

COOLE NATIONAL SCHOOL



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ADMISSION POLICY

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 [date]. 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 Coole National School 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

Coole National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath.

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic primary 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 for the pupils 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 Coole National School 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.

Coole National School currently has seven teachers. This includes six mainstream class teachers and one full time special educational needs teacher. The ancillary staff includes a secretary, caretaker and a special needs assistant.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria used to determine admission into Junior Infants and into other classes in our school. While recognising the right of parents/guardians to enrol their child in a school of their choice, the BoM reserves the right to determine maximum school and class size, in order to ensure the safety of all pupils and to provide for the educational needs of existing pupils. This policy sets out the priority order, which will apply, where the number of applications for admission exceeds the number of available places. In doing so, the BoM has regard to available resources, directions from the Patron; Circulars from the Department of Education & Skills; Pupil Teacher Ratio, school and class sizes etc.

The following is a list of factors taken into consideration by the BoM in devising its admission policy:

- Overall school capacity: The school has accommodation for 6 mainstream classrooms. Consequently, the maximum number of pupils that may be enrolled is capped at 162 pupils. An application for admission into a mainstream class, will not be accepted where the existing class, in respect of which the application is made, has 27 or more pupils.
- Availability of space in classrooms, play areas and overall site size.
- Health and Safety requirements, including school site, space and traffic restrictions.

The arrangement of pupils on an annual basis into classes and the numbers in each class setting, for teaching and learning purposes, remains the prerogative of the Principal, subject to BoM approval.

3. Admissions Statement

Coole National School 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.

Additional Information

Coole National School 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 Roman Catholic denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Admission of Students

The school shall admit each student seeking admission except where:

- a) the school is oversubscribed
- 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/her and that s/he shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- c) Coole National School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of that denomination, where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

5. Oversubscription

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the selection criteria (see below Criteria used to prioritise applicants for Junior Infants) in the order listed to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's Annual Admission Notice.

Admission of Students to Junior Infants

The following conditions must be met for application for admission into Junior Infants:

- A fully completed enrolment application form, duly signed and dated, must be returned not later than the closing date.
- The official application form must be used. This is available for download from the school's website at www.coolens.ie and/or in hard copy on request, from the school.
- A separate form must be used in respect of each child's application.
- The following documentation must accompany a fully completed, signed & dated application form, which must be submitted no later than the closing date in order for the application to be considered a "complete application":

Copy of the applicant's birth certificate

Proof of address in the form of a utility bill in the name of one of the Parents, which must be dated no later than three months prior to the closing date.

If the application for admission is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined in this policy and the Annual Admission Notice, the pupil shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.

Criteria used to prioritise applicants for Junior Infants

Where applications exceed the number of available places in Junior Infants, the available places will be allocated in the following order:

1. Siblings of existing pupils (It is to be noted that reference to siblings is to be taken as reference to step or half siblings and fostered children residing at the same address.)
2. Applicants from within the Roman Catholic Parish boundary of Summerhill/Coole, Dangan, Summerhill, Co. Meath.
3. Other applicants

Students tied for places

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place, the following arrangements will apply:

1. Applicants' ages will determine the outcome i.e. places will be offered beginning with the oldest eligible applicant in the oversubscribed category and proceeding in descending order of age from oldest to youngest, until all available places have been filled.
2. If this process fails to offer a solution and two or more applicants remain tied for a place (i.e. in the case of multiple births tied for the last remaining place), the name/s will be drawn by lot.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Admission to Schools Act, 2018, 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
- b) Payment of fees or contributions 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 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 as outlined in the selection criteria at 5.2)
- g) The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school, subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the Annual Admission Notice.

7. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Coole National School will be based on the following:

- The 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 the Annual Admission Notice

Selection criteria not included in the school's admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in the school.

8. 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).

9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Coole National School, parents/guardians must indicate —

- i. whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- ii. whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

10. 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 Coole National School 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 9 above.

11. 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.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom —

- i. an application for admission to the school has been received,
- ii. an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- iii. an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- i. the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- ii. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- iii. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- iv. a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. 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 Coole National School 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 Coole National School 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.

Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

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.

13. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

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

The following criteria apply when an application for enrolment into any mainstream class (including Junior Infants after the 1st October) prior to or during the academic year is under consideration:

- i. That optimum arrangements of existing pupils for teaching and learning purposes are maintained
- ii. That a place exists in the relevant class/es, taking all relevant circumstances into account, e.g. needs of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, integration of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, cap on class sizes as provided for in this policy, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations etc.
- iii. Coole National School is limited to its current accommodation of 6 mainstream classrooms. Consequently, the maximum number of pupils that may be enrolled is capped at 162 pupils in the mainstream classes. An application for admission into a mainstream class, will not be accepted where the existing class, in respect of which the application is made, has 27 or more pupils.

Pupils will be enrolled in age appropriate class/es once the following criteria have been met:

- The official application form, which is available for download from the school's website at www.coolens.ie and/or in hard copy on request from the school, must be fully completed, dated and signed by the parents/guardians
- The following documentation must accompany a fully completed, signed & dated application form:

Copy of the applicant's **birth certificate**

Proof of address in the form of a **utility bill** in the name of one of the Parents, which must be dated no later than **three months** prior to the closing date.

- A separate form must be completed for each child
- The BoM is not obliged to consider applications which are incomplete and/or not signed and /or not dated and/or do not include the required documentation.
- The availability of a place, in a specific class, will be determined in the context of the overall number of pupils which the school can accommodate at the time the application is made and in addition taking into consideration other relevant circumstances e.g. needs

of the existing pupils, presence of pupils with special educational needs, integration of pupils with special educational needs, presence of pupils with behavioural needs, cap on class sizes as provided for in this policy, space in classrooms, health and safety considerations etc.

- Submitting inaccurate information on an application form or in accompanying documentation will render the application void ab initio. Where a place has been offered, this will result in the offer of the place being withdrawn and it being reallocated. In the case of placement on a waiting list, it will result in removal from the waiting list
- Written notification of the decision regarding the application will be issued to parents/guardians within 21 calendar days of receipt of the fully completed, signed and dated application form.

Parents/guardians of applicants who have been offered a place must inform the school by completing and returning an enrolment acceptance form within 7 calendar days. Failure to do so will result in the place being forfeited and the place being reallocated.

If the application for enrolment is successful and the place has been accepted as outlined above, the pupil shall be enrolled as per his/her name on his/her official birth certificate.

Applicants who are not successful in securing a place for classes, other than Junior Infants up to the 30th September, will be placed on a separate waiting list.

Any such waiting list will be prioritised in the following order:

1. Siblings of existing pupils (It is to be noted that reference to siblings is to be taken as reference to step or half siblings and fostered children residing at the same address.)
2. Applicants from within the Roman Catholic Parish boundary of Summerhill/Coole, Dangan, Summerhill, Co. Meath
3. Other applicants

In the event of any of the above categories being oversubscribed, the date and time of receipt of a completed application will determine the order of priority within that particular category.

A place on a waiting list expires at the end of the academic year for which the application was made.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year will be made to those students, in the order of priority in which they have been placed on the waiting list and in the context of the cap on overall numbers and the cap on numbers in the particular class for which application is being made.

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

The Board of Coole National School 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.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

17. Reviews/appeals

Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of 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 10 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.