Questions & Answers
on the
Unified Admissions Process
to
First Year Ordinary Classes and Special Classes
at Post-Primary Schools
in Ennis for the relevant school year

Coláiste Muire
Ennis Community College
Gaelcholáiste an Chláir
Rice College
St. Flannan's College

November 2026

Application form for first year admissions either to ordinary classes or special classes, for the school year 2027/2028.

A new **Unified Admissions Process (UAP)** for admissions to first year was introduced by the post-primary schools in Ennis in 2021. This collaborative unified process, serving the needs of the Ennis community and its environment, continues to operate for admissions to first year. The participating post-primary schools are:

- **Coláiste Muire**
- **Ennis Community College**
- **Gaelcholáiste an Chláir**
- **Rice College**
- **St. Flannan's College**

All the relevant dates relating to the Unified Admissions Process for entry to first year are available from admissions office of any of the following schools.

- ### Coláiste Muire
  Admissions, Coláiste Muire, College Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
  School website: www.colaistemuire.ie

- ### Ennis Community College
  Admissions, Ennis College, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare.
  School website: www.Harmonyrowcampus.com

- ### Gaelcholáiste an Chláir
  Iontrálacha, Gaelcholáiste an Chláir, Inis, Co. An Chláir.
  School website: www.Harmonyrowcampus.com

- ### Rice College
  Admissions, Rice College, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.
  School website: www.ricecollege.ie

- ### St. Flannan's College
  Admissions, St. Flannan's College, Ennis, Co. Clare.
  School website: www.stflannanscollege.ie

The complete Admission Policy of each of the above named post-primary schools can be viewed on the relevant school website address, as listed above.

Each student applicant should only complete one application form, to apply for admission to first year in any of the post-primary schools in Ennis for the appropriate school year.

Please note the following before completing the Unified Admissions Process (UAP) application form.

1. All the information that you provide will be taken in good faith. If it is found that any of the information is incorrect or misleading, the application may be rendered invalid or will be considered at the end of the process as a late application.
2. Correspondence in relation to this application will be sent to the address of the student applicant.
3. If you do not know the applicants PPSN, you can get it from your Local Social Welfare Office, Intreo Centre Ennis, Kilrush Rd, Clonroad Beg, Ennis Co. Clare, V95 YP70. or by phone from 01-7043281
4. In the event, that your child is offered a place in first year and where more than one address is provided, on the application form, academic reports will automatically be sent to both addresses.
5. A copy of the **Birth Certificate** of the student applicant is required to accompany this completed application form. If either the surname or the first name, provided on the application form, differs from that on the Birth Certificate, please supply a copy of the Deed Poll. If the original Birth Certificate is not either in English or Gaeilge, it must be translated into either English or Gaeilge before being submitted with this application form.

Important note regarding the completion of the Application Form

Each student applicant should only complete one application f**orm.** Four post-primary schools have mixed enrolments (boys & girls) and one post-primary school has female enrolments only.

Parents/guardians are advised and requested to indicate, on the application form, **four schools in the case of a boy** and **five schools in the case of a girl,** to which they are applying in a genuine descending order of preference.

If the minimum of four/five schools, as appropriate, are not listed **the limited number of preferences listed on the application will be considered fully**, but in the event the limited number of preferences listed does not provide a school place for that applicant, the application cannot be considered further until all the stated preferences of other candidates have been fully considered.

Only ONE active application will be accepted for each student. If your child is unsuccessful in obtaining the first preference, their application will then be considered in order of the descending school preferences outlined on the application form.

Please be sure to tick the YES box on page 1 of the application form if you are applying for a place in a special class in the school(s) listed in your preferences. The schools with a special class designation are listed in the table below.

School Name	Special Class Designation			Medium of Instruction	List your school preferences (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5)
	MGLD*	ASD**	None	English/Irish	
Coláiste Muire **Gender:** Female			No Special Class/es	English	
Ennis Community College **Gender:** Mixed	MGLD*	ASD**		English	
Gaelcholáiste an Chláir*** **Gender:** Mixed			No Special Class/es	Gaeilge Irish***	
Rice College **Gender:** Mixed		ASD**		English	
St. Flannan's College **Gender:** Mixed		ASD**		English	

*Mild General Learning Disabilities ** Autistic Spectrum Disorders

*** The medium of instruction in classes at this school is only in Gaeilge, the Irish language.

Please return, the fully completed application form, to the principal of the school of your first preference, by the relevant closing dates for the school year in question.

The main steps in this new UAP are as follows:

- All feeder primary schools will be advised of the timetable.
- The process will **commence in early November** and will be completed quite early in the following year, **usually before the end of February**.
- Parents/Guardians will be requested to complete just **one Unified Application Form** for admission into either an ordinary first year class or a special class.

- The application form, for the appropriate school year, will be made available to potential applicants in early November each year.
- Applicants are advised and requested to indicate, on the application form, a minimum of **four schools in the case of a boy** and **five schools in the case of a girl**, in a **genuine descending order of preference**.
- The completed Application Form is to be sent to the principal of the school of first preference.
- The post-primary principals will meet with the independent facilitator around three days after the closing date for receipt of applications to address any erroneous/duplicate application forms.
- Each school will call a meeting of its Board of Management or its Committee on Admissions to allocate places to students who meet their criteria for admission to first year.
- An offer of a school place will be issued to each family who meet the criteria for admission. All offers will be communicated to all applicants by the schools on the same day. Parents/guardians will be advised that acceptance/refusal of a school place will have to be communicated to the school within a week of the date of posting the offer.
- A copy of the application forms for students who do not receive an offer of a school place, will be sent to the facilitator for redistribution to other participating post-primary schools, in accordance with the preference indicated in each of the application forms, at a date agreed with the school principals and the facilitator.

Some features of the UAP for First Year Admissions to Post-Primary Schools in Ennis

- Each school will submit its stated capacity to the independent facilitator each year, indicating the number of first year students that the school will admit at the beginning of the next school year. This information will also be available in each school's Admissions Notice on the school website in accordance with the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018.
- The facilitator, with appropriate administrative support, will liaise with the feeder primary school principals and other relevant bodies both before and after the conclusion of the UAP each year.
- Meetings between the facilitator, the patrons and the post-primary school principals will be held on an ongoing basis throughout the school year to review the operation of the new UAP.
- The stated capacity of schools may be one changing factor in the operation of the process over time. Some schools may increase their capacity over time. The determination of school capacity is by and large a matter for the Patrons and Board of Management of each school.

Based on the successful operation of the Unified Admissions Process (AUP) for entry into first year since September 2022, the UAP process represents the most workable system for managing the admissions of students to post-primary schools in Ennis.

As an application and tracking process, it represents the most workable solution for ensuring that every student has access to a school place in first year.

Questions and Answers

What is the Unified Admission Process (UAP)?
The UAP is the agreed process by which the transfer of 6th class primary school students to the participating post-primary schools in Ennis is managed from beginning to end. It is the principals of the participating post-primary schools that will regulate and implement the UAP, and an independent facilitator will oversee its operation on behalf of the school patrons.

What are the official names of the post-primary schools in Ennis that are participating in this new unified admission process?
The participating post-primary schools are:

- *Coláiste Muire*
- *Ennis Community College*
- *Gaelcholáiste an Chláir*
- *Rice College*
- *St. Flannan's College*

What are the criteria for admission to a post-primary school in Ennis?

Each participating post-primary school has unique admissions criteria. The Admission Policy of each of the post-primary schools in Ennis is based on the requirements of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

The complete Admission Policy of each of the post-primary schools can be found on the relevant school's website. These website addresses are listed on page 3 of this booklet.

If any parents/guardians have any queries regarding a school's admission policy or criteria for enrolment, please contact that school directly to seek clarification.

How can I make an application for first-year admission to a participating post-primary school?

*To make an application for a place in first year, for the appropriate school year, you must complete a **Unified Admissions Process Application Form**. Only **one application form** needs to be completed to apply for admission to any of the participating post-primary schools. The **Unified Admissions Process Application Form** is available from the website of each of the participating post-primary schools. A copy is also available from feeder primary schools.*

Parents/guardians are advised and requested to indicate, on the application form, ***four schools in the case of a boy*** *and* ***five schools in the case of a girl,*** *to which they are applying in a genuine descending order of preference.*
If the minimum of four/five schools, as appropriate, are not listed ***the limited number of preferences listed on the application will be considered fully****, but in the event the limited number of preferences listed does not provide a school place for that applicant, the application cannot be considered further until all stated preferences of other candidates have been fully considered.*

Only ***ONE active application*** *will be accepted for each student. If your child is unsuccessful in obtaining the first preference, their application will then be considered, by the other participating post-primary schools in order of the descending preferences, as outlined by you on the application form.*

Where do I access information in relation to application and decision dates in relation to special class applications?

Please refer to the ***Admissions Notice*** *for each post-primary school on the schools' websites. These website addresses are listed on* ***page 2*** *of this booklet.*
Further information is also available from the ***National Council for Special Education (NCSE)*** *on the NCSE website – www.ncse.ie where you can visit the 'Parents/Guardians' section.*

What happens if I am unsuccessful in being offered a place in a special class that I have applied for?
In the event of an application for admission to a special class not being successful, that application will then be further considered by the schools for ordinary first year classes, in the order listed in the applicant's preference list, as provided on page 5 of their application form.

What can I do, if I have an application form already submitted, but I now want to change the order of my school preferences?

Changes to the order of school preferences are allowed provided they are made before the closing date and time for the submission of application forms.

- *If your* ***school of first preference remains unchanged****, you should write to the principal of that school, enclosing a second fully completed application form and clearly informing him/her that you have amended the remaining preferences and now wish to proceed with the new/revised application form.*

- *If you **have changed your first preference school**, you should write to the principal of the school of your original first preference, informing him/her that you are withdrawing your application. A new/revised fully completed application form should then be submitted to the principal of your new school of first preference.*

If you submit more than one application form and fail to notify the relevant schools of same, you will be contacted to determine which application form you wish to proceed with.

If confirmation of your school of first preference (and the application form outlining this) is not received, then the multiple forms will be deemed as invalid. In that event, the multiple forms, which you have submitted, will be removed from the process until the very end, at which time they will be presented for consideration to all the schools listed on your application form still with first year places available.

What happens if my child does not receive the school of his/her first preference?

If your child does not receive the school of his/her first preference, you will be informed by the school of this decision by post. Letters of refusal will be issued by individual schools where offers of school places are not made.

If your child is unsuccessful in obtaining a place in his/her first preference school, their application form will then be considered by the other schools, in the order of the descending preferences, as outlined on the application form.

If you have any queries regarding an offer or refusal by a school, please contact that school directly.

What happens when an application form is received by my first preference school after the stated closing date and time?

*Applications forms presented to post-primary schools after the closing date and time will be accepted but marked **"Late Application".** Late applications will not be included in the normal selection process. They will however be presented for consideration to any of the schools listed on your application form who still have places in first year available at the very end of the admissions process for that school year.*

Will each of the participating post-primary schools maintain a waiting list, in the event of oversubscription of first preference applicants?

In the event of there being more applications for a school year than first year places available, a waiting list of students, whose applications for admission to a particular post-primary school were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed, will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.
Placement on the waiting list of any of the participating post-primary schools will be in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied its selection criteria, in accordance with its published admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places, that become available, for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought, will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

If I receive a place in my second preference school, does my name remain on a waiting list in my first preference school?

Yes, it does.

After a school has filled all its available places with first preferences applicants, in what circumstances could it offer more first preference applicants places?

After a participating post-primary school has filled all its available places for a particular school year with first preferences, any additional first preference offers will only arise from cancellations of places previously offered.

If I complete the application form and include two school preferences only, will I be successful in receiving a place in first year in one of them?

Four post-primary schools have mixed enrolments (boys & girls) and one post-primary school has female enrolments only. Parents/guardians are advised and requested to indicate, on this application form, at least ***four schools in the case of a boy*** *and* ***five schools in the case of a girl,*** *to which they are applying in a genuine descending order of preference.*

If the minimum of ***four/five*** *schools, as appropriate, are not listed* ***the limited number of preferences listed on the application will be considered fully****, but in the event the limited number of preferences listed does not provide a school place for that applicant, the application cannot be considered further until all stated preferences of other candidates have been fully considered.*

Where can I find information on the admission criteria that each school applies?

The complete Admission Policy and Admissions Notice of each of the participating post-primary schools can be found on the relevant school's website. These are listed on page 4 of this booklet.
If any parents/guardians have any queries regarding a school's admission policy or criteria for enrolment, please contact that school directly to seek clarification.

Where can I find information about each school?

*Please refer to the **website** for each post-primary school. The website addresses are listed on page 3 of this booklet.*

If I am unhappy is there an appeals process? If so, how does this operate?

Yes, there is. Please refer to the Admissions Policy of the relevant post-primary school. An appeal is enshrined in the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.

Can I be offered a place in two schools simultaneously?

This should not arise under the Unified Admissions Process (UAP). The UAP is a collaborative unified process to serve the needs of the Ennis community and its environment for the forthcoming years. Any such unexpected administrative error would be corrected immediately.

What happens if my application form is incomplete?

All the information that you provide on the application form will be taken in good faith. If it is found that the form is incomplete or that any of the information is incorrect or misleading, the application may be rendered invalid, or it will be considered at the end of the process as a late application.

What happens if I am not offered any place by any of the participating post-primary schools in Ennis?

Having submitted a fully completed application form on time and, if in the event that your child does not receive an offer of a school place in first year (from the schools outlined in your preferences on your application form), please contact Ms. Miriam Gleeson, Senior Education Welfare Officer in TUSLA, Ballycummin Avenue, Raheen Business Park, Raheen, Co. Limerick (061-513020) who will assist you in identifying schools with capacity to enrol your child.

Appendix

Background to the UAP for Ennis

Some years ago, many families, schools, public representatives, and the media reported considerable frustrations and very high levels of anxiety regarding the application to post-primary schools in Ennis, Co. Clare. On closer examination of the issue, a problem began to emerge whereby some of the schools were oversubscribed (with hundreds of students being offered places in more than one school and a considerable number of students receiving no offer of a school place) in terms of applications for places in first year. The result of this was that each year some students were unplaced when the admissions process was complete.

The patrons of the post-primary schools in Ennis became very conscious of the levels of anxiety and concern amongst students and their parents/guardians, in relation to the ongoing admissions issues into first year into their post-primary schools.

In April 2021, they established a process to facilitate a structured approach to help resolve the admissions to first-year issues to their post-primary schools in Ennis.

The patrons made it clear that they are committed to adopting a unified approach in seeking a long-term resolution to the ongoing first year student admission issues. They appointed an agreed facilitator, with specific terms of reference, to liaise with their post-primary schools in Ennis, the feeder primary schools and other relevant stakeholders, to oversee the development and implementation of a unified first year admissions process.

The work on developing a proposed unified admissions process began in April 2021.

The facilitator began by collaborating with the principals of the post-primary schools during the months of April, May, and June in developing a new unified admissions process for admission to first year. He also collaborated with the Chairpersons and members of the Boards of Management of the participating post-primary schools.

The unified admissions process in the post-primary schools in Ennis has been approved by the patrons of the four post-primary schools.

Arising from that work, a new **Unified Admissions Process (UAP)** was accepted by the patrons. All post-primary schools in Ennis operated the new **UAP** for admissions to first year, beginning in November 2021 for the school year 2022/23. Arising from its success, it has continued to be used for admissions to first year classes since then.

Beginning for first year admissions in this school year, the application form has been revised and updated. It is now an application form for first year admissions both to ordinary classes and special classes.

The system is a process by which the transfer of 6th class primary school students to the participating post-primary schools in Ennis is managed from beginning to end. The implementation of this applications process is overseen by the independent facilitator appointed by the patrons.

It is the principals of the participating post-primary schools that implement the UAP, and the facilitator oversees its operation on behalf of the patrons.

The *Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018* has a significant impact on school admission policies and patterns, particularly in those schools that are currently oversubscribed in terms of applications for first year places.

Section 66(6) of the *Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018* allows for the sharing of data between schools to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- an application for admission to the school has been received,
- an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any, or all, of the following:

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