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DUNSHAUGHLIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMISSIONS & PARTICIPATION POLICY 2017/18

ADMISSIONS & PARTICIPATION POLICY



DUNSHAUGHLIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE 2017-2018

1.1 Introduction

The enrolment Policy of Dunshaughlin Community College has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the EPSEN Act 2004 and the Equal Status Act 2000 in order to assist Parents and Guardians of prospective pupils in relation to enrolment matters. The Principal as Secretary to the Board of Management will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to students who wish to enrol in First Year for the following academic year, students of the college who wish to apply for a particular curricular programme, and students who wish to transfer from another post-primary school.

1.3 School Mission Statement

‘We are committed to the provision of a complete education maximising student potential to the highest possible standards through a highly committed staff in a modern well equipped college. We strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in a happy, caring, supportive but challenging and well structured environment.

A demanding environment can also be a caring environment.’



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1.4 Relationship of Policy to DCC's Mission Statement

This policy has been developed in line with the mission statement of Dunshaughlin Community College. The school endeavours to provide an education for all its students, that is one which has as its aim the development of all aspects of the individual – aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, religious, social and spiritual, for personal and family life, for working-life, for living in the community and for leisure.

Dunshaughlin Community College operates within the regulations laid down by the D.E.S and Louth & Meath Education Training Board and follows the curricular programmes of the D.E.S. both of which may be amended from time to time in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act, 1998.

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College while formulating this policy have shown due regard for the provisions of the **four principle** Acts which govern education policy, namely, the Education Act, 1998; the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000; the Equal Status Acts, 2000 & 2004 and the Vocational Education Amendment Act 2001

In keeping with the above-mentioned legislation the Board through this admissions policy 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.

1.5 Rationale

In the context of enrolment, the Education Act 1998 aims to promote (i) “equality of access to and participation in education and to promote the means whereby students may benefit from education” and (ii) “the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice having regard to the rights of patrons and the effective and efficient use of resources” (Objects of the Education Act 1998 (c) & (e)). Under this act the school is obliged to “establish and maintain an admissions policy which provides for maximum accessibility” (Education Act 1998, Section 15 (2) (d)).



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1.6 Policy Content

1.61 Management

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College endeavours at all times to carry out its duties in accordance with section 15(1) of the Education Act, 1998. (For details of the structure of the Board and a list of current members see appendix 1.)

1.62 Organisations

- (i) *Parents' Association:* The school has a Parents' Association.
- (ii) *Student Council:* In accordance with Part VI, S.27 of the Education Act 1998, Dunshaughlin Community College has a Student Council.

1.63 Curriculum

In keeping with the education principles and the requirements as set down in the Education Act, 1998, Dunshaughlin Community College endeavours to provide a curriculum which will meet the needs, aptitudes and abilities of all its students. (For details of programmes currently on offer see Appendix 2). The curriculum is subject to change from time to time, either because of changes initiated by the D.E.S. or due to changes in the financial and staffing resources available within the school.

1.64 What constitutes a completed Application Form?

An application for enrolment in Dunshaughlin Community College is defined as a completed Dunshaughlin Community College Enrolment or Transfer Form, along with required supporting documentation as described on the form. The application to enrol becomes 'live' from the date of receipt of **all** required documentation.



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2.0 First-Enrolment Procedures

2.1 Applicants for admission to first year 2018/2019

Parents or guardians seeking to enrol a child in their care to First Year in Dunshaughlin Community College are requested to return a completed Enrolment/Application Form together with required documentation, to the College by the date specified at the Colleges Open Night and College publications each year. The names of children from whom completed Enrolment Application Forms have been received will be placed on a waiting list.

It is a condition of enrolment that the parents/guardians of children applying for places give their consent in writing to comply with the College's Code of Conduct and any other policies that the College deems necessary.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to the College. No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language accent, gender, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs and values, sexual orientation, family or social circumstances.

2.2 General Principles applied to Enrolment Applications

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College must also respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the pupils already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. Assisting the College in such circumstances, **the Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children to be enrolled** bearing in mind:

- Available space in classrooms and not to exceed limits dictated by Health & Safety requirements.
- Availability of grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills.
- The ability of the College to cater for the educational needs of children.
- Department of Education and Skills maximum class size directives.
- The culture and ethos of the College community.

Should the number of children seeking enrolment in any year exceed the number of places available (due to the non-availability of suitable accommodation, teaching staff or other resources), the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment.



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1. Children who reside within the catchment (as defined by the board of Management).
2. Brothers and sisters of pupils already attending the College.
3. Children who attend the designated feeder schools in the catchment area:
 - Dunshaughlin National School
 - Gael Scoil na Rithe, Dunshaughlin
 - Culmullen National School
 - Dunsany National School
 - Skryne National School
 - Rathbeggan National School
 - Rathfeigh National School
 - Rathregan National School
4. Children of College staff members.
5. All other Applicants.
6. Regardless of the above categories a set number of places will be reserved for students from the CES.

The Board will review and consider these criteria and the weightings associated with them on a yearly basis.

Pupils falling within the agreed criteria will be offered provisional places in First Year for the following academic year. Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list from which any subsequent vacancies in the year group will be filled.

The order in which a waiting list should be compiled will be as follows:

1. Applications received on or before the closing of Wednesday 11th October 2017 will be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be determined by a lottery system, which will be independently overseen.
2. Applications received after the closing date will be placed on the waiting list after (1) above, in order of date and time received.

The college will follow the procedures below:

1. Open Night will be held on Tuesday 3rd October 2017
 - Invites will be given to all feeder schools in the first instance
 - Advertisements to be placed in the local paper, parish bulletins, college website site, local social media platform.
2. Closing Date for Application is Wednesday 11th October 2017
3. First Round Offers will be made during the week commencing 23rd October 2017.

Following the receipt of applications and the provisional allocation of places, pupils are required to attend for an assessment test. Failure to attend for registration/ assessment test without furnishing adequate notice may lead to the offer of a place being withdrawn.

The College will arrange an information night for parents/guardians prior to the commencement of the academic year.



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2.3 Decision-making Process

In the normal course of events it is envisaged that enrolment in Dunshaughlin Community College will be ratified as a matter of course. In situations where this is not the case the Principal will refer the particular case to the BOM for its decision.

All decisions in relation to the enrolment of students in Dunshaughlin Community College are made by the BOM of the school in accordance with school policy; the Education Act 1998; the Education Welfare Act, 2000 and the Equal Status Act, 2000.

2.4 Specific Requirements

- The student must have reached eleven years of age 12 by 1 January of the year preceding entry into Dunshaughlin Community College in accordance with Dept. of Education and Skills regulations.
- The applicant's birth certificate, one passport-sized photos and a copy of a utility bill to confirm proof of residence in the catchment area should accompany all applications.

2.5 Contract of Learning /Behaviour

Central to the operation of an effective and caring school is a just and fair code of behaviour to which all parties – parents/guardians, students, staff and management - fully subscribe and which has regard to the rights and responsibilities of all concerned. It is an essential prerequisite of enrolment in Dunshaughlin Community College that the school's:

- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Photograph Parental Consent

is studied in advance by the parents/guardians/students concerned and that its acceptance is acknowledged in writing.

2.6 Yearly Commitment in Subsequent Years

Parents/guardians are required to renew their acceptance of the Code of Positive Behaviour **and other policies relevant to good order and behaviour** prior to the commencement of each school year. The student journal will be used for this purpose.



2.7 Other Programmes:

2.71 Transition Year

Places will be allocated on the following basis:

- All students who wish to be considered for Transition Year, will be required to fill out an application form in November of their Third Year (subject to change) and return the fully completed form to the school by the designated due date.
- The student's behaviour, work ethic and attendance records in previous years will be examined, along with his/her application form and these will be taken into consideration before offering a place to a student.
- A student's age may be considered in determining if it is in the best interest of the student to partake in Transition Year.
- Interviews (Group and /or Individual interviews) may then be held to determine the suitability of the students to partake in the programme.
- A waiting list will be created following the initial filling of the agreed number of places on the programme. This will be determined following a meeting of the Board of Management of the College.
- A student may lose his/her place in Transition Year if his/her behaviour record deteriorates.

2.72 Leaving Certificate Programme

The school offers the established Leaving Certificate Programme, the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

- Students who wish to continue on to Senior Cycle in either programme will be expected to indicate this to the school by the end of January (subject to change).
- Students will be asked to indicate their preferred choice of programme on an application form by the end of January (subject to change).
- Students will subsequently be asked to indicate their preferred subject choices. Every effort will be made to facilitate the students' choices. However, due to teacher allocation and other constraints, it may not be possible to offer all subjects requested by students.
- Students may also partake in the LCVP programme subject to meeting the necessary requirements as set down by the Department of Education and Skills.



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2.73 Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

There will be one Leaving Certificate Applied Class (subject to adequate numbers as determined by the BOM).

- All students who wish to apply for LCA will be expected to fill out an application form in January (subject to change) and return the fully completed form to the school.
- Interviews(Group and /or Individual interviews) may then be held to determine the suitability of the students to partake in the programme
- The student's behaviour, work ethic, suitability for the programme and attendance records in the previous three years will be examined and taken into consideration when offering a place to the student.

2.8 Students with Additional Needs

The BOM of Dunshaughlin Community College welcomes students with special educational needs. Parents/guardians of students with such needs should contact the school as early as possible in writing in relation to the specific needs involved and, if possible, submit copies of any assessments, reports or other relevant documentation. This information is required by the school so that it can seek additional resources from the National Council for Special Education well in advance of the commencement of the school year. Where necessary, the school will also meet with the parents/guardians concerned to discuss students' needs and the school's capabilities to meet those needs.

In exceptional circumstances, where adequate resources are not forthcoming from the National Council for Special Education or where the provision of these resources is unduly delayed for whatever reason, the school may have to postpone admission until the resource needs are put in place.

3.0 Repeating a Year in Dunshaughlin Community College

3.1 Pupils Wishing to Repeat a Year

Consideration will only be given to pupils wishing to repeat a year in exceptional circumstances and for reasons acceptable to the Department of Education and Science as set out in circular letters M57/87, M33/89, M47/93 and M2/95.



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Students of Dunshaughlin Community College who wish to repeat a particular school year must apply in writing to the school Principal. In a memorandum of 23 October '03 the D.E.S. devolved authority to schools to make the final decision in this matter. In making the decision the school is obliged to respect the criteria laid down by the D.E.S. in CL.M2/95, namely that a student wishing to repeat should normally fulfil one of the following conditions (as summarised):

- (a) that he/she had been absent due to illness for a considerable period of time;
- (b) that he/she has experienced significant learning difficulties and as a result has not made satisfactory progress in school;
- (c) that he/she has recently changed domicile;
- (d) that he/she has experienced other extenuating circumstances.

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

Please note that because of the constraints imposed by option choices and restrictions in class size, it may not always be possible to satisfy an individual student's requirements.



4.0 Transferring from Another Second Level School

4.1 Transfers

While it is appreciated that in certain exceptional circumstances transfers are unavoidable (e.g. a change of residence or a family moving into the area), as a matter of general policy, transfers into the school during school term are discouraged in the overall interests of the continuity of the student's education, and to reduce disruption to the class group. The school acknowledges the challenges facing families newly migrated into the area from afar and will endeavour in so far as possible, bearing in mind the needs of all students, to facilitate the transfer requests of such students.

An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled (or is currently enrolled) in another post- primary school in or outside the catchment area or from a student who makes application after the commencement of the autumn school term. **In general, it is the policy of the Board of Management not to accept transfer applications from students enrolled in other local post-primary schools that share the same catchment, or are in adjacent catchments, or from students who have ceased to attend a post-primary school due to exclusion or suspension or encouragement to leave (whether formally or informally conveyed).**

Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which include any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or The Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

4.2 Transfer Application Procedures

Applications from students wishing to transfer into the school should be accompanied by:

1. A letter setting out clearly the reason(s) for the application and the following documentation should be supplied:
2. Completed Transfer Application Form which must have the following:
 - a. Report of Student's school attendance to date.
 - b. Special Educational Needs information.
 - c. List of optional subjects required.



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- d. In all cases, students will be requested to indicate their levels in Irish, English and Mathematics.
- e. The completion of the Student Enquiry Form from their current school.
- f. The two most recent reports from the pupil's previous school.
- g. A written reference/report from the previous school together with at least one additional written reference, dated within one month of the date of application, from a local Youth Club/Sports Club or similar organisation and/or a member of the Garda Síochána and/or a person of standing in the community.
- h. Psychological reports or other reports, if relevant.
Results of any assessment tests – e.g. NRIT, CAT 3/4, DATS etc..
- i. The Application Form must be completed in full.**
- g. Interview with parent(s)/guardian(s) or a student over 18 years of age.

The school also reserves the right to request a confidential reference from the authorities in previous school(s) and such other background checks as may be deemed appropriate in order to properly consider the application.

Having due regard and respect for the statutory and constitutional rights of parents and their children, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse any application in particular circumstances, which might include but are not confined to the following:

- i. An established prior record of poor behaviour and, in particular, any propensity towards violence against other pupils and/or members of staff; or any record of being involved in the use of or of encouraging others to use illegal substances either in school or in public.
- ii. Lack of adequate resources and adequate support personnel to cater for particular needs;
- iii. Insufficient educational attainment to participate in a particular course or year group, e.g. a post-leaving certificate programme.
- iv. Lack of space in a particular programme/year group.

Applications to transfer into the school will be considered having regard to the overall wellbeing of existing pupils, and the availability of a student place in the class or year group, physical space and resources. Where the Board has good grounds for forming the fair and reasonable opinion that it would not be in the best interests of the existing students, of teaching and learning in the school, and/or the applicant, to accept such a transfer, it is the policy of the school to refuse to enrol such applicants.



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Where a student, who has left Dunshaughlin Community College voluntarily to take up employment or to attend another educational establishment, subsequently makes a formal application for re-admission to the school, the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College shall, upon review, take a decision as to whether or not to re-admit a student to the school. Such a review would incorporate the student's previous record in the school in relation to application to work, participation in school activities, attendance, behaviour, records from previous school. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student will be interviewed as part of the re-entry procedure.

Prior to admission to Dunshaughlin Community College students will be required to sign a form indicating their acceptance of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour.

Dunshaughlin Community College welcomes students with special needs and will use the resources, both financial and personnel, provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost so that these students are free to participate in the life of the school in so far as is reasonably practicable.

While recognising and fully supporting parents'/guardians' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the school's ability to accept students with particular 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.

The school welcomes applications from students with special educational needs, unless the nature and degree of those needs is such that to enrol the student concerned would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation including student's records from primary school, will assess how the needs of these students can be met.

Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled. If further resources are required, the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) will request NCSE to approve the necessary assistance – forms will be completed in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Principal may request a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's education and/or other needs.



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NB It may take some time for the Department of Education and Skills to process such applications. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making application.

4.3 Exceptional Circumstances

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College reserves the right to refuse to admit a student in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances may include where the enrolment of the student may pose an unacceptable risk to the health, welfare and safety of other students or staff, or a risk to school property.

5.0 Right of Appeal

The BOM advises parents/guardians that in the event of a pupil being refused entry to Dunshaughlin Community College an appeal may be made under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. The appeal is made initially to the Board of Management. In the event that the Board of Management formally refuses entry, a further appeal may be made to Louth & Meath Education Training Board. If the appeal is not upheld at LMETB level an appeal may then be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. Further information will be made available if requested. **(See appendix 4 for school contact details)**

6.0 Monitoring and Review of the Policy

Monitoring and Review of the Policy.

This policy was revised on 30/09/2003
This policy was revised on 14/12/2009
This policy was revised on 09/09/2010
This policy was revised on 19/11/2012
This policy was revised on 21/09/2015
This policy was revised on 22/09/2016
This policy was revised on 12/10/2017



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Appendix 1

Organisations/Groups represented on the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College

LMETB	Ms Catherine Clair Mr Gerry O Connor Mr John Fanning
Teaching Staff	Ms Vera Prendergast
Parents	Mrs Barbara Sheehan Mr Terry Malone
Community Representative	Ms. Rosemary Maguire

Appendix 2

Programmes which will be provided in Dunshaughlin Community College in 2017-2018

Junior Certificate.
Transition Year
LCVP
Leaving Certificate
Leaving Certificate Applied



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Appendix 3

Maximum number of Classes and Maximum Year Group sizes for 2017 – 2018

First Year:	7 Class Groups : 188	students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Second Year:	6 Class Groups : 180	students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Third Year:	6 Class Groups: 157	students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Transition Year:	6 Class Groups:	149 students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Leaving Certificate Year 1:	7 Class Groups : 187	students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Leaving Certificate Year 2:	6 Class Groups : 172	students for 2017 / 2018 academic year
Incoming first years 2018:	*180 students	students for 2018 / 2019 academic year (Please refer to Page 5: point 6)

Appendix 4

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS:

Principal: Mr. Shane Foley

Deputy Principal: Ms Bridget Bennett

Deputy Principal: Ms Cathy Byrne

Deputy Principal: Ms Julie Anne Collins

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