

Policy No: 1

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. Scope: This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, Staff, Parents and Students of Moate Community School and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to all pupils who wish to enrol in the school and to their parents but particularly to those children who live within the local community.

2. This policy is rooted in the schools fundamental aim of providing a comprehensive system of Post Primary Education open to all the children of the community. The policy sets out procedures to be followed in all the following circumstances.

- Students applying for a place in First Year
- Students from outside of 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 of any 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 Certificate Traditional, LCVP, Transition Year, Junior Certificate Schools Programme, etc).

The policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The School's Mission Statement
- The School's Vision Statement
- The School's Code of Behaviour
- The School's Code of Discipline
- The School's Book Policy
- The School's Homework Policy
- The School's Attendance Policy
- The School's Policy on Disabilities and Special needs
- The schools' Policy on Substance Abuse

- Policy of Parent/Teacher Meetings
- Policy on Bullying
- Policy on Pupil Assessment
- Policy on Internet
- Policy on Religious Education
- School Prospectus and School Yearbook

3. Relationship to the School Mission Statement.

This policy statement is in line with the objectives set out in the school's mission statement and in the Deed of Trust for Community Schools to:

‘provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the community, combining instruction in academic and practical subjects’.

The school mission statement prescribes that the school is co-educational, multi-denominational and inclusive. This policy statement, therefore, provides for the admission of all boys and girls in the community regardless of religion, social class or educational need within the limits of available accommodation and facilities provided by the Department of Education and Science.

4. Rationale

The School is subject to all legislative requirements and regulations set down from time to time by the DES. The School is funded by the DES and is provided with staff in accordance with DES staff allocation systems. The curricular programme of the school is governed by Department of Education and Science regulation in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act of 1998.

Enrolment is limited by school capacity and by the requirements of the school curriculum and organisation as prescribed from time to time by the Board of Management and as determined by DES regulations and standards. In assessing applications for admission the school will take fully into account:

1. The rights of children living within the local community.
2. The rights of parents to enrol their children in the school of their choice.

3. The capacity of the school to provide adequately for the education of all of its pupils.

This policy also aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school:

- To make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with its Ethos, the Mission Statement of the School and legislative requirements.
- To make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in the light of the resources available to it.
- To put in place a framework which will ensure effective and productive relations between students, parents and teachers where a student is admitted to the school.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 (Section 19 (1)) requires that a Board of Management shall not refuse to admit a child except where such refusal is in accordance with the school's Admission Policy. Section 19(2) requires that parents must provide relevant information to the school while Section 19 (3) requires that the Board of Management shall, as soon as practicable (but not later than 21 days) after receiving such information '*make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parent in writing thereof*'.

The Equal Status Act, 2000 (Section 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 School will comply fully with this legislation and render any application void, which does not comply with this legislation – in particular Section 19(2)

Context: Our school is a Community School and as such supports the principle of equality for all students regarding access to and participation in the school. The school respects the diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. The school acknowledges the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice, subject to the resources available to the school including classroom accommodation, class size, teaching resources and financial resources and subject to the capacity of the school to provide for the needs of those who apply for admission. Where the school lacks the necessary resources to meet the needs of any applicant or student, it will make every effort to secure those resources – where the resources cannot be secured the school may refuse admission.

The school is managed by a Board of Management, which operates under the Deed of Trust for Community Schools. The school has an active Parents' Association and Student Council.

Mission Statement: It is our intention that all of our programmes, activities and actions are informed by our Mission Statement and our School Vision Statement. We try our best to live by it and all who work in the school – students, parents, and teachers – are expected to work in accordance with these principles. Our Mission Statement and our Vision Statement inform not just what we do, but also how we do it. Faith development in the Christian faith is a central feature of school life for our Christian students and participation in related activities is a requirement for them. See {Appendix 1}.

Management, Teaching & Financial Resources:

The school is funded by the Department of Education & Science as part of the free education scheme. The school is staffed in accordance with the standard pupil-teacher ratios sanctioned by the Department of Education & Science and any additional teaching hours sanctioned by the Department in respect of curricular concessions, special needs, special programmes, etc. The school operates within the regulations laid down by the Department from time to time.

The capacity of the school to implement its desired curriculum, its broad range of educational programmes, its breadth of extra-curricular activities, its school plan and policies are dependent on the resources it receives. Consequently, in determining its activities and programmes for any school year the school must have due regard to the teaching, management and administrative resources and the accommodation, equipment and funding available to it.

Organisation:

Appendix 2 contains relevant information about the organisation of the school. In addition the school issues a number of Information Bulletins for parents each year setting out relevant information for the current year including holidays dates, dates of house examination, dates of Parent-Teacher meetings etc.

Curriculum:

The school offers a broad curriculum designed to meet the needs of a wide range of abilities and aptitudes. The details of the curriculum on offer are set out each year in the School Prospectus which is distributed to all who apply for admission and which is available from the school on request. The curriculum is subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate by the school. The school also endeavours to provide a wide range of extra curricular activities. Those on offer each year are set out in the prospectus. The provision of these activities is subject to a range of factors and the list of activities is subject to change from time to time.

6. Objectives:

The objectives of this policy statement are:

1. To define clearly the procedures to be followed by parents/guardians in applying for the admission of a child to the school:
 - On transfer from primary to post-primary school
 - On transfer from another post-primary school

- On seeking admission to a particular programme of course e.g. Transition Year, Leaving Certificate Applied, Post-Leaving Certificate courses
- 2. To define the criteria to be applied in the consideration of applications in the event that the number of applications exceeds the number of available places.
- 3. To define clearly the means by which enrolment decisions may be appealed to the local school management and/or to the Department of Education & Science.

7. Policy Content ~

Procedures – Application, Enrolment Criteria & Decision, Appeal

Application Procedures – into First Year

- The school will have an Open Day/Night each year circa. January/February. This will be published by contacting all Primary Schools in the catchment area and by advertising in the local press.
- Application forms will be forwarded to all 6th class students in our school's catchment area/ and to others on application, together with School Prospectus, Yearbook, Admission Policy and Opening & Closing Dates.
- Application forms will be accompanied by a Medical Information form and must be completed in their entirety and signed by parents. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents.
- Application Forms will be accepted up to and including April 1st.
- Further information may be requested from time to time.
- In some circumstances the school may request to meet with students and parents.
- All parents and students will be required to sign the School's Code of Behaviour.
- All students will be required to sit an Assessment Test.
- It will be the policy of the school to accept all students from its catchment area regardless of ability or special educational needs except where there are limited facilities, shortage of places etc. Criteria for admission

from outside catchment area is outlined later in this policy.

Students will be accepted from all backgrounds as well as those from minority groups. If a situation arises where Moate Community School receives more enrolments than it can cater for the following will apply:

- (a) *Priority given to pupils living in the catchment area and attending National Schools in the catchment area.*
- (b) *Students living in the catchment area and attending National School outside the catchment area will also be given priority.*
- (c) *Priority will also be given to brothers and sisters of pupils from the catchment area already enrolled in the school.*

If more students enrol from the catchment area than the school can cater for then the following will apply:

- (a) Priority to brothers and sisters attending the school
 - (b) Lottery
- All students entering 1st Year must be 12 years of age on 1st September of year of entering.

Applications from Outside the Catchment Area – First Year

As outlined in exceptional circumstances students from outside the Moate Catchment Area (as outlined by the Department of Education & Science) will be admitted to Moate Community School, provided that 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/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 rules and regulations
- Overall capacity of school to meet educational needs of the child

- Class size
- Capacity of the school / sufficient time to deliver programme (late applications only).

All applications must be submitted with full documentation to the Board of Management for decision.

Failure to complete the necessary documentation listed above or to supply any other relevant 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 meets approximately every six weeks.

Assessment Test:

- Students will normally be advised of the outcome of their application prior to sitting for the school's Assessment Test.
- All applicants shall be obliged to sit for the school's Assessment Test, which shall be held on a day, time and place determined by the school. A candidate who fails to sit for the test without good reason (as judged by the school) will put their admission at risk. The Board may decide to revoke an earlier decision to admit such a student and to offer the place to a student on the waiting list.
- The Assessment Test will be used to help the school identify whether a student has special educational needs and the results may be used as a basis for seeking additional teaching or other resources from the Department of Education & Science, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.
- The Assessment Test guides the school in its assignment of students to certain classes. Details of Class (**Appendix 2**)

Application for other Year Groups:

- Application Forms are available from the Office, Moate Community School. These will be accompanied by School's Prospectus and Yearbook, plus this Admission Policy/ Code of Behaviour/ Opening and Closing dates.

- Any application must be fully completed together with a medical form. Incomplete application forms will be returned to parents.
- Normally applications should be submitted by April 1st. Late application procedures are outlined later in this policy.
- All applications must be accompanied by a reference from previous school.
- Applicants will be required to furnish details about previous 2nd Level education including school reports and other relevant information. The procedures as outlined for students entering first year from outside the catchment area also apply.
- All applicants will require the following:
Approval of Board of Management/Interview with Principal/Deputy Principals/ Written Assurances regarding compliance with the school's Rules & Regulations.
- All new applicants will initially be accepted on a trial period – Contract to be signed by parents/Students.

(Appendix 3)

Selection Criteria: The following will determine the success of the application:

- The capacity of the school to cater for the applicants needs i.e. subject choice, class size.
- The behaviour record of a student in their previous school
- The attendance record of a student in their previous school
- Late applicants to year Groups: In the event of applications being received after April 1st from students wishing to enter a particular year group the following will apply:
 - (1) All procedures as outlined previously for 'Application for other year groups'
 - (2) Class Size – certain subjects (i.e. practical classes must comply with Department of Education & Science capacity limits.
 - (3) Subject Choice / availability of subjects.
 - (4) There are certain restrictions on class sizes also in line with Department of Education & Science guidelines and with school policy.

Details of such restrictions may be had from the school.

- (5) Applicants must have studied subject in previous school.

Because of the lateness of application, applications received after January 1st in a particular school year will not be accepted.

Admission to specific programmes or subjects (or subjects at a specific level) to students from the school.

If there are limits in Transition Year, LCVP or Specific Subjects the following will apply:

- Behavioural record
- Attendance record
- Performance in subject previously
- Student's commitment to the programme
- Student's participation in all aspects of the programme
- Student's choosing TY as a final year in school.

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

Repeat a Year:

- Applicants must meet with Principal and outline reasons.
- Department of Education & Science forms to be completed.
- Since places are limited the following will apply:
 - (a) Application of Department of Education & Science criteria
 - (b) Attendance Record
 - (c) Behaviour Record

Admission to Repeat the Leaving Certificate.

- Applicants must meet with Principal/Deputy Principals
- Department of Education & Science forms to be completed and guidelines to be followed
- Since the school does not provide a specific Repeat Year Course and if space is limited the following will be considered:

- (a) Subject availability
- (b) Class size
- (c) Behaviour Record
- (d) Attendance Record.

Appeals Procedures:

All applicants will receive a written answer to their request as set out above. Where possible, this will be done within 21 days of receipt of the application. Where it is not possible to make a decision on an application at the time it is received, the procedures to be followed will be explained in writing to the applicant within 21 days of receipt of the application. All applicants have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management. This will be dealt with as soon as possible.

A decision to refuse admission may also be appealed to the Department of Education & Science Education Act as outlined in Appendix 4.

The policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by a representative staff group for ratification by the Board of Management annually. Any staff member, Board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content of the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Next Review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2010/2011.

Success Criteria/ Implementation and Review Procedures

Parents are also advised that 'A Handbook for Parents' is also available to parents on request or on the webpage – www.moatecs.com

Appendix 1

Mission Statement

Our school is characterised by an atmosphere of respect

this is at the heart of our school ethos. Respect manifests itself

in our attitude towards one another in the school,

in the community

and in the environment in which we live and work.

We endeavour to help each individual reach his/her full potential

by promoting the formation of the whole person.

We provide an education which empowers young men and women to put their Christian beliefs and values into practice.

As a Community School we strive to provide an educational environment which serves

the needs and aspirations of the entire local community.

Appendix 1

Vision Statement

We, the Trustees of Moate Community School, envisage a school based on a Christian community of faith, providing a secure environment for learning and teaching, which is conducive to the holistic development of the whole school community. The ambience will be open, supportive and welcoming, where students, teachers and support staff feel a sense of belonging, and parents are active partners in the education of their children.

Trustees Goals

We, the Trustees of Moate Community School, endorse, support and entrust this clear Vision Statement to the Board of Management and we fully support the process undertaken by the Principal and staff in their efforts to create a School Plan involving all the partners in the school.

Board of Management Goals.

We, the members of the Board of Management, will make ourselves available at all times to manage all the resources of the school so that we can help the school community reach the goals outlined by the Trustees in the Vision Statement. We will support the Principal and all the partners in the development of the School Plan. We will endeavour to adjust courses and training programmes to meet the ever-changing demands of the work place.

Appendix 2

Moate Community School Board of Management Members:

Ms. Elizabeth Palfreyman	Parent Representative
Mr. Peter Cunningham	Parent Representative
Ms. Olive Costello	Teacher Representative
Mr. David Wynne	Teacher Representative
Sr. Maeve Rowan	Trustee Representative
Mr. John Galvin	Trustee Representative
Fr. Martin Kilmurray, O. Carm	Trustee Representative
Ms. Rosemary O'Connor	VEC Representative
Mr. Joseph Whelan	VEC Representative
Mr. Tom Allen	VEC Representative

The following are members of the Parent Association:

Tommy Walshe, Ballinamuddagh, Moate, Westmeath
Liz Palfreyman, Ballinamuddagh, Moate, Co. Westmeath
Caroline McManus, Hall, Moate.
Peter Cunningham, Moyvoughley, Moate, Co. Westmeath
Angela Higgins, Kilfoylan, Moate, Co. Westmeath.
Louie Cunningham, Lake Road, Moate, Co. Westmeath
Jenny Spittle, Ballymore, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Jimmy Redmond, The Forge, Dublin Road, Moate, Co. Westmeath
Turlough O'Brien, Station Road, Moate, Co. Westmeath.
Imelda O'Brien, Curragh, Rosemount, Moate.
Louise McCormack, 42 Mount Carmel Drive, Moate
Mary Ganly, Baskin, Drumraney, Athlone
Susan Fleming, Ballybrown, Streamstown, Mullingar, Westmeath
John Smyth, Hill View Lodge, Baltrasna, Moate.
Bernadette Hickey, Carn Park, Mount Temple, Moate
Ann Ward, Clarehill, Ballymore, Mullingar, Westmeath

Principal: Kevin Duffy

Deputy Principals: Maura Murray, Tom Lowry.

Organisation of School:

An Assistant Principal will have responsibility for each year group (called Yearhead). A parent wishing to make enquiries about their child should in the first instance make contact with the Yearhead by phoning the school and making an appointment. A parent wishing to speak to an individual teacher should in the first instance make contact with the Yearhead to outline the problem.

Each class group will have one teacher who is responsible for that group. This teacher is called a Tutor. Parents wishing to make contact with the child's class tutor can do so by contacting the Yearhead.

Class Details: Students in each year will be divided as follows:

1st Year – Alphabetical for 2 groups. A special class offers additional support to students will also be formed.

From 2nd Year – 6th Year – based on student subject choices.

Appendix 3

MOATE COMMUNITY SCHOOL STUDENT FROM OUTSIDE CATCHMENT AREA

CONTRACT

I _____ understand that I am being admitted to Moate Community School on a Trial Basis. I have read the rules and regulations of the school and clearly understand that if I am in breach of any of these rules I will be asked to leave the school and may not return. I understand that I must carry out the instructions of the teachers without question and that I may not leave the school during lunch break.

I know that I am being accepted into the school on the strict understanding that my behaviour, conduct and application are impeccable.

Signed:

Student

Signed: _____
Parent

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Appendix 3

CONTRACT OF CONDUCT

I undertake to fully comply with the Rules and Regulations of Moate Community School. I also give an undertaking to co-operate with the teachers and to desist from back answering.

I also agree to leave the school grounds immediately at lunchtime and go home. I will not return until 1.35 p.m. I further agree to leave the school grounds at 3.40 and go directly home.

I understand that if there are any further breaches of school rules I may be suspended indefinitely.

Signed:

Student

Parent

Yearhead

Principal

Date: _____

Appendix 4.

Specific Information for Parents:

Moate Community School is a recognised School under the Education Act 1998 and as such it follows the prescribed curriculum and is dependent on the resources, both financial and personnel resources, provided by the Department of Education & Science and accordingly school policy must necessarily have regard to such resources and funding available to the school.

- The Board of Management is supportive of the principle of inclusiveness in particular in regard to students with a disability or special educational needs having regard to the financial and personnel resources provided by the Department of Education & Science to the school.
- All application for admission to the school will have access to the large range of subjects taught in the school including any special programmes of sex education, special classes, etc.
- The school Code of Behaviour is available with all application forms/ on webpage www.moatecs.com. and in the Student Journal.
- School Curriculum and organisation is available on webpage www.moatecs.com and in the school prospectus and Appendix 2.
- The characteristics and religious ethos of the school is outlined in Appendix 2.
- The teaching staff are listed in the School Yearbook which accompanies all applications
- The school operates a student Council
- The school operates a Transition Year Programme
- The school's dress Code is outlined in the School Prospectus, which accompanies all applications.
- School opening and closing dates accompany all applications.

Appendix 5

Appeal Procedure:

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Parents, students and teachers are advised that all decisions made by the Board of Management and School Management together with decisions based on School Policy may be appealed in the first instance to the Board of Management by contacting:

**The Secretary,
Board of Management,
Moate Community School,
Church Street,
Moate,
Co. Westmeath**

Parents may also appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.