



Ratified at
BOM meeting of
October 16th 2018

Admissions Policy

*As an educational community we strive to embody the
values of unity, truth and love in our everyday interactions.*

Good Counsel College

NEW ROSS, CO WEXFORD.
ROLL NO: 63610I

AN AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL

1. Rationale

Good Counsel College is subject to all legislative requirements and regulations set down from time to time by the Department of Education & Skills (DES). The School is funded by the DES and is provided with staff in accordance with DES staff allocation systems.

The curricular programme of the school is governed by Department of Education and Skills regulation in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the **Education Act of 1998**.

Enrolment is limited by school capacity and by the requirements of the school curriculum and organisation as prescribed from time to time by the Board of Management and as determined by DES regulations and standards.

In assessing applications for admission the school will take fully into account:

- a. The rights of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice bearing in mind recent High Court decisions.
- b. The capacity of the school to provide adequately for the education of all of its pupils.

This policy also aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- a. To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with its Ethos, the Mission Statement of the School and legislative requirements.
- b. To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it.
- c. To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school.

The **Education Welfare Act, 2000** (Section 19 (1)) requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school's Admission Policy. Section 19(2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management shall, as soon as practicable (but not later than 21 days) after receiving such information *'make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof'*.

The **Equal Status Act, 2000** (Section 5 & 7 (2) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of *'gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community'* regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the school or regarding expulsion or any other sanction.

The School will comply fully with this legislation and render any application void, which does not comply with this legislation – in particular Section 19(2).

2. Introduction

- a. Good Counsel College is a Catholic School for boys and wishes to consider only:
 - i. Pupils whose parents/guardians are in agreement with the aims and philosophy of the school.
 - ii. Pupils whose Primary School records show that they are well motivated and willing to adapt to school discipline.
- b. It is expected that an application to attend Good Counsel College indicates an acceptance of all school regulations by both parents/guardians and pupils.
- c. Parents/guardians applying on behalf of a prospective pupil will be deemed to have read all the information set out in this document.
- d. The Board of Management retains the right to restrict intake below the number that the physical capacity of the school indicates if it considers that the admission of some pupils would be detrimental to the interests of those pupils or to pupils currently attending the school or to prospective pupils.
- e. All prospective pupils must meet current Department of Education and Skills requirements.
- f. Students with specific needs are catered for insofar as school resources, supported by the Department of Education and Skills, will allow. Applications will be considered from parents/guardians who desire for their son an education in the Roman Catholic

tradition. Should the need arise selection of pupils will take place in accordance with the admissions criteria set out below.

g. See page 5 for additional details regarding enrolment in the ASD Unit.

The Trustees of the College approve the Admissions Criteria and delegate to the Board of Management and the Principal the responsibility of applying the criteria.

3. Admissions Criteria.

Pupils, on entering 1st Year must be a minimum of 12 years of age on the 1st of January in the calendar year following entry. (Original birth certificates will be requested)

Applicants, whose applications have been received on time, will be admitted in the following descending order:

1. Pupils applying to the ASD Unit, to a maximum of 2 boys for the 2019/20 academic year.
2. Pupils whose parents are members of the staff of the College.
3. Pupils who have a brother currently attending the College.
4. Pupils who have brothers/parents past-pupils of the College.
5. Others.

Where necessary within any category, should demand exceed availability, pupils will be chosen by lottery. The **maximum number of admissions is 150 boys which is inclusive of the 2 boys admitted to the ASD unit**¹. The closing date for receipt of completed applications is 3.00pm on Friday November 9th 2018. Late applicants in any year will only be considered on the basis of availability of places.

In the event of students not being offered a place due to the maximum number being exceeded they will be placed on a waiting list. If a place subsequently becomes available, the criteria listed above, 1 to 5, will be invoked including the application of Footnote 1 below.

¹ Where the number of applicants to the ASD Class is less than 2 boys at the closing date for applications, the number of boys accepted into the mainstream cohort will be increased by that number. e.g 1 applicant for the ASD Class at 3pm on Friday November 9th 2018. 1 additional places now become available in the mainstream allocation i.e. 149. Total intake still at maximum of 150 boys (1 boy in ASD Class plus 149 in mainstream)

4. Admissions Procedure

First Year

- Stage 1** The first point of contact with the school is, generally, the Open Day on October 20th 2018. This is advertised in local papers and notice is given to the Principals of the Primary Schools in the area.
- Stage 2** Completion and return of the Application Form by 3pm on Friday November 9th 2018. Applications are considered valid from those parents/guardians who return this form complete with the Administration Charge (which may vary.) The closing date for receipt of same will be printed on that form.
- Stage 3** Parents will be informed at this stage if there is a difficulty accepting their son on the basis of the criteria set out above. The appeals process is set out below.
- Stage 4** The Entrance Assessment. Students may only attend for this assessment if they have completed the first two stages and have therefore made a formal application to attend this school. A candidate who fails to sit for the assessment without good reason (as judged by the school) will put their admission at risk. The Board may decide to revoke an earlier decision to admit such a student and to offer the place to a student on the waiting list.

Closing dates for these stages will vary from year to year. At each stage the closing date will be clearly stated and adhered to rigidly.

5. Eligibility for Enrolment in ASD Class:

The following conditions, along with the general criteria outlined above, must be satisfied for enrolment to be considered;

- a. The pupil has a diagnosis of Autism i.e. DSM-IV, DSM-IV-TR, DSM-V or ICD-10, from an ASD Multi-Disciplinary team and the pupil is recommended for placement in a Special Class or Unit attached to a mainstream secondary school.
- b. A detailed Psychological and Cognitive Assessment noting that the student is assessed to be within the mild/general to above average range of intellectual ability together with a Speech and Language report and an OT report within the previous two years must be provided. Indicators are that the needs of a student with moderate intellectual ability who is not capable of any significant level of integration are best met in a Special School placement. The ASD Class will not cater for boys with severe or profound learning difficulties.

- c. Each application should be supported by a report from the primary school, previous secondary school if transferring, outlining the student's academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs and outlining the current extent of social inclusion.

ASD Class Enrolment Policy:

- a. All vacancies in the ASD Class will be filled as per the criteria outlined in the Admissions Policy, page 4, and subject to all the conditions above being in place i.e. diagnostic criteria etc.
- b. Pupils who meet criteria for enrolment but are not offered a place for September will remain on that year's waiting list in the event that a mid-school year vacancy should arise.
- c. Where an application for a boy to be enrolled specifically in the ASD Class is unsuccessful this boy will not be accommodated in the mainstream intake as GCC would not have the capacity to meet their diagnosed needs. (see f below)
- d. The number of students enrolled in the ASD Class each year will depend on resources and the ability of the school to integrate the students into mainstream classes. The total capacity of the ASD Class is 12 boys. This will not be exceeded. The number of boys enrolled each year is determined in consultation with the NCSE.
- e. The inclusion operates on the understanding that the intellectual ability of students enrolling in the special class is similar to the profile of the population of students attending the main stream section of the school and the student would have the ability to integrate into mainstream classes according to individual need.
- f. In certain circumstances and following assessment, Good Counsel College may be unable to meet the needs of an ASD student on the grounds that:
 - i. They are considered a risk to themselves or others.
 - ii. Admission of the student would make it impossible to deliver, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the provision of an educational service to the applicant and to other students.
- g. An Annual Review of the student's placement within the ASD Class will be held by the ASD Class team together with a nominated representative from the Multidisciplinary Team, and any other significant professional/personnel involved in the students life to ensure that the ASD Class continues to be the most suitable placement option available to the student.

- h. All potential applicants may be visited by a member of the Admissions Committee to observe the student in their existing placement and to provide for feedback to the Admissions Committee.

ASD Application Process:

- a. Parent/Legal Guardians are required to indicate on the standard application form that they request consideration for enrolment in the ASD Unit on behalf of their son. Applications from a third party will not be considered.
- b. Applications should be made to the School Principal on the standard application form. This application form will be posted to all parents who complete an Expression of Interest Form, available from the school.
- c. Applications for enrolment will be considered, for eligibility, by the Admissions Committee².
- d. The completion of a written application form for placement of a boy does not confer an automatic right to placement in the ASD Class.
- e. Completed application forms and **all of the required documentation** (outlined at page 5 point 5.b) must be received in the school no later than 3pm on Friday November 9th 2018.
- f. If the number of applicants to the ASD Class exceeds the places available in any year the Admissions Criteria outlined on Page 4 (points 2-5) of this policy will be applied.
- g. Late applications to the ASD Class will not be considered. (See footnote 1 Page 4) Such applicants will be placed on the schools waiting list, in chronological order of receipt of application, and will only be offered a place in the ASD Class whereby there is;
 - a. A space available in the Class

AND

 - b. The overall enrolment in the year does not exceed 150 boys.Such late applications will not supersede those to the ASD Class or mainstream made before the closing date for receipt of applications who are already on the waiting list.

² The Admissions Committee will deal with any applications for enrolment in the ASD Class.

The Admissions Committee reviews the psychological and other available assessments of the child and any enrolment is subject to the approval of the said committee. The decision of the committee is subject to Board approval.

The members of the Admissions Committee are –B.O.M Nominee, Principal/Deputy Principal, Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, Member of the ASD Class team.

- h. If parents/guardians have decided to avail of a place in another school rather than accept a place in the ASD Class within Good Counsel College, they are required to inform the Principal, in writing, immediately. This will enable the school to offer the place to another student.

ASD Class Notification of Vacancies:

- a. The Principal will notify the Special Educational Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O.) of the number of vacancies in the existing classes in the school for the following year. The S.E.N.O. will also be informed of names of pupils on the application list.
- b. When the places for the following school year have been filled, the Principal will inform the S.E.N.O. of the pupils who still remain on the waiting list without places.
- c. The S.E.N.O. will also be informed if vacancies occur during the school year. Vacancies may be filled as they arise during the school year following recommendation from the Admissions Committee.

ASD Class Transition Programmes:

- a. The school will endeavour to make arrangements for staff to visit and observe new pupils in their existing placements, during the last school term to gain information about the students.
- b. Transitional Programmes will be arranged on an individual basis with successful applicants in consultation with parents, educational and multi-disciplinary personnel.
- c. Parents will be invited to a meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal for all new incoming students in May.

6. All Other Years

Admission is subject to the same conditions as outlined above. Admission is considered subject to;

- i. The completion of Application Forms which available are from the Office, Good Counsel College. These will be accompanied by the Admission Policy, Code of Behaviour and School Calendar.
- ii. Any application must be fully completed. Incomplete application forms will be returned to parents.
- iii. Normally applications should be submitted by April 1st in the year prior to the academic year the student intends commencing. Late application procedures are outlined later in this policy.
- iv. All applications must be accompanied by a reference from previous school.

- v. Applicants will be required to furnish details about previous 2nd Level education including school reports and other relevant information.
- vi. All applicants will require the following:
 - a. To attend for interview with Principal/Deputy Principal. To provide Written Assurances regarding compliance with the school's Code of Behaviour.
 - b. All new applicants will initially be accepted on a trial period – Contract to be signed by parents/student.
- vii. Selection Criteria: The following will determine the success of the application:
 - a. The capacity of the school to cater for the applicants needs i.e. subject choice, class size.
 - b. The behaviour record of a student in their previous school
 - c. The attendance record of a student in their previous school
 - d. The potential impact of the student on class dynamics.

7. Late applicants to year Groups:

In the event of applications being received after September 1st but before January 1st in any academic year from students wishing to enter a particular year group in that academic year the following will apply:

- i. All procedures as outlined previously for 'Application for other year groups'
- ii. Class Size – certain subjects (i.e. practical class compliance with Department of Education & Skills capacity limits.)
- iii. Subject Choice / availability of subjects.
- iv. There are certain restrictions on class sizes also in line with Department of Education & Skills guidelines and with school policy such as for Transition Year. Details of such restrictions may be had from the school.
- v. Applicants **must** have studied the available subjects in their previous school.
- vi. A period of at least one week will pass between the acceptance of a student and the student commencing classes to allow time for the Year Head and Tutor to disseminate relevant information regarding the new student's arrival.

Applications received after January 1st in a particular school year will not be accepted for that school year.

8. Admission to specific programmes or subjects (or subjects at a specific level) to students from the school.

If there are limits in Transition Year, or specific subjects the following will apply:

- i. Behavioural record.
- ii. Attendance record.
- iii. Performance in subject previously. If the student has not taken the subject previously the Principal will liaise with Guidance Counsellor and subject teachers in order to ascertain the viability of this option while being cognisant of the subject departments approved policy.
- iv. Student's commitment to the programme modules and completion of projects.
- v. Student's willingness to participate in all aspects of the programme.

In relation to the above courses an application process will apply. The school will be the final arbiters of who enters any of the programmes listed above.

Repeat Years

A separate policy is available for these applicants.

Data Protection

All data will be treated in line with our Data Protection Policy which can be found on our school website.

Appeals to a decision to refuse to enrol

- i. All applicants will receive a written answer to their request as set out above. Where possible, this will be done within 21 days of receipt of the application. Where it is not possible to make a decision on an application at the time it is received, the procedures to be followed will be explained in writing to the applicant within 21 days of receipt of the application. All applicants have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management. This will be dealt with at the next scheduled Board of Management meeting.

Appeals should be made in writing to;

**The Secretary,
Board of Management,
Good Counsel College,
New Ross
Co. Wexford**

- ii. A decision to refuse admission may also be appealed to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- iii. The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by a representative staff group for ratification by the Board of Management annually. Any staff member, Board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review, by outlining their observations in writing to the Secretary of the Board, at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Admissions Policy



To: _____

The Board of Management of Good Counsel College wishes to inform you that the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Admissions Policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of 16/10/2018 [date].

Signed *Paul Peadar O'Leary* Date 16/10/2018
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed *Mark O'Brien* Date 16/10/2018
Principal, Secretary Board of Management

School Contact:

Phone: 051 421182

Email:

Principal: mark.obrien@goodcounselcollege.ie

Deputy Principal: aidan.obrien@goodcounselcollege.ie

pj.walsh@goodcounselcollege.ie

Office: info@goodcounselcollege.ie

Website: www.goodcounselcollege.ie

Twitter: @GCC_NewRoss