

## Bailieborough Community School – Admissions Policy



### **Mission Statement**

Bailieborough Community School is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in all areas of education. Our aim is to generate and maintain an inclusive climate of learning within which each student is enabled to develop and fulfil his/her unique potential.

It is our hope that every student who leaves this school will be equipped not only to make his/her way in the world but also to make a particular contribution to society and at the same time continue a process of lifelong learning.

Our characteristic spirit enables us in our commitment to respect ourselves and each other, to think independently, to be responsible for ourselves and to society and to tolerate and value diversity.

We aspire to fulfil this commitment by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the school, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged and valued and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

### **Introduction**

Bailieborough Community School is a co-educational second level school under the joint Trusteeship of the Bishop of Kilmore and Cavan-Monaghan Educational Training Board. It caters for a wide

range of curricular and co-curricular activities and will provide for the educational needs of students in its catchment area. This provision will be as wide and varied as possible and will operate in an atmosphere where each individual will be given the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential within the rules and regulations of the school.

This policy has been formulated by the Board of Management having consulted with the stakeholders of the school and in accordance with the provisions of the following legislation: The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Equal Status Act (2000) and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004).

Bailieborough Community School supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness particularly in relation to the enrolment of students with special needs or those disadvantaged by socio-economic circumstances
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- The right of parents/guardians to send their children to a school of their choice
- Respect for the diversity of traditions, values, languages and ways of life in modern Irish society

Implementation of this and other school policies will have due regard to resources and funding available from Department of Education and Skills grants and teacher allocations. The school will operate under the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department of Education and Skills. The school will follow the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 1 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

## **General Criteria for Admission to Bailieborough Community School**

- The return of a completed student enrolment form or application to transfer form. This form must be accompanied by all educational, psychological, medical, school and behavioural reports and assessments relevant to the individual applicant as well as his/her original Birth Certificate.
- The completion of an Assessment Test
- The acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and all other relevant Bailieborough Community School policies
- A positive attitude towards school work, behaviour, attendance and punctuality.
- The ability of the school to meet the educational and other needs of the applicant. Students with special educational needs will be educated in an inclusive environment with students who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the student is such that to do so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the student as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 or (b) the effective provision of education for students with whom the student is to be educated.

## **Application Procedures**

### **FIRST YEARS**

Each year an Open Evening will be held in November. Invitations and details of how to apply for enrolment will be sent to the local feeder schools (St. Anne's N.S., Ballinamoney N.S., St. Felim's N.S., Cabra Central N.S., St. Michael's N.S., Corlea N.S., St. Killian's N.S. Cross, Killinkere N.S., St. Joseph's N.S., East Knockbride N.S., Muff N.S.,

The Model N.S., Maio N.S., St. Mary's N.S., St. Patrick's N.S., St. Brigid's N.S.) and notices placed in the local media.

Students who wish to apply must have reached 12 years of age by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the year of entry or the year preceding entry to Bailieborough Community School and reached an educational standard of sixth class primary school level.

Completed applications, with required documentation, must be lodged in the School Office by the advertised closing date in order to be processed as required. Confirmation of enrolment shall be issued within 21 days of closing date. Students will be invited in writing to undergo an assessment test on a Saturday in February or early March. An information night for the parents/guardians of incoming first year students will be arranged by the school prior to the commencement of the academic year. Each student will receive a "Bailieborough Community School Welcomes You" brochure to help them prepare for the transition to second-level education.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Bailieborough Community School welcomes pupils with special educational needs and operates a Special Educational Needs Policy. The school will use the financial and personnel resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost.

It will endeavour to ensure that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably possible. In line with the Special Educational Needs Policy, the school will liaise with feeder schools in order to access information relevant to providing for the needs of students with special educational needs.

It is expected of all parents that they will facilitate the provision for special educational needs where the school authorities deem this is necessary.

### **LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED PROGRAMME**

This is a programme which can be taken instead of the conventional Leaving Certificate. It has a practical emphasis and is aimed at students who find it difficult to access the type of learning and academic requirements on offer in the traditional Leaving Certificate Programme. All students wishing to follow the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme must complete an application form issued after students and their parents or guardians have been fully informed about all senior cycle options at an information evening in the school.

All students are required to attend for interview in order to ensure that they fully understand what is involved in the programme and to ascertain their suitability for the course. A commitment to the attendance requirement, work experience and the meeting of deadlines for tasks and module assignments is crucial.

Following interview, successful candidates will be informed in writing that they have been offered a place.

A confirmation slip indicating acceptance or non-acceptance of the place must be returned to the school by the student and his/her parent or guardian.

A decision to refuse a student a place on the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme may be appealed to the Board of Management.

All Leaving Certificate Applied students engage in work experience one day per week. It is a student's responsibility to find his/her own work experience.

## **TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMME**

This is a one-year programme offered to students on completion of the Junior Certificate Programme. The programme is optional. All students wishing to follow the TY Programme must complete an application form issued after students and their parents or guardians have been fully informed about all senior cycle options at an information evening in the school. Students will be interviewed and successful candidates will be informed in writing that they have been offered a place.

A confirmation slip indicating acceptance or non-acceptance of the place must be returned to the school by the student and his/her parent or guardian.

A decision to refuse a student a place on the Transition Year Programme may be appealed to the Board of Management.

A fee is charged to cover some of the cost for a wide range of activities/trips in which the students are involved during the year. Fundraising during the year determines the extent of additional outings physical and educational. Provision of subjects and activities is subject to availability of resources.

All Transition year students engage in work experience one day per week. It is a student's responsibility to find his/her own work experience.

## **STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL**

As a matter of general policy, transfers into the school from another school are discouraged in the overall interests of the continuity of the student's education. An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled in another post-primary

school and seeks to enrol in Bailieborough Community School prior to the start of the school year.

The following considerations and procedures will apply:

- Student's applying for transfer from another school must submit a student enquiry form prior to completing an application to transfer form. The latter must clearly state the reasons for the transfer as well as being accompanied by copies of the student's two most recent school reports and copies of any assessments (educational psychological)
- The effect of the transfer on the student and his/her best interest
- The effect of the transfer on the order, discipline and educational welfare of existing students
- Availability of space in the curricular programme sought by the applicant
- Availability of the applicant's chosen subjects
- Department of Education and Skills guidelines with regard to class size of those subjects
- Consultation with the Education Welfare Officer if appropriate
- Where an applicant has been expelled or excluded from another school, the school will not consider itself obliged to enrol this student until all appeal mechanisms have been availed of.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application which includes an established prior record of poor behaviour

#### STUDENTS APPLYING TO ENROL AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Applications after the start of the school year or during the school year will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and will be

dealt with on an individual basis. The Parents/Guardians of students who seek to do so must arrange an appointment with the principal by ringing the school office or replying in writing requesting same.

### **REPEATING THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE/ REPEATING A YEAR**

Students from Bailieborough Community School who wish to repeat their Leaving Certificate must apply in writing to the school stating the reasons why they wish to repeat and nominating the subjects & subject levels as well as attend for interview accompanied by a guardian/parent. The Year Leader of the student concerned will be asked to ascertain the views of the applicant's teachers and if there is a consensus that repeating is in the best interest of the student who is accepted. This acceptance is conditional on the student agreeing to reasonable conditions laid down by the principal.

The school also wishes to point out that because of the constraints imposed by option choices and restrictions in class size it may not always be possible to satisfy an individual applicant's requirements. Also schools are required to submit applications for Department approval for a student to repeat a year of the Leaving Certificate programme where it is proposed to allow more than 5% of a year group to repeat.

Students of Bailieborough Community School who wish to repeat a particular school year must apply in writing to the school principal and attend for interview accompanied by a parent/guardian. They must fulfil the criteria laid down by the Department of Education & Skills. (Circular M2/95 A/B/C)



The school authorities wish to stress that the over-riding concern in all cases will be the welfare of the student concerned.

### **AUTISM CLASSES (ASD UNIT)**

Application will only be considered in the year of entry of the candidate to Bailieborough Community School.

All applications must be accompanied by an assessment carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist, approved by the Department of Education and Skills, recommending the candidate as suitable for consideration for entry to an Autism Spectrum Disorder Class.

Following receipt of a completed application, supported with all required documentation, applications will be considered in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Organiser for the area.

The following documentation is required:

1. A completed student enrolment form which is available in the school.
2. An Education/Clinical Psychologists' Report recommending the candidate is suitable for placement in an Autism Spectrum Disorder Class.
3. Reports from all previous schools attended and parental consent to access these.
4. Parents/Guardians will agree to share the content of any further reports with the school, e.g Psychological, Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language reports)

The following criteria will apply in allocating places to the two Autism classes:

- That there is available space. The unit will provide a maximum of 12 placements at any one time. Each group will have a maximum of 6 students
- That the needs of the student as identified can be met within the class
- Where there are more applicants than places the national schools of the school's catchment area will have priority
- The recommendations of the Special Educational Needs Organiser for the area based on the needs of the applicants
- All recommendations will then be considered by the Board of Management of the school who makes the final decision on all applications

Bailieborough Community School may in certain circumstances and following assessment be unable to meet the needs of the applicant on the ground that:

- They are deemed a risk to themselves or others
- Admission of the candidate would make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the provision by an educational establishment of its services to others

The placement of each student will be subject to regular, at least annual, review by school staff and, where relevant, professionals external to the school. At this point a decision will be made as to whether the pupil will:

- Continue in the Autism Class
- Integrate fully into the mainstream school
- Seek an alternative placement

Students with ASD will be educated in an inclusive environment with students who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the student is such that to do so would

be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the student as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 or (b) the effective provision of education for students with whom the student is to be educated.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment. Parents/Guardians of pupils who are refused admission will be advised of their right to appeal and given information on how to do so.

### **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The Board of Management of Bailieborough Community School wishes to state that it preserves the right to refuse an application for admission in exceptional circumstances.

### **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

The Board of Management further wishes to advise parents/guardians that in the event of a student being refused entry to Bailieborough Community School an appeal should be made first to the Board of Management and then, if unsuccessful, to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Further information will be made available if requested.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management pending legislation or within one calendar year, whichever occurs first but not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on  
October 6<sup>th</sup> 2014.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary of the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_