Coláiste Choilm Tullamore

Admissions Policy

School Address: O'Moore Street, Tullamore, Co Offaly
Eircode: R35 WF97
Roll Number: 65610S
School Patron: Bishop Thomas Deenihan
Diocese of Meath

Dream, believe, achieve

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 25th August 2026. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hard copy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Coláiste Choilm's 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. In this policy, the term 'parent' is taken to include 'guardian' and/or 'carer'.

The application form for admission must be made through the website www.applytoschool.ie

2. Characteristic Spirit and Mission Statement

Coláiste Choilm is a Catholic all-boys voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Bishop Thomas Deenihan of the Diocese of Meath. Our mission statement is "to provide a caring Christian Education, in a community of pupils, staff, parents and management, where each individual is valued as a unique human being."

"Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school denotes the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which seeks to promote:

(a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects.
(b) a living relationship with God and with other people.
(c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.
(d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith.

This ethos places an onus on schools to provide religious education in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church which may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Coláiste Choilm shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for 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.

As a Catholic diocesan secondary school, Coláiste Choilm's principal objective is to assist in the development of all aspects of the student; the spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical and social. In keeping with Catholic tradition, the school is guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Gospel values. Our school reflects these values in the day-to-day life of the school through Catholic religious' celebrations, iconography, statuary and symbols. Parents, students and staff are expected to respect this tradition.

Religious Education is central to the curriculum in Coláiste Choilm. Accordingly, the school supports the formation in faith of our students through many school-based experiences of prayer and ritual. All students' spiritual growth is further enhanced through areas such as sport, language, nature, art, poetry and music.

Our school seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes and bears witness to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. The following core elements are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools. They seek to:

(a) Promote the holistic development of each member of the school community including the spiritual, moral, emotional, social, intellectual, physical and human aspects.
(b) Strive to excel in teaching and learning both inside and outside the classroom.
(c) Create a caring school community that celebrates its diversity and keeps partnership and inclusion at the centre of all its activities.
(d) Encourage effective leadership, especially Christian leadership, at all levels.
(e) Continue the ministry of Jesus Christ through nurturing a faith community in the traditions of the diocese.

Our Catholic school is an inclusive community underpinned by the interaction and collaboration of its stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, members of the Board of Management. Furthermore, our school draws on the rich resources of the local community and contributes to the life of that community.

3. Admission Statement

According to Section 61(1) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, the Admission Policy of every school shall include an "Admission Statement" that the school shall 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.

*Part (a) above is qualified in Section 61(2) of the Education Act 1998, regarding a school that admits students of one gender only. In such circumstances, "the admission statement of the school shall include a statement that the school does not discriminate in relation to the admission of students where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of that gender."

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

Coláiste Choilm is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic religious' values and does not discriminate where it admits students of Roman Catholic denomination in preference to others.

Coláiste Choilm is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic religious' values and does not discriminate in relation to the admission of students where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic denomination and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

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

Coláiste Choilm will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

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

Coláiste Choilm is committed to the concept of inclusion. The school is committed to the provision of an educational programme which will meet the needs of all the students enrolled in the school, in so far as

it is practicable. Coláiste Choilm with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established three classes to provide an education exclusively for students with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis to our ASD class. The diagnosis must be confirmed by professional psychological reports.

Admission to a special class is subject to the applicant being known to the NCSE and in receipt of a letter from the NCSE confirming that the applicant has the required diagnosis and professional recommendation for placement in a special class for autism.

5. Admission of Students

To be eligible for enrolment applicants must have completed 6th Class (or its equivalent) and have reached the age of 12 years on the 1st of January in the calendar year following entry to second level.

Coláiste Choilm 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) Coláiste Choilm provides education exclusively for boys and will refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of that gender.
(d) Coláiste Choilm is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
(e) The special classes attached to Coláiste Choilm provides an education exclusively for students with autism spectrum disorder and the school may refuse admission to these classes, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

6. Procedure for Offer of Places and Oversubscription

Coláiste Choilm will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those eligible applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

Mainstream Applications

Applicants will be offered places strictly in the following order:

1. Applicants who have a brother who is attending the school or who has attended the school and completed the Junior Certificate and/or Leaving Certificate in the school.

2. Applicants who have a parent working as a staff member in the school (teaching or non-teaching) and who has been employed in the school for at least two years at the time of application.

3. Applicants who have a parent or grandparent who is a past student of the school and who completed the Junior Certificate and/or Leaving Certificate in the school. Coláiste Choilm will only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice. For the academic year 2027/2028, the number of places is 25% of the 120 places available which equates to 30 places.

Note:

3.1 Should there be an excess of applicants in Category 3, the places will be allocated based on random selection.

3.2 Applicants who are unsuccessful after the random selection process has been completed and where a maximum of 25% of the places available have been filled will be transferred into Category 4.

4. Applicants who have attended one of the feeder primary schools as listed below. For the purpose of enrolment as outlined in this Admissions Policy, the Board of Management defines the catchment area of Coláiste Choilm as including the following primary schools only (in no particular order of priority with regard to criteria):

- Ballinamere National School (15656M)
- Charleville National School (10353P)
- Colman's National School Mucklagh (17746A)
- Daingean National School (16620T)
- Gaelscoil Eiscir Riada (19990V)
- Geashill National School (09191I)
- Gort-na-Móna National School (07191V)
- Scoil Bhríde National School (18524K)
- Scoil Eoin Phóil II Naofa (19713S)
- St. Colmcille's National School, Durrow (17508H)
- St. Joseph's National School, Ballinagar (17637S)
- St. Sinchell's National School, Killeigh (17031F)
- Scoil Bhríde National School, Croghan (18690E)
- St. Colman's National School, Cappagh (19354Q)
- Scoil Aodha Naofa, Rahugh, Kilbeggan (17882I)
- Educate Together Tullamore (20189L)
- Scoil Charthaigh Naofa Rahan (17056V)
- Coolanarney National School (18795S)
- Cloneygowan National School, (18115Q)

Note:

4.1 Should there be an excess of applicants in this category, the places will be allocated based on random selection.

4.2 Applicants who are unsuccessful after the random selection process has been completed and where a maximum of 120 places have been filled will be placed on a waiting list.

5. Applicants who do not fall into the categories 1-4 above.

Note:

5.1 Places will only be offered to applicants in this category after all applicants in each previous category have been offered a place.

5.2 If the quota of places is not reached random selection will be applied.

5.3 If the quota has been reached applicants will be placed on a waiting list.

If 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:

- ✓ In respect of siblings (twins, triplets etc.) from the same family, we will treat the application as single application in the random selection.
- ✓ When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the Waiting List.
- ✓ If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.

The random selection will be conducted by an Admissions Committee appointed by the Board of Management. Late applications in any year will only be considered after all on-time applications have been processed. Late applications will be considered in order of receipt of application.

ASD Class Applications

Applicants will be offered places strictly in the following order:

1. Applicants who have a brother who is attending the school or who has attended the school and completed the Junior Certificate and/or Leaving Certificate in the school.
2. Applicants who have a parent working as a staff member in the school (teaching or non-teaching) and who has been employed in the school for at least two years at the time of application.
3. Applicants who have a parent or grandparent who is a past student of the school and who completed the Junior Certificate and/or Leaving Certificate in the school. A maximum of 25% of the available spaces will be allocated based on this criterion.
4. Applicants who have attended one of the feeder primary schools as listed above.

5. All other applicants will have equal status.

If 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:

- ✓ In respect of siblings (twins, triplets etc.) from the same family, we will treat the application as single application in the random selection.
- ✓ When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the Waiting List.
- ✓ If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.

The random selection will be conducted by an Admissions Committee appointed by the Board of Management. Late applications in any year will only be considered after all on-time applications have been processed. Late applications will be considered in order of receipt of application.

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 a special class in so far as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs 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 family attending or having previously attended the school other than:
    (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and
    (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, Coláiste Choilm 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.

8. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Coláiste Choilm will be based on the following:

- ✓ Our school's Admission Policy.
- ✓ The school's Annual Admission Notice.
- ✓ The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our Annual Admission Notice for receiving applications.

Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period.

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to decide on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying Applicants of Decisions

Applicants will be informed by email as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admission 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 Choilm 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 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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 Choilm 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 data 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 name, address, Date of Birth and Personal Public Service Number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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 Choilm 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 Choilm 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 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.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to Year Groups other than the school's intake group are as follows:

Applicants should complete the standard application form in full, available from the school Reception Office, giving all the details required. Applicants must meet any criteria laid down by the Department of Education and Skills from time to time. All students entering the school must supply a Birth Certificate or other appropriate identification as determined by the school. Incomplete forms shall be returned to parents.

Where a place is available it will be offered to the applicant. Where there is no place available the applicant will be placed on the Waiting List. Placement on the Waiting List 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.

Confirmation of a place is conditional on the receipt by the school of the signed acceptance by a parent of the school's Code of Behaviour. It is at this stage that parents are requested to provide full information regarding any medical condition and/or special educational needs of a student to whom a place has been offered. Additional information e.g. copies of school reports, may also be requested from parents by the Principal. Decisions regarding admissions are a matter for the Board

of Management. However, this task is normally delegated to the Principal who decides on such matters in accordance with the school's Admission Policy. The Principal may refer any application to the Board of Management for decision.

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of Management is required under Section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that Board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

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

The Board of Management of Coláiste Choilm or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with Section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, charge fees for, or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-
The list may include any or all of the following:

(a) an application for admission of a student to the school,

(b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

17. Arrangements regarding students opting out of Religious Education

A parent of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Coláiste Choilm without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student to discuss how that request may be accommodated by the school.

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 of Management 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.

19. Review of Policy

The Admissions Policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management, staff, parents and the student body. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 1st July 2020 and was reviewed on 25th August 2026.

Signed: *Fiona Flanagan* Date: 25/08/2026
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Tadhg O'Sullivan Date: 25/08/2026
(Principal)

Date for Review: September 2027