

CARNDONAGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Enrolment and Admissions Policy

The Board of Management of Carndonagh Community School sets out this Policy as required by the provision of the Education Act, 1998 and hopes that the policy will assist Parents/Guardians in regard to admissions and enrolment issues in this school.

School Ethos & Mission Statement;

Carndonagh Community School is a mixed education school under the auspices of the Department of Education & Science. The school has a Christian ethos, encourages open access to educational opportunity for children of all abilities, promotes inclusion and welcomes and respects other traditions. Children are encouraged to develop their ideas and values through what is taught and through the school's culture and ethos. The school aspires to creating the best school environment in which to teach, learn, work and play. This places an obligation on the whole school community to do their best to realise this aim in a supportive environment.

ENROLMENT TERMS & PROCEDURES:

Enrolment is conditional upon adherence to all School Rules and Policies and a written confirmation on the Enrolment Form by Parents/Guardians that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such Code by the child. The Code of behaviour is available on the school website www.carndonaghcs.ie or upon request from the school office. It is the responsibility of Parents/Guardians to provide the school with information particular to the health, safety and educational needs of their child and any special information a school needs to know e.g. access or denial of access to a child. The first/final date for completion of enrolment forms is printed on the application forms. The school follows the Curriculum as prescribed by the Education Act 1998 which may be amended from time to time. Applications for enrolment will receive a response within 21 school days of the date of receipt of application forms. All applications for first time enrolment must be accompanied by a copy of the child's Birth Certificate.

FIRST YEAR:

Children will in most instances transfer from one of the feeder National Schools in our catchment area. Our Transfer team will visit the National Schools to promote an awareness of the Curriculum, Pastoral Care Structure, Policies and support network available in C.C.S. Enrolment forms will be processed through names received from the National schools and direct applications by Parents /Guardians. Enrolment forms will be posted to the parents of sixth class pupils in the catchment area. C.C.S.'s Transfer Team will visit any national school to provide information to the pupils about enrolment opportunities at Carndonagh Community School. Parents / Guardians are encouraged to attend the briefing meetings in the school concerning transfer to C.C.S. where school policies, subject options, pastoral care structures are explained. Incoming First Year pupils are brought for orientation and induction to Carndonagh before they leave the National School. Parents are asked to provide all relevant information concerning their child to the Transfer team or directly to the school. The school evaluates the educational needs of the incoming First Years through an assessment. Reports regarding Reading, Literacy, Numeracy, Behaviour, Resource requirements are sought from the National Schools. Pupils are assigned to class groups following analysis of assessment and pupil reports and individual subject choice forms. Streaming is not used to determine placement in First Year classes. Every effort is made to meet the subject preferences of each pupil. There are constraints based on available resources, restrictions on class sizes and viable class units. First Year pupils will follow either the Junior Certificate or Junior Cert. Schools Programme as prescribed by the Department of Education & Science. The first year programme will be agreed with parent/guardian following an analysis of the needs of the pupil. The school management will advise that a pupil avail of a recommended place in the Junior Certificate Schools Programme but the final decision rests with the parent/guardian. The subjects that a pupil will follow will be as a result of the optional subjects chosen and available to the pupils combined with the compulsory subjects for all First Years. All First Year pupils must study Irish unless specifically exempted from the study of Irish. The school has no role in issuing exemptions other than to adhere to the recommendations based on assessments provided by the NEPS (National Educational Psychological Services). All pupils must participate in P.E. unless there is a clear reason for exemption which shall be for a specific period. All pupils will study R.E. which is taught on a non-denominational basis. Every effort will be made to meet the needs of the child.

A First Year Subject Choice Form must be completed and returned to the school. Where a Subject Choice Form is not returned, the school will allocate subjects to the pupil. Where a subject Choice Form is returned after the due date for processing, subjects will be allocated on an available basis.

For children wishing to enrol at CCS from outside the catchment area, or from a different educational background, or wishing to enrol after term has commenced, an enrolment form must be completed and an appointment must be made to discuss the needs of the child and the availability of space in specific subject areas. Parents/Guardians resident outside the catchment area must make an appointment to discuss enrolment. Enrolment in such cases is on the understanding that the pupil will observe school opening and closing times and attend in accordance with all school rules and policies. It is advisable to inform the school at the earliest opportunity prior to the end of the current school year and beginning of the new school year of the request to enrol. Subject options may not be available once the school year commences. Once a child has enrolled, there is a statutory obligation on Parents/Guardians to ensure their child attends school up to the age of 16. The school

monitors attendance and must inform the Educational Welfare Officer if a child under the age of 16 has missed 20 days (including sick days).

SPECIAL NEEDS:

The Board of Management is supportive of the principle of inclusion in particular with regard to students with a disability or other Special Needs in so far as is reasonably practicable and subject to the resources provided by the Department of Education & Science / National Council for Special Educational Needs. The school is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to enable students with disabilities participate in the school. Where pupils require additional help, an application is made to the Department of Education & Science / National Council for Special Educational Needs for Resource assistance. Parents are informed of the additional resources provided for pupils. The school recommends that pupils follow the Resource/Learning Support assistance provided for them. Enrolment of a child with Special Educational needs in mid-year may be dependent upon an application for additional resources. The Board reserves the right to refuse enrolment where a pupil has special needs beyond the ability of the school to meet the educational needs of the child, where the cost of additional resources or facilities is beyond 'nominal' cost, or where a pupil may represent a danger to self or to other pupils and staff. Pupils can only be enrolled where they have completed the prescribed National School Curriculum (or equivalent), and where they have satisfied the age requirement. Final decision rests with the Department of Education & Science. A parent / guardian has an entitlement to appeal a decision to refuse to enrol to the Board of Management and the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Science. Where a child's enrolment has been processed it may be necessary to defer admission pending - educational reports / assessments / application for support / education plan.

Prior to the end of each school year (April) the school tries to establish if a pupil intends to return to school in September. A timetable and class position is created for each child, determined by the subjects chosen by the pupil. An enrolment form must be completed for each child in each year intending to return to school in September. Failure to return an enrolment form may mean the loss of a place in a class or subject area. Getting one's subject choices depends on numbers choosing particular subjects and availability of spaces in classes and returning a completed subject choice form on time.

FOR ENTRY/PROGRESSION INTO SECOND YEAR

Class Placement in Second Year is determined primarily after an analysis of Subject Choice form and Results achieved in First Year tests. Consideration may also be given to recommendations/reports/additional information from subject teachers and Year Head. The school promotes opportunity for pupils to achieve to their potential. Teachers are encouraged to promote pupils' achievement to their potential and to expect effort and performance relative to the pupil's ability. Unless there is academic evidence to the contrary, pupils should have the opportunity to aspire towards higher level courses. In particular cases this may be for a limited period until it becomes apparent that the pupil is at a level beyond his/her ability. Classes may not be exclusively Higher or Ordinary level and may often be mixed, where both levels are taught. In September/October it may arise that a child has been misplaced in terms of ability or the child has not selected the optimum subject or level. Most often the subject teachers will refer such a situation to the Year Head for consideration. Occasionally a parent/guardian may express a concern. Where the subject or level at which the pupil is studying is a cause of concern a meeting can be arranged to discuss concerns. Due to issues of class size, combinations of subjects on the Timetable, it is often difficult to manage a change of subject for a pupil without implementing a change of class and change of several teachers and/or change of additional subjects. Before completion of subject choice form it is advisable to seek as much information regarding your choice of subjects. FIRST YEAR pupils who do not return Subject Choice forms on time – or at all - are unlikely to get their preferred options. Punctual return of forms improves the possibility of getting subject preferences and combinations and assists in the management of subject choice.

THIRD YEAR:

Second Year pupils must complete and return an enrolment form confirming intention to return to school for Third Year. Failure to confirm enrolment may lead to loss of place in a subject or level where the space is required.

FOURTH YEAR PROGRAMMES: Third Year Pupils and Transition Year pupils are issued with Subject Choice forms for FOURTH YEAR following a Seminar for Third Year & Transition Year pupils and their Parents/Guardians. Careers advice is offered to all Third Year and TYO pupils, as is specific Leaving Certificate subject oriented talks by teachers. Pupils are advised to seek as much advice regarding their choice of subject before returning the Form. The Subject Choice Form is designed to maximise the number of career options and course options for pupils. Pupils may have a preference for studying a particular combination of subjects unavailable on the choice form. This generally indicates that this combination is not a required combination for specific courses. Pupils who do not return Subject Choice forms on time – or at all - are unlikely to get their preferred options. Punctual return of forms improves the possibility of getting subject preferences and combinations as class size restrictions and viability of subjects due to pupil numbers are significant factors. Consideration may be given to Fourth Year pupils who may wish to change subject options after the Junior Certificate results. However, no guarantee can be given that changes will be possible. Pupils who return late to school in September without valid written notice may lose their places in subject groups or on Programmes. (Family holiday, pupil working, failure to provide notice and significant reason will not be considered as valid reasons for holding open a class placement where the place is sought by another pupil). Where a pupil has an unacceptable (15 school days)and unexplained level of absences, his/her place may be reallocated to another pupil.

Pupils who do not fill out a Subject Choice Form prior to end of **THIRD YEAR** must make an appointment to discuss returning to school and the subject options still available. The school promotes opportunity for pupils to achieve to their potential. Teachers are encouraged to promote pupils' achievement to their potential and to expect effort and performance relative to the pupil's ability.

Unless there is academic evidence to the contrary, pupils should have the opportunity to aspire towards higher level courses. In particular cases this may be for a limited period until it becomes apparent that the pupil is at a level beyond his/her ability. Classes may not be exclusively Higher or Ordinary level and may often be mixed, where both levels are taught. (Performance at Higher level in Junior Certificate subjects may be used in assigning places in higher level classes.) In September/October it may arise that a child has been misplaced in terms of ability or the child has not selected the optimum subject or level. Most often the subject teachers will refer such a situation to the Year Head for consideration. Occasionally a parent/guardian may express a concern. Where the subject or level at which the pupil is studying is a cause of concern a meeting can be arranged to discuss concerns. Due to issues of class size, combinations of subjects on the Timetable, it is often difficult to manage a change of subject for a pupil without implementing a change of class and change of several teachers and/or change of additional subjects. Before completion of subject choice form it is advisable to seek as much information regarding your choice of subjects. Pupils are advised to follow recommendations from teachers regarding subject levels *and to discuss all issues with the parent/guardian.*

LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED or TRANSITION YEAR

Pupils who wish to be considered for enrolment in the LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED or TRANSITION YEAR PROGRAMMES must have a meeting with one of the Guidance Counsellors and must attend the Careers Seminar on Fourth Year Programme options with a Parent/Guardian. A good attendance and behaviour record are also criteria for entry onto these Programmes. An interview may be required to determine suitability for L.C.A. / T.Y.O.

FIFTH YEAR:

Towards end of Fourth Year, all Fourth Year Pupils must enrol for Fifth Year confirming that they will return at the start of term. Pupils who do not enrol and confirm their return may lose subject/class places if amalgamation of classes must occur. The academic progress of pupils in Fourth Year will be monitored and parent/guardian will be advised if there are concerns about the pupil's progress. This may result in a recommendation to change subject level.

Applications to Repeat an Academic Year:

There will on occasions be very valid reasons why a pupil may request approval to repeat an academic year and the school management may on occasion make a recommendation that a pupil repeat an academic year. Parents / Guardians should be aware that the Department of Education & Science supports a child spending six years in second level education.

All applications to repeat an academic year must be submitted as early as possible and in time for administrative planning.

Pupils who are considering repeating an academic year must meet with a Guidance Counsellor and discuss the reason for and the implications of the request.

The Parent / Guardian must present a request in writing to the Year Head stating the reasons for a request to repeat an academic year. This may be by the official application for entry onto a particular year or programme. An application to repeat will be considered in the context of the best interests of the pupil and the ability of the school to meet the request. There may be significant implications for the pupil in processing a request to repeat due to issues of class size, combinations of subjects on the Timetable, rotation of teachers.

The following may be considerations for requesting to repeat an academic year:

- a) The age and maturity of the child:
- b) Inadequate academic progress:
- c) Unsuitable choice of subjects:
- d) Career based decision:
- e) Unsatisfactory record of behaviour:
- f) Significant absence due to illness or specific circumstances:

Most applications to repeat a year tend to apply to Fourth Year and are for one or more of the above reasons. Where a pupil applies to repeat Fourth Year, the application will usually be submitted at Easter. Where the application does not relate to f), the pupil will be expected to be in full and co-operative attendance at school until the end of the school term. An application to repeat, to enrol in Fourth Year is not a guarantee that the subject choice is assured. Places in subjects will not be held open for pupils who are not in attendance during the month of May. This has particular significance for practical subjects where there are class size restrictions or where subjects are oversubscribed.

REPEAT LEAVING CERTIFICATE:

Pupils wishing to be considered for enrolment on THE REPEAT LEAVING CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME, should apply to the school as soon as possible after sitting the Leaving Certificate stating the subjects (and levels) they wish to study and the reason for repeating. Pupils are advised to meet with a Guidance Counsellor to discuss the reason for repeating. An official application form is available at the school office. The school will consider each application individually in the context of specific criteria for approval, including attendance and record of behaviour. Acceptance to repeat the Leaving Certificate will be conditional upon a Repeat contract agreed by the pupil with the school management.

GENERAL

Where the behaviour of a pupil has been such as to endanger the safety of pupils or staff, or to compromise the education of other pupils, the matter will be brought to the attention of Parents/Guardians and if unresolved will be referred to the Board of Management. Parents are expected to familiarise themselves with the School Rules and Policies. Applications for enrolment will be processed and a provisional decision relayed to the Parent/Guardian within 21 school days of closing date for application. Enrolment is conditional upon acceptance of, and adherence to all School Rules and Policies. The School's Code of Behaviour must be accepted in writing by the pupil and parent/ guardian before enrolment can be finalised. All pupils will study Irish (unless officially exempt); all pupils will participate in P.E. to Junior Cert.; all pupils will study R.E.

An enrolment form must be completed for each child in each year intending to return to school in September.

TRANSFER from other post primary schools;

A pupil who has attended / is attending another second level school may apply for enrolment by completing the relevant application form. It is advisable to apply well in advance of the commencement of the academic year. An appointment must be requested with the Year Head / Deputy Principal and the reasons for enrolment explained. All necessary reports and information must be provided and an application for enrolment may not be processed until all relevant information has been received.

Where a pupil is transferring from a post primary school it may not be possible to meet the subject, subject level or programme preferences. If the application for enrolment is into final year Leaving certificate or Junior Certificate, the school having considered all circumstances and information may recommend and advise that the pupil be enrolled into Fourth Year or Second Year. The school management will consider the potential for disruption to the teaching and learning of the class groups into which the pupils may seek entry.

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 the Department of Education & Science regulations and standards.

Approved by the Board of Management 22nd January 2009

In April of each year the Board will examine and determine the capacity of the school to accept transfers from another school. The Board will be obliged to measure capacity in the context of being able to retain a minimum number of places to meet the needs of the existing school cohort including facilitating any transfer of pupils between classes in Second and Third Year as may be required or recommended by the Deputy Principal(s) / Year Head due to academic, curricular, behavioural or class size reasons.

Reviewed, amended and approved by the Board of Management 25th June 2009.

PUPILS 18 years and over who are returning to full-time classes in Carndonagh Community School must complete an application for Garda Vetting and their enrolment will be conditional upon the result of this process.

All applications to enrol / repeat an academic year / return to school after having left full-time education must be processed before 30th September of the academic year. * In the event that the school advertises and offers a return to education Leaving Certificate (for students who are over 18 / who have left school without any qualification / have been outside of second level education for 2 or more years., applications must be confirmed by the due date if a designated class is to be considered.

- Applications from pupils arriving in the catchment area mid-term / mid-year will be examined on a case by case basis in accordance with the terms of the Enrolment Policy.

Reviewed, amended and approved by the Board of Management at the meeting of 1st October 2009.