

Enrolment Policy for ASD Class

School: Marist National School, Clogher Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12

Roll No: 18386B

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Denomination: Catholic Primary School **Patron:** Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin

Enrolment Policy for our Special Class for Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

This Policy was drafted in 2019 by the BoM of the school in consultation with school staff. It was further amended in 2021. It is drafted in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, the Education Welfare Act, 2000, the Equal Status Act, 2000, the Disabilities Act, 2002, the Education of Persons with Special Needs Act, 2004 and other relevant legislation and circulars. The aim of this special enrolment policy is to assist parents/guardians in relation to enrolment matters concerning our special class that supports children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Current School Provision

A Special Class for supporting children with ASD. The class will cater for 6 children who meet the criteria for enrolment. The purpose of the class is to support children with ASD, who are experiencing, or would experience, difficulty in a mainstream class setting, to access the curriculum and maximise their potential for learning and development in terms of their personal, social and communication skills. These classes also serve to prepare children with ASD to integrate into the mainstream school setting.

Aim and Objectives

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in the class, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education
- To strive towards the integration of children in the class into mainstream education, having regard for levels of disability, available resources and suitability for such integration
- To enhance the communicative and social skills of the children in the class

Enrolment Procedure

- The process of enrolling in our special class supporting children with ASD begins with an enquiry to the school – this can be a telephone call, e-mail or a parent/ guardian calling to the school.
- The caller will be informed of the current enrolment status of the special class and will also be directed to this enrolment policy on the school website.
- If a parent/guardian decides to proceed with an application, the application (incorporating date of application, date of birth, address, telephone number and email address) will be entered in the Applications File.
- Applications will only be considered on the basis of a diagnostic or psychological report – a diagnosis of autism meeting DSM - IV/V or ICD 10 diagnostic criteria. These classes are for all pupils who meet these criteria irrespective of cognitive ability. A recent recommendation (within two years of the proposed admission date) must also be provided by the above professional(s) indicating that a placement in an ASD special class in a mainstream school is warranted.
- The application will undergo team assessment by the Admission Team, to ensure that the application fulfils the enrolment criteria outlined in this policy. (The admission team is made up of the Principal, the SEN coordinator in the school and one other member of the Special Education Team) The Admissions Team will also be advised by the NEPS psychologist. Once this process has been completed the applicant secures a place on the list of applicants to enrol. This list is organised on the basis of our enrolment criteria outlined below.
- Receipt of acknowledgement of an enrolment application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it guarantee a place in the school. It is simply the recording of an application for admission to our school.
- When a place becomes available the parents and principal will complete the 'Notification to NCSE of enrolment in a special class'. This is Form 7 available on www.ncse.ie
- A school application form, incorporating family details and medical history is completed prior to enrolment for children who have secured a place in the special class.

A child may be phased in gradually to the ASD class.

In

line with the school's Admission Policy, parents who are still awaiting a place for their child in the Special Class will be informed in writing as per the Admissions Notice; if there is no place in the Special Class for their child in the following school year he/she will be offered the option of remaining on the waiting list.

- July Provision will not be offered or met by the school

Enrolment Criteria.

The maximum class size in the special class for children with a diagnosis of ASD is 6 pupils. The Board of Management reserves the right to enrol less than this if it is deemed in the best interests of the class, the children and the school. If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order, beginning with the first category – subject to meeting all the criteria and completing all the procedures outlined in this policy

Category 1: Children with an ASD diagnosis currently enrolled in the school.

If the number of applicants in Category 1 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- 1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.
- 2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.

Category 2: Children who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year who are attending the Marist Primary School Early Start Programme.

If the number of applicants in category 2 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

- 1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.
- 2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.

Category 3: Children who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year and who have brothers or sisters or step-siblings presently enrolled in the school.

If the number of applicants in category 3 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.

2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.

Category 4: Children with an ASD diagnosis, who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year, living within the parish of Clogher Road (2 utility bills must be supplied as proof of address – electricity, gas, water, bin charges etc. are acceptable).

If the number of applicants in category 4 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.

2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.

Category 5: If spaces are still available, places will be allocated to children with an ASD diagnosis, who are four years of age before the first day of the academic year, from outside the parish of Clogher Road.

If the number of applicants in category 5 exceeds the number of available places, the Board reserves the right to determine the applicants to be enrolled. The following criteria will be considered:

1) Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.

2) Length of time waiting for enrolment.

Offers of Places and Return of Forms of Acceptance

Letters of Offer of places in the ASD Class will be sent as per the school's Admissions' Notice. An Acceptance Form, which must be returned as per the Admission Notice, will be attached to the Letter(s) of Offer. All Acceptance Forms imply acceptance of the School Code of Behaviour in accordance with Section 24(4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. If the school does not receive the completed Acceptance Form, as per the Admissions' Notice, the place will be offered to the next eligible child on the waiting list for that school year.

Inclusion

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, (i.e. severity of Autism diagnosis) traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria. Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
- Sufficient classroom space is not available
- The Admission Team decide that the school is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child

Taking all of the above into account, and based on the advice of the Admission Team for the special class, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Refusal to Enrol and/or a Decision to Exclude

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment/admission to any student where either –

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/or provide the student with an appropriate education or;
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management the student poses a risk to the health and safety of the other students, to school Staff or to school property.

Any applicant who applies for and is not offered a place in the Marist Primary School has the right to appeal the decision, under Section 29, with the Department of Education and Skills.

Behaviour

It is accepted that some children with special educational needs may, at times, display challenging behaviours. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and support services and through the implementation of the child's Individual Education Plan. All pupils including pupils with special needs and pupils without special needs are subject to the School Code of Behaviour and Health & Safety Statement. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the Special Class or another

mainstream class to the extent that their safety and/or constitutional right to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management of the school, the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable setting should be sought for their child.

Support by Outside Agencies

Students, attending the special class, who require additional support from outside agencies i.e. speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, etc., will be dependent on their local H.S.E. services. The school does not have the resources to follow up on these services, it is up to the parents/guardians to ensure that all possible services are being availed of for their child.

Discharge Policy

Discharge from the special classes may happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school. Discharge may also be recommended if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardian, feel that placement is not appropriate.

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy. This policy will be amended and updated yearly or earlier if the need arises.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was initially ratified by the Board of Management of the Marist Primary School on the 8th of May 2019, the amended policy was subsequently ratified by the Board of Management on **11th November 2021**. The policy is communicated to all parents/ prospective parents through the school website.