

Dear parents/guardians,

The leaving certificate is an exciting but challenging time for many students. I am aware that parents and teachers want to support and encourage as much as possible. The best way for students to prepare for the Leaving Certificate is to attend school everyday. **Students who attend school regularly are far more likely to do better in exams than those who don't.**

Some important dates to note are:

the deadline for discounted application (€30) to CAO is **20<sup>th</sup> January after this date it goes up to €40**

**All applications MUST be in by February 1<sup>st</sup>**

The guidance counsellor will help your daughter apply for the CAO in class on the **15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January**. Your daughter will need a credit/revolut card or card information on that date as it is €30 to complete the process.

Do not worry if your daughter is unsure of what courses to do or the order, they can change their mind until July but the application **MUST** be made before February.

**DARE**

Your daughter can complete the process at home if they wish however, It is vital that your daughter ticks the **DARE** box if it applies to them (for students with a diagnosed disability) Any student applying under the DARE scheme must supply official documentation to support their application.

**HEAR**

**Most students should also tick the HEAR box on their application.**

The Higher Education Access Route (**HEAR**) is an admissions scheme for students from DEIS schools.

The scheme aims to improve access to college for school-leavers from socio-economic backgrounds that are under-represented in third-level education (such as Dublin 1) Under the HEAR scheme several third-level places are allocated to school-leavers on a reduced points basis. To be eligible for the scheme you must meet certain criteria.

To be eligible for HEAR your family income **BEFORE** tax must be within these limits in **2022**

Number of dependent children* in your family	Family income in 2021
Fewer than 4	€46,790
4-7	€51,325
More than 8	€55,630
<b>Add €4,785 to the total income for every sibling/parent enrolled in a full-time college, university or Post-Leaving Certificate further education course.</b>	

Each student must also have **2** of the following:

- You or child have a **Medical Card** or **GP card** on 31 December 2023
- you were getting a **means-tested social assistance payment** for at least 26 weeks in 2022
- Social and cultural Group: You come from an area that does not traditionally have people who go to college e.g. Dublin 1.
- You did not go to college yourself.
- You have completed 5 years of second-level education at a school in a DEIS school **(AUTOMATICALLY APPLIES AS MOUNT CARMEL IS A DEIS SCHOOL)**
- You are living in an area of economic disadvantage for example, high unemployment and poverty and few community facilities e.g., Dublin 1/Finglas

Most students will qualify for HEAR. There are supporting documents you as parents will need to prove your income. We don't need these yet, **what is important is the HEAR box is ticked when making the application.** If you forget to tick the box, they won't accept it at a later date.

I will contact after Christmas with further information on documents required. I am here if you have any questions and am happy to assist in any way I can.

I hope you and your family have a happy and safe Christmas.

Kind regards,

Aoife

Guidance Counsellor