

# **Admissions Policy for St Eunan's College, Letterkenny**

(Effective for school year 2011/2012)

## **Preamble:**

St Eunan's College was founded in 1906 as a minor seminary and boarding school for boys. The introduction of free education and the expansion of VEC schools to all parts of Donegal during the last thirty years presaged the end of boarding in 1992.

St Eunan's is a Catholic college under the trusteeship of the Bishop of Raphoe. It caters in large measure for Letterkenny and its environs. The college has continually evolved and changed to meet the demographic, social and cultural challenges both locally and nationally. The college welcomes and respects the increasing multiracial, multi-denominational nature of the community.

Letterkenny is Donegal's largest town. It has close links with Northern Ireland. The college has been influenced by the rapid pace of change in education, technology and society. As the college acknowledges and manages these changes, it is aware of the demands and pressures on young people. The college aims to equip its students with an education that will allow them to take their place in the Ireland of the twenty-first century.

## **Mission Statement.**

St Eunan's College is committed to the development of the whole person while endeavouring to foster in the student a positive sense of self-worth within a Christian and caring environment. The college constantly strives to achieve positive change, leading to the continuing evolution of structures, which can serve the needs of each student. The criterion of excellence is applied to all our activities.

## **Aims**

- To encourage the development of the individual students to the fullest extent, in co-operation with parents and guardians
- To help the students realise his spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and cultural potential
- To recognise the diverse talents of all our students and help them develop these talents
- To foster a sense of identification and belonging with the school
- To provide the student with the best possible education available, academic and practical, from the resources the school has to offer.

## **1 Operating Context**

### *The 1998 Education Act*

The Board of Management of St Eunan's college supports the principles underpinning the Education Act of 1998 and recognises the rights of the Patron of the College, the Bishop of Raphoe, as set out in that act.

The college strives to be a place of welcome. It is Christian and specifically Catholic in character and ethos but does not exclude other faiths and traditions.

It is inclusive in its intake and offers as comprehensive a curriculum as resources and finance allow. The college endeavours to exercise justice and fairness in its procedures.

The college welcomes students with special needs and recognises the rights of parents to send their children to the school of their choice.

### **School resources**

St Eunan's College is funded by a combination of the Department of Education and Science (DES) capitation grants, a yearly school fee and funds raised by the Parents' Association. The college endeavours to implement all policies and plans subject to resources.

The college operates according to regulations laid down by the DES and follows curricular programmes prescribed by the DES

Programmes: Junior Certificate Programme  
Transition Year Programme  
Leaving Certificate Programme  
Leaving Certificate Applied Programme  
Learning Support teacher and Special needs programmes in Junior and Senior cycles.

## **2 Application for Enrolment Process for Academic Year 2011/12**

- 2.1 Enrolment packs for year 2011/12 will be distributed to the feeder National Schools in Spring 2010. The pack will contain the 1<sup>st</sup> year Prospectus, Application for Enrolment Form, School Transport Form and a copy of the school Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 Application for Enrolment forms will be also available directly from the school office (074-9121143).
- 2.3 The closing date for receipt of completed forms for academic year 2011/12 will be Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010 @ 4.30pm. Applications received after this date will not be considered.
- 2.4 Acknowledgement of receipt of Application for Enrolment forms will be issued by the school within 7 days.
- 2.5 Application must be accompanied by a €50 enrolment administration fee (The enrolment administration fee will be deductible from the school administration fees for 1<sup>st</sup> year payable in May 2011)
- 2.6 All applicants will be informed of allocation of places by the school on or before the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010.
- 2.7 The balance of the school administration fees will be payable in May 2011. Notification will be sent to all applicants of exact dates in due course. At this time applicants will be asked to confirm in writing their acceptance of the place offered for school year 2011/12.
- 2.8 In the case of a student deciding not to take the place offered, they must inform the school in writing at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 2.9 Notification will be sent regarding the Assessment testing and Induction day scheduled usually for the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in December of each year.

## **3 Selection Criteria**

The Board of Management shall have regard for the Department of Education and Science directives concerning class size, staffing provisions and other relevant requirements concerning accommodation such as physical space or the health and welfare of children in deciding the maximum number of places to be offered for enrolment each academic year.

If the number of applicants in any particular year exceeds the maximum number of places to be offered in that year, the Board of Management will apply the criteria listed below in the following order to determine the allocation of place:

- 3.1 First priority will be given to applicants in Category A. All places in Category A will be allocated prior to the selection process proceeding to Categories B, C & D.
- 3.2 Second priority will be given to applicants in each school in Category B.
- 3.3 All places in Category B will be allocated, and any possible waiting list for Category B created, prior to the selection process proceeding to Category C.
- 3.4 Third priority will be given to applicants in Category C.
- 3.5 All places in Category C will be allocated, and any possible waiting list for Category C created, prior to the selection process proceeding to Category D.
- 3.6 Fourth priority will be given to applicants in Category D.
- 3.7 Should the number of applicants in Categories A & B combined exceed the number of available places, then priority within Category B for the remaining places will be given to applicants in each school in Category B on a percentage pro-rata basis, directly proportional to the number of applications for admission received from each of the schools in Category B.
- 3.8 An independently witnessed random process (see selection process below) will be used to select those applicants from each school in Category B to whom an offer of a place will be made.
- 3.9 All Applicants in Category B, who are unsuccessful in the random selection process for that Category, will be placed on a single numbered waiting list, which will be compiled by a random selection process.
- 3.10 Should the creation of a waiting list for Category B be necessary, the selection process for Category C and Category D may be conducted to complete the creation of the single numbered waiting list, and the names of each Applicant will be added to the waiting list in the order in which they are drawn according to the process designated for Category C and Category D respectively.
- 3.11 Should the number of Applicants in Categories A and B be less than the number of places available, but the number of Applicants in Categories A, B & C combined exceed the number of places available, then priority within Category C will be given to applicants in each school in Category C by a random process selection.
- 3.12 An independently witnessed random process will be used to select those applicants in Category C to whom an offer of a place or a place on the waiting list will be made.
- 3.13 All Applicants in Category C, who are unsuccessful in the random selection process for that Category, will be placed on a single numbered waiting list in the order in which they were drawn.
- 3.14 An independently witnessed random process will be used to select those applicants from Category D to whom an offer of a place or a place on the waiting list will be made.

- 3.15 All Applicants from Category D, who are unsuccessful in gaining admission to the school after the random selection process for that Category, will be placed on a single numbered waiting list, in the order in which they were drawn.
- 3.16 The Board of Management reserves the right to allocate place(s) to any applicant(s) whose circumstances the Board of Management deem to be exceptional.

#### **Category A.**

- (i) Brothers of a present student in St. Eunan's College where present student is defined to include those who are enrolled but are not yet attending the College.
- (ii) Brothers of a past student in St. Eunan's College where a past student in this sub-category is defined as a student having completed at least 2 full academic years in the College.
- (iii) Sons of a past student in St. Eunan's College where a past student in this sub-category is defined as a student having completed at least 3 full academic years in the College.
- (iv) Sons of eligible staff in the College where eligible staff is defined as non-casual employees by St. Eunan's College for a minimum of one academic year are who are reasonably expected to be employed by the school at the time their son commences Secondary school.

#### **Category B.**

##### **Pupils of the following schools, listed in no particular order:**

Scóil Cholmcille NS, Convent Road, Letterkenny.

Woodlands NS, Ramelton Road, Letterkenny.

Scoil Naomh Fiachra, Illistrin, Letterkenny.

St Patrick's N.S., Lurgybrack, Letterkenny.

Glenswilly NS, Glenswilly, Letterkenny.

#### **Category C.**

##### **Pupils of the following schools, listed in no particular order:**

Gaelscoil Adhamhnáin, Glencar Road, Letterkenny.

St Colmcille's N.S. Kilmacrennan, Letterkenny.

Naomh Colmcille, Drumoghill, Manorcunningham, Letterkenny.

Scoil Cholmcille, Termon

Scoil Cholmcille, Newtowncunningham.

Glasáin NS., Creeslough, Letterkenny

Magherabeg NS, Derry Road, Letterkenny

Ballyraine NS, Letterkenny.

Educate Together, Letterkenny.

Scoil Mhuire N.S., Creeslough.

### Category D.

All other applicants.

### Notes

- Age – if a student is under the age for recognition for second level schooling he will not be accepted.
- Religion – a Catholic school is entitled to give priority to Catholic children within limits set out by the *Equal Status Act 2004-2008*.
- In exceptional circumstances the discretion of the Board of Management may be exercised.
- In the event of places becoming available offers will be made to applicants on the waiting list.
- In the event of over subscription and consequent unavailability of a place parents have the right of appeal to the Board of Management.

### SELECTION PROCESS

As part of the Selection Process all places in Category A will be assigned prior to the random selection process involving Category B.

The random selection process will be overseen by the Principal and witnessed by a representative of the Board of Management, a representative of the Parents' Association and an Independent Observer.

### Percentage Pro-rata allocation of places

The sample numbers below give an explanation of the method of allocating places to the schools in Category B if a pro-rata selection is necessary. The number 100 is used as an example and is not the real number of places to be allocated. Four imaginary schools are used in the sample pro-rata Category B table.

Total Number of Places for Enrolment	Number of Places filled from Category A	Number of remaining places for Category B
<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>80</b>

<b>Students from Category B</b>					
		Number of forms received	Percentage of total forms	Applying % to available places	Number of places to be allocated
Category B	School 1	24	25.26%	25.26% of 80 = 20.2	20
	School 2	21	22.11%	17.7	18
	School 3	30	31.58%	25.3	25
	School 4	20	21.05%	16.8	17
<b>Totals</b>		<b>95</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>80</b>

## **Random Selection Process**

The name of each Applicant from Category B will be placed in a container with all others from that Applicant's school. Each school container will be labelled with the school name. A member from the Board of Management will draw names from each container, one by one, until the maximum number of places allocated for each school in Category B is reached.

The order in which the names are drawn from the container will be recorded on a numbered list. Places will be offered in the order in which names are drawn from the container until the available places are filled.

## **Waiting List**

The remaining names in each container will be placed in one single container and a second similar random selection process will take place to establish a single numbered waiting list.

Please Note: Where there are applications from two or more brothers in the one random selection process, then upon the selection of one of their number, all of the brothers are deemed selected. Where there are insufficient places available in the relevant sub-category, the name(s) of that brother(s) is automatically placed at the beginning of the single numbered waiting list.

The Board of Management will allocate the 100\* places in the order of Category A (prior to random selection process), Category B (by pro-rata random selection process), and thereafter to Category C and Category D applicants by their respective random selection processes. \*100 is used here as a sample number only.

If at any point in the selection process a single numbered waiting list is created, any remaining Categories may be processed to complete the creation of the numbered waiting list.

The numbered waiting list will be used by the College to offer any places which may become available between the initial offer of places and the 1<sup>st</sup> September of the year in which the students begin First Year in St Eunan's College.

If a place becomes available in the relevant year and if the proposed transfer is deemed appropriate, the place will be offered to the first student on the waiting list.

## **SCHOOL ASSESSMENT AND INDUCTION.**

Once students are accepted into the College they will be invited to sit the school assessment which will be held in the school early in December 2010.

Students who fail to attend the school assessment will be deemed to forfeit their place automatically.

The Board of Management may, at its sole discretion, if it deems that exceptional circumstances apply, overturn such forfeiture if notified in writing before and, in any event, not later than 2 working days after the date of the school assessment, of the reason for such failure to attend.

#### **4 Special Educational Needs**

The school welcomes students with special educational needs. The school will request access to student's records from Primary school in advance of entry to the school and apply to DES for resources to support the student.

Information on the enrolment form will be used to identify children with special needs who may be applying for admission to the school and to become familiar with their needs.

The school will request copies of any of the child's medical/psychological /educational reports, if available.

The school may ask for an assessment as soon as convenient so that the needs of the individual may be assessed. The DES will be requested to provide extra resources, e.g. special needs assistant, specialised equipment, etc.

The school will meet with the parents to discuss the child's needs and the schools capability to meet same.

The school will endeavour to do all it can to identify, plan and provide for children with special educational needs and for children with disabilities.

The enrolment form contains a section dealing with particular questions concerning children with special needs. For example, useful information for the school would be: did the pupil have learning support at primary school; was an educational assessment carried out recently or was the student in receipt of resource hours?

Parents/guardians are requested to bring any documentation pertaining to the above on enrolment night. In many cases parents are met prior to the pupil beginning in September. If the pupil has had an educational assessment, application is made to the Department of Education and Science for hours prior to his commencement at the college. In the case of a student having physical disabilities application will be made in the same way for necessary supports and resources prior to the pupil becoming a student of the college.

#### **5 Links to National Schools for Enrolment**

Enrolment: 2011/12 Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010

Enrolment: 2012/13 December 2010

(Therefore enrolment dates will revert back to Autumn of the child's 5<sup>th</sup> class in school for the school year 2012/13 and subsequent years.)

#### **6 Contact with primary schools**

The primary school principals will be contacted by letter initially in November of each year to inform them of enrolment at the school. The letter will detail the requirements for enrolment; registrar's birth certificate, the completion of an application for enrolment form and other details including the date for the entrance assessment.

#### **7 Assessment**

**The assessment for incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year students, a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT3),** usually take place over the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in December each year proceeding entry to the school. This assesses an individual's ability to reason with symbols representing words; symbols representing quantities; and symbols

representing spatial, geometric or figure patterns. The assessments are analysed by the Learning Support Department. Their analysis will identify any student who may have a learning difficulty and who may be eligible for extra support. In addition a teacher for the college will visit the National schools in May to gather relevant information on each student. Each school will be asked to pass on information regarding students in receipt of remedial help, learning support and who have educational, psychological reports etc.

## **8 Transferring students**

All such requests will be dealt with in the first instance by the school Principal. Applicants will be issued with an enrolment pack containing, application for enrolment form for the particular year, school prospectus, admissions policy, mission statement, and a copy of the school code of conduct.

The application will need to be accompanied by relevant reports and references from the previous school. Applicants will be notified in writing within 21 days of receipt of the application informing them of the decision. Applicants will have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management.

## **9 Repeat Students**

All such requests will be dealt with in the first instance by the school Principal. Such applicants will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants will be notified in writing within 21 days of receipt of the application informing them of the decision. Applicants will have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management.

## **10 Exceptional Circumstances**

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse to enrol any student in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could include the following:

- In the view of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.
- The student has special needs such that, even with additional resources from the Department of Education and Science, the school cannot provide the student with an appropriate education.

## **11 Review**

The policy is subject to review by the Board of Management and the next review will take place not later than 2012/2013.