



St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo Admissions Policy

Mercy Philosophy of Education

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Mercy Education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy Education is committed to ongoing whole school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, Staff, Parents/Guardians and the wider community.

CEIST Core Values

The Core Values of CEIST are:

- Promoting Spiritual & Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Being Just and Responsible

Mission Statement

St. Joseph's Secondary School Castlebar Co. Mayo is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for girls under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust). We aim to provide a holistic Christian Education in co-operation with staff, students, parents/guardians, Board of Management and the Community. We work to create equality for all in an atmosphere of mutual respect. We strive to excellence in learning and endeavour to help each student to reach her full potential in a positive, caring and happy environment.

School Ethos

The characteristic spirit of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar is based on the Mercy Philosophy of Education which espouses the core values of respect, justice, care and joy. The School's Ethos is holistic and person centred. The school encourages students to use and share their talents to their full potential, to recognise God's presence in their lives, to celebrate their Christian faith and to show respect to all persons in all areas of life and work. Students are encouraged by school staff to strive for excellence in learning and to participate to the best of their ability in all aspects of school life.

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo is hereby setting out its Admissions and Participation Policy in accordance with the provision of the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act 2000.



- ❖ St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo is an all girls Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship of CEIST.
- ❖ St. Joseph's Secondary School is a voluntary secondary school and as such the financial and teaching resources of the school are provided by a combination of Department of Education and Science Grants, Annual Family Contributions, and fundraising. School policy is implemented by giving due regard to the resources and funding available.
- ❖ St. Joseph's Secondary School follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.
- ❖ Within the context and parameters of the Department of Education and Science Regulations, Programmes, Resources and together with the Mercy Philosophy of Education St. Joseph's Secondary School supports the principles of :-
 - Inclusiveness
 - Parental choice in relation to enrolment
 - Equality of access and participation in the school
 - Respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life.

Education Legislation

All decisions in relation to the enrolment of students in St Joseph's Secondary school are made by the Board of Management of the school in accordance with the Education Act 1998, the Equal Status Act 2000, the Education Act 2000, Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004.

Allocation of Places

Decisions made by the BOM in relation to the number of places available in any year and the allocation of places are in accordance with: -

- Criteria *set* down by the Board of Management (and only in very exceptional circumstances will children not be enrolled on application.)
- Department of Education and Science Rules: A girl must be aged 12 or over on 1st January in the calendar year following her entry into First Year at Post Primary Level.
- Department of Education and Science staffing allocation and class sizes and/or any other relevant requirements concerning accommodation , such as physical space and the health and welfare of student and total student enrolment.
- Department of Education and Science provision of resources to meet the needs of students with special educational needs.

Enrolment Procedures for Incoming First Year Students

- St. Joseph's Secondary School is a girl's only voluntary school, which operates a policy of open enrolment. Students are accepted in accordance with the Equal Status Act 2000.



- Opening date for applications is 1st November of the year prior to admission.
- The closing date for applications will be as printed on the enrolment form/5 working days after Open Evening
- Parents of students intending to enrol must complete a school's enrolment form and return the completed document in full to the office by the closing date.
- Late applications will be considered when on time applicants have been accommodated. Late applicants will be placed on a waiting list in order of date in which each application is received. Available places will be offered on a first come first served basis.
- Requests for places received from families outside of school's local area prior to 1st November will be placed on a mailing list in order of initial contact and information regarding application procedures will be forwarded to them prior to Open Evening
- Notices regarding details of Open Evening and Enrolment will be published in local newspapers and in Parish newsletters.
- Enrolment forms will be available from the school office on request and at Open Evening.
- Copies of the school's Admissions Policy Code of Behaviour and Acceptable Use Policy will be given to prospective Parents/Guardians at the time of enrolment, at Open Evening or if requested.
- All other school policies are available to view on the school website
- (Birth Certificate, copy of recent passport size photograph required and PPS number are required.)
- The Enrolment Form must be completed and signed by both daughter and Parent/Guardian.
- Parents/Guardians and daughter will be requested to sign a statement saying that they have read and agree with the school's Code of Behaviour/Disciplinary Procedures and A.U.P. (Acceptable User Policy) for students. The signed documents will be filed by the school.
- **Parents will be notified of the status of their application 21 days after the closing date for applications.**
- **These offers must be accepted by the date specified-i.e. within 10 days of receipt of a place offer.**
- **A place is confirmed when:**
 - a. When the enrolment form is completed in full and signed.
 - b. When the birth certificate, passport photo and PPS no. is submitted.
 - c. When the acceptance form is returned completed and signed.
 - d. When the Student Support Service Fund is submitted.
- Failure to adhere to the admission procedure may result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.



- Once a parent has accepted a place in St Joseph's Secondary School on behalf of their daughter, they are informed of the date of the Aptitude Test. This test helps to identify students who may need learning support or resource teaching. St Joseph's operates a policy of mixed ability classes.

Enrolment Criteria for Incoming First Year Students

Students are accepted in accordance with the criteria, set out below

1. Girls who have or who have had a sister registered with the school.
2. Daughters of staff members.
3. Daughters of past pupils who are attending Primary Schools other than any of those mentioned below.
4. Girls who are enrolled in local feeder Primary Schools i.e. St. Angela's N.S. Castlebar; Ballintubber N. S.; Ballyheane N.S.; Ballyvary Central N.S.; Breaffy N.S.; Carnacon N.S.; Glenhest N.S.; Cornanool N.S.; Crimlin N.S.; Derrywash N.S.; Errew N. S.; Leitir N.S.; Clogher N.S.; Manulla N.S., Mount Pleasant N.S., Ballyglass; Parke N. S.; Scoil Raifteirí, Castlebar; Snugboro N.S., St. Anne's N.S., Belcarra; St. Paul's N.S. Islandeady.

These are the primary schools from which students have traditionally come from.

5. All other applicants.

Where the number of applicants, in 1 to 5 above, exceeds the number of places available, offers will be made to those excess student applications on a random selection basis. This selection process will be independently witnessed.

Necessary Information Requested by the School from All Prospective Students

The Board of Management requires that all details requested on the Enrolment Form are completed in full.

- Failure to fully complete the enrolment form or to supply relevant documentation requested by the school or to make a reasonable arrangement to meet the Principal to discuss the application if requested may result in a place being withdrawn.

Relevant information, regarding custody, access arrangements and Court Orders pertaining to student(s) will be requested by Principal on behalf of Board of Management, if applicable.

Special Educational Needs

The Board of Management welcomes girls with special educational needs, in so far as the necessary resources for the individual student are provided by the Department of Education and Science. The school management will examine applications in order to identify students with special needs.



The Board of Management will request that the School Principal:

- Meet the Parents/Guardians to discuss their daughter's needs and the school's capability to meet these needs.
- Request a copy of the girl's medical/psychological report/individual educational plan and/or request immediate assessment.
- Request in writing from the Department of Education and Science the necessary resources e.g. learning support, special educational needs teaching hours, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, assistive technology, transport or other.
- Request in certain instances that a full case conference be organised in order to involve all of the professionals and support services working with the student.

The Board of Management will ensure that school management are satisfied that the student will pose no harm or health and safety issues for fellow students or staff members. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application should it prove impossible to provide the necessary resources in order to meet the special educational needs of the student(s).

Enrolment of Student(s) Transferring From Other Second-Level Schools

- The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar welcomes applications from girls who wish to transfer from other second level schools at the beginning of or during the academic year subject to certain conditions and must be in accordance with Section 19, Education Act.
- Reason for transfer must be explained by Parents/Guardians of the prospective student(s) or by the student (where the student has reached the age of 18 years).
- The school in which the student is currently a registered student will be contacted
- Information regarding the prospective student's attendance record, educational progress to date, behaviour record and impact on the learning/teaching environment for other students/teachers will be required. A transfer form will be sent to the school the student is transferring from.
- Acceptance of application of transfer will be outlined to Parents/Guardians or to student (where the student has reached the age of 18 years). Acceptance of application of transfer will be subject to a place being available in a suitable class in the appropriate year group and/or to availability of subject choices and/or to provision of resources regarding special educational needs.
- The Principal on behalf of the Board of Management will interview the student in the presence of her Parents/Guardians or the student (where the student has reached the age of 18 years).
- The Principal on behalf of the Board of Management is obliged to furnish the Parents/Guardians and the student (where the student has reached the age of 18



years of age) with copies of the School's Admissions Policy and Code of Behaviour and A.U.P. (Acceptable User Policy) at the time of enrolment.

- If the school management considers that the student may have special educational needs an appropriate report i.e. psychological assessment and (or) medical reports must be provided to the school. The school will request that resources or support provided by the Department of Education and Science be transferred in order to accommodate the special needs of the prospective student.
- Relevant information, if applicable, regarding custody, access arrangements and Court Orders pertaining to student(s) will be requested by Principal on behalf of Board of Management.
- Consultation with The Child and Family Agency/TUSLA, D.E.S. Personnel, H.S.E. Personnel and out of school support agencies may be necessary.
- The following documents will be required:
 - Completed Enrolment form
 - Transfer form.
 - Reference from previous school.
 - Most recent school report.

Students Applying From Outside the Irish Jurisdiction

Students who wish to enrol in St. Joseph's from outside the Irish Jurisdiction will be accepted for enrolment subject to:

- The school has verified the identity of the student and that the application is made by the student's parent/guardian.
- There being places available in the appropriate year group and/or to availability of subject choices and /or to provision of resources regarding special educational needs.
- References and/or reports from their previous school where possible.
- Enrolment procedures as they apply to all other students.

Repeat Leaving Certificate Students

St. Joseph's Secondary School welcomes applications from girls who wish to repeat their Leaving Certificate Year. Numbers may be limited due to class size and hence priority will be given to girls who have already been enrolled at the school and have completed their Leaving Certificate at St. Joseph's.

- Students who wish to repeat their Leaving Certificate must apply in writing to the school principal stating the reasons why they wish to repeat and indicate the subjects and levels they wish to take.
- Students must attend for interview with the school principal.
- Student must agree to view their leaving certificate scripts, if taken in the year of repeating.



- Students must meet with the Guidance Counsellor to clarify the reasons for repeating and the suitability of chosen subjects.
- If a student has attended another school the same procedures apply as transferring from another school as outlined previously.
- Students must fulfil any conditions laid down by the Department of Education and skills.

Students excluded/suspended from another school

- In exceptional circumstances the BOM may at its discretion give consideration to an application to enrol in respect of a pupil excluded/suspended from another school or requested to leave another school. The application may be considered where the BOM is of the view that the applicant is likely to benefit from such a transfer and where the current pupils are unlikely to be adversely affected by the admission of the applicant.
- The school must be satisfied with the reason for transfer
- The decision regarding the application to enrol will be made 21 days from the school receiving the completed enrolment form.
- The normal enrolment procedures will apply.
- Contact with TUSLA will be made as appropriate.

The final decision with regard to enrolment of a student in St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo and with regard to all matters covered in this Admissions and Participation Policy lies with the Board of Management.

In accordance with Sections 28 and 29 of the Education Act 1998, Parents/Guardians of applicants who are not enrolled in the school may appeal the decision to the Board of Management in the first instance and subsequently if necessary to the Department of Education and Science.

Related Policies

Code of Behaviour

A.U.P. (Acceptable User Policy)

Anti-Bullying Policy

Substance Use Policy

Health & Safety Policy Document

Attendance and Participation Policy

Consultation

Partners in the school community i.e. Staff, Parents' Council, Board of Management have been consulted in drafting this policy document.



Monitoring and Review

Reviewed and Ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 21st
September 2017

This policy is operational from 22nd September 2017

Mr. John Caulfield
Chairperson of Board of Management

Ms. Marie Mac Cabe
Principal