

HOLY ROSARY COLLEGE MOUNTBELLEW

ADMISSION AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

This policy replaces all previous policy documents and will be reviewed prior to next school year enrolment application closing date.

This policy will take effect from the date signed by the BOM for the academic year 2017/18 and the admissions procedure shall operate for 2018/19 academic year.

SECTION A

MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Rosary, Mountbellew is a Voluntary Catholic Co-Educational Secondary School where Students, Staff, Management, Parents and the local Community, together aim to provide a Holistic Education, in a safe and caring environment, where the dignity and uniqueness of every individual is valued and respected. We aim to foster, in co-operation with parents, a caring school community in which we strive for the spiritual, moral, aesthetic, intellectual, physical and emotional development of the individual.

HRC does not discriminate against its students on grounds of sex, religion, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, membership of any minority or other group or organisation or on any grounds whatsoever.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

HRC is a Christian Catholic community of parents, pupils, teachers, and management.

Education in today's world is challenging and demanding. It requires dedication and commitment from all parties involved. It requires a willingness to be open to change, not simply for the sake of change but rather to meet the changing needs of our times. This demands that we, the formal educators continually assess the society and environment in which our children and we live. It demands that we be aware of the various pressures that aim to determine our school curriculum. Our response must be creative and relevant to the needs of our time.

SECTION B

OPERATING CONTEXT

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to enrolments
- Respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society

These principles are supported within:

- The context and parameters of the Department of Education & Skills (DES) regulations and programmes and current legislation.
- The rights of the Trustees as set out in the Education Act
- The funding and resources available.

SCHOOL RESOURCES

- The financial and teaching resources of the school are provided in the main by the DES Grants and teacher allocations are supplemented by parents' voluntary contributions and by fundraising.
- The availability of school programmes and subjects and the implementation of the school plan and school policy must have due regard to the funding available.
- The school operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the DES.
- The school follows the Curricular Programmes and the Education Policy prescribed by the DES, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Acts.

SECTION C

SCHOOL DETAILS

Holy Rosary College (HRC), is a Voluntary Catholic Co-Ed Secondary School under the Trusteeship of CEIST, "Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust". It is a non fee-paying grant aided co-educational school and is a "recognised school" pursuant to the educational legislation, located in the town of Mountbellew, in the County of Galway.

Board of Management:

The conduct, management and financial administration of the school is under the control of the Board of Management. The Board consists of eight Members.

Four nominees of CEIST

- By election of parents / legal guardians of children currently in the school: two members
- By election of the full time permanent teachers on the staff: two members.

Principal / Deputy Principal

Subject to such direction or directions as may be given from time to time by the Board, the organisation management and discipline of the school, including the assignment of duties to members of the teaching and non-teaching staff shall be controlled by the Principal who shall be assisted in this task by the Deputy Principal in accordance with the terms of his /her job description.

Unless expressly stated to the contrary, where the Principal gives a direction or signs her name to any such direction, policy or other document or gives any verbal or other instruction concerning school business, it is to be taken that she does so in her capacity as Principal and as such is acting on behalf of the school Board of Management and with their full authority.

Furthermore where the situation requires, the Principal retains the discretion to digress from this policy but only if that situation in the view of the principal requires it, as in issues not provided for pertaining to Health and Safety of the school community as a whole. Preservation of life and health of individuals takes precedence over all else.

Organisation:

The parents of the students have established a Parents' Association, which endeavours to promote the interests of the students of the school in co-operation with the Principal. Each year the students nominate members to a Student Council, which also endeavours to promote the interest of the school.

Teaching Resources and Curriculum:

The number of teachers in the school is determined by the overall staff allocation from the **DES (Appendix 2 contains a complete Staff Listing)** and the guidelines set down by the Education Legislation incorporating the Health and Safety Legislation provisions.

The number of students in the school is determined by the guidelines set out in the Admissions Procedures.

The following programmes are available:

- Junior Certificate
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Special Needs Students are catered for with Resource teaching hours throughout the school where possible.

Access to programmes may depend on a variety of factors including e.g. resources available from the DES, limits on class and programme sizes, availability of places, suitability for each programme and basic entry requirements.

Medical

Medical assistance is available on the school premises as several of the staff are trained first-aiders. **All medical conditions/allergies or non-intellectual disabilities**, of which parents are aware, **must** be disclosed on application for admission or not later than the acceptance of a place. Failure to do so is a breach of School policy, which could lead to place being allocated to another applicant. More importantly it could leave the school unprepared for a future medical emergency, which could affect the health and safety and welfare of your child. School expressly deny liability in such cases for any failure on its part to provide medical aid .

Photography

This school has a practice to photograph each first year child individually for sporting academic or other achievements, school and family records. Unless parents request otherwise in writing at the beginning of the school year, this practice will continue. This list is not exhaustive.

CCTV

Due to the large numbers in our school and the limited number of staff available for supervision purposes it is essential for the safe running of the school to have closed circuit tv cameras in operation.

Due also to the proximity of the main road and easy access of non school related persons it is also necessary to protect the health and safety of the school community for these cameras to be in operation, they are also a huge assistance in the deterring and detection of bullying and the prevention of vandalism. The cctv footage will only be used for these purposes and will only be retained for as long as is necessary for the incidences to be processed. No unauthorised persons will have access to the video, and rooms containing monitors will not be viewable by the general school population.

Extra Curricular Activities

The School provide an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. The offer of any or all of the activities is dependent on the availability of resources. The level of resources may be supplemented by fund-raising activities.

SECTION D

ADMISSION PROCECURES

(A) FIRST YEAR APPLICANTS

IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THE PROCEDURES AS SET OUT BELOW ARE FOLLOWED BY APPLICANTS. PLACES ARE LIMITED, SO FAILING TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN A REFUSAL.

Health and Safety Guidelines determine the overall capacity of the school and therefore the class sizes will vary accordingly as well as in accordance with DES guidelines from time to time.

Note. When calculating class size numbers, special needs assistants learning support personnel, etc will be included in calculating the requisite class number.

The Board reserves the right to amend these limits from time to time in light of experience and changing circumstances. All applications will be considered in the light of these limits on numbers. With the recent introduction of some sections of the Education of Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 and the Disability Act of 2005, parents will be required to give written permission to the school to inquire of the feeder national school into ANY special educational needs that may be required for their child before a place can be offered to that child in our school. This is to enable the school and the department to budget for the coming school year and to see if they can facilitate the proposed students' needs.(e.g. resource, learning support etc)

- 1. Applications for places in First Year** must be submitted on the official school application form. Applications received imply acknowledgment that the school policy has been read and the school ethos has been understood and the applicant is undertaking to abide by and fully participate in all school programmes. It is a matter for applicants or Parents/guardians on their behalf to familiarise themselves with the school policies before applying. Application to the school implies a commitment to at least a five year program, subject to acceptable behaviour.
- 2. The completed application form (See Appendix 3).** Must be returned **before the closing date expires.**
- 3. Closing dates may vary from year to year and will be communicated to all via the usual channels.**

4. Application to the school implies permission for the school to contact the feeder school regarding any educational needs pertaining to all students.
5. Children will normally be enrolled on application unless to do so would be in conflict with the characteristic spirit of the school as outlined in this Section of this policy.
6. All Applications are subject to the enrolment criteria,(3. below.)

2. **An Enrolment Day/Evening** is held every year for prospective first year students and their parents and that date will be advertised via the usual channels.

The following information will be provided on that occasion;

Procedure for enrolment application.

Closing dates for receipt of completed applications.

Date for decision on application.

It is envisaged that future applications will be available to be made online ,where possible.

School cannot be responsible for applications lost in the post, so it will be the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to ensure application is received by the school in time.

LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

3. On receipt of properly presented application form, **Places will be allocated** according to the following **Enrolment criteria:**

- Brothers/Sisters of present students.
- Pupils of the traditional feeder National Schools in the catchment area.
- Children of school staff.
- Brothers and sisters of past pupils
- Children of past pupils
- Lottery

In the event that the number of students wishing to enrol in the school is greater than the number of places available, those applicants will be put on a “Waiting List” and the Board of Management will apply the above criteria for their admission to the school. Thereafter, places will be allocated, all other things being equal, an Independent observer will be present while a Lottery style draw takes place for the awarding of such places.

All applicants must be aged 12yrs + , on the 1st January in the calendar year following the student’s entry to first year (a Birth Certificate will be required for this purpose).

The Board of Management reserves the right to exercise its discretion in application of the criteria and will at all times adhere to the guiding ethos of the school’s education philosophy. Application to the school implies full acceptance of the Schools Code of Behaviour & Discipline Policy and/or any other of the schools policies, which the school retains the discretion to proffer from time to time as deemed necessary

Parents / Guardians when they accept their place, indicate their acceptance that,

- (a) They are aware of and accept the characteristic spirit of the school as stated in this Admissions and Participation Policy.
- (b) They are, confirming in writing, that this admissions Policy, the School Code of Behaviour and Discipline – including the Suspension and Expulsion policy – is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with all of the above, by their child.

A assessment test may be held for those students who have accepted a place in the school. The purpose of this test is to determine appropriate class placement /or students educational needs if any.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- The school welcomes students with Special Needs insofar as it has the resources to cater for them.
- **The school will require a letter of consent from the parent/guardian of any student with special needs, granting them permission to make all the necessary inquiries regarding any special educational needs that a student might require, such letter to accompany the initial application. For your convenience, if necessary the school will provide you with such a letter.**
- Parents should be aware of the new legislation (2004 and 2005 Acts) guidelines regarding catchment area and enrolment with regard to students with special needs.
- The Board of Management may require a statement of needs to be supplied by a competent person to enable it to determine whether the school has in fact the necessary resources and / or facilities to cater for an individual special needs student.
- If the Board of Management is of the view that the school does not have the necessary resources / facilities immediate application will be made to the National Council for Special Education /D.E.S. requesting their provision as soon as possible.
- The Board of Management may defer the enrolment of any pupil with special needs pending receipt of the aforementioned statement, or on receipt of the statement, pending the provision of the necessary resources / facilities by the D.E.S. or other agencies.
- Applications in respect of pupils with special needs should be accompanied by the relevant reports i.e. medical, psychological etc and where applicable by a copy of any Individual Educational Programme.

C STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

(i) Students may transfer to the school subject to the following conditions:

- That the admission of any such student shall not be in conflict with the characteristic spirit of the school as outlined in Section A of the policy. In the case of a student over eighteen, the student will be asked to sign a statement to the effect that she/he is aware of and accepts the characteristic spirit of the school as stated in this Admission and Participation Policy. Parents /Guardians will sign this statement for all other students.
- That, taking account of the preferred limits to individual class sizes and the school's application policy there is a suitable place available.

That the application is made on the appropriate application form and is accompanied by all the necessary documentation.

- That the parents / guardians of the pupil, students over 18 years of age, having been given a copy of the School Code of Behaviour and Discipline, have confirmed in writing that the Code of Behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance by the pupil and/or by themselves.
- Applicants who have attended a previous second-level school will be required to submit an academic report outlining their progress and their attendance at the school and noting any special educational needs. Applicants will also be required to submit a reference from their previous school(s) under a list of headings specified by this school and the school completing the reference will be asked to make full disclosure of all relevant matters.
- The behaviour of a student in their previous school may be an important consideration. The Board of Management reserves the right in exceptional circumstances to refuse admission or alternatively to attach conditions to the admission of a student. Such circumstances might include, but not limited to where the enrolment of a student may pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of staff or students or to school property based on that applicant's previous bad behaviour record or any other good reason at the discretion of the board. The Board also reserves the right to postpone the enrolment of any applicant pending the furnishing of any relevant information required by the Board to assist it in arriving at any such decision. Such information might include but not limited to for example information regarding their progress to date, a comprehensive reference from their previous school and /or psychological report(s) as appropriate.

(ii) Students with Special Needs:

The same procedures as obtaining for 1st Year Applicants with special needs will apply to students with special needs wishing to transfer from other schools.

D Procedure for application for Transition Year Programme:

Where the necessary resources are available and the College has decided to put the programme on in a particular year, a specific TY programme will be offered each year. The content of that programme is subject to change.

All students wishing to follow the Transition Year Programme must complete an application form which is available from the school Principal. Because of the limited nature of resources it may not be possible to accept all students that apply for Transition Year. In such circumstances the following limits and criteria will apply:

- Students will have to have displayed reasonable willingness and capability to follow programmes that allow varying levels of supervision and will have to have a proven record of cooperation with the school, the code of behaviour and school policies. An in-school team of personnel comprising the TY coordinator and Programme Coordinator and other staff member may interview students.

E Procedure for application for the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme is offered to all students who have the required subject combinations.

F Procedure for Application to Repeat the Leaving Certificate

Students who wish to repeat the Leaving Certificate must apply in writing to the school. The following criteria will apply:

- The school must be in a position to accommodate the student as regards subjects and other resources
- Acceptance by the student and his/her parents/guardians of the school's Code of Behaviour & School Regulations
- Students from another school must present the results of their Leaving Certificate and attendance records from the Principal of their last school
- Consideration may be given to a student's past disciplinary record.

GENERAL

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances may include for example, where the enrolment of the student may pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of staff or students or to school property. The Board may in certain circumstances postpone the enrolment of any applicant pending the furnishing of any relevant information it may require. All such decisions shall be guided by the principles of natural justice.

A parent / guardian who has complied with the aforementioned conditions shall be informed in writing of the Board's decision to offer their child a place or to refuse an offer as soon as is practicable but not later than 21 days after the closing date for applications. If, for any reason, the Board refuses to enrol a pupil, that pupil, if aged 18 years or over, or if not, that pupils parents or guardians have a right to appeal this decision under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as inserted by sec. 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

. Further information on the appeals procedure is available from the school.

Students, including students with special needs, who have been admitted to the school shall participate in all appropriate school activities subject to the School's Code of Behaviour and Discipline and provided that their participation would not be detrimental to their own health and safety or the health, safety or right to education of other students.

All policies adopted by this school are drafted in consultation with the school community as a whole and are in accordance with current Education legislation guidelines.

Approved by the Board of Management on 24th day of October 2017. This policy will be reviewed in September 2018 if not required sooner.

