

Woodbrook College Bray, Co. Wicklow



Admissions Policy 2019/2020

This policy was drafted in consultation with the education partners at Woodbrook College, Bray, Co. Wicklow and in accordance with relevant provisions of the Education Act 1998, The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 to 2004 and the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004. This admissions policy fully reflects the ethos of the school and embraces fully the guiding principles of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter. It was ratified by the Board of Management at their meeting on March 5th, 2018

School Profile

Founded in 1956, Woodbrook College is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for boys and girls operating under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). The ethos of the school is informed by five guiding principles of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership

- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership

The school is managed by a Board of Management consisting of eight members – four representatives nominated by the Trustees, two parents elected by the parent body and two teachers elected by the teaching staff. The Principal of the school acts as secretary to the board. Woodbrook College operates within the regulations laid down from time to time by the Department of Education and Skills. In addition the school follows the curricular programmes – Junior Certificate, Transition Year, Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied – prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time in accordance with the Education Act 1998 (Sections 9 and 30).

Aims

Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, parents, staff and students of Woodbrook College promote the following aims:

- To provide an inclusive school environment particularly with reference to the enrolment of students with a disability or other special educational needs including gifted children
- To promote equality of access to and participation in education and in accordance with the Equal Status Act 2000 - 2011, not to discriminate in its admissions policy on any of the following grounds – gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age*, race, disability or membership of the Travelling Community.
- To provide an environment which is free from all forms of harassment
- To ensure students achieve the highest academic standards based on their own individual abilities.
- To deliver a broad-based curriculum that adequately responds to the needs of our students and society in general.
- To continue to provide and resource an extensive programme of extra-curricular activity which caters for the wide range of talents and interests amongst our students.
- To provide a student-centred education which strives to develop the whole person – spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and socially.
- To foster a spirit of co-operation and respect amongst all of our school community.
- To promote a happy, positive and safe environment where the wellbeing of each person is valued and respected and where healthy relationships are developed.
- To facilitate and embrace a harmonious integration of different cultures, faiths, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations and ethnic diversities.
- To inspire and promote lifelong learning in our students to prepare them to take their place as responsible citizens in a challenging society.
- To continue to grow our partnership with the wider community by reaching out in a tangible way to people in need.

* Students are required by law to have reached the age of 12 by January 1st of their first year of attendance at secondary school.

Admissions

In keeping with our stated aims, Woodbrook College welcomes all students for whom the school can provide an appropriate education.

Eligibility

Pupils who satisfy the following criteria are eligible for admission to Woodbrook College:

- To have completed and returned an official application form by the stated closing date. Application forms are available from the school or may be downloaded from our school website. However, submission of a completed application form does not guarantee the student a place
- To have reached the age of 12 on the 1st of January in the calendar year following the child's entry into first year

- To have completed sixth class in a recognised Primary School or to have received an equivalent education elsewhere
- To be willing with their parents/guardians to respect the school ethos and accept the school Code of Behaviour. Confirmation that parents/guardians and students accept the Code of Behaviour will be required in writing before a place can be taken up. A copy of the Code of Behaviour is available for download from the school website www.woodbrookcollege.ie
- Students of all faiths and none will be required to attend Religious Education class. Alternative appropriate work will be given to students for completion in the classroom at times when it is deemed appropriate to excuse them from participation while certain areas of the Religious Education curriculum are being taught

Criteria

All enrolments are subject, in the first instance, to a place being available. The school's Board of Management decides in advance the maximum number of First Year students to be enrolled, having due regard to the accommodation, facilities, personnel, plant and resources available. For admission in 2019 this figure stands at 81 students. The closing date for receipt of completed applications and all related documentation, for enrolment to first year for September 2019 will be 4.30pm on October 15th 2018.

Procedures

All parents/guardians who wish to enrol their child in Woodbrook College must complete the standard application form. As soon as is practicable after the closing date for receipt of applications or after the parent has provided the relevant information, whichever is the later, the Board of Management shall send a "Request a Place" form to all those applicants from whom an application was received. Those applicants who still wish to have their application considered must sign and return the "Request a Place" form within the timeframe indicated on the "Request a Place" form. Places will then be allocated in the following order:

- 1) Brothers or sisters of students currently enrolled in the school
- 2) Brothers or sisters of past pupils of the school
- 3) Sons/daughters of past pupils of the school
- 4) Applicants currently enrolled the primary schools contained in our catchment area:*

 - St. Anne's, Shankill
 - Scoil Mhuire, Shankill
 - Rathmichael National School
 - St. Peter's National School, Bray
 - St. Philomena's National School, Bray
 - St. Cronan's Primary School Bray
 - St. Patrick's Primary School Bray
 - Gaelscoil Ui Ceadaiigh, Bray

** Our catchment area is defined as an area within a radius of 2.5km from Woodbrook College*

- 5) Applicants currently enrolled in the following primary schools
 - Kilmac Primary School
 - St. Gerard's and St. Mary's Primary School, Enniskerry
 - Scoil Chulann, Bray
- 6) Applicants from other primary schools who live in the catchment area
- 7) Applicants from all other primary schools

In the event that the number of applications in any of the above categories received prior to the stated closing date exceed the number of places available, an independently observed lottery will be held to allocate the available places and notice of this lottery will be communicated to all applicants in those categories. This lottery will be overseen by a registered Peace Commissioner. Once all places have been filled, those applicants who failed to secure a place will have their name placed on a waiting list in the order that their name was drawn out during the lottery process. Any further applications received after the closing date for the receipt of applications will be placed on the waiting list by reference to the date the application was received in the school.

Please note that a place on the waiting list does not in any way imply that enrolment will be offered to applicants who are on the waiting list.

Confirmation

The school will respond in writing to all those who apply for or request places in Woodbrook College within 21 days following receipt of the application or request a place form. Following the allocation of places all applicants will receive notification in writing to:

- Confirm their place

or

- Confirm that all places have been allocated and that the applicant's name has been placed on a waiting list and their position on that waiting list.

Following this, the parents/guardians of successful applicants will be further notified in writing to:

- 1) Arrange an interview between a representative of school management, the parents/guardians of the student and the student if considered necessary.
- 2) Inform the parents/guardians of the school's Transition Test for new first year students. This is not a selection test and is used only to assess the students' achievement levels in order to best meet their educational needs.
- 3) Give notification regarding the general information evening for parents/guardians of incoming first year students.

Notes

- The school reserves the right to contact the applicant's previous school(s) to ascertain relevant information including records relating to disciplinary matters and attendance. Contact may also be made with the relevant Educational Welfare Officer.
- Students who have been offered a place but who do not sit the Transition Test may forfeit the place at the discretion of the Board of Management. Students who are unable to sit the Transition Test due to illness or other unforeseen circumstance, must inform school management of this at the earliest opportunity but in any event no later than the morning of the Transition Test.

Finance

In addition to resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills, the school relies on contributions from parents/guardians to continue to provide the students of Woodbrook College with the best possible resources. Such contributions are completely voluntary and there is no compulsion to pay nor will non-payment adversely affect any student's application for enrolment. The contribution we ask parents/guardians to make is broken down as follows:

- Administration contribution payable with request for place € 150
(Includes journal, insurance, locker, photocopying, postage etc.)
- Voluntary capital contribution € 160

Students with Special Educational Needs

Woodbrook College welcomes applications from students with special educational needs subject to the appropriate provision of resources to the school by the Department of Education and Skills. The school will use these resources to make reasonable provision and accommodation for all such students thereby ensuring that in so far as is reasonably practicable, these students can participate fully in the life of the school. Parents are required to co-operate with the school to establish the special educational needs of the student and in making the necessary applications to the Department of Education and Skills and the Special Education Needs Organiser to secure the resources necessary to meet those needs. Failure to do so impedes the school's ability to provide adequately for the student and, in extreme cases, might prevent or delay his or her admission.

Parents/guardians of applicants with special needs are asked to provide the school management with the following:

- The most recent copy of the applicant's medical/psychological report/Individual Education Report or an immediate assessment
- Details of any Special Needs Assistant or Classroom Assistant available to the applicant in their previous schools
- Any additional resource hours allocated to the applicant in their previous schools
- Any additional help which the applicant was entitled to in their previous schools e.g. visual impairment, hearing impairment, general learning disability, assistance in relation to travel/mobility, assistive technology etc.
- Any behavioural modification assistance provided for the student in their previous school.
- Any Irish or other exemptions granted to the applicant

This information is necessary in order to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his or her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.

Right to Refuse

The Board of Management reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to refuse admission to a student or to withdraw a place previously granted. Such exceptional circumstances could arise where:

- 1) The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills, the school cannot meet such needs and therefore cannot provide the student with an appropriate education
- 2) The nature and degree of the applicant's special needs is such that to enrol the student would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student is to be educated
- 3) In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student poses an unacceptable risk to other students, to school staff and/or to school property
- 4) In the opinion of the Board of Management, the student's behaviour would be detrimental to the education of other students in the school, basing our value judgements on the principles of natural justice
- 5) The applicant or his or her parents/guardians, have furnished incorrect, inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information to the school authorities in the course of the application process

Transfer Students (prior to the start of the school year)

Woodbrook College will accept applications from students who wish to transfer from another school. Such applications should be made on the special transfer application form and in addition the following information must be provided in writing before the application can be considered:

- Full details of the applicant's secondary education to date including all schools attended and relevant dates
- A copy of the three most recent secondary school reports on headed school notepaper and signed by an authorised signatory e.g. Principal/ Year Head etc
- A character reference from the school Principal or Year Head or equivalent of the most recent secondary school attended by the applicant.
- A copy of the student's disciplinary record for the previous twelve months
- A copy of the applicant's Junior Certificate results, where applicable
- Full details of any special educational needs of the applicant. Copies of any psychological reports, assessments or other relevant documents relating to the applicant must be enclosed
- Full details of any additional resource or special education needs hours allocated to the applicant in their previous schools.
- The reasons for the decision to change school

Criteria for Admission

In addition to the eligibility criteria stated earlier in this policy, applications for transfer into Woodbrook College will be subject to the following criteria:

- The availability of a place in a particular year group with reference to Department of Education and Skills guidelines on class sizes and the maximum number of students allowable in each year as determined by the Board of Management
- Whether the subject requirements of the applicant can be accommodated by the current school curriculum
- The applicant's prior history of study in the subjects they wish to pursue
- The best interest of the applicant
- The best interests of the school
- Any special educational needs of the student and the school's ability to satisfy these needs

Transfer Students (after the start of the School Year)

The school does not normally accept applications for enrolment after September 30th except in exceptional circumstances. Such applications however are subject to the same criteria as apply to students wishing to transfer prior to the start of the school year.

Right of Appeal

Decisions regarding the enrolment of students in Woodbrook College and regarding all other matters covered in this admissions policy are delegated to the Principal by the Board of Management.

Parents may appeal a decision not to enrol a student, to the Board of Management. In addition, under section 29 (d) of the Education Act 1998, parents/guardians have a right of appeal to the:

**Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills,
The Appeals Administration Unit,
Department of Education and Science,
Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.**

Appeals must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to the parents/guardians.

Other Information

Change of Details

The school will use the information provided in the application form when corresponding with parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians therefore to notify the school of any change of address in writing. Unless and until otherwise informed in writing, all correspondence in relation to your child will be sent exclusively to the address provided on the enrolment form.

In the case of parents who have separated/divorced and where the school has been notified of same, the school will arrange for correspondence in relation to your child to be sent to both parents separately, if requested to do so in writing.

Disabled Persons

Woodbrook College has been designed to allow access to students with physical disabilities in accordance with part m of the building regulations.

Data Protection

The school is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Acts 1988 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 us to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social and Family Affairs, An Garda Síochána, the Health Services Executive and the 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.

Further Reading

This admissions policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents which are available to download from the schools website at www.woodbrookcollege.ie

- 1) The school's Mission Statement
- 2) The school's Special Educational Needs Policy
- 3) The school's Code of Behaviour (including the schools policy on Suspensions and Expulsion)
- 4) The Transition Year Policy
- 5) The Dignity at Work Policy
- 6) The Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter

Hard copies of all of our school policies are available from the school on request.

Appendix 1 Admission to Transition Year

Woodbrook College requires all third year students to complete the Transition Year Programme before progressing on to fifth year and the first year of the Leaving Certificate Programme. However, students may in certain circumstances be allowed to skip Transition Year if:

- 1) The applicant has already repeated a year at Junior Cycle. Under Department of Education and Skills regulations, a student may not remain in school for more than six years before sitting their first Leaving Certificate examination
- 2) It is the considered opinion of the school, having consulted with parents/guardians, that a

particular student would not benefit from participation in Transition Year or would benefit better from immediate entry to the 5th year programme or the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA).

Application for Admission to Transition Year by External Students

Students applying for admission to Transition Year who are not existing students of the school are subject to the criteria contained in this policy relating to the “Transfer of Students from other Schools”.

Appeals

Decisions not to admit a student to Transition Year may be appealed in the first instance to the Principal. Thereafter, an appeal may be made to the Board of Management.

Appendix 2 Admission to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Entry to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is determined by reference to the combination of subjects being studied by the applicant at leaving certificate level. Only those students who have the correct combination of subjects, as determined by the Department of Education and Skills, can be admitted to the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme class.

Appendix 3 Admission to Leaving Certificate Applied Programme

Application to enter the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA) (if available) will be accepted from 3rd year and Transition Year students. Admission will be by Year Head recommendation and interview and places are limited to 12 students each year. The school will endeavour to admit all students who wish to undertake this programme provided, having consulted with parents/guardians, it is felt that participation on the programme will be of benefit to them and subject to the availability of places. Applications will also be accepted from external students although preference will be given to existing students of Woodbrook College.

Appeals

Decisions not to admit a student to the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme may be appealed in the first instance to the Principal. Thereafter, an appeal may be made to the Board of Management

Appendix 4 Application to Repeat the Leaving Certificate

Woodbrook College will accept applications from their own 6th year students who wish to repeat their Leaving Certificate. However, applications will only be approved in the case of students:

- Who have an exemplary discipline record
- Who in the opinion of their teachers are likely to benefit from this opportunity

In addition, agreement to repeat the Leaving Certificate will be subject to:

- The subject options available
- The places available within the subject class groupings
- The curricular restrictions of each subject area
- The provisions of the Department of Education and Skills Circular M02/95

Applicants who wish to repeat their Leaving Certificate should complete the Repeat Leaving Certificate Application Form, available from the school.

Appendix 5 Application to Repeat 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 5th year

Woodbrook College will only accept applications from existing students who wish to repeat a year of school in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances might include prolonged absence due

to illness or other personal matters. The school reserves the right to take into account a student's disciplinary record in reaching a decision in this regard. Applications to repeat a school year should be made in writing to the Principal and should state clearly the reasons for the request.

Consultation and Review

This policy has been drawn up by the Board of Management in consultation with parents, staff and representatives of our feeder schools. It is operative for the first year intake in the school year 2019/2020. It will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually. Submissions for such review are welcome and should be forwarded to the Board of Management by January 31st, 2018.

Ratification and Publication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at their meeting held on March 5th, 2018 and was agreed for publication by the Edmund Rice Schools Trust on _____.