

Admission Policy of St. Clare's Comprehensive School



School Address: Manorhamilton

Roll number: 81013P

School Patron/s: The Minister for Education and Skills in partnership with The Bishop of Kilmore , Bishop Martin Hayes

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 15th September 2020. 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. Clare's Comprehensive School'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.

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

A short history of St. Clare's Comprehensive School

In 1971 Manorhamilton Vocational and St. Joseph's Secondary School were amalgamated. St. Clare's Comprehensive was the thirteenth comprehensive in the country. For the school year 1971/72 students returned to their old schools and the new 1st Years were based in three prefabricated classrooms at the Community Centre. A new school was built at Ross Lane and in September 1972 all students attended class there. Its first Principal was Mr. Sean Sweeney. In June 37 students sat the Leaving Certificate. The school enrolment was 300 in that year. In June 1973 the Vocational School in Kiltyclogher was destroyed. All students and staff were accommodated in St. Clare's. This brought the enrolment to 350 students with thirty one teachers.

Today the student population is 504 with a school staff of 46 including teachers, SNAs, Administration and Auxiliary staff. **For more information about our school please read the copy of our school brochure that is enclosed.** Please feel free to contact the school if you have any questions about any aspect of school life in St Clare's Comprehensive.

St. Clare's Comprehensive is a denominational Comprehensive School. We support all students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of St. Clare's. The characteristic of St. Clare's finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate for each student.

In St. Clare's Comprehensive, we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others and our environment.

We provide a comprehensive system of post primary education open to all the children of the local community. The core values of St. Clare's Comprehensive School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. We endeavour to support each student reach his/ her potential in a caring and creative environment. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller Community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education Act 2018 in accordance with the Equal Status Act. Once enrolled St. Clare's Comprehensive provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, our school environment and with the whole community.

St. Clare's Comprehensive School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to our school community and wider society. We, in St. Clare's, strive to support all students reach their potential irrespective of their identity, culture or background. We promote a fully inclusive education which recognizes the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We support our students to become open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society, See also www.stclarescomprehensiveschool.ie for further information re staff, Year Heads, tutors etc

Mission Statement:

To create a caring, disciplined and Christian environment where all students and staff can reach their potential.

Aims:

- To educate for life.
- To promote tolerance, justice and respect.
- To encourage teamwork and respect individuality.
- To nurture ambition and leadership.
- To promote pride and confidence in one's own ability. (self-esteem)
- To motivate our students in the pursuit of a high standard of academic achievement and critical thinking by providing a varied range of learning experiences and a varied range of teaching excellence
- To help all students do their best
- To work in partnership with parents in the promotion of the overall good of the student, acknowledging the role of parents as the primary educators of the child.

Our discipline and anti-bullying policies protect the right of students to learn and teachers to teach.

Curriculum Statement:

The Curriculum offered in St. Clare's is wide and varied and is designed to give each student the opportunity to realise their full potential and to develop their interests and talents.

We encourage our students to take responsibility for their own decisions, to develop independent learning strategies and to show a commitment to their studies.

We recognise the wide range of intelligences amongst our students and we strive to meet their individual needs.

Pastoral Curriculum Statement:

The pastoral care and curriculum in St. Clare's are designed to help the students feel safe and secure in the school environment, to assist them take full advantage of the range of opportunities available and to prepare them for adult life.

On entering St. Clare's each group is assigned mentors and class teachers who develop a close relationship with each student. (**See role of Class Teacher**).

Their progress during their school life is continually monitored so that they can reach their potential. The Board of Management and the Principal develop strategies that seek to protect, inform and develop our students in a holistic way. They are assisted on a daily basis by the whole staff.

General Information about St Clare's Comprehensive

St. Clare's Comprehensive School follows the curriculum as prescribed by the Education Act 1998 which may be amended from time to time

Programmes Offered:

- * Junior Cert.
- * Leaving Cert
- * L.C.V.P
- * Transition Year

Junior Cert

Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, Science, H.E., Business, S.P.H.E., Woodwork, Metalwork, Tech. Graphics, C.S.P.E, Religion, French, P.E., Music, Spanish, Art and Information Technology.

Leaving Cert

Irish, English, Maths, History, Geography, H.E., Business, Construction, DCG, Engineering, Accounting, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, P.E., Career Guidance, Information Technology, Agricultural Science, French, Religion, Music, Spanish, Art, & Physical Education.

St Clare's Comprehensive School has regard for the principles of a democratic society and promotes respect for a diversity of beliefs and values

3. Admission Statement

St. Clare's Comprehensive 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.

St. Clare's Comprehensive School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 relating 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. Clare's Comprehensive School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

St. Clare's Comprehensive is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of a Catholic background in preference to others.

St. Clare's Comprehensive 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. Clare's Comprehensive School is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provide an education exclusively for students with categories of special educational needs and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

If the class is oversubscribed, the selection criteria of St. Clare's will be adhered to. (See section 6).

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the special classes

1. Rang Mhic Dhiarmada

St. Clare's Comprehensive School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class, Rang Mhic Dhiarmada, to provide an education exclusively for students with Moderate Learning Difficulties.

2. St. Clare's Comprehensive ASD Support Class

St. Clare's Comprehensive School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class, to provide an education exclusively for students with

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Asperger's Syndrome

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

St. Clare's Comprehensive School is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Rang Mhic Dhiarmada

The Rang Mhic Dhiarmada is a class attached to St. Clare's Comprehensive School that provides an education exclusively for students with Moderate Learning Difficulties and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

The ASD Unit

The ASD unit is a class attached to St. Clare's Comprehensive School that provides an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger's Syndrome and the school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class.

6. Oversubscription

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:

Criteria for admission

- 1. Students whose nearest post primary school is St. Clare's Comprehensive School**
- 2. Students who have brothers/ sisters in St. Clare's**

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:

- An organised and supervised lotto system ("names out of a hat") will determine the successful applicants.**

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 Rang Mhic Dhiarmada or the ASD unit insofar 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 or her family attending or having previously attended the school other than, in the case of selection criteria based on siblings of a student attending or having attended St. Clare's Comprehensive 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.

This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St. Clare's Comprehensive School will be based on the following:

- Our 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 our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) below 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](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St. Clare's Comprehensive School, 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. Clare's Comprehensive 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 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 other Board of Management member with a list of the students to whom-

1. An application for admission to the school has been received
2. An offer of admission to the school has been made
3. 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 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 to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to St. Clare's Comprehensive 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 St. Clare's Comprehensive 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.

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. 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 classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

A student who requests to enter St. Clare's in a year other than 1st Year will be accepted provided that

- Please see section 6
- **If a year group is oversubscribed we will prioritise applications using the following criteria.**
 1. Students whose nearest post primary school is St. Clare's Comprehensive School
 2. Students who have brothers/ sisters in St. Clare's

Where a pupil is transferring from a post primary school it may not be possible to meet the subject, subject level or programme preferences.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

A student who enrolls in St. Clare's Comprehensive after the commencement of the school year will be accepted provided that

- Please see section 5 and section 6
- If a year group is oversubscribed we will prioritise applications using the following criteria.
 1. Students whose nearest post primary school is St. Clare's Comprehensive School
 2. Students who have brothers/ sisters in St. Clare's

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

The board of St. Clare's Comprehensive 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.

17. 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:

Students who opt out of Religion will be allowed study during that period. If they require resource support it may occur during this time if there are available resources. The parents or a student who is over 18 must put their request in writing to the Principal who will then arrange a meeting with the student, who is over 18, or their parents/ guardians to see how their request can be facilitated

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 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.

N.B. It is imperative that our school's Code of Positive Behaviour is agreed to and signed by Parents/ Guardians and by the students themselves. Students aged 18 and over must agree to and sign the Code. This will be done on an annual basis.

Worked on by the whole community, Bishop Hayes and the legal department of the Department of Education and skills.

Sanctioned by the Board of Management in 2020

Reviewed September 2022

Reviewed in accordance with Section 62 of the Education (admissions to schools act), January 2023

Signed: Gerard Reilly

Maeve Kelly

Chairperson BOM

Principal

Date: _____