

**St. Cuan's College,  
Castleblakney  
Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.**



## **Enrolment and Admissions Policy**

**Ratified & Adopted by St. Cuan's College Board of Management: \_\_\_\_\_.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Justin Harkin  
Chairperson

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Collette Kennedy Walsh  
Principal

### **Mission Statement**

St. Cuan College is a Catholic Diocesan Co-Educational College.

St. Cuan's College is dedicated to the academic, social, cultural and spiritual growth of its students. In this pursuit, we are devoted to achieving the highest attainable level of education and promoting the development of young men and women of strong moral character consistent with the school's Christian tradition.

We endeavour to create a stimulating, respectful and supportive environment for staff, students and families in which all are valued and encouraged to develop and share their unique talents. St Cuan's College promotes further education beyond Leaving Certificate, inviting the local community to join us in our pursuit of personal development - mind, body and spirit.

## St. Cuan's College Admissions Statement

This is a statement of the St Cuan's College policy concerning the admissions of pupils to the school. In accordance with Equality Legislation, the college shall not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on the following grounds: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, Traveller community ground or the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

### Scope

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the students of St Cuan's College and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to all candidates who wish to enrol in the school and to their parents/guardians.

### Relationship to the School Mission Statement

This policy statement is in line with the objectives set out in the school's mission statement which recognises St. Cuan's College as a Catholic Diocesan Co-Educational college. This policy statement, therefore, provides for the admission of students in the community for the purpose of pursuing academic learning provided by the school within the limits of availability of facilities as stipulated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES herein).

The religious ethos of the school is founded in the teachings of Christianity. School management will ensure that applicants are made aware that St Cuan's is a Catholic Diocesan college, a voluntary secondary school, operated under the patronage of the Bishop of Elphin. The school welcomes students of all or no religious background, insofar as the value system of the school is not compromised. Religious education is time-tabled for all years and on occasion incorporates religious instruction for Catholic students. Applicants who wish to be enrolled in St Cuan's, but are not willing to participate in religion classes or classes that incorporate religious instruction for Catholic students, will, in keeping with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, follow a programme of morality and spirituality pre-agreed with parents/guardians and provided by the school. Further information about such arrangements can be found in St Cuan's Religious Education Policy.

### Rationale

St Cuan's College is subject to all legislative requirements and regulations set down from time to time by the DES. The school is funded by the DES and is provided with staff in accordance with the DES staff allocation system. The curricular programme of the school is governed by the DES regulation in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act of 1998.

Enrolment is limited by school capacity and by the requirements of the school curriculum and organisation as determined from time to time by the Board of Management and by the DES regulations and standards. In assessing applications for admission, the school will take into account:

1. The rights of the children living within the local community
2. The rights of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice
3. The capacity of the school to provide adequately for the education of all its pupils

### Objectives

The objectives of this policy statement are:

1. To define clearly the procedures to be followed by parents'/guardians in applying for admission of a child to the school:
  - On transfer from primary to post-primary school
  - On transfer from another post-primary school

- On seeking admission to a particular programme or course (e.g. transition year, repeat Leaving Cert, Post-leaving certificate course)
2. To define the criteria to be applied in the consideration of applications in the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places.
  3. To define clearly the means by which enrolment decisions may be appealed to the local school management and/or to the DES.

### Admission Procedures

#### Application for Admissions from primary school

The Board of Management will inform the school community of the procedure for application through the appropriate channels (e.g. visitations to local national schools by selected representatives of the school, parish newsletters, and local media).

First year enrolment takes place in the winter (December) of the preceding academic year. No applications will be accepted before this date. The school enrolment co-ordinator will have contacted local schools and issued enrolment forms and prospectus/application packs to potential applicants. The school's enrolment co-ordinator will also confer with 6<sup>th</sup> class teachers.

Application packs are also made available from the school office and on the school's Open Night. Students intending on enrolling from abroad must supply all relevant reports including references from primary and other school teachers.

Application for enrolment in the school is made by completing the school's application form and submitting it and other relevant documentation to the school office by the appointed closing date (June 30). **As part of the application process, parents/guardians and the applicant are required to read and sign the school's ethos statement and code of behaviour.**

Information required to be given to the school is further detailed in St Cuan's College Data Protection Policy and is governed by the information required by the DES. Enrolment forms must be signed by the parent/guardians of the prospective student.

Personal data asked for at the time of application may include:

- Name, address, PPS number, date of birth, gender
- Name/Maiden name and addresses of parent/guardians and their contact details
- Name/s of previous school/s attended
- Necessity for language support
- Religious beliefs
- Racial, ethnic or national origin
- Name of doctor
- Possession of a medical card
- Identification with the Traveller community
- Original Birth certificate
- Attendance records

**Application for admissions concerning students transferring from other post-primary schools after the commencement of the school year:**

Along with the standard enrolment information additional enrolment processes are required for students transferring from other post-primary schools after the commencement of the school year.

These processes include:

- Providing reports from previous post-primary Principal/s with relevant information given
- Providing Academic records of post-primary school achievements
- Providing a brief written statement (150-250 words) from the prospective student in which she/he expresses their understanding of the school ethos
- Sitting an interview (accompanied by their parents/guardians) with the Principal and Deputy Principal

A candidate who has been expelled from a previous secondary school, and applies to enrol after the commencement of the school year, may be offered a probationary placement. In such cases, the applicant may participate in the day to day activities of the school, including the new student integration programme, and will be given a time-table. After a specified period of time, the applicant and his/her parents or guardians will meet with school management to review enrolment.

Section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act imposes an obligation of the Principal, as soon as possible after enrolling a pupil from another school, to inform the Principal of the previous school of the enrolment. The Principal of the previous school has an obligation to notify the Principal of the new school (St Cuan's) of any issues relating to the applicant's attendance.

**Application for admissions for programmes such as Transition Year, Repeat Leaving Cert, and Post-Leaving Cert (FETAC) courses:**

Enrolment for Transition Year occurs in the spring of the preceding academic year. The school provides for students transferring from other post-primary schools in order to enrol in the TY programme. The requirements for candidates transferring into TY will not deviate from the standard requirements for all post-primary transfer candidates.

Applications for TY are available and limited to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. Criterion for enrolment is based on an applicant's suitability for the course. Suitability is determined by the candidate's performance in 3<sup>rd</sup> year and her/his understanding of the responsibilities assumed upon enrolment into the programme. Students must have demonstrated acceptable standards of behaviour and attitude while in Junior Cycle years. Priority enrolment is given to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students who are already currently enrolled in the school. Applications to the TY programme must be submitted by the end of May of the preceding academic year. The school will not accept applications for entrance into a TY programme currently running.

Enrolment of Repeat Leaving Cert students will be considered up to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September. Applicants must apply in writing to the school after they have received their Leaving Certificate results. Priority enrolment is given to applicants who were enrolled in St. Cuan's when she/he initially sat the Leaving Cert exam. Repeat candidates from other schools must meet the criteria and provide the documents outlined in the post-primary transfer section above with the addition of past Leaving Cert results.

Enrolment of Post-Leaving Cert (FETAC) courses takes place from the 1<sup>st</sup> of June until the end of September. St Cuan's College follows the provisions as detailed by the policy on admissions for

FETAC courses. These include specific requirements such as: applicants must be aged 17 years or older, must have a minimum standard of Junior cert or equivalent and may be requested to take an assessment test and attend for interview before receiving a place on the course. Priority will be given to applicants who have previously graduated from St. Cuan's.

**Criteria to be used in the assessment of applications:**

Apart from exceptional circumstances, candidates will be enrolled on receipt of completed enrolment forms by the school before the admissions closing date. The latest date for decision on applications is within 21 days of the closing date.

**The school may refuse enrolment in exceptional circumstances.** Exceptional circumstances affecting enrolment include:

- issues concerning the health and safety of the candidate and/or currently enrolled pupils,
- where the number of students seeking admission is greater than the number of places being made available in the school
- where the parents or students over 18 years of age fail to accept the Code of Behaviour of the school
- in accordance with the existing exemptions in the Equal Status Act for schools where the objective is to provide education in an environment that promotes certain religious values.

If an enrolled student fails to present themselves to school for more than 50 days in the course of an academic year, excluding medically certified absences and suspensions, school management will assume the student has withdrawn his/her enrolment. In cases in which a student has withdrawn her/his enrolment through uncertified absenteeism, and wishes to return to school, admission will require re-enrolment, with the additional requirement of an interview with the Principal and Deputy Principal.

Limitations on enrolment apply due to school capacity. The school recognises the right of the student to choose a particular programme. The degree to which particular programmes are accessible is limited to class capacity and course criteria.

In the event that the number of suitable applications exceeds the number of available places, the school will not be in a position to offer enrolment. **Maximum enrolment** in a given year group is 50. Maximum number in a Transition Year programme is 35. Maximum number for practical subjects including: Science, Woodwork, Tech Graph, Music, Art is 24 students. Maximum number for Home Economics is 20. Maximum number of Repeat Leaving Cert enrolment is 10. The number of PLC places is limited by the Department of Education and Skills to 38.

**Criteria to be applied in the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in any particular course:**

In the event of the above, the school will offer enrolment by lottery.

Information to be supplied by the school to a prospective student

Prospective students have access to the school's admission policy, Code of Behaviour and Discipline policy and the school's curriculum and organisational structures. General information about the school will also be made available. This information includes:

- The school name, address, telephone and contact information
- The name of the school Patron
- The character and religious ethos of the school
- Whether the school is co-education or not

- Names of current teaching staff
- The recognition of the school under the Education Act of 1998
- The range of subjects taught, including any special programmes
- Whether there are any additional classes or support programmes or support teachers for students with a disability or special educational needs
- That the school board supports the policy of inclusiveness in particular in regard to students with a disability or special educational needs having regard to financial and personnel resources provided for by the DES.
- Whether or not a Transition Year programme is operated
- Information about the Student Council
- The school's dress and uniform code
- Any other information which may include opening hours, closing hours, extra-curricular information
- The recognition that any refusal to admit a student to the school may be appealed by the parent to the Board of Management in the first instance and to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

#### Appealing Enrolment Decisions

The right of appeal is conferred under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and relates to the school's decision to refuse enrolment or to permanently exclude a student from school.

A parent/guardian or student (over the age of 18) has the right to appeal a decision regarding enrolment. The Child and Family Agency, or a person appointed by the agency, but independent of the Agency, is also enabled to appeal under Section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

A written request to appeal a decision must be sent to the school's Board of Management. The Board will consider the appeal in a timely manner and communicate in letter the result of the appeal. If the parent/guardian, Agency or student over age 18, is dissatisfied by the Board's decision on the appeal, he/she has the right to appeal in writing to the Secretary General of the DES.

#### Fees

No fees or contributions will be requested as part of the admissions process.

#### Policy Implementation and Review Procedures

This policy is to be implemented by the BOM and school management. It is made available to all prospective students on the Open day, on the school website and by request from school reception.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school's Board of Management.