



# Coachford College

## Admissions Policy

A decision on an application for admission will be based on the implementation of this Policy, the information set out in the annual Admission Notice of the school and the information provided by the Applicant in the application for admission, once received before the closing date set out in the annual Admission Notice. The Principal of Coachford College is responsible for the implementation of this Admissions Policy.

### Introduction to Coachford College

#### Mission Statement

We are a community. Together we share mutual respect in a positive environment. We develop individual potential in all fields.

Coachford College is a designated community college. Designated Community Colleges are established by the signing of a model agreement between an ETB and the local Catholic Bishop and/or a religious congregation. Cork Education and Training Board is the patron of the school. The model agreement provides for the participation of the Bishop of Cloyne Diocese in the organisation and management of the College on an ongoing basis.

Coachford College was established in a spirit of partnership between Co. Cork VEC (now Cork ETB) and the Diocese of Cloyne. The inherited traditions, values and founding intentions of CCVEC/CETB and the Diocese of Cloyne remain enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school.

Our school is a state, co-educational, multi-denominational school underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education;
- Care;
- Equality;
- Community and
- Respect.

All members of our school community are treated equally, regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status. The school offers all students equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018). Once enrolled, Coachford

College strives to provide all its students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life.

Coachford College provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. It strives to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. The school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. It prepares open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

As a multi-denominational school, Coachford College welcomes, respects and supports students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

Coachford College prizes inclusion in all its curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular practices. The school has enjoyed significant academic success in recent years with students from the school taking first place in Ireland in Leaving Certificate subjects on ten occasions. Significant growth in enrolment has been experienced in recent years, with the number of class groups entering First Year having risen from five to six since 2019.

Junior Cycle, Transition Year, Leaving Certificate, and Leaving Cert Vocational Programmes are provided at Coachford College. Students develop key skills at Junior Cycle, enabling them to participate in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning through the various core and optional subjects and other areas of learning. Junior Cycle Optional subjects include Business, Engineering, French, Graphics, Home Economics, Music, Spanish, Visual Art and Wood Technology. Senior Cycle optional subjects include Accounting, Agricultural Science, Applied Mathematics, Art, Craft & Design, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Construction Studies, Design & Communication Graphics, Engineering, French, Geography, History, Home Economics, Music, Physics, Spanish (which will be available at Senior Cycle from Sept 2023).

Students are encouraged to participate meaningfully and collaboratively in their learning at Coachford College. Through the student voice, the College seeks to encourage students' engagement with learning and enhance student-teacher relationships. The effective use of digital technology is prioritised at Coachford College to enhance teaching, learning, assessment and reporting, so that our students become engaged thinkers, active learners, knowledge constructors and global citizens equipped to participate fully in society.

Coachford College is committed to creating a caring community of learners in a safe and respectful environment. The College seeks to be a centre of learning excellence which promotes excellent physical and mental health, and a safe and happy environment in which students achieve their full potential. Amongst the supports in place for students are the Class Tutor, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor and Chaplain. The Student Support Team works closely with the class teachers and parents/guardians in ensuring that each student is supported and challenged to reach his/her full potential as confident, happy and connected young adults.

Participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is highly valued at Coachford College. By optimising learning opportunities for students outside the classroom, Coachford College seeks to enhance its students' wellbeing and encourage learning, creativity, imagination, connection, empathy, resilience and self-confidence.

Involvement with local groups, organisations and employers is an integral part of life at Coachford College. The College provides an extensive programme of community engagement initiatives which support student learning and nurture in students the importance of relationship-building, supporting others, which in turn engenders community spirit and a sense of accomplishment.

Work has commenced on the construction of a new one thousand pupil school at Coachford College, which will facilitate increasing enrolment and ensure commitment to quality education in the catchment area. Development of the school's open spaces and further promotion of its enviable rural location offers students a quiet tranquil setting to achieve their potential.

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### **PART A: *General Information for All Applicants***

1. ***Glossary of terms***
2. ***Admission Statement***
3. ***Legal Framework***

#### 4. **General Admission Provisions (for all Applicants)**

### 1 **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**'Applicant'** means the parent/guardian of a Student, or, in the case of a Student who has reached the age of 18 years, the Student, who has made an application for admission to Coachford College.

**'Student'** means the person in respect of whom the application is being made. All uses of the word throughout this Policy therefore imply 'prospective' as part of the interpretation. That is, the use of the word 'Student' does not mean that an application or acceptance of offer makes him/her a student of Coachford College; a person is only regarded as a student of Coachford College once s/he is enrolled on his/her first day of attendance. It does not include a person who was formerly enrolled in the school and was permanently excluded from the school or who left the school after being recommended for expulsion by the Board of Management.

**'Enrolled'** means attending the school as a registered student, in line with section 20(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

**'Gender'**, in line with the definition of "*the gender ground*" in the Equal Status Act 2000, is such that "*one is male and the other is female*". This does not prejudice any Student who is Intersex or identifies as Androgynous/Androgyne, Bigender, Demigender, Gender Fluid, Genderqueer, Multigender, Neutrois, Non-binary, Transgender, Transsexual or otherwise.]

**'Catchment Area Category 1'** refers to the designated residential area for application to Coachford College in respect of the person on whose behalf the application is being made. The catchment area for Coachford College (Category 1) is defined as the areas for which the following English-medium primary schools are closest: Aghabullogue N.S., Ballyvongane N.S., Berrings N.S., Canovee N.S., Cloughduv N.S., Coachford N.S., Dripsey N.S., Farran N.S., Firmount N.S., Kilmurry N.S., Kilbonane N.S., St. Lachteen's N.S., Rusheen N.S., Rylane N.S., and all students who live in these areas and attend Gaelscoileanna in Ballincollig, Blarney, Bandon or Mallow.

**'Catchment Area Category 2'** refers to the designated residential area for application to Coachford College in respect of the person on whose behalf the application is being made. The catchment area for Coachford College (Category 2) is defined as the areas for which the following English-medium primary schools are closest: Bweeng N.S., Ovens N.S., Vicarstown N.S. and all students who live in these areas and attend Gaelscoileanna in Ballincollig, Blarney, Bandon or Mallow.

**'Parent'** has the same meaning as in the Education Act 1998 and includes a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997.

**'Feeder Primary Schools'** refers to the primary schools of preference for application to Coachford College. The feeder primary schools for Coachford College are: Aghabullogue N.S., Ballyvongane N.S., Berrings N.S., Bweeng N.S., Canovee N.S., Cloughduv N.S., Coachford N.S., Dripsey N.S., Farran N.S., Firmount N.S., Kilmurry N.S., Kilbonane N.S., St. Lachteen's N.S., Ovens N.S., Rusheen N.S. Rylane N.S., Vicarstown N.S. and where appropriate Gaelscoileanna in Ballincollig, Bandon, Blarney and Mallow.

**'Special Class'** means a class that has, with the approval of the Minister of Education, been established by a school to provide an education exclusively for Students with a category or categories of special

educational needs specified by the Minister of Education. Coachford College has a Special Class, established to cater for special educational needs of Students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Moderate General Learning Disability, Mild General Learning Disability, Severe Profound General Learning Disabilities, Specific Speech and Language Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Multiple Disabilities.

**‘Relevant Report’**, as advised by the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), means a written report, based on an assessment by a relevant professional, which:

- a. provides detailed evidence of the Student’s needs,
- b. confirms that those needs constitute complex/severe educational needs which arise from a named diagnosis relating to the Student, and
- c. makes a recommendation for a Special Class placement for the Student on the basis of his/her complex/severe educational needs arising from said diagnosis.

The relevant professional may include an educational psychologist, psychologist, other relevant health professionals, HSE disability services or HSE multi-disciplinary team staff, in line with guidance issued by the NCSE on this point.

**‘First Year’** means the intake group of Students for the most junior class or year in a school.

For the purpose of the selection criterion relating to the student having a sibling who previously attended the school, **‘Sibling’** refers to full siblings, half-siblings, foster-siblings and step-siblings.

For the purpose of the selection criterion relating to the student having a sibling who is currently enrolled in the school, **‘Sibling’** refers to full siblings, half-siblings, foster-siblings, step-siblings and students who reside in the same household.

**[Note:** the wider definition of sibling in the second of the two paragraphs immediately above is for the purpose of facilitating families who are required to do more than one drop-off and/or collection to/from the school.

## **2 ADMISSION STATEMENT**

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Accordingly, Coachford College shall not discriminate in its admission of a Student based on the following grounds:

- 2.1. Gender of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.2. Civil status of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.3. Family status of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.4. Sexual orientation of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.5. Religion of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.6. Disability of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.7. Race of the Student or Applicant;
- 2.8. The Student’s or Applicant’s membership of the Traveller community;
- 2.9. Special educational needs of the Student or Applicant.

Coachford College shall not charge fees or payments or seek contributions as a condition of admission or continued enrolment of a Student.

### 3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

**CORK EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD WAS ESTABLISHED UNDER THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD ACT 2013 WHICH SETS OUT THE FUNCTIONS OF ALL ETBs, INCLUDING TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN RECOGNISED SCHOOLS, CENTRES FOR EDUCATION AND EDUCATION AND TRAINING FACILITIES IN EACH ETB'S FUNCTIONAL AREA.**

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The Board of Management of Coachford College is a committee established under Section 44 of the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and also constitutes a Board of Management within the meaning of the Education Act 1998.

The Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 place a duty on all recognised schools to prepare and publish an Admission Policy.

The Education Act 1998 provides for an appeal process in the event of a refusal to enrol. The appeal process is set out in Section 5.2 in respect of applications made to the First Year group and in Section 6.2 in respect of applications made to all year other than the First Year group.

Section 62 (7) of the Education Act 1998 requires each school to set out in its Admissions Policy the arrangements it has in place where a parent, or student over 18 years of age, requests that the student opt out of religious instruction.

Coachford College offers *religious education* in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and the model agreement. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, *religious education* supports the 'multi-denominational' aspect of our school's ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or nonreligious beliefs and those of their peers.

It is important to understand that our school does not provide '*religious instruction*' and therefore the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise in this school. It is also important to understand the distinction between '*religious instruction*' and *religious education*':

- *Religious instruction* is a term used in Ireland to indicate instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a **particular** religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.
- *Religious education* is open to all students regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.

As ETB schools are 'multi-denominational', Coachford College supports the provision of *religious education* that caters for all students regardless of their religious or non-religious beliefs.

Parents or students over the age of 18 who wish to opt-out of *religious education* must make a written submission to the principal in the first instance. The submission should outline reasons why the opt-out is being requested. The principal will then arrange to meet with the parent(s) or student over the age of 18 to discuss the request. If after that meeting the parent or student over the age of 18 still wishes to opt out of *religious education*, the school will facilitate this. Through discussion, consultation

and with consideration of available resources, Coachford College will make specific arrangements for the student. In accordance with S.62(7)(n) of the Education Act 1998, the school day shall not be shortened for the student as a result of opting out of religious instruction.

Coachford College will co-operate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 relating to the provision of education for 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.

Coachford College will comply with any direction served on the patron or the Board, as the case may be, under Section 37A and any direction served on the Board under Section 67(\$B) of the Education Act.

#### **4 GENERAL ADMISSION PROVISIONS**

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A decision on an application for admission shall be based on:

- the implementation of this Admission Policy,
- the annual Admission Notice of the school, and the
- information provided by the Applicant in the application for admission.

If, prior to the commencement of section 62 of the Education Act 1998 by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020, Coachford College had confirmed, in writing, that an Applicant had been placed on a list relating to the allocation of school places for entrance before the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025, then this confirmation is still valid and the Applicant will be offered that place.

In processing an application Coachford College **shall not consider**:

- 4.1 The payment of fees or contributions to the school;
- 4.2 A Student's academic ability, skills or aptitude, it is necessary to ascertain whether or not the Student has the category of special educational needs concerned for admission to a school approved by the Minister of Education providing education exclusively to Students with a specified category of special educational needs or a special class;
- 4.3 The occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a Student's Parent(s)/guardian(s);
- 4.4 A requirement that a Student or his or her Parent(s), attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- 4.5 A Student's connection to the school due to a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school, unless the connection is a sibling of the Student concerned attending, or having attended, the school.
- 4.6 The date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school as long as it is received during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual Admissions Notice for that academic year.

Coachford College **will consider** the offer of a place to every Student seeking admission to the school, **unless [one of] the following applies**:

- 4.7 The Parent/Student fails to confirm in writing that s/he accepts the Appropriate Behaviour Policy and he/she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the Student;
- 4.8 The Student seeking admission to a Special Class in the school does not have the category of special educational needs specified by the Minister of Education in respect of that class.
- 4.9 The Applicants' subject choices on the curriculum which is operational at the time of application are not available, and/or the maximum class size is exceeded;
- 4.10 The information contained in the application is incomplete, false or misleading in a material respect.

Where Coachford College considers an application, each Student shall receive a place, unless the school is oversubscribed, in which case, selection criteria will be applied to each application.

Section 5 of this Policy addresses the selection criteria and other matters related to the admission provisions for the First Year group.

Section 6 of this Policy addresses the selection criteria and other matters related to the admission provisions for all year groups other than First Year.



## **PART B: Information for Specific Categories of Applicants**

5. ***Application to the First Year Group***
6. ***Application to All Year Groups Other Than First Year***

## **SECTION 5 APPLICATION TO THE FIRST YEAR GROUP**

### **5 APPLICATION TO THE FIRST YEAR GROUP**

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#### **5.1 Admission Provisions (First Year group)**

- 5.1.1. Oversubscription
- 5.1.2. Selection criteria in order of priority
- 5.1.3. Selection process
- 5.1.4. Late Applications
- 5.1.5. Second/subsequent-round offers of a place
- 5.1.6. Acceptance of a place
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- 5.1.9. Appeals

#### **5.2 Appeals**

- 5.2.1 Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription
- 5.2.2 Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription
- 5.2.3 Basis for appeal

#### **5.1 Admission Provisions (First Year Group)**

Where Coachford College is not oversubscribed, all Students will be offered a school place, subject to sections 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 or 4.11.

##### **5.1.1 Oversubscription**

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at section 5.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid for the school year in respect of which the applications are made, with the exception of cases in which any of 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 or 4.11 apply. Where Coachford College is in a position to offer further school places that become available for and during the 2024-2025 school year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission to the same year group in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications to all year groups other than First Year.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admission Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

### **5.1.2 Selection criteria in order of priority**

Coachford College will apply the following criteria for admission to the First Year group:

1. Siblings of students who are already attending the school;
2. Siblings of students who previously attended the school;
3. Children of members of staff of Coachford College;
4. Children who are the first in family and at the time of application attend a feeder primary school and who reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
5. Children who at the time of application attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
6. Children who are the first in family, attend one of the feeder primary schools at the time of application and who reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
7. Children who, at the time of application, attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
8. Children who reside within the catchment area but attend a primary school outside the catchment area;
9. Children who at the time of application attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside outside the catchment area;
10. All other applicants.

### **5.1.3 Selection process**

Coachford College will apply the selection process as follows:

Applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Subsequently, where the school still has places available, the remaining Applicants are considered in light of the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the school. This process is continuously carried out until all available places have been offered and accepted.

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, Coachford College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

### **5.1.4 Late applications**

An application received by Coachford College after the closing date published by the College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admissions Policy.

Where Coachford College is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, the late application will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by Coachford College before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be

placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school, subject to Section(s) 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11.

Where Coachford College is not oversubscribed and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place within Coachford College, subject to Sections 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11, and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be applied *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school within two weeks of issue.

### **5.1.5 Second and subsequent-round offers of places**

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within Coachford College but does not accept the offer, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and fourth rounds *etc.* until all places within the school have been filled.

### **5.1.6 Acceptance of a place**

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or within two weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second/third round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or within two weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second/subsequent-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for refusal as set out below.

### **5.1.7 Refusal**

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

- 5.1.7.1. The reasons that the Student was not offered a place in Coachford College;
- 5.1.7.2. Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria, if the year group to which the Applicant is applying is oversubscribed;
- 5.1.7.3. Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable;
- 5.1.7.4. Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision.

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11, an offer of admission may not be made where:

- 5.1.7.5. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect.

### **5.1.8 An offer of admission may be withdrawn where**

- 5.1.8.1. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect,  
or
- 5.1.8.2. The Applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual Admissions Notice of the school for the following academic year, or in the case of a late application, or second/third round offer, within two weeks, or
- 5.1.8.3. An Applicant has not indicated:
- (i) whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s);
  - and
  - (ii) whether or not s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s).

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the Student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place on the admission list or waiting list for that academic year and any subsequent applications for the same academic year on behalf of that Student shall be treated as a late application in line with section 5.1.4 above.

### **5.1.9 Appeals**

For information relating to an Applicant's right to appeal a decision of Coachford College regarding admission to the First Year group, see Section 5.2.

## **5.2 Appeals**

### **5.2.1 Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission because the school is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision must first request a review by the Board of Management in writing, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, ([www.coachfordcollege.ie](http://www.coachfordcollege.ie)) for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie).

If an Applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, or the Board of Management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the Applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's '*Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under Section 29*', such an appeal must not be brought until the Applicant has received correspondence from the Board of Management in relation to the review, or until 42 calendar days have passed since the date of initial refusal, and may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

### **5.2.2 Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission to Coachford College for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision may first choose to request a review by the Board of Management, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing info@office.coachfordcollege.ie. (An applicant may withdraw a request for review at any time prior to the conclusion of the review by notifying the Board of Management in writing to that effect.)

Alternatively, s/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's *'Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under Section 29'*, such an appeal may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

If an Applicant who seeks a review by the Board of Management is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, that Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998, as outlined in the immediately preceding paragraph.

### **5.2.3 Basis for a review by the Board of Management**

As required by Section 29C (2) of the Education Act 1998, any request for the Board of Management to review a decision of the school to refuse admission must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the school's Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to review the decision.

## **SECTION 6**

### **APPLICATION TO ALL YEAR GROUPS OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR**

#### **APPLICATION TO ALL YEAR GROUPS OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR**

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##### **6.1 Admission Provisions (other than First Year)**

- 6.1.1 Oversubscription
- 6.1.2 Selection criteria in order of priority
- 6.1.3 Selection process
- 6.1.4 Late Applications
- 6.1.5 Second/subsequent-round offers of a place
- 6.1.6 Acceptance of a place
- 6.1.7 Refusal
- 6.1.8 Withdrawal of an offer
- 6.1.9 Appeals

##### **6.2 Appeals**

- 6.2.1 Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription
- 6.2.2 Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription
- 6.2.3 Basis for a review by the Board of Management

#### **6.1 ADMISSION PROVISIONS (OTHER THAN FIRST YEAR)**

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Where Coachford College is not oversubscribed, all Students will be offered a school place, subject to Sections 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, or 4.11.

##### **6.1.1 Oversubscription**

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at Section 6.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid for the school year in respect of which the applications are made, with the exception of cases in which any of 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 or 4.11 apply. Where Coachford College is in a position to offer further school places that become available for and during the 2022-2023 school year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the school for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission to the same year group in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications to all years other than the First Year Group.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admissions Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

Where the Transition Year Programme in Coachford College is oversubscribed, a Student applying for admission to the programme in the relevant year group, will, subject to this policy, be placed on the appropriate waiting list already compiled (annually) by the school, which list will contain the names of students enrolled in the school who have been placed on an internal waiting list for this programme.

### **6.1.2 Selection criteria**

Coachford College will apply the following criteria for admission to a year group other than First Year:

1. Brothers and sisters of students who are already attending the school;
2. Brothers and sisters of students who previously attended the school;
3. Children of members of staff;
4. Students who move into the area and therefore have no school;
5. Children who are the first in family and attend a feeder primary school and who reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
6. Children who attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
7. Children who are the first in family and attend a feeder primary school and who reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
8. Children who attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
9. Children who reside within the catchment area but attend a primary school outside the catchment area;
10. Children who attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside outside the catchment area;
11. All other applicants.

Any selection criteria not included in this Admissions Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not an Applicant is admitted.

### **6.1.3 Selection process**

Coachford College will apply the selection process as follows:

Applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Subsequently, where the school still has places available, the remaining Applicants are considered in light of the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the school. This process is continuously carried out until all available places have been offered and accepted.

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, Coachford College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

#### **6.1.4 Late applications**

An application received by Coachford College after the closing date published by Coachford College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admission Policy.

Where Coachford College is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, that application will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by Coachford College before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school, subject to section(s) 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11.

Where Coachford College is not oversubscribed and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place within Coachford College, subject to Sections 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11, and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be operated *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school within two weeks of issue.

#### **6.1.5 Second or subsequent-round offers of a place**

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within Coachford College but does not accept the offer, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second-round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and subsequent rounds *etc.* until all places within the school have been filled.

#### **6.1.6 Acceptance of a place**

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or within two weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second or subsequent-round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or within two weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second or subsequent-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for refusal as set out below.

#### **6.1.7 Refusal**

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

- 6.1.7.1. The reasons that the Student was not offered a place in Coachford College;
- 6.1.7.2. Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria, if the year group to which the Applicant is applying is oversubscribed;



- 6.1.7.3. Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable;
- 6.1.7.4. Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision.

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11. an offer of admission may not be made where:

- 6.1.7.5. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect.

### **6.1.8 Withdrawal of an offer**

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

- 6.1.8.1. The information contained in the application is incomplete, false or misleading in a material respect, or
- 6.1.8.2. The 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 for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second/subsequent-round offer, within two weeks, or
- 6.1.8.3. An Applicant has not indicated:
  - i. whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s), and
  - ii. whether or not s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s).

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the Student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place on the admission list or waiting list for that academic year and any subsequent applications for the same academic year on behalf of that Student shall be treated as a late application in line with section 6.1.4 above.

### **6.1.9 Appeals**

For information relating to an Applicant's right to appeal a decision of Coachford College regarding admission to a year group other than First Year, see Section 6.2.

## **6.2 APPEALS**

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### **6.2.1 Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission because the school is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision must first request a review by the Board of Management in writing, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, ([www.coachfordcollege.ie](http://www.coachfordcollege.ie)) for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie).

If an Applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, or the Board of Management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the Applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and

must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's *'Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under Section 29'*, such an appeal must not be brought until the Applicant has received correspondence from the Board of Management in relation to the review, or until 42 calendar days have passed since the date of initial refusal, and may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

### **6.2.2 Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission to Coachford College for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision may first choose to request a review by the Board of Management, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie). (An applicant may withdraw a request for review at any time prior to the conclusion of the review by notifying the Board of Management in writing to that effect.)

Alternatively, s/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's *'Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under Section 29'*, such an appeal may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

If an Applicant who seeks a review by the Board of Management is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, that Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998, as outlined in the immediately preceding paragraph.

### **6.2.3 Basis for a review by the Board of Management**

As required by Section 29C (2) of the Education Act 1998, any request for the Board of Management to review a decision of the school to refuse admission must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the school's Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to review the decision.

## **SECTION 7**

### **APPLICATION TO THE SPECIAL CLASS**

#### **7 APPLICATION TO THE SPECIAL CLASS**

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##### **7.1. Admission Provisions for the Special Class**

- 7.1.1. Oversubscription
- 7.1.2. Selection criteria in order of priority
- 7.1.3. Selection process
- 7.1.4. Late Applications
- 7.1.5. Second/third-round offers of a place
- 7.1.6. Acceptance of a place
- 7.1.7. Refusal
- 7.1.8. Withdrawal of an offer

##### **7.2. Appeals**

- 7.2.1. Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription
- 7.2.2. Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription
- 7.2.3. Basis for a review by the Board of Management

## **7.1. ADMISSION PROVISIONS FOR THE SPECIAL CLASS**

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Coachford College has a Special Class, established in 2024 to cater for the additional educational needs of Students with Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders needs arising from Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Moderate General Learning Disability, Mild General Learning Disability, Severe Profound General Learning Disabilities, Specific Speech and Language Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Emotional Disturbance.

Only applications in respect of Students whose needs fall within the category additional educational needs provided for by the Special Class will be considered. In this respect, the school requires that such needs of the Student be verified in a Relevant Report which has been prepared within the 24 months immediately preceding the Student's application to the Special Class.

Where the Special Class in Coachford College is not oversubscribed, all Students whose needs fall within the category of special educational needs provided for by the Special Class, as confirmed by the NCSE, will be offered a place in the Special Class, subject to sections 4.7, 4.8 and 4.10.

### **7.1.1 Oversubscription**

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the published selection criteria as set out at section 7.1.2 below will apply and a waiting list shall be compiled which shall remain valid only for the school year in respect of which the applications are made. Where Coachford College is in a position to offer further places that become available in the Special Class for and during that academic year, places will be offered in accordance with the order of priority in which Students have been placed on the waiting list subject to there being a place in the relevant mainstream year group. If there is not a place available in the relevant year group, the next person on the waiting list for the Special Class will be considered for the place in question but this will not change the initial Student's place on the waiting list for the Special Class for the remainder of that school year, *i.e.* if another place subsequently became available in the Special Class during that school year, the initial Student at the top of the waiting list would be considered first, but again subject to there being a place in the relevant year group for that Student.

For clarity, if a place becomes available in a given mainstream class group, before that place is offered to a Student on the waiting list for that mainstream year group, the waiting list for the Special Class shall be reviewed and if there is a place available in the Special Class and there is a Student on the waiting list who would be able to take-up the place due to the available place in the given mainstream year group, that Student will be offered the place in the Special Class (thereby removing the place in the mainstream year group). This is in the interest of ensuring that the scarce resources of the Special Class are never under-utilised.

Where an application is made on behalf of a Student for both the Special Class and a mainstream year group, and his/her application for one but not both is successful, s/he will remain in the same position on the waiting list for the group to which s/he was not successful, regardless of whether the Applicant accepts the place in the group to which the Student was successful.

For the avoidance of doubt, if a Student does not receive a place in the Special Class for a given academic year, but s/he wishes to be considered for admission to Special Class in the following academic year, a new application must be made on behalf of that Student during the dates specified by the school as being the period when it will accept applications for the Special Class.

Where the school is oversubscribed, any selection criteria that are not included in this Admission Policy shall not be considered in determining whether or not a Student is admitted to the school.

### **7.1.2 Selection criteria in order of priority**

Applications to the Special Class will only be considered if the Student's needs fall within the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this class. Subject to this requirement, in the event of oversubscription, the following criteria for admission to the Special Class will apply:

#### **Selection criteria in order of priority**

1. Siblings of students who are already attending the school;
2. Siblings of students who previously attended the school;
3. Children of members of staff of Coachford College;
4. Children who are the first in family and at the time of application attend a feeder primary school and who reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
5. Children who at the time of application attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 1);
6. Children who are the first in family, attend one of the feeder primary schools at the time of application and who reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
7. Children who, at the time of application, attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside in the catchment area (Category 2);
8. Children who reside within the catchment area but attend a primary school outside the catchment area;
9. Children who at the time of application attend one of the feeder primary schools and reside outside the catchment area;

All other applicants.

Having met the criteria for admission to the Special Class, applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion. Subsequently, where the school still has places available the remaining Applicants are considered against the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the Special Class. This process is continuously carried out against all selection criteria until all available places have been offered and accepted.

Where two or more applications are tied in the foregoing selection process, Coachford College will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the Special Class, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

N.B. The number of places available in a year group is subject to reduction in the event that a placement(s) in the Special Class is/are given to Student(s) from that year group, i.e. the selection process for the Special Class will be completed before the selection process for the mainstream year group and the number of Students who are offered a place in the Special Class will be the number by which the places in the relevant mainstream year group(s) are reduced.<sup>1</sup>

### **7.1.3 Late applications**

An application received by Coachford College after the closing date published by Coachford College, and set out in the Admission Notice, is considered a late application for the purposes of this Admission Policy.

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<sup>1</sup> This approach is based on section 2 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, which requires that: "A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out .... or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated."

Where Coachford College is oversubscribed and receives a late application for admission, that application will receive a place on the waiting list beneath Applicants whose applications were received by the school before the closing date for applications, irrespective of any selection criteria which may have been applied to applications received before the closing date for applications. Such late applications will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the date and time they were received by the school, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8. For the avoidance of doubt, selection criteria are not relevant to, and will not be applied to, late applications.

Where Coachford College is not oversubscribed, i.e. there is no waiting list, and it receives a late application, the Student seeking admission will receive an offer of a place within Coachford College, subject to sections 4.7 and 4.8 and the same process as applies to Applicants whose applications were received before the closing date will be applied *i.e.* an Acceptance Form will be issued to the Applicant for completion and return to the school within 2 weeks of issue.

### **Second/third-round offers of a place**

Where a Student is in receipt of an offer of a place within Coachford College but does not accept the offer, or the school withdraws the offer in line with the relevant provisions of this Policy, the place will be offered to the next Student on the waiting list in a second-round of offers. This process will continue throughout third and fourth rounds *etc.* until all places within the Special Class have been filled.

#### **7.1.4 Acceptance of a place**

If the Student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the Applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The Applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form by the date set out in the School Admission Notice, or within two weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school by the date set out in the school's Admission Notice, or within 2 weeks of issuing by the school if it is a late application or if it is a second/third-round offer, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for withdrawal of an offer, as set out below.

#### **7.1.5 Refusal**

Where a Student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

The reasons that the Student was not offered a place in Coachford College;

Details of the Student's ranking against the published selection criteria, if the year group to which the applicant is applying is oversubscribed;

Details of the Student's place on the waiting list, if applicable; and

Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out at 4.7 and 4.8 an offer of admission may not be made where:

The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect.

### **7.1.6 Withdrawal of an offer**

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where the information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or

The 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 for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second/third-round offer, within two weeks, or

An Applicant has not indicated:

whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s);

and

whether or not s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s).

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the Student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place for that academic year (and shall not be placed on a waiting list). If the Applicant still desires a place for that academic year, a new application must be made for the same academic year on behalf of that Student and shall be treated as a late application in line with section 7.1.3 above.

### **7.1.7 Appeals**

#### **Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission because the school is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision must first request a review by the Board of Management in writing, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie).

If an Applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, or the Board of Management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the Applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's *'Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under Section 29'*, such an appeal must not be brought until the Applicant has received correspondence from the Board of Management in relation to the review, or until 42 calendar days have passed since the date of initial refusal and may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

#### **Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription**

An Applicant who was refused admission to Coachford College for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision may first choose to request a review by the Board of Management, via a 'BOMR1 Form', available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College. Such a review must be sought by the Applicant within twenty-one calendar days of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead. Completed BOMR1 Forms should be submitted to the school office or online by emailing [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie). (An applicant may withdraw a request for review at any time prior to the conclusion of the review by notifying the Board of Management in writing to that effect.)

Alternatively, s/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under Section 29A of the Education Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing on a 'Section 29 Appeal Form' and must be submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. The 'Section 29 Appeal Form' may be downloaded from the Department's website or may be obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit in the Department of Education. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website. As per the Department of Education's *'Procedures for hearing and determining appeals under section 29'*, such an appeal may not be brought later than 63 calendar days after the initial decision to refuse admission.

If an Applicant who seeks a review by the Board of Management is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, that Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an Appeals Committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998, as outlined in the immediately preceding paragraph.



### **7.1.8 Basis for a review by the Board of Management**

As required by Section 29C (2) of the Education Act 1998, any request for the Board of Management to review a decision of the school to refuse admission must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the school's Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to review the decision.

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This Policy was ratified by the school's Board of Management on August 20<sup>th</sup> 2024, having been signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and by the Principal.

It is posted on the school's website [www.coachfordcollege.ie](http://www.coachfordcollege.ie), and is available on request from the school office, 021 7334113 or [info@office.coachfordcollege.ie](mailto:info@office.coachfordcollege.ie).

The Policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Signed by:

*Niamh Lehane*

**Chairperson of the Board**

Date: 20/08/2024

*[Signature]*

**Principal**

Date: 20/08/2024

## Appendix 1

### Statement on Characteristic Spirit

Coachford College is a designated Community College. Designated Community Colleges are established by the signing of a model agreement between an Education and Training Board (ETB) and the local Catholic Bishop and/or a religious congregation. Cork ETB is the patron of the school. The model agreement provides for the participation of the Bishop of Cloyne Diocese in the organisation and management of the college on an ongoing basis.

Coachford College was established in a spirit of partnership between Cork ETB and the Diocese of Cloyne Diocese. The inherited traditions, values and founding intentions of Cork ETB and the Diocese of Cloyne remain enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of the college.

Coachford College is a state, co-educational, multi-denominational school underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education;
- Care;
- Equality;
- Community and
- Respect.



All members of our school community are treated equally, regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status. All students of the school are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018). Once enrolled, the school strives to provide all its students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life.

Coachford College provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. The school strives to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. The school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. The school prepares open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

Coachford College is multi-denominational. Students of all religions and beliefs are welcomed, respected and supported. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

## Appendix 2

## Opt-Out of Religious Instruction

Coachford College offers *religious education* in all year groups as it promotes the holistic development of students and can contribute positively to their wellbeing in line with the principles of the Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle Frameworks and the model agreement. It facilitates the intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual values and moral development of students and encourages respect for all members of our school communities. In addition, *religious education* supports the ‘multi-denominational’ aspect of our school’s ethos as it provides opportunities for students to engage with questions around their own religious or nonreligious beliefs and those of their peers.

It is important to understand that Coachford College does not provide ‘*religious instruction*’ and therefore the legal requirement to advise of the option to opt-out of religious instruction does not arise in this school. It is also important to understand the distinction between ‘*religious instruction*’ and *religious education*’:

- *Religious instruction* is a term used in Ireland to indicate instruction in accordance with the rites, practices and teachings of a **particular** religion or denomination for pupils of that religious tradition.
- *Religious education* is open to all pupils regardless of their commitment to any particular religion or worldview. It seeks to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all students equally.

As ETB schools are ‘multi-denominational’, Coachford College supports the provision of *religious education* that caters for all students regardless of their religious or non-religious beliefs.

Parents or students over the age of 18 who wish to opt-out of *religious education* must make a written submission to the Principal in the first instance. The submission should outline reasons why the opt-out is being requested. The Principal will then arrange to meet with the parent(s) or student over the age of 18 to discuss the request. If after that meeting the parent or student over the age of 18 still wishes to opt out of *religious education*, the school will facilitate this. Through discussion, consultation and with consideration of available resources, Coachford College will make specific arrangements for the student. In accordance with S.62(7)(n) of the Education Act 1998, the school day shall not be shortened for the student as a result of opting out of religious instruction.