



Coláiste Bhaile Chláir Claregalway College

Prospectus

Introduction

Claregalway College will be a co-educational, multi-denominational post primary school under the patronage of Co. Galway Vocational Education Committee. The school will be committed to the pursuit of excellence in all of its activities and will strive to provide a learning community seeking to achieve the highest level of education for its pupils. This journey will be undertaken in an environment that encourages self-esteem and mutual respect. Furthermore, this environment will cater for and embrace the diverse social, cultural, academic and personal needs of young people in the Claregalway area and its wider hinterland in a safe, respectful and disciplined educational institution.

Enrolment Arrangements for 1st Year Students entering Claregalway College for the School Year 2013/2014

- **Enrolment application forms will issue on the 20th September, 2012**
- **Closing date for receipt of enrolment application forms Friday, 19th October, 2012**
- **An Information Evening for prospective parents/guardians will be held on Thursday, 11th October, 2012 in the Claregalway Hotel at 8.00p.m.**

Background and Current Status of Second Level Educational Provision for Claregalway

Co. Galway VEC was first to highlight the need for second level educational provision in Claregalway which it incorporated in its submission of the 11th May 2007, to the Survey of Post Primary School Accommodation Needs in South Galway carried out by the Commission on School Accommodation during the autumn, 2007.

The Commission's Report, published in November, 2007, recommended that a site should be identified and acquired for a Post Primary facility that would accommodate approximately 600 students and stated that the school would likely be needed by circa 2016.

Subsequently, during 2010, a local group of parents formed the Claregalway Parents' Second-Level School Action Committee and they initiated a campaign to lobby for the establishment of a second level school in Claregalway.

Following extensive research of enrolment

figures in local Primary Schools, the Action Committee forwarded a submission to the Department of Education and Skills as well as meeting and lobbying local politicians in relation to their campaign.

Finally, the Minister for Education & Skills, Mr. Ruairí Quinn, T.D. on the 27th June, 2011 announced that a new Second Level school would be established in Claregalway to cater for up to 1000 pupils and that the school would open in September, 2013.

Subsequently, in July, 2011, the Department of Education & Skills announced that it was accepting applications from prospective patrons in relation to the patronage of the new school in Claregalway. Following a few postponements of deadlines, the DES finally settled on the 24th February, 2012 as the deadline for applications from prospective patrons.

Having submitted our formal application for patronage on behalf of Co. Galway VEC, the Dept. of Education & Skills (DES) then drafted a report for consideration by the New Schools' Establishment Group (NSEG). The NSEG subsequently provided a report for the Minister for Education & Skills and he



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announced his final decision on the 25th July, 2012 when he appointed Co. Galway VEC as patron of the new Claregalway Post Primary School.

Over the next year it will be the responsibility of Co. Galway VEC to establish a Board of Management and appoint a Principal for the new school. Co. Galway VEC will engage with the partners in putting in place the structures and policies which will underpin the new school's operation. A series of policy documents will be developed; such policies will include Admissions/Participation, Code of Behaviour, Child Protection, Pastoral Care etc.

School Philosophy

Claregalway College will promote the development of the whole person and will aim to nurture responsible citizenship. Student development will be based on principles of respect for self, for others and for the environment. Personal responsibility will be fostered, as will a strong sense of the interdependence of the school community. Management will strive for a school community that is just, compassionate and caring. Cultural and religious diversity will be acknowledged and celebrated.

The "Mission Statement" of Coláiste Bhaile Chláir/Claregalway College will be agreed later following consultation with the relevant partners.

Management Structure

Claregalway College will operate as a "non-designated" community college. Similar to all second level schools, the day-to-day running of the college will be the responsibility of the Principal. The Board of Management will be

responsible for the good governance of the school while accountable to Co. Galway VEC. It will consist of representatives of Co. Galway VEC (4), Parents (2), Staff (2) and 2 representatives from the local community. Co. Galway VEC will provide training for the members of the Board of Management.

The Role of Parents

Claregalway College will recognise the central role of parents in the education and development of their children. In addition to representation on the school's Board of Management there will also be a democratically elected Parents' Council, and parents will be entitled to nominate and vote in the election of Parents' representatives to Co. Galway VEC.

In addition to the traditional means of home-school communication i.e. term reports, parent-teacher meetings, class journals etc, Claregalway Community College will use modern communication technologies i.e. email, website, texting, to keep parents up-to-date with school activities.

Management will create an atmosphere in which individual parents can feel comfortable in bringing any concerns they may have to the attention of the school authorities.



Curriculum

Claregalway College will offer a broad range of subjects based on the Department of Education and Skills' syllabi, incorporating technologies, the arts, humanities, languages and sciences. Students of Claregalway College will be prepared for the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations. All of Co. Galway



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VEC's existing second level schools have met the Quality Assurance criteria laid down by FETAC. Claregalway College will facilitate students in attaining certification by FETAC and other recognised educational bodies where appropriate.

The current Irish educational landscape is experiencing on-going change and this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future. The VEC Sector's second level schools have been at the forefront of innovation in Irish education and Claregalway College will play its part in shaping and responding to these changes as and when they are introduced.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Co. Galway VEC has a long tradition of providing opportunities for students in its 11 established second level schools to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including the performing arts and the broadest possible range of sports. Claregalway College will continue to benefit from that tradition as well as the recently formed partnership with a local music school.

Sport

Claregalway College will foster an appreciation among the entire student body of the value and enjoyment to be derived from participation in sporting activity. Students will be encouraged to reap the rewards of an active lifestyle beyond their teenage years.

In the sporting arena, as in other aspects of school-life, students will be encouraged, and supported, by dedicated teachers to achieve excellence, and success will be recognised and celebrated within the school and corporately, by Co. Galway VEC's annual awards scheme.



Students with Special Needs

Claregalway College will offer a caring and responsive educational environment to cater for and integrate students with special needs into the school community. Learning Support, Individual Education Plans, Counselling Services, Psychological Support Services, Home School Community Liaison, the employment of Special Needs Assistants and Education Welfare Services will be among the services deployed to the benefit of students with Special Educational Needs.

Enrolment Policy

Claregalway College's enrolment policy will be inclusive and equitable. The Board of Management, in association with the education partners, will prepare its enrolment policy with a view to ensuring the provision of a high quality of education to all young people living in the Claregalway area and its wider hinterland.

Irish Language

Co. Galway VEC has a long tradition of Irish medium second level provision in its area. It currently maintains five second level schools and one Aonad in the Connemara/Aran Islands Gaeltacht area. Furthermore, it recently established a Gaelcholáiste in Athenry in 2006.

In the event of there being a demand for Irish medium education for students in the area, Co. Galway VEC would consider the establishment on an Irish medium "Aonad" (Unit) to facilitate that demand.

In addition to the provision of Irish as a core subject on the curriculum, Co. Galway VEC currently provides approximately 75 annual scholarships for its second level students to attend Gaeltacht Summer Courses.

Discipline and Motivation

Achieving the best possible examination results will be a high priority in Claregalway College. This is in keeping with our vision for second level education provision in Claregalway – **"a learning community seeking to achieve the highest level of education for its pupils"**. Teachers will set high standards in the classroom, structuring lessons and deploying varied teaching methodologies in



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such a manner as to challenge all of the students in their care to achieve their full potential.

Claregalway College will benefit from Co. Galway VEC's recently developed standardised and centralised ICT infrastructure which saw 1300 netbooks provided to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students throughout our 11 second level schools last September, 2011.

Claregalway College's underlying philosophy of offering a holistic and integrated education will extend to the subject planning process and cross-curricular subject planning will be used to enhance and deepen students' learning experiences in the areas in which syllabi overlap.

Students will be expected to observe the highest standards of behaviour. Positive behaviour and achievement will be acknowledged and rewarded. Student indiscipline will be dealt with through a code of discipline rooted in principles of justice and in keeping with guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board and all relevant legislation.

A Code of Behaviour will be prepared by the Board of Management in association with the education partners.

Staffing

Co. Galway VEC will undertake the process of recruiting staff for Claregalway College. Recruitment procedures will adhere to those nationally agreed between the Department of Education and Skills, Trade Unions and existing school patrons. These will ensure that the most highly qualified and competent staff will be employed in Claregalway College. Teaching staff will be registered with the Teaching Council and all staff will be subject to a Garda vetting procedure.

Student Support

Claregalway College will provide a comprehensive range of student supports including Learning Support, Pastoral Care,

Leadership Development, Netbook Provision, Career Guidance and Counselling, Canteen Facilities and other services.

A student Council will be formed to facilitate communication between the student body and their teachers.

Staff Support

Claregalway College will promote and facilitate teachers in their personal and professional development. In particular, teachers will be encouraged to develop their ICT skills for incorporation in the classroom environment. Teachers will be able to avail of Co. Galway VEC's scheme-wide ICT training for teachers so that they can embrace a broad range of teaching methodologies to meet the needs of a diverse student body in a mixed ability setting.

School Buildings

Claregalway College, in collaboration with the Department of Education & Skills, will provide state of the art facilities which will be constructed by the DES. In addition to excellent facilities for the learning and teaching of practical subjects like Science, Technical Graphics, Music, Home Economics, Computer Science and Materials' Technologies, Claregalway College will be equipped to maximise the utilisation of Information and Communications Technology as a learning and teaching aid.

Claregalway College's buildings will represent a significant investment of taxpayers' money and the school management will actively seek to maximise their utilisation within the community by facilitating their use for educational and recreational purposes after hours and outside term through establishing links with community groups.

The Role of Co. Galway VEC

Co. Galway VEC is a democratically-elected body with responsibility for 11 existing Post

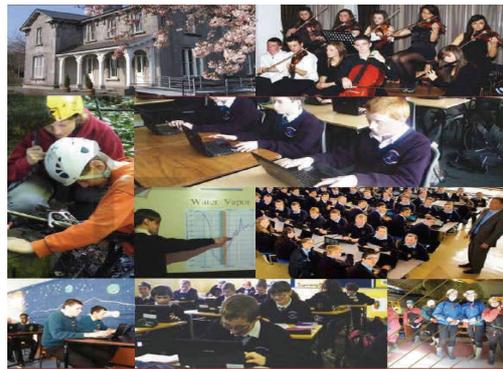


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Primary schools in County Galway, 5 Youthreach Centres, 4 VTOS Centres, 10 Adult Learning Centres and an Outdoor Education Centre. In addition, the VEC also provides Post Leaving Certificate Courses in its Post Primary schools and has an extensive range of Adult and Community Education Services throughout County Galway.

The Committee itself has representatives from Galway County Council, Ballinasloe Urban District Council as well as staff, parent and community representatives. The Committee is publicly and democratically accountable and its monthly meetings are open to the press.



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