



Rice College, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

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Rice College is a Voluntary Co-Educational Secondary School, under the Trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. It is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills.

Admissions Policy Document

The admissions policy for 2012/13 has been agreed for publication by the Patron. On receipt of the Patron's agreement, the policy is then approved at a meeting of the Board of Management, signed by the Chairman and retained with the minutes of the Board meeting. The policy is distributed to primary schools, is available from the college office and is published on the college website www.ricecollege.ie. The policy is reviewed and monitored annually by the Board of Management. Revised copies/updates are made available on line or issued in hard copy on request to parents/guardians. All new applicants to the school will receive the admissions policy, the college prospectus and an application form.

Section 1

Ethos

Rice College is operated according to the Religious and Educational philosophy of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST) Charter. This Charter provides guiding principles against which all schools and communities of learning in the Edmund Rice Network will assess themselves. These principles are:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and gospel-based Values;
- Promoting partnership;
- Excelling in teaching and learning;
- Creating a caring school community;
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

It is a Catholic college. We see our college not only as a centre of academic excellence but a community animated by the spirit of the Gospel, where Roman Catholic values are transmitted and where personal faith is nurtured and developed.

Section 2

Mission Statement

We strive to live up to Christian values and show genuine concern for our school community. Our core aims are to provide a broad and comprehensive education and to recognise the needs and develop the talents of each person. We strive to enrich all those with whom we are privileged to come in contact, we strive to succeed.

Section 3

Management

The Board of Management, (BOM) manages the college within the Regulations and Programmes of the Department of Education and Skills.

It respects and is governed by the Religious and Educational philosophy of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust.

It operates with the funding and resources available to promote education according to the above philosophy.

Organisation Board of Management, Staff, Parents Council and Student Council.

Resources

The Department of Education and Skills, parent contributions, fund raising and teacher allocation provide the financial and teaching resources of the college.

The implementation of the school plan and its policies must have due regard to:

- Resources and funding available.
- Regulations as laid down from time to time by the DES and the curricular programme prescribed by the DES, which may be amended, in accordance with *Section 9 and 30* of the Education Act 1998.

Curriculum See Prospectus for the general Curriculum offered by College.

The **Transition Year Programme**:

The Transition Year option is a one-year educational programme available to students who have completed their Junior Certificate programme, depending upon demand. It offers students space to learn, mature and develop, by studying and participating in a wide range of subjects and activities. Any student wishing to do Transition Year can apply. Transition Year Classes are capped at 24 students. If necessary, places are allocated on the basis of an interview. For further details on this programme please see Prospectus.

The Transition Year subjects include:

Gaeilge, English, French, German, Mathematics, Business Studies, Science and Electronics, Computer Studies, Media Studies, Environmental and Social Studies, Religious Studies, Physical Education, Construction Studies, Music, Art, Career Guidance, Work Experience, First Aid, Tourism, Car Maintenance, Spanish and Japanese

Curriculum (Contd.)

The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)

The College offers further education and an openness to learning new skills in communication, problem solving, team work, flexibility and independent thinking through its Leaving Cert Vocational Preparation (LCVP) course. This programme is open to all Senior Cycle students, subject to option choices set by the DES.

Students will receive the same Leaving Certificate as other leaving certificate students with an additional statement of the result of the link modules. A distinction, merit or pass will be awarded to the successful students.

Students applying for a degree, diploma or certificate course in the institutes of technology or universities may submit their link module grade in place of their sixth subject. Students who complete this course should be more employable, flexible and enterprising as they join the workforce.

Extra Curricular See attached Prospectus

Special Needs

The College offers support to students with Special needs. This support is available to students who experience general learning difficulties and concentrates on his/her individual needs. New Entrants are tested by the special needs teaching staff of Rice College to determine the specific help they need. All first year students complete a standardised DES screening assessment for reading comprehension and numeracy.

Acceptance of students with special needs may depend on the DES providing the necessary extra resources/help to educate these students. In some cases a provisional acceptance will issue and confirmation of the acceptance will depend on the response of the DES to requests from the college for suitable extra help, having assessed the particular needs of the prospective student.

Other Relevant Information

A voluntary contribution of €50 is payable on acceptance of a place. In addition there is an annual administration voluntary contribution of €70 per student or €90 per family.

The annual voluntary contribution covers personal accident insurance for the students, photocopying, school journal, in-house examinations but not corrections and answer scripts for Trial Examinations in Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate.

Section 4

Application Procedure

Class size Classes will have a maximum of 30 students for general subjects and 24 for specialist subjects. Once these limits are reached, the class(es) in question are full.

A) New First Year Entrants

- Applications are invited for students to enter 1st year. The closing date is the **18th of November, 2011**.
- 122 students are offered places each school year in 1st year.
- As with the Education Welfare Act section 19, decisions on enrolment are communicated in writing **within** 21 days of deadline for applications.
- After the closing date deadline, November 18th 2011, parents will be informed by December 2nd 2011 if their son/daughter is accepted. For those accepted, the letter will include details on:
 - An open night for those students and their parents and an assessment test, which will take place soon after the open night, (for mixed ability class formation only)

Students are accepted according to the following enrolment criteria in the order of preference listed below:

1. Applicants with brother(s)/sister(s) in Rice College (current and/or in the past). The term brother/sister applies when there is a least one parent in common or the process of legal adoption has been completed.
2. Applicants from CBS Primary. Pupils in this category must have been enrolled in the CBS primary for at least 5 years prior to the date of admission to Rice College. The only exception to this requirement is in the case of applicants who by virtue of a change of domicile necessitated a change of school during that 5 year period.
3. All other applicants.

Where there are excess applications for places - a lottery is held in the relevant categories. *The lottery draw for places, if applicable, is undertaken by a representative of the Board of Management and an independent external person nominated by the Board.* As demand for places normally exceeds places offered it is advisable to apply to more than one school.

The Principal decides on admissions according to the above criteria - subject to limitations of space and the capacity of the college to educate these students.

Students applying to the college must be 12 years on the 1st of January in the calendar year following the student's entry into 1st year. (DES Rule)

An appeal to the BOM can be made for unsuccessful applicants. (See Page 7)

B) Transfers from other 2nd level Schools

The maximum number of students in each year group is 120. However, in the case of 5th year, the number is determined by the Transition year uptake for that particular year.

Students wishing to transfer to this college will be accepted on the following basis:

- a) That the board is free to contact the school from which the student wants to transfer.
- b) That the applicant is between the ages of 12 years - 18 years and age appropriate for the year group.
- c) That the board is satisfied with their previous school record (Academic and Behavioural).
- d) The reason for transfer.
- e) Available space and the capacity of the college to educate these students.
- f) That the college can offer the subjects choices being studied by the transferring student.
- g) That there are spaces in the core subject classes at the levels chosen by the transferring student.

A copy of the two most recent examination results, a reference and a copy of the disciplinary record from the previous school are essential for all such applicants.

C) Repeat Students (any year group)

Students between the ages of 12 years - 18 years and age appropriate for the year group, wishing to repeat at this college will be accepted on the following basis:

- (1) The board must be satisfied that such a repeat will be educationally beneficial to the student.
- (2) There must be space in the year group and the option classes that the student would be entering.
- (3) The board must be satisfied that such a repeat will not detract from the new year group.
- (4) That the college can offer the subjects choices being studied by the repeating student.
- (5) That there are spaces in the core subject classes at the levels chosen by the repeating student.

Right to refuse

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application in exceptional circumstances. The right to refuse may arise if

- (i) The school cannot meet the special needs of a student or provide that student with an appropriate education.
- (ii) In the opinion of the Board of Management the applicant possesses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff or to school property.

Section 5

Data Protection

The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003. Personal data supplied on the enrolment form will be used for the purposes of student enrolment, registration, administration, child welfare and to fulfil any other legal obligations. While the information provided will generally be treated as confidential to the school, from time to time it may be necessary for the school to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education and Skills, Department of Social and Family Affairs, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, National Educational Welfare Board. Contact details will also be used to notify you of school events and activities.

The school relies on parents/guardians to provide us with accurate and complete information and to update us in relation to any change in the information provided. You should write to the Principal should you wish to update or access your child's personal data.

A copy of the notice (Circular 0047/2010) to parents, guardians and students over 18 is available from the Department of Education and Skills outlining how personal data of students of students in this school is returned to the Department of Education and Skills, and how this data is fairly processed and in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

Section 6

Code of Behaviour/Discipline Procedure

The board supports the endeavours of staff, students, parents, and the community to ensure positive student behaviour and conduct. In addition, the board expects parents and students to recognise their responsibility in developing student self-discipline. Students shall be responsible and accountable for their behaviour and conduct: while involved in school-sponsored or related activities; while on college property; during any recess or lunch periods on or off college property; while travelling to and from school and beyond the hours of school operation if the behaviour or conduct detrimentally affects the welfare of individual students or the good name, climate, or efficiency of the college.

Failure to meet the expectations for behaviour and conduct shall result in some or all of the following consequences:

- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behaviour expectation with student and then reprimand;
- Written exercises: these will have clear educational purposes;
- Parental involvement;
- Detention of students after school or during school hours;
- Temporary removal of privileges;
- Suspension;
- Behaviour contract with students;
- Restitution for property damage to an individual or College;
- Involvement of Gardai and/or other statutory agencies;
- Referral to the National Educational Welfare Board;
- Conditional return to College;
- Expulsion from the College;

School Rules For full breakdown of specific School Rules see attached School Prospectus.

Please Note: Once you have secured a place in Rice College, Parents and students will be required to sign a College Code of Discipline every September.

Section 7

Board of Management Appeals Procedure on refusal to enrol a student

1. If enrolment is unsuccessful, a formal letter of appeal can be made in writing to a sub-Committee of the BOM., stating clearly the grounds/reasons for asking for the appeal.
2. The Sub-Committee will examine the contents of the letter and the reason for the appeal.
3. Using the BOM's criteria for admission, the Sub-Committee will make a decision on the appeal before it.
4. This decision is communicated to the Parent/Guardian promptly.
5. If this is unsuccessful, a further appeal can be made to a full BOM meeting where you will be invited to attend to make an oral presentation **or** invited to make a further written presentation of the issues you consider important for your case. The board will consider the case put before it and a final decision will be made.
6. The decision is communicated to the Parent/Guardian promptly.

An appeal against the decision of the Board of Management on enrolment is available under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

It is open to Parents/Guardians to make a general application to the college at any time for a place for their son/daughter (Education Act 1998). Being unsuccessful in the 1st year application process does not affect this right.