

Admission Policy of Moate Community School



**School Address: Church Street, Moate, Co. Westmeath.
Roll number: 90150L**

School Patrons: The Provincial of the Sisters of Mercy (CEIST)/ The Provincial of the Carmelites & The Chief Executive of LWETB

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 patrons and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patrons in September 2021. 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 Moate 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.

Application Form:

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

Mission Statement of the School:

Our school is characterised by an atmosphere of respect, this is at the heart of our school ethos. Respect manifests itself in our attitude towards one another in the school, in the community and in the environment in which we live and work. We endeavour to help each individual reach his or her potential, by promoting the formation of the whole person. We provide an education which empowers young men and women to put their Christian beliefs and values into practice. As a Community school we strive to provide an environment which serves the needs and aspirations of the entire local community.

Characteristic Spirit of a Community School under the joint patronage of Catholic and ETB Patrons

Moate Community School is a co-educational multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of the Provincial of the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy, the Provincial of the Carmelites in Ireland and the Chief Executive of the Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board.

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. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened in 1996 following the amalgamation of the Convent of Mercy Secondary School, Carmelite College Secondary School and Moate Vocational School (formally Co. Westmeath V.E.C. now LWETB). The values of LWETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy and the Carmelite Order are enshrined in the characteristic spirit of the school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Moate 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/ 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, Moate Community School provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Moate Community 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 Moate 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.

Vision Statement of the School

We, the Trustees of Moate Community School, envisage a school based on a Christian community of Faith, providing a secure environment for learning and teaching, which is conducive to the holistic development of the whole school community. The ambiance will be open, supportive and welcoming where students, teachers and support staff feel a sense of belonging, and parents are active parents in the education of their children

To this end our school provides:

- A comprehensive system of post primary education open to all children of the community providing instruction in academic and practical subjects.
- A wide range of extracurricular activities.
- A pastoral care programme which integrates the academic, social, personal and religious dimensions in a caring atmosphere.
- A comprehensive programme of adult, continuing education and further education

3. Admission Statement

Moate Community School 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.
- (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.

4. Special Education Classes

Moate Community School is a school which has established classes, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

It has established classes to provide an education exclusively for students with ASD. The school may refuse admission to this class, where the student concerned does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class. (See Uisneach Centre Admission policy attached)

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
- c) the student is not 12 years of age by January 1st of the year they start secondary school
- d) the school feels they cannot fulfil a duty of care to other students in the school due to health and safety issues with the students enrolment

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:

Selection criteria:

1. Priority is given to students from primary schools in the catchment area who enrol by set date
2. Priority is given to students whose siblings/step siblings are already in the school who enrol by set date
3. Priority is given to students who live in the catchment area who enrol by set date
4. A lottery system may be employed in a situation where demand exceeds supply. The lottery will be overseen by an independent observer.

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, other than in relation to a student's prior attendance at:
 1. an early intervention class
 - or
 2. an early start pre-school, specified in a list published by the Minister from time to time.
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school; (other than in relation to further education and training courses run by a school in respect of those courses).
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude other than in relation to: admission to a special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned.
- (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.
- (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 31st January 2025 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Moate 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

(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 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 **Moate Community School**, 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.
- (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.

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 Moate Community School 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.
- (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 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 Moate Community School 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 Moate Community School 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.

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

All students seeking admission to other years during the school year are subject to the following criteria:

- a. The school capacity to cater for the student
- b. Class size and subject choice
- c. Having sufficient resources
- d. Physical accommodation
- e. Health and Safety concerns

Enrolment Process at start of the school year

1. Official enrolment form is filled out fully by applicant
2. Moate Community School will seek reports from previous school to assist in providing a suitable education provision for the student.
3. The student and parent is met by Principal/Deputy Principal
4. The applicant is advised in writing/email if there is a place available

Enrolment Process during the school year

As Above

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

The Board of Moate 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-

- (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

Moate 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.*