



# ADMISSION POLICY

# **Admission Policy of Marist College**

**School Address: Retreat Rd, Athlone, Co Westmeath**

**Roll number: 63190M**

**School Patrons: Marist Brothers**

## **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.

This policy was approved by the school patron and Board of Management on 6<sup>th</sup> of February 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 Marist College 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**

Marist College is an all-boys Voluntary Catholic Secondary School operating under the Trusteeship of the Marist Brothers. As such it supports the religious and educational philosophy of its founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat. In September 1884, the Marist Order opened the first boy's school in Athlone.

The challenge for the school is to enable each student to reach his highest academic standard without stifling his development as a whole person. We face this challenge in the light of St. Marcellin's vision that a Marist school gives its pupils a realistic and pragmatic education in the context of "a Christian spirit and Christian attitudes".

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Marist College 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.

We make every effort to ensure that the uniqueness and dignity of each person is respected, and responded to, especially through the pastoral-care system in the school. Being keenly aware of the ever-increasing effect of outside influences on the lives of our students, we are even more concerned to maintain Christian values and practices.

The school supports the following principles :

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs.
- Equality with respect to maximum access and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to choice of school, having regard for the characteristic spirit of the school.
- Respect for the diversity of beliefs, languages, traditions and ways of life in society.

### **Mission Statement**

Our school Mission Statement seeks to create in our students a sense of:

- Self-Worth: For a happy and fulfilled life: good self-esteem is fostered by emphasis on strengths rather than weakness, by providing a variety of opportunities for success outside the classroom.
- Respect and Tolerance: For self and others
- Responsibility: For one's own actions based on a clear view of right and wrong and the strength to say no even to peer pressure: For the community based on a sense of justice, duty and responsibility to others
- Initiative and Openness to life's Opportunities: Which will foster an optimistic, grateful approach to life in general and an ability to cope with difficulties
- Christian Living: Giving by example and instruction an awareness of the Christian way of life, of the spiritual and moral guidance of the church, and promotion of devotion to Mary, the mother of God.

### **3. Admission Statement**

Marist College 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.

Marist College is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Marist College is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Marist religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of Catholic belief in preference to others.

#### **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class**

Marist College, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

#### **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

Marist College provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Marist College is a Catholic School and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Catholic denomination where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

## **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:

### **Mainstream Selection Criteria**

1. Brothers of present or past pupils of Marist College.
2. Sons of current staff members.
3. Applicants who attend the following feeder primary schools: An Grianan National School Mount Temple, Ardkeen National School, Ardnagrath National School, Athlone Mixed National School, Ballinahown National School, Ballybay Central National School, Ballinteleva National School, Ballymore National School, Brideswell National School, Carrick National School Curraghboy, Clonown National School, Coosan National School, Clonbonny National School, Cloonakilla National School, Cornafulla National School, Cornamaddy National School, Dean Kelly National School, Drumraney National School, Feevagh National School, Glanduff National School, Kilcleagh National School, Knockcroghery National School, Lismoil National School, Rashina National School, Rosemount National School, Scoil Na gCeithre Maisti, St. Ciaran's National School Baylin, St. Marys National School, Summerhill National School, St. Clare's National School Tubberclare, Tang National School, Taughmaconnell National School, Tubber National School.
4. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.

### **ASD Special Class Selection Criteria**

1. Current students enrolled in the school.
2. Sons of current staff members.
3. Brothers of present or past pupils of Marist College.
4. Applicants who attend the feeder primary schools (listed at number 3 above).
5. Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories.

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), a lottery system will apply.

## 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 to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;

When a boy with special educational needs qualifies for a place in Marist College on the basis of the selection criteria set out above, the Principal will discuss the boy's needs with his parents or guardians, to ensure that the school is in a position to meet those needs, within the resources provided by the DES.

- (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 as set out in Section 6, criteria 1 and 3.
- (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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 only).

## 8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Marist College 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 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) 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 Marist College.

## 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 Marist College, 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.

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 Marist College 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 data 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 to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Marist College 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 Marist College 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 for admission of students to other years are as per the categories set out above and at the consideration of the Board of Management.

The Board of Management will decide on an application for admission to any other year other than First Year by applying the following criteria:

- There must be an available place after the general admission criteria have been applied
- It is in agreement with the College Admissions Policy
- Reason or reasons for leaving the previous school must be supplied
- The transfer must be in the best interest of the student
- The transfer must be in the best interest of the college and the other students in the college
- The transfer must be of educational benefit to the student  
*Transfer during an examination year is not recommended due to the disruptive nature of the move and the demands on students in exam years. Only in exceptional circumstances, (to be decided by the Board), will consideration be given to an application for a place in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Year.*
- The college's ability to offer the student their subject choice
- All applicants must provide the school with the following documentation before the Board of Management can consider an application.

(i) Completed enrolment form.

(ii) The two most recent reports from the pupil's previous school.

(iii) A written reference / report from the previous school

(iv) A statement on special needs, if relevant.

(v) Full behaviour record including any school files relating to incidents of misbehaviour.

(vi) Copy of Psychological reports if one has been completed for the applicant.

(vii) Where an applicant has attended more than one second level school they must submit all requested reports and files from each school.

(viii) Student passport from primary school.

(ix) Students attendance records for all years.

(x) Students engagement with Education welfare officer if applicable.

(xi) A list of subjects the student would like to study at senior or junior cycle.

(xii) A copy of state examination results if relevant.

**An application will be deemed incomplete until all relevant specified documentation has been submitted. The application will not be processed until compliance with the above has been carried out.**

Before arriving at its decision, the Board of Management will consult with the student's parents/guardians, his former school(s) (with parental permission), and the Educational Welfare Officer, if deemed necessary. To enable the Board of Management to properly and fully assess the application it is essential that it has all the relevant specified documentation.

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure that the required reports are submitted to the College.

The intended boy along with his parents or guardians will be invited to meet with the Principal once all of the above documentation has been submitted to the Principal.

The procedures for the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year are as per the procedures set out above and at the consideration of the Board of Management.

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

The board of Marist College or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, charge fees for or seek payment or contributions 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 faith development of our students is given priority through an extensive and creative religious education programme. All students are expected to attend religious education classes.

A parent of a student or a student who has reached the age of 18 years, who wishes to attend Marist College without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal.

A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss the matter. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students. The student concerned will be required to remain in the RE classroom under the supervision of the RE teacher.

## 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.