



## ADMISSIONS POLICY 2017/2018

### Thurles C.B.S. Secondary School

#### (A) MISSION STATEMENT

Thurles C.B.S. is a Catholic Voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice School Trust (ERST) for boys only. The capacity of the school is approximately 700 students. Our policy is to enhance the educational growth of our students in their intellectual, spiritual, social, artistic, moral and sporting development. The policy is implemented within the context of our Mission Statement:

***Thurles C.B.S. is a place of learning where students are prepared for adult life, academically, emotionally, spiritually and culturally. We strive for a safe environment, free from bullying. We aim to promote the Christian values inspired by the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice. We seek to create an atmosphere of respect for the needs and talents of all members of our school community, while challenging all to reach their full potential.***

The Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter values are underpinned by a philosophy of education that has at its centre the unique dignity of the human person as a child of God. We see the interaction of people from different backgrounds—spiritual, ethnic, language, special needs—as a gift that will enrich the community of the school and promote the growth and learning of all. We value each student and their family. We welcome and are sensitive to each one, seeking to respond to their individual needs through:

**The Curriculum:** We provide a broad range of subject areas, encouraging students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and decision-making.

**Pastoral Care:** We support and challenge our students to make the most of their time in school, providing programmes of language support, help with study, and personal counselling where necessary and developing links with family, working in partnership with parents and guardians.

**Faith Development:** We have a special commitment to development of the spiritual dimension of the lives of our members. Faith formation and the Religious Education programme play a key role.

- Students follow the State programme in Religious Education which is suitable for students of all faiths and those of no faith
- The school celebrates the major Christian feasts, and the major feasts of other faiths are acknowledged and celebrated in an appropriate way.
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We hope that the gospel values inherent in the culture of the school will be internalised in the values, attitudes and behaviours of all members of the school community, and will find expression in their respect and care for one another.

The school is open to and welcomes all who share this vision and wish to benefit from it.

## **(B) SCOPE**

This policy operates in respect of admissions to the school in the following circumstances:

- Students applying for a place in first year
- Students from outside of the school applying for a place in any other year group or programme
- Students applying to repeat any year of any programme within the school, including repeating the Leaving Certificate
- Students from within the school applying for a place in the curricular programmes *Transition Year (TYO)* or *Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)*

## **(C) RATIONALE**

This policy aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it

## **(D) LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy is compliant with relevant sections of the:

- Education Act 1998
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007
- Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003

## **(E) SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Board of Management welcomes students with special education needs unless the nature and degree of these needs is such that to enrol the student would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student herself and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated. While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to select a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with special needs is dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student being supplied by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Hence the Board of Management reserves the right to postpone admission until such resources have been provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

Parents of students with special needs should inform the school as early as possible so that an application may be made to the Department of Education and Skills to have the resources necessary to meet the special needs of the student at the commencement of the school year. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school of the full details of their son's special needs well in advance of making an application to enrol. The Board of Management will do all that is reasonably possible to secure the resources to meet the needs of these students.

**(E) THE FOLLOWING WILL APPLY TO ALL APPLICANTS:**

- The educational attainment of the student must be such that there is a reasonable prospect that he will be able to access the curriculum.
- The school reserves the right to refuse a place to applicants whose behaviour it considers would be detrimental to the rights of other children. Attendance at the school is conditional on adherence to the school's Code of Behaviour. The school requires parents/guardians to confirm in writing that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the Code. A copy of the Code will be given to each applicant.

**(F) PROCEDURES RELATING TO ADMISSION INTO FIRST YEAR**

The Open Night for incoming First year students for 2017/18 will be held in Early October 2017. The school will accept application forms for 2017/18 from the date of the Open Night up to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Alternatively, information concerning Open Night can be attained by contacting the school office or the school website, [www.cbsthurles.ie](http://www.cbsthurles.ie).

1. Application forms are available from the school office on request.
2. Secondary school students must be aged 12 or over on Jan 1st of the calendar year following the child's entry into 1st year and must supply a Birth Certificate as identification.
3. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application within 21 school days after the *Due Date* for completed applications in any year. Late applications will be kept on file and considered only when all applicants who applied on time have been considered.
4. On receipt of an offer of a place, parents/guardians must secure that place by completing and returning the *Acceptance Form* which accompanies the offer. This *Acceptance Form* must be received in the school office on/before the date indicated on the letter offering a place. Failure to return the completed *Acceptance Form* by this date may result in the offer of the place being withdrawn, and the place being offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.
5. Misleading or inaccurate information may result in disqualification of the applicant.
6. Parents are expected to co-operate with the school's attempts to identify the educational or other relevant needs of the child by permitting the school to discuss their child's educational records with the feeder primary school.

A maximum of 130 students will be enrolled in First Year. If the school is over-subscribed then the following criteria will be applied in selecting applicants.

1. Brothers of students, past or present, and children of school staff.
2. Pupils of Scoil Ailbhe (E.R.S.T.) National School, Thurles.
3. Students from within the traditional catchment area as defined by the following feeder schools, listed in the following order for convenience;

Ballagh  
Ballycahill  
Ballysloe  
Ballytarsna  
Boherlahan  
Clonoulty  
Crosspatrick  
Gaile  
Galmoy  
Gortnahoe  
Holycross  
Inch  
Johnstown  
Leugh  
Littleton  
Loughmore  
Moycarkey  
Moyné  
Rahealty  
Rossmore  
Templetuohy  
Thurles  
Two-Mile-Borris  
Upperchurch  
Urlingford

5. All other applicants

At whatever stage in the above listed criteria that demand may exceed the remaining places then a public lottery will be held in the school to select students from that stage of the criteria to fill the remaining places in first year. The offer of a place in first year is subject to the student fulfilling the criteria laid out in section ( F ).

#### **(G) PRODECURES RELATING TO ADMISSION TO A YEAR OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR**

##### **Procedure**

1. Following initial contact with the school, intending applicants will be required to meet with the Principal accompanied by parents or guardians.
2. Applicants should complete the application form, giving all of the details required. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians.
3. Applicants will be required to provide details about the second-level education in their previous school(s) including copies of their two most recent school reports that set out the results of in-house examinations. Where an applicant has attended more than one second-level school they may be required, at the discretion of the Board, to submit reports from each school and copies of the results of any State examinations.

4. Where it is considered necessary by the school, an applicant may be required to complete a further information form regarding their child's educational progress and/or to provide a current education psychological assessment report. Failure to complete any of the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant documentation requested by the school may result in an applicant being refused admission to the school.
5. Only in very unusual and unavoidable circumstances will applications be accepted for entry to a year group sitting a state examination .i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> year and or 6<sup>th</sup> year.

#### **Enrolment criteria**

1. The applicant and his family must agree, in writing, to allow the principal to seek all records relating to the applicant from his previous school(s).
2. Enrolment is subject to the applicant's subject choices being available (on the curriculum and not exceeding maximum class size) and not exceeding the maximum number in a year group (number 6 below)
3. All students entering the school must supply a Birth Certificate or other appropriate identification.
- 4.. The school reserves the right to refuse to admit a student in exceptional circumstances. (See section (J))
5. The overall capacity of the school is approximately 700 students. The desired number in any year group is 130 per year, except for TYO which will have no more than 72 students.

#### **(H) PROCEDURES RELATING TO ADMISSION TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES, SUBJECTS OR SUBJECT LEVEL**

If the demand for a specific programme, subject or subject level exceeds the number of places available then the school will make every effort, within the constraints of teaching resources, to accommodate the student. Where it is not possible to accommodate all applicants then priority will be given to students from within the school. A lottery will be held to fill remaining places.

##### **1. Entry to Transition Year (TY).**

It is the stated intention of the Board of Management of Thurles C.B.S. that as many students as possible experience the Transition Year Programme in the school. This Programme is designed to broaden the educational experience of the student and further prepare him for the Leaving Certificate Programme. A copy of the T.Y. Programme may be acquired by contacting the Principal of the school.

Procedure for Applying: - All students wishing to follow the T.Y. Programme must complete an application form. This application can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Because of the finite nature of resources it may not be possible to accept all students that apply into T.Y. In such circumstances the following limits and criteria will apply.

- (i) Class size, in general, will not exceed 24 students.
- (ii) Students will have to have displayed a reasonable willingness and capability to follow programmes that allow varying levels of supervision.
- (iii) Where demand exceeds available places then a lottery system will be used to allocate places.

2. **Entry to Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)** requires students to have a particular combination of subjects, as laid down by the Department of Education & Skills.
3. **Entry to specific subjects** will be determined by the subject choice process, where students indicate their preferred options and the school allocates classes. A subject will only be offered if there are a minimum number of applicants for it. In normal circumstances this will be a minimum of 10 students. Other criteria to be used include:
  - The student's previous performance at that subject relative to the other applicants
  - The student's results in State examinations (where available) will also be considered.
  - If this does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the school may survey the student's previous teacher(s) about his suitability for the subject or alternative subjects and the school may also take into account the availability of other suitable subjects .
  - If above procedures do not resolve an over-supply situation then a lottery will be held.
4. **Entry to specific subject levels** will be primarily determined by the student's results in the relevant State Examination. The student's performance at this subject up to this application and his performance in this subject relative to other applicants will also be taken into account.
5. **Admission to repeat a year:** All such applications are subject to Dept of Education & Skills Circular Letter M2/95. Applications will be considered in the light of the class size and overall enrolment restrictions set out elsewhere in this policy. Applications must be in writing and must state the relevant Circular and the particular clause(s) being invoked in support of the application and must be accompanied by supporting documentation, as appropriate. The school must be satisfied that the applicant, in light of the special circumstances that gave rise to the application, applied himself to the best of his ability. The application to repeat the year will only be successful subject to all first time applicants having been accommodated.
6. **Admission to repeat the Leaving Cert Programme:** The school does not operate a Repeat Leaving Certificate Programme. It does not provide any additional teaching to cover material normally covered in year 1 of the Leaving Certificate Programme. Students who apply to repeat the Leaving Certificate will be considered in the context of places available in the relevant subjects, the overall programme and overall enrolment within the school. The student's previous academic record, application to studies, and attendance will also be taken into account.

**(I) DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REGARDING ENTRY TO FIRST YEAR, OTHER YEAR GROUPS AND SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES AND SUBJECTS**

This is a matter for the Board of Management but is normally delegated to the Principal, who decides on such matters in accordance with the school's general policies. The Principal may refer any application to the Board for decision.

**(J) RIGHT OF REFUSAL**

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student in exceptional cases.

Such an exceptional case could include the following:

1. The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and

Science, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education or

2. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

Ultimately, the right to refuse admission is a matter for the Board of Management, who must balance the rights of the individual alongside the rights of the school community in line with legislation.

**(K) RIGHT OF APPEAL**

Where a student is refused admission to the school or to a specific programme within the school, they have the right to appeal this decision to the Board of Management, or under S.29 of the Education Act, to the Secretary General of the Dept of Education & Skills.

**(L) OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES**

All school policies are available from the school on request.

**(M) EQUALITY OF ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION**

Guided by the principles of the school Mission Statement, Thurles C.B.S., Secondary will ensure no boy will be refused admission for reasons of religion, ethnicity, special educational needs (unless the needs cannot be met by the school, as outlined above), disability, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, sexual orientation, family or social status.

**(N) PARENTS/ GUARDIANS**

The school relies on parents/guardians to provide it with accurate and complete information and to update us in writing with any changes in the information already provided. Unless and until we are otherwise informed in writing, all correspondence in relation to your child will be sent to the address indicated on the enrolment form. In the case of parents who have separated, and where the school has been notified of same, the school will arrange for both parties to receive correspondence in relation to the child, if requested to do so in writing. The principal will also, when requested by a parent try to facilitate involvement by both parties in parent-teacher meetings. Should a parent or student wish to update or access their personal data, they should write to the principal.

**(O) DATA PROTECTION**

The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Personal data supplied on the enrolment form will be used for the purposes of student enrolment, registration – including the October Returns to the Department of Education & Skills, administration, child welfare, the school texting service for parents and to fulfil any other legal obligations. While the information provided will generally be treated as confidential to the school, from time to time it may be necessary for us to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education & Skills, the Department of Social & family Affairs, An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive and the National Educational Welfare Board.

**(P) REVIEW PROCEDURES**

The Board of Management will review the Admission Policy annually in line with evolving legislation and practice, including the Education Acts, the Equal Status Act and all related statutory and regulatory requirements.