



St. John the Baptist Boys' National School
Downey Street, Pennywell, Garryowen, Limerick.

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Enrolment Policy for our special classes that support children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

November 2020

This enrolment policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS in 05/11/2020. It is written 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 support children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

General Information:

Name of school: St John the Baptist BNS

Address: Pennywell, Garryowen, Limerick

Telephone: 061 314 411

E-mail: office@sjtbb.ie

Background

Our first special class for supporting children with ASD was established on 31/8/2015. A second class is scheduled to open on the 30/8/2021. The purpose of these classes are 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 personal development. These classes also serve to prepare children with ASD to re-integrate into the mainstream school setting. **Therefore enrolment to these classes will only be available to children with ASD who, with the supports available in St John the Baptist BNS, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.**

Enrolment Procedure

- The process of enrolling in our special classes supporting children with ASD begins with an enquiry to the school – this can be a telephone call, e-mail or a visit from the parents/guardians.
- The caller will be informed of the current enrolment status of these special classes and will also be directed to this enrolment policy on the school website.
- If an application proceeds, this 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 diagnostic criteria. These classes are for all pupils who meet these criteria irrespective of cognitive ability.
- The application will undergo team assessment by the Admission Team, (The admission team is made up of the Principal, a Special Class teacher and one other member of the Learning Support Team) to ensure that the application fulfils the enrolment criteria outlined in this policy.
- 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.
- 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 on enrolment day for children who have secured a place.

Enrolment Criteria

A further reminder that enrolment to these classes will only be available to children with ASD who, with the supports available in St John the Baptist BNS, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.

The maximum class size in each special class is six 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 number one – 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 with an ASD diagnosis living within the catchment area as outlined in our general enrolment policy. (2 utility bills must be supplied for proof of address – electricity, gas, water, bin charges are acceptable).

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)** If spaces are still available, places will be allocated as to children with an ASD diagnosis from outside the catchment area.

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.

- Every year after Easter, the school will write to all parents/guardians of applicants on the waiting list offering them an option to stay on the list.

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 classes, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Discharge Policy

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the special classes for children with ASD once they have reached the age of twelve. Pupils who reach the age of twelve after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year. Discharge may also be recommended after the first year if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardian, feel that placement is not appropriate. Discharge from the special classes may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

Evaluation

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

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS on:

Date: 05/11/2020

Signed:

Chairperson, Board of Management.