

# Admission Policy of St. Colman's National School

Bellview, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath



Roll No. 19650U

School Patron: Bishop Tom Deenihan

## 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 17/12/2024. 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 St. Colman's NS 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

St. Colman's NS is a Catholic co-educational school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the bishop of Meath, Bishop Tom Deenihan.

"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 St. Colman's NS 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.

#### **St. Colman's Mission Statement:**

*"To give the children a sense of self-worth and value, to empower them to develop their individual potential as human beings and to respect others who are created in God's image and likeness."*

St. Colman's N.S. is primary school, which strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure learning environment where we endeavour to

- ❖ celebrate the uniqueness of each child, as it is expressed in each child's personality, intelligence and potential for development.
- ❖ nurture the child in all dimensions of his or her life—spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.
- ❖ enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for all those that they meet and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible for their actions and behaviour at all times
- ❖ promote respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.
- ❖ enable children to meet, with self-confidence and assurance, the demands of life, both now and in the future
- ❖ promote, both individually and collectively, the professional and personal development of staff
- ❖ welcome and encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts and through their involvement in St Colman's NS Parents Association.

### **3. Admission Statement**

St. Colman's NS 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.

St. Colman's NS 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

St. Colman's NS 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.

St. Colman's NS 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/special class**

St. Colman's is a mainstream school and does not have a SEN class attached. SEN pupils are integrated into the mainstream classes and are supported by the school's SET team.

## 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) St. Colman's NS is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.
- d) Applicants **must be at least four years of age before the First of June of the year in which they apply.**

## 6. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

- ❖ **Places will be offered to children from the categories below on the basis of age beginning with the oldest.**
- ❖ Having applied the selection criteria of Category 1 below to allocate places, further places will then be allocated to children from categories 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 each in turn, **on the basis of age beginning with the oldest.**

#### Category 1

Children who are at least four years of age on and including the 31st of December in the year immediately preceding their enrolment and who are:

- Siblings of children currently enrolled or who have been enrolled in the school.

#### Category 2

Children who are at least four years of age on and including the 31st of December in the year immediately preceding their enrolment and who are:

- Living within Primary Catchment Area (1) (as outlined below).

### **Category 3**

Children who are at least four years of age on and including the 31st of December in the year immediately preceding their enrolment and who are:

- Living within Secondary Catchment Area (2) (as outlined below)
- Children of current permanent staff members.

### **Category 4**

- Remaining siblings of children currently enrolled or who have been enrolled.
- Remaining children living within Primary Catchment Area (1) and Secondary Catchment Area (2).

### **Category 5**

Children living within the parish boundary but outside the catchment areas.

### **Category 6**

All other applicants.

## **CATCHMENT AREAS FOR ST. COLMAN'S NS**

The Catchment Area for admission purposes is as follows giving priority to those living in closest proximity to the school.

### **Primary Catchment Area: (1)**

Delvin Rd, Springfield, Ginnell Tce, D'Alton Park, Assumption Villas, Great Oaks, Lakepoint, Derravarra, Beechgrove, Bellview Heights, Glenview Heights, Tower View, Meadow Court, Burnell Drive, Dublin Road, Prospect, Beechlawns, Beechdrive, Bellview Rd. Millmount, Auburn Village, Newlands, Ballagh, Gleann Petit.

### **Secondary Catchment Area: (2)**

Glenmore Wood, Petitswood Manor, Chestnut Grove, Chestnut Drive, Oak Crest, Newtown Lawns, Ardmore Rd, Petitswood, Marlinstown Court, Richdale Court, Hazel Grove, Dublin Rd. from Gleann Petit to Marlinstown roundabout.

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:

Places will be offered to children on the basis of age beginning with the oldest as per the date and time on the birth certificate.

## 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;
- (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.
- (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 St. Colman's NS 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 together with an original birth certificate and valid proof of address received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 14](#) (page 8) in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) (page 8) in relation to 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](#) on page 10 for further details).

## **10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Colman's NS. 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.

## **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 St. Colman's NS. 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.

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).

### **13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription**

In the event of there being more applications in the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Colman's NS 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 St. Colman's NS is in the order of priority assigned to the students' application 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.

Note: Late Applications for places in Junior Infants will be added to the end of the Waiting List.

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

St. Colman's NS is currently a nineteen-class teacher school and operates within the Department of Education and Skills pupil teacher ratio guidelines with an average of 23:1.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, to classes or years other than the school's intake group and those who apply after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought are as follows:



Applications for admission of students to other years (Senior Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> class) in St. Colman's NS will be accepted from parents/ guardians of children who have already been enrolled in another school.

Parents / Guardians will be required to fill out an application form and submit this together with

- an original Birth Cert
- proof of address
- a contact name and number of the child's previous school

The Board of Management will accept transfers into St. Colman's NS subject to the terms of Circular 24/02, specific provisions of The Education Welfare Act (2000) in relation to the transfer of pupils and to the following:

- That the child has already been enrolled in another school
- That the school is not already full
- That the child is transferring to an age appropriate class
- That there is a space in a class at that level for which the application is being made

Where the Board of Management is unable to offer a child seeking a transfer a place in the school, the child will be placed on a Transfer Waiting List in accordance with the criteria set out above. Each year's Transfer Waiting List will remain valid only for the school year in which admission is being sought.

In determining the child's position on the Transfer Waiting List the school will prioritise siblings of pupils currently enrolled in the school in the first instance and secondly by the date on which the original application for transfer was received (with the earliest date being ranked highest).

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St. Colman's NS 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**

The following are the school's arrangements for pupils, where the parents have 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 pupils:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be

arranged with the parent(s) to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school.

## 18. 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 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.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.

Signed: Mary Hughes  
Mary Hughes, Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Meath Diocesan Education Office

**Approved**

Signed: M. Melvin 10

Date: 17/12/2024

