specialized equipment or furniture, transport etc.
- It is noted that it may take some time for the Department of Education and Skills to process such applications. This may impact on the commencement of attendance of a student to the school.

Circular 14/2017

- Coláiste Chiaráin acknowledges the aims and objectives of Circular 14/2017.
- In accordance with Circular 14/2017, the management and administration of the DES resources is at the discretion of the Board of Management. Circular 14/2017 does not supersede the Board's overall responsibility to manage the school.
- Coláiste Chiaráin will not exceed the sanctioned number of places in the AS class.
- It is the school's position that the application of Circular 14/2017 does not equate to using the DES SEN (General allocation model) annual allocation for the provision of the supports and resources equivalent to that of a specialized setting such as a designated AS class or other DES recognized special classes.

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:

Selection Criteria:

1. Admission will be granted to students attending any of the following Primary Schools Scoil Mhuire NS, Scoil Bhríde NS, Scoil Eoin Phoill NS, Scoil Cearbhaill Uí Dhálaigh NS.
2. Students who have or had a brother or sister in the school.
3. Children from Leixlip (West of the River Rye).
4. Members of families of Staff at Coláiste Chiaráin
5. Children of parents/guardian who attended Coláiste Chiaráin.
6. Students other than those listed above.

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:

Order of priority will be decided by lottery supervised by a person nominated by the Board of Management but who is not a member of the Board of Management.

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 other than in relation to admission to the special class for children with ASD insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of ASD 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 other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or parents/guardians of a student having attended the school as described in the selection criteria above.

In relation to parents/guardians having attended, the school will 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.
This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and 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 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 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 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 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.

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

How to Apply:

Application Forms are available from the school office on request. A copy of this Admissions Policy will be issued with each application form.

Applicants should complete the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should sign the application form and date it.

Enrolment Criteria:

All students entering the school must supply a Birth Certificate or other appropriate identification as determined by the school.

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 6](#) 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
- c) In the opinion of the Board of Management in line with Health and Safety legislation, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or school property.
- d) In a case where a student has been excluded from another post primary school, an application for enrolment will not be considered until all pastoral and disciplinary

avenues have been explored with that school up to and including a section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998.

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

The board of Coláiste Chiaráin 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

Coláiste Chiaráin - Leixlip Community School offers religious education in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, religious education supports the 'multi denominational' aspect of our school's ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers. In this context it is important to understand the distinction between '*religious education*' and '*religious instruction*':

- Religious education is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.
- Religious instruction is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.

Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise.

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.