



Admission Policy of Dunmore Community School

**Dunmore, Co. Galway.
Roll Number: 91414Q**



School Patrons: Ceist & Galway & Roscommon E.T.B.

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 22/10/2020. 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 Dunmore Community School 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

Dunmore Community School is a co-educational multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of CEIST and Galway & Roscommon ETB.

Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened in September 1990, following the amalgamation of the Incarnate Word College (Under the management of The Mercy Sisters) and St Patrick's Vocational School. The values of Galway & Roscommon ETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of The Mercy Sisters and are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Dunmore Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his or her full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. 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 (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, our school provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Our school provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support 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 the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In Dunmore Community School 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.

3. Admission Statement

Dunmore Community School is an inclusive school and 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 Travellers 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.

The Board of Management makes decisions in relation to applications for enrolment. In its decisions, the Board will be guided by the principles of natural justice and will act in the best interest of all students. The Board reserves the right to refuse an application and to determine the maximum number of students in each separate class or class group bearing in mind:

- Size of/available space in classrooms.
- Educational needs of students
- Presence of students with special educational/behavioral needs.
- In the interest of enrolment, the Board will have due regard both for the rights of the individual student and the rights of the general cohort of students.

4. Special Educational Needs admission

Dunmore Community School is an inclusive school, where we welcome students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), subject to the availability of resources to meet the needs of the student.

It is extremely important we are informed of any additional needs of the child and the following if available as early as possible to ensure we can organise the provision of suitable supports and resources.

- Details of the special educational need,
- disability or medical condition if applicable,
- copies of Psychological Reports & Educational Reports if available,
- details of resources provided in Primary School or facilities/supports required.

(A percentage of our students present with learning difficulties and/or special needs. The school will make every effort to respond to the special educational needs of individual students subject to the availability and suitability of accommodation and staff which is subject to the sanction of the Department of Education and Science. In the case of a student identified as having special needs presenting for enrolment, the Board will request a copy of a student's medical and/or psychological report, or, where such a report is not available, will request that the student is assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment or other reports is to assist the school in establishing the educational and other related needs of the student relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to identify the support services required. Following the receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school can meet the needs specified in the report. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, before enrolment, request that the Department of Education and Science provide the resources to meet the needs of the student as outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. The school Principal or a representative will meet with the parents of the student to discuss the student's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. All students with special educational needs are enrolled in accordance with the provisions of the recent legislation dealing with "Education of persons with special education needs." In catering for students with special educational needs, the Board of Management must have due regard for the needs of all students. The school has a policy dealing specifically with special needs/learning support. - old policy. Running this through the SEN Team. Awaiting feedback.)

5. Application/Process of Enrolment

An open day for intending first-year students is held in the spring preceding the school year for which the student wishes to enrol. Details are also provided through primary schools in the school catchment area, notices in parish newsletters and local newspapers. Completed application forms are accepted over a period of two weeks following the open day. Late application forms will be accepted subject to the standard enrolment criteria. The Board of Management will make decisions in respect of applications based on the criteria published in this enrolment policy document. When enrolling, the school must be provided with the following documents:

- Completed enrolment form
- Original copy of Birth Certificate (will be returned immediately after checking of data)

- Other documentation/reports where relevant eg. Psychological Reports
- Completed Subject Options Form

Students enrolling in Dunmore Community School will:

- Be at least twelve years when they transfer to the Post Primary School.
- Have completed a full course of education except in the case of a pupil who is thirteen or more on the first of August of the Post Primary School year and has completed fifth standard.
- All students living in the catchment area as defined by the Board of Management are eligible to enrol.
- Students from outside the catchment area are eligible to enrol provided they can be accommodated and provided there are available places in the subject areas required.

ACCEPTANCE INTO DUNMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

- Parents/Guardians must actively support our school ethos and goals.
- Parents/Guardians must accept the code of behaviour in writing and make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student. (Parents and students are also obliged to accept amendments to the code as they arise subsequent to parents signing the code.)
- Students must follow the full timetabled programme (exceptions will be made for students who qualify for exemptions in Irish in accordance with the relevant DES circular or who have reduced timetables in the context of special educational needs.)
- The Principal must be advised of medical conditions of the student in the interest of the welfare of the student.
- The office must be provided with name, address and phone numbers of a contact person in the event that the parent/guardian cannot be contacted in emergency.

TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL/REPEATING

For students transferring from another post-primary school, the following process and criteria will apply: Students may transfer subject to the terms of this policy document.

- Space being available in a year group and the school being able to accommodate the student as regards subjects and resources and at an appropriate level. If a space or a subject is not available or not available at an appropriate level, parents/guardians will be advised of this and will be offered the place available. They are free to accept the place, all else being satisfactory, but without any preconditions.
- A school report from the previous school must be provided. Information will be requested concerning attendance, educational progress, behaviour record, disabilities and special needs. (Education and Welfare Act 2000, Section 20).
- Acceptance by the student and his or her parents/guardians of the Code of Behaviour and School Regulations.
- The school may also require an assessment process.

Students who are transferring to another school or withdrawing from school are asked to notify the school at least three days in advance. All textbooks on loan from the book scheme must be returned, and no

refunds will be given. Information as to where the student is moving and the name of the school (if applicable) must also be furnished. On transferring from this school to another school the school is legally obliged to retain the students name on roll until such time as the Principal of the school into which he/she is transferring confirms in writing that the transferring student is now on its roll. If you require a reference or need forms signed, please give five days notice.

6. Oversubscription

If the number of applicants is greater than the number of places available, a waiting list will be compiled as below. If places become available, they will be offered in turn to the next applicant on the list.

- places will initially be offered to applicants in primary schools within the catchment area who have siblings already enrolled in Dunmore Community School
- Children of current permanent staff, including ancillary staff
- All children living within the catchment area
- All children from outside the catchment area whose siblings attended the school in the past
- Whose parent/guardian attended the school in the past

Siblings: The following procedure will apply to siblings who apply for enrolment to First Year in the same academic year. The allocation of a place to one sibling by means of random selection draw, in any of the criteria below will mean that the remaining sibling will automatically be offered the next available place or will be given the next place on the waiting list.

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 naonrai
- 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, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and /or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.)
- g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school- 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 Dunmore Community 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

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 Dunmore Community School, you must indicate—

- 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
- 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 Dunmore Community School where —

- it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- 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.
- 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 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.

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 [school name] 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 [school name] 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 admission policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under the Act.

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

Please see Section 5.

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

The board of Dunmore Community School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of

- i. an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- ii. the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Dunmore Community School offers religious education in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and in the spirit of the Deed of Trust. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, religious education supports the ‘multi-denominational’ aspect of our school’s ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or non-religious beliefs and those of their peers.

In this context it is important to understand the distinction between ‘religious education’ and ‘religious instruction’:

- Religious education is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.
- Religious instruction is instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a particular religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.

Given that Religious Education, as distinct from Religious Instruction, is timetabled across our school at all levels the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise.

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.

Signed: Jarlath McDonagh

Chairperson of BOM

Date: 22/10/2020

Signed: Declan Quinn

Principal/Secretary to the BOM

Date: 22/10/2020