



St Anne's NS, Ardclough ASD Class- Enrolment Policy

current

The Board of Management of St. Anne's National School has set out the policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, and the Disabilities Act 2002. The Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

General information:

Name of School:	St. Anne's National School,
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Introduction

The ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) Unit Junior Class will be established on Sept 1st 2016 and will be funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Skills. This school policy has regard to the funding, resources, services and space available.

Aim and Objectives:

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in the ASD Unit, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education.
- To strive towards the integration of children in the ASD Unit 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 ASD Unit.

Pre-enrolment Procedure:

- Registration process begins with a referral to the ASD Unit from the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer), and/or contact from the parents.
- Enrolment Application Forms for 2016/17 school year (which are available from the school office) will be accepted from April 2016.
- **The closing date for the submission of enrolment applications is Friday May 13th 2016 (subsequent years tbc)**
- **All applications received on or before this date will be acknowledged within 2 weeks of the closing day for the submission of applications.**

Enrolment Criteria

The maximum class size is six pupils. Subject to sufficient places being made available in the ASD class, the criteria for enrolment to the ASD class, incorporating the Department of Education and Skill and HSE policies, are as follows:

1. The Enrolment Application Form provided by the school should be fully completed by the parent/guardians on behalf of the child.
2. The enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by an original Birth Certificate .
3. All reports in existence on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team. These will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and only shared with professionals on a need to know basis. The withholding of reports from the school Admissions Team may invalidate an Enrolment Application at any time. A recent psychological or psychiatric assessment is mandatory. A report from a member of a multi-disciplinary team should also be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist.
4. Please note applications will only be accepted on the basis of a psychological report with a primary diagnosis of Autism, provided by a qualified professional, within the last two years. A child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV or ICD 10 by a psychologist or psychiatrist and with a recommendation for ASD specific education/ special class within a mainstream school i.e. there must be a recommendation by a psychologist in the report that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child.
5. As inclusion is an integral part of our school ethos, it is a necessary criterion of enrolment that any child attending the unit must have the potential of integrating into a mainstream classroom setting. The level of integration, duration and timing will be decided upon by the principal and the staff of the unit in consultation with the mainstream teacher, parents of the child in question and on the basis of information shared at an annual review meeting. See also St Anne's Integration Policy
6. This year, 2016/17, it is intended that a Junior ASD Class will be established (junior referring to children between the ages of 4 and 8 years of age on or before the 1st September 2016). This demand will be reviewed in subsequent years with the intention of continuing with a senior ASD class
7. The parents of the child must accept and agree to the terms of the school's relevant behaviour policies and other relevant policies.
8. An Acceptance Form as issued by the school must be returned to the school within the required time period.
9. Children should be resident within the Catchment Area. If places are not filled by children resident within the catchment area, then these places will be offered to children outside the catchment area as recommended / advised by the school's SENO.
10. In the event that the number of children that apply for a place (per criteria above) is greater than the number of places (which is 6 places) available such places will be filled on review of Enrolment Applications received in the following order of priority.
 - A. Brothers and sisters of children already in the school
 - B. Children living in closest proximity to the school

Please note: In allocating places the Admissions Team will consider the readiness of the child, the suitability of placement and age appropriateness of the child.

- All unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 within 42 days from the date of the decision by the Board of Management.
- **Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space and/or resources are not available.**
- The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment/admission to any student where the student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills and the Department of Health, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
- ***N.B. If the school does not receive the required documentation with the Enrolment Application form, the application will not be processed or considered by the school. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/Guardian(s) to ensure that all supporting documentation is correct and is received by the school.***

Admissions Team

Each application will be considered by the Admissions Team. The team will include the School Principal, the Special Needs Co-ordinator and the Special Class Teacher(s). The Admissions Team can seek advice from a NEPS psychologist and other relevant professionals. A recommendation will be made by the Admissions Team in relation to each application to the Board of Management of the school. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management.

Procedure for Enrolment

- Enrolment Applications for the 2016/2017 school year will be accepted from April 2016.
- **The closing date for the submission of enrolment applications is May 13th 2016.**
- All applications received on or before this date will be acknowledged within 2 calendar weeks of the closing day for the submission of applications.

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. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our enrolment policy.

Return of Forms of Acceptance.

Letters of offer for places in the ASD class will be sent by the end of May 2016. The letter of offer includes an Acceptance Form which must be returned within **one week** of the letter of offer being issued by the school. Acceptance into the unit is contingent upon a signed acceptance of the school policies including the School Code of Behaviour in accordance with Section 24(4) of the Education Welfare Act, 2000. If the school does not receive the acceptance form with the required time period, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list for that school year.

Late Applications

Applications for places in the ASD class made on or after **May 13th 2016** cannot be considered for the new school year 2016/17 if all places are filled for this school year.

Post Acceptance

Once a parent/guardian has accepted a place in the ASD, the Principal will communicate with the parent/guardian as follows:

- The parents of a child being offered a place in the ASD class will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Ed. Team and the Principal of the School.
- An information evening will organized subsequently
- The parents will be requested by the school to consent to a visit by the staff to a child's pre-school/school/home setting to observe the child.
- The parents/guardians will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to the class to meet with staff and see the classroom.
- The first year will be used to assess the child's individual needs, develop an IEP plan and assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.
- The plan will be updated on a regular basis by the staff.
- The S.E.N.O (Special Education Needs Officer) may also be made aware of the plan.
- The children will be phased in gradually to the special class through a mutually agreed process between the school and the parents of the child. It is important that every child gets the best possible start in the class. In order to achieve this, the duration of the child's day or school starting date may vary depending on the needs of the child.

Parents of children in the unit will be expected to liaise with the HSE for essential services based on their needs e.g. Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy if they have not already done so.

Monitoring and Review

- **Placement Review:** The school reserves the right to review the child's progress from time to time whether during or after each year to recommend whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child.
Occasionally, concerns regarding the suitability of a child continued attendance at the school may arise. In such circumstances, a review of the school's ability to continue to meet the child's needs, safety, and the safety of others may be necessary. Any such review will be undertaken by a committee appointed by the Board of Management, in conjunction with the Principal and other relevant staff members.
Parents/guardians should be kept informed of any concerns that might arise in relation to their child's continued attendance at the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/guardians will also be given an opportunity to engage in the discussion surrounding the placement and concerns that arise from the case itself. In the event that it is determined that the child is not suitably placed in the school, having regard for the realistic service options available at the time, the BOM may request a multi-disciplinary team assessment be carried out to determine the best options for the specific child.

- **General Discharge policy**

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

- **Behaviour Review**

While some children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant, or oppositional behaviours, all efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the child's Individual Education Plan. All pupils including special needs pupils and non-special needs pupils are subject to the School Code of Behaviour and Health and Safety Statement. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the ASD class or another mainstream class to the extent that their 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 found for their child.

General Principles:

Taking into account the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special need.
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and way of life in society.

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfill 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 Admissions Team decides that the school is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child.
- The child is deemed a risk to themselves or to others.
- Admission of the child would make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on the provision by an educational establishment of its service to others.

Taking all of the above into account, and based on the advice of the Admissions Team, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy. This policy will be amended and updated as required.

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Chairperson of the Board of Management on _____

Review.

This policy will be reviewed at the end of December 2016 and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairman:_____ **Date :**

Principal:_____ **Date:**

