

ADMISSION POLICY

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna

May 2015

INTRODUCTION

This Admissions Policy is one of the most important documents the school has produced. It is written for parents and students who wish to find out about the school and how to apply for admission to this school.

This policy is rooted in the school's fundamental aim of providing a comprehensive system of Post-Primary education open to all the children of the community. The policy sets out the procedures to be followed in the following circumstances.

- Students applying for a place in First Year.
- Students from outside the school applying for a place in any other year group or programme.
- Students applying to transfer from another second level school.
- Students applying to repeat any year or programme within the school including repeating the Leaving Certificate programme.
- Students from within the school applying for a place on any programme within the school (Leaving Cert. Applied, L.C.V.P., T.Y., J.C.S.P., etc.)

WHAT THIS SCHOOL IS ABOUT

Patron /Trustees

The Patrons of Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna are the Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board.

The school was founded in August 2007 following the amalgamation of La Sainte Union Secondary School Banagher and St. Rynagh's Community College Banagher. L.S.U. was a voluntary secondary school founded by the La Sainte Union nuns in Banagher in 1863 and was a co-educational school with a girls' boarding school. St. Rynagh's was a co-educational day school run by the Co. Offaly V.E.C. since 1953. Discussions on amalgamation began in the mid 1990's and the schools had common enrolment in September 2006 and full amalgamation in August 2007. The school moved to its current site in September 2010.

School Name and Details

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna is a Community College under the administration of the Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board.

The school was established in August 2007 as a result of the amalgamation of La Sainte Union Secondary School Banagher and St. Rynagh's Community School Banagher.

The school is a co-educational second level school.

The school serves the west Offaly, east Galway and north Tipperary area. Among its feeder National Schools are;

St. Rynagh's, Banagher, Lumclon N.S., Cloghan N.S., Highstreet N.S., Clonmacnoise N.S., Oxmanstown N.S., Birr, Lusmogh N.S., Laurancetown N.S., Eyrecourt N.S., Clonfert N.S., Rath N.S. and Rathcabin N.S.

The school provides free second level education as envisaged by the Department of Education and Skills.

The school motto is 'Mol an óige' (Praise the Youth)

The school is run by a Board of Management responsible to the Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board.

The Board of Management is comprised of the following

The current members of the Board of Management are:

Mr. Eamon Dooley, Ms. Vivienne Keenan and Mr. Denis Magner (E.T.B. Representatives), Sr. Goretti Sweeney and Mr. Tom Mc Glacken (L.S.U. Representatives), Ms. Barbara Feeney and Mr. Derek Treacy (Parents Representatives), Mr Paddy Scales (Principal), and Ms. Laura Mc Dowall and Ms. Mary Dalton (Staff Representatives).

The term of office of the Board is linked to the length of the term of office of the County Council which is not longer than five years. Elections will take place on that basis and all relevant groups concerned will be notified in relation to all elections and given the opportunity to vote according to their rights. This is in lines with Department of Education and Skills guidelines.

Names of Board members will be published annually in the Christmas newsletter and in the school's promotional booklet for incoming First Years.

Mission Statement

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna is a multi-denominational school which aims to provide an education which is truly Christian.

We aspire to:

- Provide a just and caring environment where each student is impressed with awareness of human dignity and to develop a sense of responsibility in each individual.
- Develop the talents of each individual and instil the desire to achieve one's full potential through a spirit of intellectual enquiry and academic endeavour.
- Foster in a caring community the desire for participation and challenge; to build individual and compassionate men/women of character.

CURRENT LEGISLATION

Education Act 1998

Section 9 (1) of the Ed Act 1998 specifies that “A recognized school shall subject to this Act and in particular section 15(2d) establish and maintain an Admissions Policy which provides for maximum accessibility to the school”

Section 14(2)

A board shall fulfil in respect of the school, the functions assigned to that school by this Act,

Section 15(2)

A board shall perform the functions conferred on it and on a school and in carrying out its functions

Section 15(2d)

States that the Board Of Management shall publish, in such manner as the board with the agreement of the patron considers appropriate,” the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs and ensure that policy principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected and such directions as may be made from time to time by the Minister, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons concerned, are complied with.

Education (Welfare) Act 2000 Admission of child to recognised school

Section 9 of the Education Act states that a recognised school shall provide education to students, which is appropriate to their abilities and needs and Section (9a) ensures that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for.

States 19(1) that the Board of Management of a recognised school shall not refuse to admit a student in such school a child, in respect of whom an application to be to admitted be made, except where such refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognized school concerned published under section 15(2) (d) of the Act of 1998.

States in19(2) that The parent of a child who has made an application referred to in subsection (1) shall provide the recognised school concerned with such information as may be prescribed by the Minister.

States that in 19(3) that as soon as practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent has provided, in accordance with subsection (2), such information as may be subscribed by

the Minister there under, the Board of Management of the school concerned shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and informed the parent in writing thereof.

The Equal Status Act, 2000 Sections 5 & 7 (2)

prohibits discrimination on the grounds of "gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Travelling Community" regarding admission, access to programmes, participation in the School or regarding expulsion or any other sanction.

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004

This Act outlines in Section 3 the Preparation of an education plan by School (including steps preliminary to such preparation), Sections 4 & 5 referring to the Assessment of the child and modes of assessment. Section 7 outlines the resources available to the School including physical classroom accommodation, class size, teaching and financial resources and is also subject to the capacity of the School to provide for the educational needs of those who apply for admission.

The implementation of the curriculum, the pastoral care programme, the School development plan and School policy have due regard to the resources and funding available. The School follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998

OUR SCHOOL

Location and Facilities

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna is a P.P.P. school opened in September 2010 following the amalgamation of La Sainte Union Secondary School and St. Rynagh's Community College in August 2007.

The school is located in Banagher Co. Offaly and is run by the Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board through a Board of Management.

The Sodexo management company runs the school facility on a daily basis.

The school has a wide range of top class facilities as follows:

A range of general classrooms and offices need for the provision of teaching and learning to the highest level. There are up to twenty general classrooms, four science labs., 2 Home Economics rooms, 2 Construction/Woodwork rooms, a Metalwork room, a Technical Graphics room, 3 Computer rooms, a Music room, a Library, 2 Art rooms, resource learning rooms, a unit for specialist teaching, a sports hall and allied changing facilities, a fitness suite a staff room, a canteen and eating area and several toilet facilities. There are 550 student lockers. There are a number of offices and stores necessary for the maintenance of the school on an ongoing basis.

As the school is built on five levels there is a lift. There are toilet facilities for disabled persons.

There are five hard courts and a large playing field outside along with spacious grass areas and shrub beds.

There is parking for up to 50 cars including two disabled parking spaces.

Management Structure

The school is run through a Board of Management representing the trustees, staff, students and parents/guardians (Details on the B.O.M. are on page 2)

School Principal: Mr. Paddy Scales.

School Deputy Principal: Mr. Kevin Jordan

School Secretaries: Ms. Dolores Mc Cabe and Ms. Clare Silke.

Teachers: A current list of teachers in the school is available from the school if required.

There may also be a number of Special Needs Assistants (S.N.A.'s) attached to the school from time to time.

School Organisation

There are **a number of different year groups** in the school (each with year head(s) and or tutor(s)) as follows:

First Year

Second Year

Third Year

Junior Cert. Applied

Transition Year

Leaving Cert Applied 1

Leaving Cert. Applied 2

Leaving Cert. 1

Leaving Cert. 2

Leaving Cert. Repeat

Post Leaving Cert. course in Business and Administration

Post Leaving Cert. course in Sport and Recreation

These year groups and the number of Year Heads and or Tutors in charge of them are subject to change year by year as necessitated by the school.

Year heads take an active role in responsibility for their year group in administration, interest, discipline, encouragement, etc.

Every class has a class tutor who is responsible for meeting their class on a daily basis, making announcements, taking the roll, uniform check, taking a general interest in their students, etc. They take a special interest in all the students in their class group and liaise with subject teachers and management on all issues of concern. Students should bring any issues of concern to the tutors notice. Tutors sign off on class reports and are the first line of communication with parents/guardians on many matters. This communication can be through the students' journal, letters, phone calls, etc.

Junior Cert. Classes up to and including Third Year are generally mixed ability classes divided alphabetically, as much as possible. Exceptions are made to balance the number of boys and girls in a class and to accommodate some special requests that can arise from time to time.

Irish, English and Maths may be divided on the basis of Higher, Ordinary and Foundation levels (after First Year) depending on such issues as student needs, teacher availability, student numbers and timetabling requirements. Some subjects may be banded, again depending on student requirements, teacher availability, etc. These decisions will be decided on a year to year basis.

General subjects such as History, Geography, Science, S.P.H.E., etc. will be taught in class groups.

Option subjects will be decided on depending on the options preferred and selected by the incoming First Years each year and as such can change from year to year. The options chosen by an incoming year will carry through to Junior Cert. for that group.

Option and other subject information will be outlined to all incoming students and their parents/guardians on our Open Night and at any other time or open evening or subject choice evening as necessary and as indicated to all students and parents/guardians. Any changes due to teacher or timetabling restrictions or lack of uptake of a subject will be communicated to all concerned as soon as is possible.

The T.Y. Programme will follow Department requirements and additions where allowed will be as per available from year to year within timetabling restrictions and options available at that time. All students accepted into T.Y. must satisfy the terms in this Admissions Policy.

The L.C.V.P. Programme will be offered to those who qualify as per their subject choices and satisfy the terms in this Admissions Policy.

L.C.A. Course; Students wishing to follow this course must satisfy the terms of this Admissions Policy. The subjects on offer will follow the Department guidelines. Where options are allowed these will be offered as per student needs, teacher and timetabling availability.

Leaving Cert. will be offered at different levels Higher, Ordinary and Foundation in Irish and Maths if required and if student numbers and teacher availability and timetabling restrictions allow. Other subjects will be on offer as required and selected by students following subject choice options having been offered. Thus, the range of subjects on offer from year to year may change as students make their selections. Options on offer will depend on numbers wishing to do a subject, teacher availability, timetabling restrictions, etc. General and option subjects, other than Irish and Maths, will be on offer at higher and ordinary levels where possible but are likely to be in mixed classes.

Repeat Leaving Cert. students will be admitted to the course, if it is on offer, subject to the terms of this Admissions Policy and should a Repeat Year be offered students will be advised as to the subjects and levels on offer at the time of applying.

P.L.C. Courses will be on offer subject to numbers and teacher availability. These courses will be advertised when available. Applicants will be subject to the terms of this Admissions Policy.

Pastoral Care Structure

All teachers are concerned with the needs of students and have a duty of care towards them.

The school also has Form Teachers, Year Heads, two Counsellors/Careers Guidance teachers and a school Chaplain. In addition, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal are available for any discussions. These form the core of the Pastoral Care team.

There are regular Assistant Principals' meetings, for Senior and Junior Year Heads, which discuss the needs of students.

There is a weekly meeting of the Mr Paddy Scales (Principal), Mr. Kevin Jordan (Deputy Principal), Ms Kathleen Gleeson (Chaplain), Mr Patrick Bennett (Learning Support teacher), Ms. Patricia Keegan (S.P.H.E.) and Mr. Jim Windsor Mc Glynn (J.C.S.P.) and the two Counsellor/Guidance teachers Ms. Claire Kenny and Ms. Lily Kinahan to discuss issues relating to any vulnerable students.

Parents/guardians may ring the school at anytime to make an appointment to meet any of the Pastoral Care team or any teacher.

Evening Study

The school runs supervised Evening Study on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during the school year. It runs from 3.45 to 5.45 each evening. Students should contact Mr. Kevin Jordan (Deputy Principal) if they wish to apply for a place in Evening Study.

Rules in relation to proper behaviour at study must be observed by all students.

Students will be informed if study is cancelled for any reason.

Teachers

All teaching staff are employed by the Board of Management and paid by the Department of Education and Skills.

The list of current teachers is available from the school if required.

Curriculum

The following Programmes are provided by the school:

Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate Applied, Junior Certificate Schools Programme, Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Leaving Certificate, Repeat Leaving Certificate and Post Leaving Certificate Business and Administration and Sports and Recreation.

The subjects on offer to each year group will include the core requirements for each course. However, the option subjects may change due to student uptake, teacher availability and timetabling restrictions. The subjects on offer from year to year will be available at our Open Night for incoming First Years each year and at subject choice nights for all other students when they have to make choices. These options and subjects available will be advertised in school literature as soon as is practical and will be discussed with all students in advance of them having to make final choices.

Core subjects offered by the school at Junior Cert. level are Irish, English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, C.S.P.E, S.P.H.E., P.E. and Religious Education.

Option subjects, which are generally on offer, but open to change include Art, Craft and Design, Materials Technology (Woodwork), Metalwork, Home Economics, Business Studies, Music, French, German and Technical Graphics.

Core subjects for the Leaving Cert. are Irish, English and Maths. All other subjects are options and will be based on student requirements and teacher and timetable constraints from year to year. Availability will be notified to all students and their parents as soon as is practical and there will be discussion with students and parents/guardians re their requirements from year to year. Parents/guardians may contact the school at any time in relation to decisions regarding subject and course choices. They will also be informed as to the date by which these decisions need to be finalised.

Subjects selected by students will be available to them for the duration of that school programme.

All subjects are taught at Higher, Ordinary or Foundation as per the Department guidelines. All other programmes available through the school will also be discussed and advertised in advance of decisions being made by students and parents/guardians.

Parents' Council

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna have a Parents Association composed of parents/guardians who are elected on a regional basis for a term of three years. All parents/guardians have a vote and will be notified re all elections.

The names of the current committee are published annually in the school Christmas newsletter and in the school's promotional booklet for incoming First Years.

The current committee is; Mr. Liam Moran (Chairman), Ms. Anne Guinan (Secretary), Ms. Martha Boylan, Ms Maura Feehan, Mr John Egan, Mr Ger Fogarty, Ms Angela Harrington, Ms Ann Dolan, Ms Kathleen Treacy, Ms Carmel O'Sullivan, Ms Pasquelina Mahony, Mrs Eileen Byrne, Mrs Linda Sheppard, Ms Joan Brogan, Mrs Teresa Turley, Mr John Bulfin, Mr John Kennedy, Mrs Claire Kenny and Mr Paddy Scales.

The Parents' Council meets on a regular basis and have an input into all school policies, which are required to be passed at their meetings, and are a great support to the school in all its activities.

Student's Council

Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna has a Students Council with representatives from the general student body. Representatives are nominated by the students and if required there is an election, should there be more students nominated than positions available. Ms. Joanne Weir is the teacher with responsibility for the Student Council and she will oversee the election, should it be required. They meet on a regular basis and are consulted on many issues in connection with the school. They make suggestions on such matters as canteen, sports days, extra-curricular activities, etc. They can be consulted with on major changes in school policies and issues such as the school Code of Behaviour.

Sport and Co-Curricular Activities

The school actively encourages all students to part-take in extra-curricular activities of which there is a wide range in the school. This is seen as part of personal development and is a great way of making new friends. The list of usual activities can be found in our promotional material and is reported on in local newspapers and our Christmas newsletter.

It includes Art competitions, Cairde, Camogie, Careers Talks, Charity Events, Educational Trips, Computer Competitions, Enterprise Education, Football (Boys and Girls), Gaisce, Golf, Foreign Tours, Hostelling, Hurling, Project Alison (Australian School Exchange), Public Speaking, Retreats, School Pantomime, Science Week, School Bank, Soccer, Talent Show, Transition Year Activities, Tráth na gCeist and Young Entrepreneurs. These are not definitive and may change or be added to from year to year.

The teachers in the school give generously of their own time both in and outside school to ensure that the school continues to offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They recognise the value of such activities to the development of students' character and encourage all students to get involved in some of the many activities on offer.

Opening Hours

The school is open from 8.00 am for all students and the school day finishes at 5.45 following Evening Study. The premises is generally open up to 8.00 p.m. as the cleaning staff are still working. Administrative staff and management are generally in the school up to 5.30.

The school day begins at 8.55 with registration and Form Class with Class Tutors

The school day is as follows

Class 1 9.05 – 9.45

Class 2 9.45 – 10.20

Break 10.20 – 10.35

Class 3 10.35 – 11.15

Class 4 11.15 – 11.50

Class 5 11.50 – 12.30

Class 6 12.30 – 1.05

Lunch 1.05 - 1.45

Class 7 1.45 – 2.20

Class 8 2.20 – 2.55

Class 9 2.55 – 3.30

Slight changes in this timetable may take place from time to time e.g. when running in house exams and Leaving Cert. and Junior Cert. mocks and these changes will be communicated to all concerned.

Any major changes to the school day will be through discussion with all the concerned parties and will be communicated to all in the school community.

School calendar

All major school events will be listed in the student diary given to all students at the beginning of the academic year. Additions to these dates and any significant ones added will be communicated to all concerned parents/guardians by text/notice/letter.

Book Scheme

The school operates a Book Rental Scheme for all students so as to reduce significantly the cost of text books for students. Students are expected to ensure that they take good care of these books and return them in good condition when required to do so or if they leave the school before their course is completed.

ENROLMENT OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

General Requirements for all students applying

Eligibility

To be eligible in Banagher College Coláoste na Sionna a perspective student must reach the age of twelve (12) on January 1st in the calendar year following their entry to the school.

The Board of Management, in consultation with the Principal, will decide on the number of places it can offer to incoming First Years in each given year.

Enrolment Procedures

A representative of the school, usually the Principal, will visit the Primary schools in the catchment area in advance of the school Open Night usually held in January /February or any other time decided upon by the school as suitable. This will also be publicised by advertising in the local press. The following will be available to all perspective First Year students in our catchment area and to others on application:

- *An Application Form for enrolment.*
- *A copy of the school's Admissions Policy.*
- *The school's Code of Behaviour.*
- *The Policy of the school relating to the suspension and expulsion of students.*
- *Advice as to the closing date for receipt of completed applications.*
- *Advice on any other requirements e.g. the need to submit a Birth Cert., PPS number, School Transport Form, notification of any exemptions from any subjects, the need to attend an interview, sit an assessment test, etc.*

The following must also be noted:

- *Permission can be sought to access any reports held by a Primary School relevant to the students' educational needs.*
- ***Parents/guardians will have to submit the School Enrolment Form. If the school authorities decide on fixing a specific date, which will be notified to them if such is set, for the return of application forms all forms received after that date will be treated as late applications.***
- *All students will be required to sit a standardised test and basic tests in Irish, English and Maths (unless they have exemptions) usually within the first month after the beginning of the first term. This is for assessment purposes only and will have no impact on the offer of a place to the student nor be used for the placing of any student in a specific class.*
- ***Applicants will be informed within 21 days of the closing date of application of the decision of the Board of Management on their application should such a specific date for receiving applications be set and communicated to parents/guardians.***
- *Parents/Guardians refused an offer of a place may appeal this decision as outlined at the end of this document under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.*
- *In the event of more students applying than places available in the school, the following order of priority will apply.*

- (1) Students living in the catchment area and attending Primary School in the catchment area.**
- (2) Students living in the catchment area and attending Primary School outside the catchment area.*
- (3) Students living outside the catchment area and going to Primary school outside the catchment area.**

If more students enrol from the catchment area than the school can cater for then a lottery will apply.

If all places are not taken up students from outside the catchment area will be considered. If more students than can be catered for apply a lottery will apply.

The lottery in all cases will be confined to students whose applications were in on or before the closing date for receiving applications should such a date have been set. The lottery will be run by the Board of Management and two representatives of the Parents' Association may attend.

Late Applications

Late applications from students will only be processed if there are places available in the school. These applications will be dealt with according to the procedures as laid down in the Admissions Policy.

Assessment Test

The school administers a standardised test and basic Irish, English and Maths tests to all incoming First Years usually within the first month of commencement of the school year. Standardised tests will also be given within the first month. These tests have no bearing on class placement and are kept for school assessment information only. They may be used to establish students who may need Resource classes if applications for such are needed.

Information Evening

At some stage during First Term all First Years and their parents/guardians will be invited to a meeting to be held with school management and First Year Form Teachers, to review their progress and give everyone an opportunity to share their experiences and discuss any issues.

APPLICATION TO FIRST YEAR FROM OUTSIDE THE CATCHMENT AREA

In exceptional circumstances students from outside the school's catchment area (as outlined by the Department of Education and Skills.) will be admitted to our school, provided they can be accommodated. If students cannot be accommodated in individual classes because of class size difficulties they will be immediately informed and the process will be terminated.

The following procedure will apply:

- Application Form completed
- Interview with Parents/guardians/student
- Suitable reference from previous school
- Good attendance record
- Full disclosure of all relevant information
- Good behaviour record of previous school
- Receipts of written assurances regarding full compliance with school Admissions Policy and Code of Behaviour.
- Overall capacity of school to meet educational needs of the child
- Class size
- Capacity of the school/sufficient time to deliver the intended programme or any special needs/requirements.(late applications only)

All applications must be submitted with full documentation to the Board of Management for decision. Failure to complete the necessary documentation information requested by the school may result in an applicant being refused admission to the school.

Applicants are advised that the Board of Management only meet at regular intervals and this may delay processing any application.

If more students apply to the school, than there are places for, then a lottery, as outlined in the case of First Years, will apply. This will apply firstly to students from within the catchment area and then to students from outside the catchment area.

ENROLMENT INTO ANOTHER YEAR OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR.

Enrolment in a year other than First Year can occur only if there are vacancies within the year and if the Board of Management consider it advisable to do so. There must be vacancies in all subject areas that the student who is applying to the school wishes to take. The Principal/Deputy Principal will interview the prospective student along with their parents/guardians should such a vacancy occur. All relevant data required by the school such as attendance data, school reports, references, etc as in our Admissions Policy may be sought by the school from the school(s) previously attended by the student. The student and the parents/guardians will also have to sign up to and accept the Code of Behaviour of the school before being accepted into the school.

All such admissions will be subject to all aspects of the school's Admissions Policy.

APPLICATIONS FROM OR ON BEHALF OF APPLICANTS PREVIOUSLY EXPELLED FROM THE SCHOOL

The school will not accept enrolment applications from or on behalf of any student previously expelled from the school, as expulsion constitutes a permanent exclusion from the school.

APPLICATIONS FROM OR ON BEHALF OF STUDENTS EXPELLED OR INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS OF A PROPOSED EXPULSION FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL.

In the case of an application by a student or on behalf of a student expelled or in the process of a proposed expulsion from another school the following will apply. The school will require full and total disclosure of the circumstances leading to the expulsion or proposed expulsion from their existing school. The school will require the student (if over 18 years) or their parents/guardians to furnish written permission giving them full authority to obtain full disclosure from their existing school the circumstances of the expulsion or proposed expulsion. Should anything come to light to the school that the student and or their parents/guardians failed to disclose, and is deemed to have relevance to the application, then the application can be ended forthwith should the school wish to do so.

TRANSFERS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

Students may transfer to this school at any time from another school, subject to:

- The School's Admission Policy.
- The school authorities being satisfied regarding the reasons for application.

While it is appreciated that in certain exceptional circumstances transfers are unavoidable (e.g. a change of residence or a family moving in into the area) as a matter of general policy transfers into the school are discouraged in the overall interests of the continuity of the student's education.

The behaviour record of the student in his/her previous school(s) shall be considered before he/she is admitted as a student of this school.

However the school must be satisfied with the reasons for the transfer and to this end information may be requested from the student's former school(s) concerning attendance, educational progress, disabilities and special needs.

With the best interest of the student and with the interests of other students in the school in mind and considering the issues relating to mid-year transfer which may include subject choices, class sizes and available resources, the School Board may decide to refuse admission at that time and advise his parents/guardians to reapply if they so wish before the start of the following academic year.

An application to transfer is defined as one from a student who has previously enrolled in another school in or outside the catchment area or from a student who makes application after the commencement of the autumn school term. It is not the policy of the Board of Management to accept transfer applications from students already enrolled in local post primary schools, except in exceptional circumstances. Where the Board is satisfied that such exceptional circumstances do exist, the following considerations and procedures will apply:

1. Reasons for transfer should be clearly stated.
2. The following documentation be supplied, **if required** by the school authorities.
 - (i) The two most recent school reports from the student's previous school.
 - (ii) A reference from the previous school.
 - (iii) A statement on special needs, if relevant.
3. This college also reserves the right to request a confidential reference from the authorities in previous school(s).
4. The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application in exceptional circumstances, which might include:
 - (i) An established prior record of poor behaviour.

- (ii) Lack of adequate resources to cater for particular needs.
Applications to transfer into the school will be considered having regard to the overall wellbeing of existing pupils and the availability of physical space and resources. Following consideration by the Board of Management of individual applications to transfer into the school, where the Board has good grounds for forming the fair and reasonable opinion that it would not be in the best interests of the existing students to accept such a transfer, it is the policy of the school to refuse to enrol such applicants.

Note: Applications will not be accepted from students who are the subject of ongoing disciplinary proceedings in another school which includes any ongoing statutory appeals procedures in accordance with the Education Act 1998 or the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.

- 5. It is the policy of the Board of Management not to accept transfers during the school year unless there are exceptional circumstances. However, in the case of students whose family have moved into the catchment area, and who are not enrolled in another post primary school, applications will be considered.

The Application will then be considered and enrolment will be offered according to the following criteria:

- (i) Schools Admission Policy.
- (ii) Reason for Transfer.
- (iii) Ability to match subject choice.
- (iv) Available space.

Late applications to Year and Subject Groups.

In the event of applications being received after April 1st from students wishing to enter a particular year or subject group the following will apply:

- (1) All procedures as outlined previously for application to another year group.
- (2) There are certain restrictions on class sizes in line with the recommendations on health and safety grounds by teacher unions and with school policy. Once class size limits have been reached namely 24 in practical classes, 20 in Home Economics 30 in general academic classes, 15 in Learning Support classes, etc. **no further enrolments will be accepted.** Health and safety concerns will apply to subjects such as Materials Technology Wood, Metalwork, Home Economics and Science subjects. However, a waiting list will be drawn up and should places become available students will be offered places in accordance with the criteria above.
- (3) Subject choice/availability of subjects.
- (4) Applicants from another school must have studied the subject in their previous school.
- (5) Because of the lateness of application, applications received by the school after April 1st in a school year will not be accepted unless it suits the school.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission of a student from other second level schools. Mid-cycle transfers are discouraged in the interest of the student's education.

Repeat Leaving Certificate students

Applicants who completed their Leaving Certificate in the school will be interviewed by the Principal/Deputy Principal to assess their suitability for the course. Other applicants will be considered as transfer students.

PLC Courses

Applicants satisfying the minimum course requirements in the Leaving Certificate examinations will be invited to attend for interview and/or aptitude test in September

Applicants for certain courses may be required to submit a portfolio of work as part of the course entry requirement.

The Board of Management may cancel a class if it decides it is not a viable class on 30th September of each year. Students will have the option to transfer to other PLC course in other County Offaly VEC Colleges/Centres if places are available.

Admission to Specific Programmes or Subjects (or Subjects at a Specific Level) from students from within the School.

If there are limits in J.C.A., L.C.A., T.Y., L.C.V.P., P.L.C., or specific subjects or subjects at a specific level in a given course year (e.g. Second Year, Fifth Year, etc.) the following will apply:

- Behavioural record
- Performance record in subject previously
- Attendance record
- Student's commitment to the programme
- Student's participation in all aspects of the programme
- Student's choosing T.Y. as a final year in school

Where specific subjects or subjects at a specific level are concerned the availability of places will be a factor.

The Principal in consultation with the specific teacher/s concerned will make a decision accordance with the above criteria.

If a general application was allowed or a specific closing date was given and the number of acceptable applicants is greater than the number of places available a lottery will be held. **This will be supervised by the Board of Management and two representatives of the Parents' Association may attend.**

If no closing date was given a list in order of application, of acceptable students will be drawn up and should places become available students will be offered a place in accordance with the above criteria.

In relation to the above mentioned courses an application process will apply. The school will be the final arbiters of who enters any of the programmes listed above.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Subject to the appropriate provision of resources to the College by the Department of Education and Skills, the College welcomes applications from students with special educational needs unless the nature and degree of those needs is such that to enrol the student concerned would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.
- The Board of Management must be made aware of any special needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where possible.
- Any details of special needs must be detailed on the Application Form and with any additional relevant documentation.
- The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met.
- Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled.
- The Principal may request a meeting with the parents of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs.
- The parents of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.
- **As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent/guardian has provided** all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof, Education Welfare Act (Section 19 (3)).

Applicants with special needs must meet the entry criteria set out for all students in this policy. The regular admissions procedures must also be adhered to. The existence of special needs requirements does not give any individual applicant any prioritised entry entitlement.

RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission to enrol a student who has applied for admission to Banagher College Coláiste na Sionna.

In the event of a refusal the parents/guardians or the student, if over the age of eighteen (18), whose application has not been accepted are welcome to seek advice regarding alternative placement.

APPEALS

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application or admission in exceptional circumstances. Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24 (5), Page 22 Education Act 1998, Section 29, Page 27, Circular Letter M48/01.

The Board of Management of a recognised school shall not refuse to admit as a student in such school, a child in respect of whom an application to be so admitted has been made, except where such refusal is in accordance with the policy of the recognised school concerned published under Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998. Education (Welfare) Act 2000 (Section 19(2))

Should a student's application for admission to the school be refused, the parents/guardians or the student if over the age of eighteen (18) have/has the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills, (Education Act 1998, Section 29(d)). The parents/guardians/student are informed in writing of the Board's decision and the reasons why the student was not accepted should be clearly stated. The right to appeal should be restated and the application form provided (Circular M48/01). The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned (Circular M48/01)

An appeal may be made to the Board of Management, then County Offaly VEC and then the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. The address is as follows:

The Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

An appeal should be made in writing on the application form supplied. The Appeals application form should be completed in full and should state:

1. The decision being appealed
2. The grounds on which the decision is being appealed
3. The date that the parents/guardians were informed of the decision
4. All other relevant information etc.

The school must be informed in writing of the decision of the appeal.

Having regard to the desirability of resolving grievances within the school where possible, the parties to an appeal under Section 29 i.e. the appellant and the school's Board of Management, will be asked to consider the matter in the first instance at local level to see if an accommodation can be reached. As a general rule, appeals will only be considered by an Appeals Committee under Section 29, where the parties are unable to resolve the issue at local level (Circular M48/01).

Adopted: 30 June 2015

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____