

Admission Policy of Castlecomer Community School

School Address: Castlecomer, Co Kilkenny

Roll number: 91360T

**School Patron/s: The Provincial of the Presentation Sisters/Kilkenny & Carlow
Education & Training Board**

Sept 2026

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 30th September 2026. 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 Castlecomer Community School's 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

Characteristic Spirit of Castlecomer Community School:

Castlecomer Community School was established in September 1987 following the amalgamation of Presentation Secondary School Castlecomer and Castlecomer Vocational School.

The joint patrons of Castlecomer Community School are the Provincial of the Presentation Sisters and the Chief Executive of Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (formerly Co. Kilkenny VEC)

The opening of Castlecomer Community School saw the commencement of a new chapter in the history of education in Castlecomer with the founding intentions, values and inherited traditions of both patrons underpinning the ethos of the new community school. The roles and responsibilities of the joint patrons of a community school are laid out in the Education Act, 1998 and in the Deed of Trust for Community Schools. The aim of the joint patrons of Castlecomer Community School is to carry forward their rich heritage and traditions into the future with a renewed sense of service and relevance for the local community.

Castlecomer Community School is a co-educational, multi-denominational school which promotes a learning environment of respect and commitment. The school welcomes all children from the area and is committed to maintaining the ethos, values and beliefs of its patrons. This includes a deep respect for the Christian values so central to the Presentation Sisters and for the diversity of values and beliefs of the ETB and the wider school community. These are underpinned by the principles of :

- Compassion and care
- Equality and inclusion
- Respect and choice

Castlecomer Community School strives to be a vibrant and caring school which reinforces a sense of belonging and is committed to the academic, personal and spiritual development of its' students. It encourages excellence in education by fostering a love of learning and promoting a rich and diverse range of opportunities for all students to engage with its comprehensive curriculum and with school life ,thus equipping them to become well rounded, responsible citizens who can thrive in and contribute to an ever changing world.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Castlecomer Community School shall uphold, and be accountable to the patrons for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational , moral ,religious ,social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

Mission Statement:

Our school is a respectful community of learning. We recognize that the many different ways our students learn contribute directly to their holistic well being. Our mission is to include all our students in their pursuit of excellence, to equip them for the challenges of life.

3. Admission Statement

Castlecomer 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, 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

Castlecomer Community School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students with ASD. For admission this class see ASD Admission Policy on Castlecomer Community School's website.

Note for schools: The act does not require schools and special classes providing for a category or categories of special educational needs to change their current status. The current arrangements in relation to the category or categories of special educational needs provided by schools will continue as in previous years unless otherwise directed by the NCSE or the Department.

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 school does not have the necessary facilities, resources, specialised classes, staffing to cater for the needs of the applicant

The ASD class attached to Castlecomer Community School provides an education exclusively for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and 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 ASD Class Admissions Policy in Section 19 of this document)

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. A student with one or more siblings in the school
2. Students from schools within the catchment area of Castlecomer Community School (See Appendix 1)
3. Children whose parents or grandparents attended Castlecomer Community School

It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform our school of their entitlement to be included in Categories 1, 2, or 3 by fully completing the application form/process rather than the school's responsibility to establish same.

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:

A lottery system will apply in such cases.

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;
- (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 criteria based on (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and/or (2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school.

In relation to (2) parents and grandparents having attended, a school may only apply this criteria to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's annual admission notice).

- (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 2026 only).

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Castlecomer 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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) 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 Castlecomer 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 and
- (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 Castlecomer 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; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in [section 10](#) above.
- (v) Where the presence of a student is considered a Health & Safety risk to the school community

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 Castlecomer 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 Castlecomer 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 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:

Applications will be considered subject to the conditions below.

- The full set of subjects and appropriate levels available are suitable to the applicant and the applicant is willing to attend classes in all subjects provided for the class group he/she is joining.
- There is sufficient space in the classes/year group/subjects (i.e. using the maximum class size guidelines as issued by the Department of Education and Science).
- Our school having sufficient and appropriate resources to meet the needs of the applicant.

To assist with the process of transfer of students, applicants from other Post Primary Schools must provide written details of:

- Reason for transfer.
- Report on attendance, punctuality and behaviour and any previous disciplinary sanctions in transferring school.
- Copies of all school and State Examinations Commission Examination Results.

- Furnish a letter of reference from the Principal of the transferring school to support the application.

Castlecomer Community School reserves the right to refuse an application for admission where:

- The school believes that admitting the student is not in the best interest of the student.
- The school believes that admitting a student would adversely affect the education of the students in its care.
- The student has displayed a significant disregard for the student's previous school's code of behaviour.
- The student has engaged in illegal activity.
- The school believes that admitting the student would pose serious risks to the health and safety of the students in its care or staff members.
- Misleading or inadequate information was provided to the school.
- Parents/relevant personnel refuse to engage in appropriate communication as required by the school to facilitate transition in the school.

This list is not exhaustive.

In this instance, the school refers to the Principal/School management or to the Board of Management as per the level of application of this policy. Students transferring to Castlecomer Community School after the 1st November are usually only considered unless relevant factors including relocation renders it impossible to continue in their current school.

Entry to specific subjects at Senior Level will be determined by the subject choice process, where students indicate their preferred options, and the school allocates classes. Subjects will only be offered if there are a minimum number of applicants for it. Other criteria to be used include

- The student's previous performance at that subject.
- The student's performance in the State Exams where available will also be considered.

Entry to specific subject levels will be determined by the student's previous performance at that subject; their results in State examinations where available will also be considered. Subject departments may hold exams to ascertain appropriate levels which may lead to a change of level.

Requests to transfer from one class to another, within the same subject and level cannot be granted by school management. The Board of Management may consider and make a transfer, if circumstances arise, that it is considered in the best interests of the student and teachers involved.

The school strongly discourages changes of chosen option subjects and it is best if all research of subjects by students is done before the start of the school year. Any work missed out on due to a subject change is the responsibility of the students to complete and the teacher that accepts the late entrant can specify the work needed to be completed by a reasonable date. The student must make a commitment to complete any work missed as part of the acceptance into the new class.

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:
Application must be made to The Board of Management, Castlecomer Community School.
A place must be available in Castlecomer Community School.
All information requested by the school, as per admissions policy, is provided.
All applicants must adhere to the Castlecomer Community School admissions policy.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of Castlecomer 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.

Note: Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

Castlecomer Community School is a multi-denominational school that offers Religious Education to all students. If any parent has a query about their child's participation in religious education or events they should contact the Principal.

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.

19. Admissions Policy for ASD Special Classes

1.0 ASD Class Mission Statement

The development of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) programme in Castlecomer Community School is based on the philosophy of educational inclusion such that students with specialised needs should receive their education within the most supportive environment with a focus on realising the full potential of each individual student. The ASD programme in Castlecomer Community School will develop the students' life skills and prepare them for life after school in an ever evolving model of best practice.

2.0 Castlecomer Community School's ASD Programme:

- 2.1 Will enrol pupils whose educational needs can be met by the continuum.
- 2.2 Will give priority in the enrolment policy to students who are already enrolled in Castlecomer Community School, who subsequently get a diagnosis of ASD.
- 2.3 Will (after number 2 above) give priority to applications for enrolment into 1st year.
- 2.4 Stipulates that a student may not apply for a place in both the mainstream school and Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme. An application to the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme carries with it an acknowledgement that said student requires support that can only be provided by enrolment in our ASD programme.
- 2.5 Can enrol a maximum of 18 students within the ASD Programme from first to sixth year inclusively. Under Department of Education and Youth guidelines the maximum number of students enrolled in the ASD special classes of the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme is 18 students (3 x 6).
- 2.6 In cases where the attendance of a student enrolled in the ASD programme is of a nature that causes the ASD programme Staff and School Management to be significantly concerned about his/her commitment and engagement to the programme, the impact on the attendance/non-attendance on the progress of the other students enrolled on the programme, and the possibility that a place is being denied to a more suitable applicant, the case for the students removal from the programme will be referred to the Board of Management after consultation with the parents/guardians.

3.0 Enrolment Procedures:

3.1 Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism in Castlecomer Community School when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

1. Diagnosis of special educational needs (i.e. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report). Psychological reports / Occupational Therapy reports / Speech and Language Therapy reports, or any other reports, which refer to the original diagnosis, will not be accepted in lieu of the original written diagnosis.

AND

2. A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

3. Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same

AND

4. A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.

3.2 In order to best support students and without affecting their eligibility for a place in the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme we require that we are made aware of:

i. Any additional medical conditions and/or dietary restrictions / requirements that the individual may have.

ii. Any medications that the applicant pupils may be in receipt of either at home or in the course of the school day.

iii. The Castlecomer Community School ASD programme is not designed to meet the educational needs of students with a recommendation for a special school placement.

3.3 Consultation with the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer) will also be part of this process. The educational and psychological reports must state that the pupil will benefit from access to an ASD classroom in a mainstream school.

3.4 Assuming all relevant documentation is in place and suitability has been determined, parents/guardians will receive written notification of the outcome by February 1st. Parents/Guardians must then accept or turn down the enrolment within 10 working days from receipt of the letter.

3.5 Once a student has been offered a place on the programme he/she will be invited to participate in a transition programme the following May in Castlecomer Community School. We regard students' participation in the transition programme to be essential in ensuring their smooth transition to their new environment, as well as in facilitating ASD Programme staff in making any necessary academic/other reasonable accommodations for the pupil in a pre-emptive and responsible manner.

3.6 We will require that the feeder school, with parental permission, supply the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme staff with copies of the applicant students' work, their up to date attainments and their most recent SSF (Student Support File).

4.0 Enrolment of First Years into the ASD Programme

4.1 Only applications from 6th Class Primary School will be considered.

4.2 All applications must be received by Castlecomer Community School no later than deadline date of the preceding year for which the application is being made.

4.3 The eligibility criteria laid out in section 3.1 of part 20 apply.

4.4 Where the number of students meeting the above criteria exceeds the number of places available priority will be given in accordance with the criteria of mainstream enrolment policy:

1. Applicants with siblings already in the school.
2. Applicants attending the feeder schools listed in Appendix 1.
3. Children whose parents or grandparents attended Castlecomer Community 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), a lottery system will apply.

4.5 The Principal of Castlecomer Community School and the ASD Programme teaching staff will carry out the enrolment procedures as set out in the criteria for mainstream selection.

4.6 All applications, offers of enrolment and continuing enrolment are subject to signing of, adherence to and ability to adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.0 On-going review of students in the ASD Programme

6.1 As learning needs may change over time, a student's enrolment in the Castlecomer Community School ASD programme will be kept under continual review by the school. This review will be on an ongoing basis (but at a minimum, a review will take place once a year) and will include a careful examination of the student's progress in achieving his/her learning targets.

6.2 This review process will consider the student's progress and the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme's ability to meet her needs and deliver the most beneficial educational programme.

6.3 The review will include regular assessing of:

- The academic, social and behavioural benefits of the student being enrolled in the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme.
- The level and quality of mainstream participation.
- Students' progression through SSF.

6.4 The review will include the student's views and those of parents, teachers and other relevant professionals. The review will look at the suitability of the special class placement and whether the student's needs might be best addressed in a mainstream setting or whether a more supported setting is required (e.g. special school setting).

6.5 In cases where it is our professional opinion that a student is not benefitting from his/her place in the Castlecomer Community School ASD Programme this will be discussed with parents and referred to the Board of Management to assess suitability for continuance in the class.

6.6 Following a decision that the special class is no longer the most appropriate placement, a student may move to:

- a mainstream class in the same school or
- a mainstream class in a school more local to the student's home or
- a different category of special class or
- a special school

6.7 Where the change involves a move to a different school, parents should apply to enrol their child in the new school and the student should remain in the existing special class

until the new placement is organised. Castlecomer Community School will help support the student's transition to a more suitable placement e.g. mainstream or special school.

6.8 The school should also notify the SENO when a student has left a special class, either to return to mainstream or enrol in another school, as this creates a vacancy in a special class that can be utilised for another student who may need it.

6.9 The rules for the maximum period that a student can be educated in a special class are generally the same as those for mainstream post-primary classes.

6.10 Relevant parents are informed by the SENO and school of the location of special classes that have places available. Parents should also be informed that enrolment of their child will be subject to the particular school's enrolment policies.

7.0 Referrals to Board of Management

7.1 Applications in the following instances will be referred to the Board of Management for decision:

- Late Applications
- Refused a place in first year in another post primary school
- Matters relating to adequacy of the professional services to meet the needs of particular applicants.

8.0 Appeal

8.1 Decisions may be appealed to the Board of Management.

8.2 Decisions of the Board of Management may be appealed to the Department of Education and Youth.

9.0 Procedures

In addition to fulfilment of the Enrolment Procedures in section 3 herein, enrolments will only be finalised and confirmed following:

- 9.2 Submission of a completed application form by requested date.
- 9.3 Consent to educational records being made available by previous schools and to professional assessment being undertaken and reports provided if requested.
- 9.4 Attendance at enrolment assessment tests as required.
- 9.5 All applicants must supply the following enrolment requirements:

- Birth Certificate
- File photographs
- Completion of school transport application where applicable

9.6 Additionally, for enrolment in years other than first year

- Two most recent term (or similar) reports
- Reasons for seeking transfer
- Report from Principal of the last school/centre attended, giving reasons for leaving that school/centre.
- Completion of notification of enrolment form for submission to SENO
- Completion of school transport application where applicable

Appendix 1.

Primary Schools within the Catchment Area of Castlecomer Community School:

Scoil Iosagáin
Wandesforde National School
Firoda National School
Ballyragget National School
Moneenroe National School
Clogh National School
Coon National School
Muckalee National School
Conahy National School
Clinstown National School
Lisnafunchion National School
St Brigid's National School Lisdowney
Johnswell National School
Ardough National School
Old Leighlin National School
Newtown National School
Mayo National School
The Swan National School