



Admission Policy of Christian Brothers Secondary School, Mitchelstown, Co. Cork.

Roll number: 62420V

School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust.

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 09/10/2020. 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 Christian Brothers Secondary School, Mitchelstown (referred to hereafter as Mitchelstown CBS) 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

Mitchelstown CBS is a Catholic all-boys voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust.

'Catholic Ethos' in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- a. the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- b. a living relationship with God and with other people; and

- c. a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- d. the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference. In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Mitchelstown CBS shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron 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.

The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter. The five characteristics of an Edmund Rice school underpin the operation of an Edmund Rice Secondary School, namely:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values,
- Promoting partnership,
- Excellence in teaching and learning,
- Creating a caring school community,
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

Mitchelstown C.B.S. is a Catholic School in the Christian Brothers' tradition, where Christian values are seen to be not only cherished but also practised.

It is a school where:-

- the pursuit of excellence in all areas of school life is encouraged and expected;
- a genuine partnership exists between the school community, the home and the parish;
- there is a real caring concern for all, especially the weak.

Respect is our core value, and we believe that good and respectful relationships between students, teachers and parents are of vital importance. We hope that the Gospel values inherent in the culture of the school will be internalised in the values, attitudes and behaviours of all members of the school community, and will find expression in their respect and care for one another.

Mitchelstown CBS provides a caring and positive learning environment. Positive relationships are fundamental to this and can be readily seen in interactions between staff and students within the school and outside. Open dialogue exists between school management and the Student Council.

The school aims to provide a caring and supportive environment which encourages the development of the student's self-esteem and confidence. Our First Year students are supported in their transition through the Mentor programme, pastoral care, and teacher support. All classes have a class teacher, while junior year groups have a Year Head who provides additional support and assistance to them, as well as focusing on building community spirit and wellbeing with the group. The Guidance Department supports personal development, educational and career development and liaises with school management and teachers to provide individualised assistance.

We cater for the particular needs of Special Education Needs students through individualised support, support in small group tutorials and support within the classroom. Students who qualify for a place in our A.S.D. classes also access some mainstream classes. We use standardised testing as supported by the Department of Education to assist us in identifying needs and improvements.

All students engage in retreats and wellbeing-promoting activities. The school is particularly focused on mental health promotion and has achieved the Amber Flag and is an ambassador school for Cycle Against Suicide.

Mitchelstown CBS promotes the achievement of each individual student's personal and academic potential. The school is committed to helping students achieve their academic potential, and sets high but realistic targets for students. A Mentor programme is in place for all 6th Year students. We provide a broad range of subjects and encourage students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. The school provides supervised study, Homework Club, programmes on study skills and access for all to the Guidance Department. Achievements are acknowledged in student journals, at assemblies, on school notice boards and intercom, through media and social media and in the annual Student Awards ceremony.

We see good attendance as fundamental to progress in school and in worklife. Consequently attendance is monitored and good attendance is promoted and acknowledged through holding regular raffles with prizes for excellent attendance.

The school provides extra-curricular activities and opportunities to enhance physical, social and emotional development of the students, and to provide opportunities for development of maturity and leadership skills. Sport enjoys a very prominent place in the school with teams competing across a range including hurling, football, soccer, rugby, golf and handball. Skills of public speaking and debating are developed both within class and through other programmes including participation in workshops. CBS collaborates with Presentation Secondary to provide opportunities for our students to participate in the annual school musical. Additional activities are arranged as part of lunch time activities.

The school has a special commitment to the spiritual development of our students. Faith formation and Religions Education play a key role. The school engages with the local parish through the parish priest. The school community comes together each November to celebrate St. Fanahan's Day Mass and in December we mark the Christmas season through the blessing of the crib and tree. A Graduation Mass is celebrated in May, marking the end of our Sixth Years' secondary school life in the school. Much work is done in school supporting various charities through non-uniform days, carol singing, Christmas Jumper Day and the food appeal for the local St. Vincent de Paul. Students participate as helpers on the Cloyne Diocesan Pilgrimage and every three years on the Carmelite Lourdes pilgrimage. Special charity fundraisers are arranged by staff and students where a deserving local cause is identified.

We operate an open communication system with parents of our students. We actively encourage parents to contact us if there is any concern or issue they wish to discuss. We seek to keep parents informed of school life events through messaging, information letters and social media. Our Parent Council meets monthly and is a valued partner within the school.

3. Admission Statement

Mitchelstown CBS 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*.

Mitchelstown CBS is an all-boys school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a girl applying for admission to this school.

Mitchelstown CBS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it admits a student of the Catholic faith in preference to others.

Mitchelstown CBS is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Mitchelstown CBS is a school which has established a class, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, which provides an education exclusively for students with a category or categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class

Mitchelstown CBS, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established a class to provide an education exclusively for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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

Mitchelstown CBS provides education exclusively for boys and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by this school.

Mitchelstown CBS is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

The special class (Seomra Rís) attached to Mitchelstown CBS provides an education exclusively for students with A.S.D. 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 these classes.

Admission of students to special class (Seomra Rís):

- a. Places in Seomra Ris are granted where a student's educational needs are such that a student has been recommended a special class placement in accordance with the school's enrolment policy.
- b. Seomra Ris is an ASD unit and students must satisfy the following

Each child must have an Autism Spectrum diagnosis

AND

The school receives a recommendation from educational professional(s) involved with the child that Seomra Ris is the most appropriate setting.

- c. The enrolment group consists of the school's SENCO, the principal and special class coordinator.
- d. If vacancies are available, Seomra Ris can accept students up to a 25 mile radius once enrolment criteria are met
- e. Seomra Ris offers a maximum of a six year cycle to eligible students.
- f. Students in Seomra Ris may be aged from 12 years by 1st of January of the calendar year following entry into First Year (as required by Department of Education and Skills regulations) and 19 years (as at the start of the school year).

6. Oversubscription

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:

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school.

Subject to the above, the selection criteria are as follows:

Offer of Places

Pupils will be offered places strictly in the following order:

- a. Applicants who have a sibling currently attending the school.
- b. Applicants who have a sibling who is a past pupil of the school
- c. Sons of former pupils (up to a maximum of 25% of the places available)
- d. Applicants from the feeder primary schools as per appendix
- e. Sons of serving staff members with a minimum of 1 year of service to the school on closing date for admissions.
- f. Other applicants.

Only students whose applications have been received on time will be offered places in accordance with the criteria above.

Places will only be offered to students in a given category after all students in each previous category have been offered a place.

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:

1. A lottery will be conducted, supervised by at least three of – A member of the Garda Síochána, the Principal, a nominee of the Board of Management who is not a member of the Board, the Chairperson of the Parents Council, a representative of the Trustees.
2. Male siblings (e.g. twins and triplets) will be treated as a single application, although all names will be entered in the lottery. If the name of one is drawn, the others will automatically be allocated places.
3. Names will be drawn until all places are filled.
4. When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the waiting list.
5. If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.
6. The waiting list shall remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Late applicants will be added to the bottom of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of their application.

Oversubscription of Semora Rís:

In the event that Seomra Rís 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:

Pupils will be offered places strictly in the following order:

- a. Applicants currently enrolled in the school seeking a place in the class
- b. Applicants who have a sibling currently attending the school.
- c. Applicants who have a sibling who is a past pupil of the school
- d. Sons of former pupils (up to a maximum of 25% of the places available)
- e. Applicants from the feeder primary schools as per appendix
- f. Sons of serving staff members with a minimum of 1 year of service to the school on closing date for admissions.
- g. Other applicants.

In relation to applications to the incoming group, only students whose applications have been received on time will be offered places in accordance with the criteria above.

Places will only be offered to students in a given category after all students in each previous category have been offered a place.

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:

1. A lottery will be conducted, supervised by at least three of – A member of the Garda Síochána, the Principal, a nominee of the Board of Management who is not a member of the Board, the Chairperson of the Parents Council, a representative of the Trustees.
2. Male siblings (e.g. twins and triplets) will be treated as a single application, although all names will be entered in the lottery. If the name of one is drawn, the others will automatically be allocated places.
3. Names will be drawn until all places are filled.
4. When all places are filled, names of applicants will continue to be drawn to establish the order of the waiting list.
5. If a vacancy arises it will be offered to the applicant highest on the waiting list.
6. The waiting list shall remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Late applicants will be added to the bottom of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of their application.

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:

- 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; other than in relation to admission to the special class insofar as it is necessary in order to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs concerned
- d. the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- e. a requirement that a student, or his 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 (1) siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and (2) parents of a student having attended the school. In relation to (2) parents having attended, this criterion applies 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.

8. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Mitchelstown CBS will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- Our school's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 14](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 15](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

9. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see [section 18](#) below for further details).

10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Mitchelstown CBS, 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.

Failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

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 Mitchelstown CBS 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.

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school.

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 Mitchelstown CBS 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 Mitchelstown CBS 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.

In the event of there being more applications to Seomra Rís than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Seomra Rís were unsuccessful due to it being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list for Seomra Rís 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 in Seomra Rís for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list for

Seomra Rís, 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, and 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:

When assessing such requests the following guidelines will apply:

1. Applicants must meet criteria laid down by the Department of Education and Skills.
2. Space being available in the year or class groups in question, and the curricular provision being suitable for the applicant.
3. A written application from the parent/guardian of the student to include reasons in writing why the student is leaving the other school.
4. The transfer, in the opinion of the school, is in the best interest of the applicant.
5. The transfer, in the opinion of the school, is in the best interest of Mitchelstown C.B.S.

As soon as is practicable after the receipt of the completed application form, the Principal shall make a decision in respect of the application, and inform the parents/guardians of the outcome in writing (as required by the *Education Welfare Act 2000*).

When a place in the school is offered, parents/guardians will be required to confirm in writing their acceptance of the place. If the place is not accepted by the date specified in the letter of offer, the offer may be withdrawn.

In accepting an offer of admission from Mitchelstown CBS, 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.

Failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Mitchelstown CBS where—

- v. 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.

Applicants refused enrolment 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).

The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school.

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

The Board of Christian Brothers Secondary School Mitchelstown 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.

17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

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

Parents of students and students (over 18) who wish to opt out of RE class should make a written request to the principal. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent or the student, as the case may be, to discuss their options. Throughout this process the constitutional right of the parent/ student (over 18 years) will be respected by the school.

The 1998 Education Act states that schools are required to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students (Section 9 (d)). At Mitchelstown CBS the allocated time on the timetable for Religious Education responds to this. Students who opt out of RE class are required to use this time to study material relating to their own religious tradition or belief, for example sacred texts. Students of no religious faith, who opt out of RE class, are required to study relevant literature or philosophical texts. A list of suggested texts can be provided by the school. In line with the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter, Mitchelstown CBS places great importance on

the religious or spiritual formation of all its students. Each student has his own personal journey which will be encouraged and respected. Students who opt out of RE class will not be offered extra tuition or study periods.

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* and must be received by the board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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*. This request must be received by the Board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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*. This request must be received by the Board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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) This request must be received by the Board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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). This request must be received by the Board not later than 21 days after the applicant has been informed in writing as to the decision of the school in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

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.