



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2019/2020

1. THE COLLEGE

Clongowes Wood College SJ is a seven day boarding school for boys, founded in 1814 and situated in beautiful surroundings near Clane, Co. Kildare, about thirty kilometres from Dublin.

Clongowes is a Catholic, Jesuit boarding school which admits boys from all over Ireland and from abroad. In addition to baptised Catholics, it may admit boys from other faith traditions whose families are in clear sympathy with the mission of the College. As a Jesuit College, it aims to be a community of growth, service and faith, in which young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and abilities in a balanced and integrated way. As a boarding school, it admits boys who have the desire and the capacity to benefit from a boarding school education. The Jesuit motto *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*, together with the College motto, *Aeterna non Caduca*, (what matters is the eternal not the transient), summarise the overall ethos of the College which operates in the context of the *Characteristics of Jesuit Education*.

A central desire is the provision of the highest quality of teaching and learning, and of development of the individual talents of each student within the community setting of a boarding school. Within this community setting, we aspire to teach and educate boys in accordance with individual learning aptitudes and we aim for qualities of critical thinking, interior knowledge, a capacity for reflection, a sense of service and appreciation for service rendered and an attitude of gratitude in our students. Because Clongowes is a boarding school, the Headmaster, on behalf of the Board of Management, reserves the right to assess where he deems it necessary, the suitability of each student for boarding school life and to advise parents accordingly.

Based on our conviction that human fulfilment is to be found through faith in Jesus Christ and in service of the world in imitation of Him, we seek to form students of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment who will strive to give Christian leadership through the quality of their lives and their commitment to work for a more just, cohesive and caring society.

This Admissions Policy is prepared as part of the School Plan under Section 21 of the Education Act 1998. It has been drawn up in compliance with The Education Act 1998; The Equal Status Act 2000; The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004; The Education Welfare Act 2000; Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018.

2. THE MISSION

The mission of Clongowes Wood College SJ is to educate its students according to the vision of the Gospel and the best traditions and highest standards of Jesuit schooling, as expressed in *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education*.

We aim to create an open, happy, stimulating, mutually respectful and supportive community where young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and academic abilities in a balanced, integrated and generous way, striving for excellence in all that they do.

It is our conviction that human fulfilment is to be found through faith in Jesus Christ and service of Ireland and the world in imitation of Him. In partnership with parents, we seek to form students who will strive to develop that faith and to give Christian leadership through the example of their lives and their commitment to a renewal of the Church and a more just, inclusive and caring society.

3. PROFILE OF A CLONGOWES GRADUATE

If Clongowes Wood College SJ is successful in its mission, its graduates will tend to be:

- A grateful, honest and forgiving person.
- Committed to a Christian faith that does justice.
- Willing to articulate religious faith in a secular society.
- Open to growth.
- Intellectually competent.
- Socially able.
- Culturally aware.
- Physically and emotionally developed.
- Committed to strive for excellence.
- Willing and able to exercise leadership.

4. PROGRAMMES

Clongowes students present for the Junior Certificate (after three years) and for the Leaving Certificate (after six years). The Transition Year (fourth year) is compulsory for all students except in very rare circumstances to be determined by the College and is subject to the College's Fee Policy.

5. PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Because of its nature as a Catholic, Jesuit boarding school for boys, Clongowes expects that parents and students will accept and support the ethos of the College in a positive and active manner.

(a) Students

To this end all students will be required to participate positively in the classroom and in the co-curricular and religious activities proposed by the College, especially Sunday Mass in which the concept of community finds its expression in a particular way. Other activities include retreats, liturgies, prayer groups, outreach and faith formation programmes.

(b) Parents

The College needs the fullest cooperation of parents and expects attendance at parent-teacher meetings, parent days, information meetings, fundraising meetings and other events. The College welcomes the support and contribution of the Parents' Association.

The acceptance of a place in Clongowes implies the agreement of parents and students to fulfil the expectations expressed in these paragraphs and their acceptance of the College's Code of Behaviour.

6. PASTORAL SYSTEMS

Clongowes operates a system whereby the students in each year are grouped together for both living and pastoral purposes. This system – known as a Line system - has proved its value over the years and contributes to the warmth and the security of the community in which the boys live. There are three lines, each divided into two sections:

1. First year (Elements) and second year (Rudiments) students together form the Third Line.
2. Third year (Grammar) and fourth year (Syntax) students together form the Lower Line.
3. Fifth year (Poetry) and sixth year (Rhetoric) students together form the Higher Line.

Each Line is assigned to the care of a Line Prefect who is assisted by Year Prefects. The Line Prefect is responsible for all the students in his Line supported by Assistant Prefect(s) who are delegated responsibility for one of the years in the Line. Prefects and Assistant Prefects are adults who are responsible for the overall growth of the boys in their care, together with the relevant Academic Year Head who is responsible for academic matters.

Prefects and Academic Year Heads work closely together for the good of everyone in the year, monitoring study, taking note of each student's overall development and participation in the co-curricular and social life of the College. They are also available to meet parents and students.

In addition to the Prefects Academic Year Heads and their Assistants, there is a network of other adults (Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Spiritual Fathers, nurses, School Counsellor live-in teachers and other teachers), young adults (GAP students,) and senior boys (House Leaders) to ensure there is always someone to turn to if students have problems or difficulties of any kind.

7. FINANCE

Clongowes Wood College is a fee-paying school. The finances of the College are mainly provided by fees and by the provision of salaries for a number of teachers by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). The College also receives some contributions from the Irish Jesuit Province.

Information on fees and fee payment is available in the School Fee Policy available from the College.

8. BURSARY PROGRAMME

The 34th General Congregation of the Jesuits in Decree 18, urged members of the Society and its various missions to "...become a platform reaching out to the community ... and the socially disadvantaged...". In recognition of this, the Board of Management introduced a Bursary Programme (called the Alberto Hurtado Programme) in September 2007. Approximately, ten per cent of student places are reserved for students on this programme. There are certain criteria for inclusion on the Bursary Programme and these are available on request from the College.

9. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Board of Management also operates a development programme supported by the Clongowes Wood College Foundation to improve facilities on the campus. The most recent phases of the plan were completed as follows;

- (a) an accommodation block for Rhetoric (6th year) students, a new dining room and kitchen and office facilities (1999).
- (b) the College-Castle Integration Programme (2005).
- (c) the James Joyce Library (2009).
- (d) the Science, Art and Technology building (2010).
- (e) the new Sports Hall (2011).
- (f) the new Swimming Pool (2017).
- (g) Dorm Refurbishment (2017 -2019).
- (h) The Bellarmine Learning Centre (2019).

These developments were completed through the generous support of parents, benefactors and the Irish Jesuit Province. As the College does not receive capital development funds from the DES, Clongowes will continue to depend on the generosity of parents and benefactors to fund future development projects.

10. MANAGEMENT

The Board of Management consists of twelve members appointed by the Jesuit Provincial who is Patron/Trustee of the College. Of these, six members are nominated by the Trustee, three by the education staff of the College and three by parents.

Board members nominated and appointed in October 2016 are:

Trustee nominees:

Mr. Peter Gray, Chairman
Fr. Michael Sheil S.J. Rector of Clongowes
Mr. Joe Rooney
Prof. Daire Keogh
Mr. Kieran Brennan
Mrs. Geraldine Ryan

Parent nominees:

Mrs. Angela O'Donnell
Mrs. Deirdre Adams
Mr. Andrew Coonan

Education staff nominees:

Ms. Anita O'Shea
Mr. Killian O'Domhnaill
Mr. Frank Kelly

The Headmaster acts as Secretary to the Board.

A new Board of Management will be appointed in October 2019.

11. ADMISSIONS

The College supports the principles of inclusiveness, parental choice, equality of access and participation in the College. The Board of Management reserves the right to determine the maximum number of students in each year group and the overall capacity of the College. The College admits male students into First Year (Elements) who have completed 6th class in Primary school or a recognised equivalent.

(a) Applications

The College will provide an Application Form to parents who wish to have their son registered as a candidate for entry in a particular year. The College will also arrange College tours for interested parents. These tours will be organised in small groups or individually; they will often include an opportunity to meet a member of staff and some students of the College.

Application forms as a candidate for entry to First Year (Elements) must reach the College on or before 1st April in the calendar year before the boy starts 6th class. All applications will be subject to an application fee.

The College will write to all parents/guardians who have sent in an application form for registration as a candidate for entry to First Year (Elements), inviting them to attend the Open Day. Parents/guardians of boys who wish to attend the Open Day will furnish the College with details of:

- Latest school report.
- A reference from the Principal of his current school.
- Any learning difficulties.
- Any medical condition.
- Any disabilities.
- Any special education needs.
- Any psychological/educational assessment carried out.
- Any Individual Educational Programme produced in a previous school.
- The boy's religion.
- The parents'/guardians' expectations of Clongowes.
- Details of family structure/arrangements (e.g. marital status, separated/divorced, parent deceased etc.).

The College requires a reference from the Principal of the Primary School attended and school reports which must be submitted before the Open Day.

Parents must fully disclose all relevant information and documents, such as, but not limited to, those pertaining to the boy's educational needs, academic history, psychological assessments and disciplinary reports.

The Headmaster has the right to deem an application null and void should any pertinent information be omitted including;

- (a) Notice of any pending reports or evaluations
- (b) Where the parents/guardians have provided any false and/or misleading information.

In such circumstances any offer of a place shall be withdrawn even if the applicant has already been enrolled.

Parents/guardians of overseas students who, in exceptional circumstances agreed with the Headmaster, do not attend the Open Day should submit all relevant documentation as outlined above as well as arrangements in regard to educational guardianship for their son(s) in line with the College's Guardianship Policy.

(b) Open Day

The parent(s) guardian(s) and applicants are invited to the Open Day which is normally held in the summer term. During the day, the applicants enjoy a range of activities that reflect life at Clongowes, have lunch, are given a tour of the College by students and staff and participate in some games or other co-curricular activities. Parents/guardians are addressed by the Headmaster.

Additional information is available from teachers and prefects who are in attendance on the day. As the Open Day is also a school day, parents and applicants have an opportunity to see the College in operation.

(c) Interview Process

Because of the wide geographical spread of applications and the desire of the College to serve the needs of parents living abroad who wish their sons to be educated in Clongowes, it is not feasible to interview the parents/guardians of all students who are shortlisted following the Open Day. However, when it is deemed necessary, the College will interview some parents/guardians in an effort to establish whether the College can provide for the particular needs of the student and that the student meets the criteria 2 for enrolment.

(d) Decision Making

The decisions relating to applications are made by the Headmaster on behalf of the Board of Management and are approved by the Board of Management in accordance with College policy. Applicants will receive notice of the decision within two months of receipt of all required information.

The following criteria for decision making will operate in the following order of priority:

Criteria 1 for Enrolment

- Brothers of present, or past students
- Sons of members of the Clongowes' full-time teaching, prefecting, administrative and other staff.
- Nephews or grand nephews of Jesuits.
- Sons of past students, and students whose Uncles attended Clongowes.
- Students from other Jesuit colleges.
- Catholic children/families.
- Children/families of other Christian denominations.
- Children/families of other religious beliefs.
- All other applications.

Where the number of applicants exceeds the numbers of places available, places will be allocated in order of date of application received.

Criteria 2 for Enrolment

All applicants must be capable of coping with and benefiting from a boarding environment as defined by the following criteria:

In addition, the following criteria will apply:

- Capable of independent living in our boarding school setting, e.g., being responsible for their grooming and personal care while not requiring supervision to ensure their own safety and/or wellbeing.
- Capable of independent learning in our boarding school setting e.g., being well behaved, attending class and study, and taking part in the co-curricular without exceptional assistance from members of staff.
- Capable of understanding other students' needs in community living and learning.
- Capable of communicating effectively with members of staff and peers.
- Willingness to follow directions from those adults charged with his care.

Candidates who cannot attend the Open Day or who cannot attend for a private visit will be considered by reference to the above criteria and to the details outlined above submitted with their applications. Such applicants may also be called to interview with the Headmaster, or another member of staff as nominated by the Board of Management, at a mutually convenient date.

Underlying all these criteria will be the understanding that when parents/guardians accept a place on behalf of their sons, they are giving commitment to the ethos of Clongowes as outlined in the first three sections of this policy i.e. that is that they desire that their son develop spiritual values and grow in concern for others and that they are open to such development in themselves. What is being looked for are, in the words of the former Superior General of the Society of Jesus (Pedro Arupe S.J.), '*men for others*'.

The acceptance of a place in Clongowes confirms that the parents/guardians and student will abide by the Code of Behaviour of Clongowes Wood College SJ and will accept the tenets of the College Fee Policy.

The Headmaster shall assess each application on behalf of the Board of Management by:

- (a) Reference to the submitted reports and documents and with reference to the criteria set out in Criteria 2 for Enrolment.**
- (b) Interviewing the Parents/Guardians and student where the Headmaster deems it necessary before making any recommendation to the Board of Management.**

(e) Right to Appeal

In the case of a student's unsuccessful application, the parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Board of Management within 10 days of receipt of the letter of refusal of a place. The Board will consider the appeal at its next meeting following receipt of an appeal in writing.

If the appeal to the Board of Management is unsuccessful, the parents/guardians have the right, under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998), to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills the decision by Clongowes not to enrol their son. This appeal must be made within forty-two calendar days from the date the decision of the Board was notified to the parents.

(f) Enrolment of Students with Special Needs

In relation to applications for enrolment of students with special needs the Headmaster will request a copy of the child's professional reports to include, but not limited to, medical and/or psychological/educational report, occupational therapist report, speech and language therapist report or, where such reports are not available, will request that the student be assessed immediately.

On receipt of the report and all other documentation relating to the child, the Headmaster will assess if the College can meet the needs of the student as specified with the resources available to the College in line with the Continuum of Support Framework.

While recognising the rights of the parent to send their child to the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Clongowes Wood College SJ is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the students already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principals of natural justice and acting in the best interests of students.

(g) Right of Refusal

Under the Education For Persons With Special Educational Needs Act 2004, the Board of Management may refuse to enrol a student where the nature or degree of the needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with:

- The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under the Act.
- The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to a pupil in exceptional cases. Such an exceptional case could arise where either:

- (a) The student fails to satisfy the requirements set out in Criteria 2.
- (b) The student has special needs such that, even with the additional resources available from the DES or within the College's own resources, Clongowes Wood College cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with appropriate education.
- (c) In the opinion of the Board of Management the student poses an unacceptable risk to himself, to other students, staff and/or College property.
- (d) It should be noted that the resources available to a special needs student during tuition time would not be available in a boarding setting. This lack of support would result in a risk to the health and safety of the particular student and the school community.

(h) Acceptance of places

Applicants who are being offered places will be invited to confirm in writing acceptance or otherwise within fourteen days of the date of the offer, along with a non-refundable deposit to be allocated in accordance with the College Fee Policy. Failure to comply with this will result in the offer being withdrawn.

Where a place has been offered in good faith and where the applicant is not in a position to meet the financial requirements, the Board of Management shall withdraw the offer of a place.

(i) Students with English as a Second Language

Students wishing to attend Clongowes and who do not speak English as their first language will be invited to visit the College and/or attend a phone interview.

Students will be asked to provide evidence of their proficiency in English to a level that the Headmaster finds acceptable for that student to integrate successfully into boarding life at the College.

ADMISSION TO YEAR GROUPS OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR

An application for transfer from another school is processed where there is sufficient space in the relevant year group, as determined by the Board of Management, the applicant is male, and the College can satisfy the subject requirements of the applicant. An applicant must satisfy Criteria 2 for Enrolment as set out in this document.

The applicant must provide the following:

- Reason for requested transfer.
- Report on attendance, punctuality and behaviour record in previous/current school(s).
- Written consent to the College to acquire relevant information from the applicant's previous school(s).
- Copies of any Examinations results.
- Details of any disability or special educational need.
- Copies of any Psychological/Educational Reports.
- Details of any medical condition if applicable.
- Furnish a letter from the Principal of the applicant's current school supporting the transfer.

The withholding of information deemed relevant by the College or providing misleading information will render the application invalid. Any offer of a place shall be withdrawn even if the application has already been enrolled.

The College reserves the right to refuse an application where, in the opinion of the College:

- The applicant's presence in the College is likely to interfere with the teaching process and the learning of others.
- The applicant's presence in the College is likely to constitute a threat to safety.
- The applicant has a history of substance abuse.
- The applicant has been involved in the procurement, possession or supply of illegal substances.
- The applicant has been involved in bullying, threatening behaviour or assault, sexual or otherwise.
- The applicant's previous behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the morale of staff and/or students.
- The applicant has been suspended, expelled or under the threat of expulsion in his current school.

The Headmaster is authorised to process and adjudicate on all transfer applications on behalf of the Board of Management of Clongowes Wood College. The decision of the Headmaster is final. Where an application is refused the normal appeal, procedures apply as set out in this Policy under Right to Appeal.

Clongowes Wood College is committed to preserving its particular ethos as described above and in its Mission Statement. Therefore, acceptance of a place in the College confirms support of and commitment to this ethos by parents/guardians and students.

Further information about the College may be obtained from the www.clongowes.net and from the College prospectus.

This policy has been reviewed in September 2019 and will be reviewed again by September 2020 in the light of experience gained from implementing the policy.

Signed: 

Date: 24th September 2019

Mr Peter Gray
Chair, Board of Management

Ratified by the Members of the Board of Management on 24th September 2019