



Admission Policy of Seamount College

Kinvara, Co Galway

Roll number: 63050T

School Patron: Bishop Michael Duignan

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 Seamount 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 14/10/2020. 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 Seamount College's 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.

Mission Statement of Seamount College

Our aim is to provide with the support of parents, a holistic, Christian education in a caring and respectful environment where teaching and learning lead to the development of the full potential of each individual in the school community.

We believe that character formation is fundamental in preparing young people for life.

It is our hope that students will leave us adequately prepared for life, with a healthy self-image and the ability to adapt in a rapidly changing world.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

Seamount College is a Catholic co-educational voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Galway Diocese.

“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;
- (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 Seamount College 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.

3. Admission Statement

Seamount College 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.

Seamount College will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Seamount College will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).

Seamount College 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 other religions or none in preference to others. Seamount College 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 Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. 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.

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

5. 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:

1. Students from the parish schools of Kinvara NS, Northampton NS, Doorus NS, Ballinderreen NS, and also students from New Quay school, as, for these schools, Seamount is the nearest secondary school by a distance of greater than 10km.
2. Students from Carron NS and Ballyvaughan NS, for whom their residence from September of the relevant school year will be closer to Seamount than to any other secondary school. Proof of residence or intended residence may be required.
3. Students who may not have attended the seven schools listed above, but for whom their residence from September of the relevant school year will be closer to Seamount than to any other secondary school. Proof of residence or intended residence may be required.
4. Students not covered under Criteria 1 to 3 who are siblings of present students in the school in the year of entry of the new student.
5. Students not covered under Criteria 1 to 4 who are siblings/children of Seamount College staff.
6. Students not covered under Criteria 1 to 5 who are siblings/children of past pupils of Seamount College, followed in priority by grandchildren of past pupils of Seamount College
7. All other students

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:

A lottery will be generated to allocate all remaining places. An independent observer will be present when the lottery is conducted.

6. 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 to the school

(c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude

(d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;

(e) a requirement that a student, or his or her 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/or

(2) parents or grandparents of a student having attended the school. (This criterion may only apply 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. This is also subject to the school making offers based on existing waiting lists (up until 31st January 2025 only).

7. Decisions on applications.

All decisions on applications for admission to Seamount College will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- 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.

8. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Seamount College, 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.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. 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 Seamount College 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. In addition, the board of management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

11. 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 data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. 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 Seamount College 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 Seamount College 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.

13. Late Applications

Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available.

In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list in order of the date of receipt.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application.

In the event of a place becoming available an offer will be made in order of the waiting list.

14. 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 are as follows:

1. There must be an **available place** after the general admissions criteria have been applied
2. It is in agreement with the College Admissions Policy.
3. The transfer must be in the best interest of the student.
4. The transfer must be in the best interest of the College and the other students in the College.
5. The transfer must be of educational benefit to the student. (e.g. it may not be possible to offer the student certain subject combinations, a place in a certain programme etc.)
6. The College Application Form must be completed
7. All relevant information from the applicants' former school(s) must be made available, including:
 - a. Copies of the two most recent school reports for the student and results of standardised tests
 - b. Copies of results of any State Examinations taken by the student

The procedures of the school 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:

- as above in the case of a student moving to the area and in need of school accommodation
- as above in the case of a student wishing to transfer from another local school. The school's position is that it is in the best interest of students to limit transfer of a school to the end of Junior Cycle or at least to the end of a school year.

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

The board of Seamount College or any persons acting on its behalf shall not, except in accordance with section 64 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, 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.

16. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

A parent/guardian of a student, or a student who has reached the age of 18, who wishes to attend Seamount College without attending religious instruction should make a written request to the Principal. A meeting will be then be arranged with the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school with the cooperation of the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student.

17. 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. 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. 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.

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)

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)

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

September 2022