

ADMISSION POLICY

Adopted by the Board of Management St Louis Community School, Kiltimagh June 2005.

1. Introduction

St. Louis Community School, Kiltimagh (“the School”) was established in 1993 following the amalgamation of St Louis Secondary School and Colaiste Raifteiri Vocational School. It is a co-educational school, recognised by the Department of Education and Science, which operates under the joint trusteeship of the St. Louis Sisters and Mayo Vocational Education Committee.

The Building

A new school building, completed in 2004, is located on the site of the former St. Louis Secondary School. The original school façade has been retained and enhanced and the school building has been designated by Mayo County council as a protected structure.

Management

The school is run by a Board of Management comprised of six representatives of the trustees, two teacher representatives and two parent representatives. The School Principal acts as secretary to the Board.

Curriculum

The range of subjects and programmes provided by the School is outlined in the School Prospectus and may be changed from time to time.

Extra-curricular activities

To complement the formal curriculum and enhance the holistic development of the student the School provides a wide range of activities including sports, music, personal development and cultural activities.

Books

A book rental scheme is in operation in the School.

2. Mission Statement

The ethos of St. Louis Community School is rooted in the local Christian cultural traditions under the Deed of Trust. The School is co-educational and is open to students of post-primary age. St. Louis Community School has the following aims:

- to provide students with an education which has a sound academic and practical content
- to foster human and spiritual values for students to realise their individual potential and to develop their sense of self-worth
- to develop the physical, intellectual, moral and emotional well-being of its students
- to develop teaching and learning aimed at good academic achievement
- to make reasonable provision for students with special needs
- to foster a sense of community within the School
- to have an open policy of education for the community and to provide insofar as possible for this
- to provide reasonable opportunities for the personal and professional development of its staff

3. Operating context

Legislation

The Admissions Policy has been formulated in compliance with the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000

Ethos

The Admissions Policy operates within the framework of the School's Mission Statement and is informed by the characteristic spirit and ethos of the School.

Principles

The Board of Management supports the following principles in regard to admissions to and participation in the School:

- equality of access and participation
- parental choice in relation to enrolment
- respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life
- inclusiveness, particularly in relation to enrolment of students with special needs and disadvantage, subject to the resources provided by the Department of Education and Science

4. Procedure for admission

- a. Following visits by the Principal and/or other school representatives to local primary schools, the School will hold an 'Information and Enrolment' evening in the School. Notification of this event will also be advertised through local media. Students and parents/guardians will be offered a tour of the School and information on the curriculum, programmes and extra-curricular activities offered by the School.
- b. Parents/guardians wishing to enrol students will be required to complete an Enrolment Form giving relevant personal information, contact telephone numbers, relevant medical details, details of previous school(s) and other relevant information. The Enrolment form must be completed and returned to the School within one week of the Enrolment evening.
- c. Decisions in relation to the enrolment of students are made by the Board of Management of the School. Parents/guardians will be notified of the Board's decision within twenty one days of receipt of application to enrol.
- d. All students enrolled in the School are required to attend the School's Registration Day at the beginning of each School Year. Each student must be accompanied by a parent/guardian on Registration Day.
- e. Prior to Registration Day, parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the School's Code of Conduct and the requirements for registration including details of the prescribed school uniform.
- f. Parents/guardians will be required to confirm in writing that:
 - i. they are familiar with the Code of Conduct
 - ii. it is acceptable to them
 - iii. they will make every effort to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct by their students.
- g. All decisions taken pursuant to this Admission Policy will be taken in accordance with the principles of natural justice and the best interests of applicants and other students in the school.

5. General admission criteria

The General Criteria for admission to the School and participation in the School thereafter are as follows:

- a. Application being made in accordance with the procedures laid out in this Policy
- b. Parents/guardians supporting the School Policies and supporting and signing the School Code of Conduct.
- c. Students complying with the School Code of Conduct
- d. The School being informed of any medical conditions of the student in the interest of the welfare of the student.

6. Specific admission criteria

A. First Year Students

- a. First Year students enrolling in this School will:
 - I. Normally be at least 12 years of age.
 - II. Have completed Primary School education or the equivalent.
- b. Applications must be received within one week of the Enrolment Evening.
- c. Successful applicants and their parents/guardians must also attend Registration Day as described above.
- d. In the event that excess applications result in there being insufficient places in the School to accommodate all applicants, priority will be established as between applicants in accordance with the following criteria:
 - I. Those with siblings attending the school at the time at which the application is made
 - II. Children from the Community generally
 - III. Children from National Schools in County Mayo and the surrounding counties
 - IV. Children of staff members
 - V. Siblings of past students
 - VI. Sons and daughters of past students
 - VII. Thereafter on a first come, first served basis
 - VIII. Thereafter, and if necessary, by random selection
- e. Applicants must also meet the General Criteria for admission to the School as set out in this Policy.

B. Applications to transfer from another second level school

- a. The Applicant must furnish all information required of applicants for First Year Classes.
- b. The school from which transfer is to be effected ('the original school') will be requested to furnish full information regarding the applicant's attendance, educational progress, subject choices, disabilities, special needs, co-operation with teachers etc.
- c. The Applicant and his/her parents/guardians will be asked to provide assistance as necessary including requesting records held by the original school in accordance with s. 9(g) of the Education Act 2000 and with the Data Protection Act 1988
- d. Applicants must also meet the General Criteria for admission to the School as set out in this Policy.
- e. All applicants to transfer to the School are subject to approval by the Board of Management in the same manner as applications generally.

C. **Applications to repeat Leaving Certificate** Admissions to repeat the Leaving Certificate in the School are subject to approval of the Board of Management in the same manner as are applications generally. Particular regard will be had to:

- Availability of space and resources
- Class sizes
- Whether the subject choices of the Applicant can be accommodated

The following criteria also apply:

- The general Criteria for admission to the School and participation in the School thereafter described above must be met.
- If the Applicant previously attended a different second-level school the general procedure and criteria for determining applications to transfer the School will be applied.
- The Applicant's past disciplinary record must be considered satisfactory by the Board of Management.
- The Principal, Year Head and Guidance Teacher must be satisfied with the reasons offered for repeating the Leaving Certificate and that repeating will be in the interest of the Applicant.
- The Board of management will ultimately decide on the application.

D. **Applications for admission to Transition Year** The Transition Year Programme is optional for students. Students who have completed the Junior Certificate or its equivalent are eligible to apply. Applicants will be required to complete an application form stating why they wish to participate in the programme. The date on which applications open and the closing date for receipt of applications will be published within the school. The following criteria will be applied:

- If the Applicant previously attended the School, the general criteria for admission to the School and participation in the School thereafter must be met.
- If the Applicant previously attended a different second-level school, the procedure and criteria for determining applications to transfer to the School will be applied.
- The Applicant's past disciplinary record must be considered satisfactory by the Board of Management.
- In the event that excess applications result in the School being unable to provide places for all applicants, following an interview process, applications will be assigned the following order of priority:
 - (a) Students from St. Louis Community School
 - (b) Qualitative assessment of application forms by the Transition Year Co-ordinator
 - (c) Students who have spent the most years enrolled as students in the School
 - (d) Thereafter on a first come, first served basis
 - (e) Thereafter and if necessary on a random selection basis

E. Application for admission by or on behalf of students with disabilities or other special educational needs

- a) The Applicant must furnish all information required of applicants to First Year classes.
- b) The General Criteria for admission must be met.
- c) In the case of applicants for admission by or on behalf of students with disabilities or other special educational needs, the School may request additional information including medical reports and reports from schools previously attended by the Applicant. These reports are essential in securing the additional resources which may be necessary to provide for students with disabilities or other or other special educational needs.
- d) The procedure outlined in this Policy as regards transfer from another second-level school may be implemented in respect of past schools attended by the Applicant.
- e) Where further resources are required in order to accommodate a student with disabilities or other special educational needs, the Department of Education and Science will be requested to provide the necessary assistance e.g. Special Needs Assistant, Specialised Equipment, Transport, etc. Where such resources are not forthcoming from the Department of Education and Science, the School may have to postpone admission until the Department of Education and Science provides the resources deemed appropriate by the School.
- f) Otherwise, applications for admission to the School by students with learning disabilities or other special educational needs are determined in accordance with the procedures described in this Admission Policy and subject always to the consideration of providing an acceptable level of education to all students in the School.
- g) Regretfully, it may not be possible to cater for students with very severe learning and/or physical disabilities due to lack of resources.

F. Confidentiality All applications for admissions to any course in St. Louis Community School and information accompanying same are treated as entirely confidential by the School.

G. Decision Making

The Board of Management will make a decision on registration within 21 days of the application being submitted. The Board of Management's decision and the participation in the School by successful applicants thereafter will be governed by the Admission Policy, the School Code of Conduct, the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

The Board of Management reserve the right to refuse an application for admission to the School if enrolling the applicant in the school would:

- Be seriously detrimental to the continuity of the Applicant's education
- Be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the School
- Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the provision of education to other students in the School
- Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the health and safety of other students or staff in the School

The Board of Management reserve the right to refuse an application for admission to the School if the Criteria set out in this Policy are not met by the Applicant.

The Board of Management reserve the right to refuse an application for admission to the School where the School has inadequate resources to cater for the needs of the Applicant.

- H. **Right of Appeal** A decision to refuse admission may be appealed to the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 by the parents/guardians of the applicant or, if the Applicant is over the age of 18, the applicant him/herself.
- I. **Code of Behaviour** Participation in the School is subject to the School Code of conduct and students may be expelled or suspended from the School for breaches of the Code. It is the responsibility of all applicants and their parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the Code of Conduct.
- J. **Application for Re-Admission** Pursuant to the Code of Conduct the Board of Management may require existing students to re-apply for admission to the School at the termination of the school year in advance of commencement of the next school year.
- K. **Strategies to Encourage School Attendance**
 - a) Informing and reminding students and parents/guardians of the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 in relation to attendance
 - b) Informing parents/guardians, through circulars and school newsletters, of the negative impact of absenteeism on students' education
 - c) Encouraging full attendance by students particularly on days prior to school breaks
 - d) Homework club: a programme to assist local primary and second-level students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The programme is delivered by a qualified teacher assisted by Transition Year students from the School
 - e) First Year Induction Programme: mentoring of first year students by School Prefects under the supervision of the Year Head
 - f) Home School Liaison Officer
 - g) Twice daily roll calls
 - h) Early identification of poor attendance patterns and notification to parents/guardians of relevant students