Admissions Policy of Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara

Seanbóthar Luimnigh,
Nás na Ríogh,
Contae Chill Dara

Roll number: 68072I

School Patron/s: An Foras Pátrúnachta

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 patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the school patron on **14/09/26**. 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 Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara 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.

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

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara is a voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship of An Foras Pátrúnachta. It is a co-educational school which was founded in 2003 and it has a catholic ethos. The main aim of the school is to preserve the Irish language. We welcome all students from any background, faith or those having special needs.

The school's Mission statement

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara is an all-Irish, non-fee paying multidenominational secondary school, which is an integral part of the Irish language community. Our school provides an excellent education to help students to identify and develop their individual strengths in partnership with their parents. It is a school that welcomes students from different faiths and backgrounds that relate to our vision, our spirit and our philosophy.

3. Admission Statement

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara 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, or
(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. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara is a school which has established 1 special class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Youth, which provides an education through the medium of Irish exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the classes a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

Any special class opened in Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara will operate through the medium of Irish.

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.

6. Oversubscription (this section must be completed by all schools including schools that do not anticipate being oversubscribed)

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:

1. Brothers, sisters, half-siblings, foster or adopted children with current pupils of the school.
2. Children from the following Gaelscoileanna: Gaelscoil Nás na Ríogh, Gaelscoil Chill Dara, Gaelscoil Mhic Aodha, Gaelscoil na Lochanna, Scoil Chrónáin, Scoil Uí Riada, Gaelscoil Átha Í, (this list is not in any order of priority)
3. Children that the school is satisfied that the pupil has achieved a level of fluency in Irish and that fluency is likely to decline if he / she is not admitted to an all-Irish school.*
4. Children who have a brother, sister, half-sibling, foster or adopted sibling who have already attended the school.
5. By age; the oldest child first.

* Parents / guardians will have an overall responsibility to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate a level of fluency in Irish to the board. See further information in the relevant document available from the school.

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

The school Board reserves the right to set the maximum number of pupils in any given year. The maximum number of students allowed in any one year is **96**.

If two or more students are connected under criterion 1/2/3/4; priority will be set according to the next criterion on the list.

If the latter criterion applies, the available time of birth of the child will be taken into account on the birth certificate.

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:

Points (a) to (g) must be included here by all schools. There are limited exceptions to some of these (highlighted in red below) and schools must retain the exceptions that apply to them and delete those that do not:

(a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,

(b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- admission to an Irish language school, in accordance with the provisions of section 62(9) of the act

(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;
(other than, in the case of the school wishing to include a selection criterion based on siblings of a student attending or having 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 GCCD 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 Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara, 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 and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and are 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 GCCD 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; or
(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 data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

(i) an application for admission to the school has been received,

(ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or

(iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

(i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;

(ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;

(iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;

(iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

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 Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara 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 GCCD 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.

The supplementary waiting list will be created if applications are received after the closing date set out in the Annual Admission Notice. Applications will be sorted according to the selection criteria in this admissions policy. The first waiting list will be cleared before candidates are offered places on this supplementary list.

14. Late Applications

A place will be offered if there is a place available in the school.

If school places are oversubscribed after the main admissions process, any subsequent school places will be filled from the waiting list created from that process.

If applications are received after the closing date as set out in the Annual Admission Notice a supplementary waiting list will be created. The main waiting list will be cleared before candidates are offered places on this supplementary list. When a space arises in the school, applications on the supplementary waiting list will be considered in accordance with the selection criteria in this admissions policy on the day on which that school place arises in accordance with the School Admissions Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

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

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

A transfer request means a student who is already enrolled in another school or who lives outside the school catchment area, or an application from students who apply after the beginning of the Autumn school term.

Parents / guardians wishing to apply for a place in any year must write a letter of application to the Chairperson of the Board. The decision to admit children in any one year will be made by the Board of Management and rests solely with the Board.

Year 1
A place will be given if a place is available this year. Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in the relevant class, the school will apply the selection criteria set out in Section 6 of this policy to those applications. Where no place is available, the child 's name will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with Section 13 of this policy.

Year 2 to 6
Places will not normally be offered in classes above Year 1, except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the board. Children will be given a place in Years 2 - 6 if there is space in the year and the Principal / Board of Management decides that the child 's ability in Irish is at a level that would allow the child to function and learn in class and that other students would not have to turn to English to communicate. The parent / guardian will be required to provide evidence of this standard. The final decision in these cases will rest with the Board of Management.

Transfers are understood to be unavoidable in certain exceptional circumstances (eg transfer of a home or family moving to an area. However, transfers to Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara are generally not encouraged in the interests of the continuity of the student's education. from other Secondary Schools.

It is not the policy of the Board of Management to accept transfer applications from students already enrolled in local secondary schools except in exceptional circumstances. If the Board is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, the following considerations and procedures apply:

(i) That the school 's admissions policy be adhered to.

(ii) That places are available in the year, class or subject group in question.

(iii) That the student will function properly in an all-Irish environment and that he / she will benefit from it. (Ability in Irish will be assessed through interview).

(iv) The reasons for a transfer request must be clearly submitted in writing to the Principal of Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara.

(v) The student's Parents / Guardians must submit copies of the student's school reports from his / her former school to the Principal.

(vi) The Principal reserves the right to seek a confidential recommendation from the authorities of the former school or schools. This request will be made subject to the satisfactory provision of all relevant information (as requested by the Principal) from the post-school and the student's Parents / Guardians. Parents / Guardians must give permission for the Principal to be provided with such relevant and relevant information from the school from which the student wishes to transfer.

(vii) The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application in cases which may include a proven track record of misconduct.

(viii) The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application where, in the opinion of the Board, there is a risk of inadmissibility for other students, school staff or school property.

(ix) The student is able to adhere to the school's curricular provision. Applicants must study the number of subjects offered by the school in the class or year group and must study the required subjects set by the school.

(x) Consult with the Educational Welfare Officer if appropriate.

(xi) The applicant and his / her parents / guardians must accept the Gaelcholáiste's Code of Behavior and its Mission Statement in writing.

(xii) The Board of Management is of the opinion that the transfer is in the best interests of the student.

(xiii) That the Board of Management is of the opinion that the transfer is in the best interests of the school taking into account the interests and rights of the students already in Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara.

Repeat Year
Students already attending Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara.

It will only be in very exceptional cases that repeat applications for one year from current students of Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara will be considered. Such an application will be considered taking into account:

(i) The best interests of the child in the opinion of the school.

(ii) The welfare of the children in the classes in which the student in question may be placed.

(iii) The provisions of Department of Education and Skills Circular M02/95.

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

The board of Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

Religion is a subject in Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara. This program is not a religious formation / religious teaching and so all students can attend these classes.

When a church event is taking place in the school e.g. Mass other school arrangements will be made for those students who are not Catholics but receive a note from their parents

stating that their child will not be participating; In the case of a student over the age of 18, this written explanation will be accepted from the student.

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.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.
An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

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. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

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. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals 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.