



Ardscoil La Salle

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ENROLMENT POLICY FOR ASD CLASS

RATIONALE

Following advice from the SENO, the decision to provide a Special Class for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Ardscoil La Salle was taken by the Board of Management (BoM) of the school in conjunction with the principal, staff and school community. This decision was made with a view to providing an appropriate, specialist education within a mainstream setting for children who want to attend our school.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in the ASD Class, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education.
- To strive towards the integration of children in the ASD 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 students in the ASD Class.
- To enhance the sense of caring, awareness, resilience and adaptability in the students in the ASD Class

CRITERIA FOR ENROLMENT

The ASD Class Ardscoil La Salle will only cater for children that are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on the 1st of September of the school year in question.

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 Dept of Education and Skill and HSE policies, is as follows;

All applicants must have an assessed primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The assessment must be in line with the established DES criteria of DSM-V and FCD 10. All applications must be accompanied by an assessment, carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist approved by the DES, within the last two years.

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.

If the child also presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild range (this diagnosis must also be made using a professionally recognised clinical and/or psychological assessment procedure).

A prospective student for the ASD Class must have a professional recommendation, from a NEPS Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or from a multidisciplinary team (Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker, and/or Physiotherapist), for placement in an autism specific class. All applications in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team/Board of Management. The withholding of such reports from the Board of Management may invalidate an enrolment application at any time.

Parents/Guardians should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in the ASD Class in Ardscoil La Salle is six students for the school academic year and thereafter. It should be noted that fulfilling the enrollment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD class.

The Board of Management requires that Parents/Guardians must accept that the enrolment process only proceeds where the educational and physical needs of the applicants as identified can be met within the ASD class.

The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of all school policies;

An Acceptance Form as issued by the school must be returned to the school within the required time period.

Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space is not available.

NB 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.

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

Registration process begins with a referral to the ASD Class from the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer), and/or contact from the parents.

Enrolment Application Forms which are available from the school office should be fully completed and submitted by the parent/guardian on behalf of the applicant. Parents/Guardians should note that the application process for placements in the ASD class and the closing date for receipt of completed applications for the ASD class in the school are different, to that for student applications for enrolment in mainstream classes.

This Enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by an original Birth Certificate of the applicant and accompanied by all the up to date and pertinent educational psychological assessments(s) and diagnostic report (s). The Enrolment Application

form must also be accompanied by School Reports and relative documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended.

There must be signed consent from the Parents/Guardians granting the Board of Management of the Ardscoil La Salle permission to access and share any other reports relative to the application

Fully completed Enrolment Application Forms are then recorded in the school applications file. Only applications that then meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered.

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 enrollment policy.

Fulfilment of enrollment criteria does not necessarily ensure admission. Admission may be refused if:

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

Taking all of the above into account, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission and to refuse admission.

Where the number of applicants on the applications file exceeds the number of places available, the following ranked criteria will then apply to all applications received:

- Applicants currently enrolled in the mainstream class group
- Applicants with siblings already enrolled in the Ardscoil La Salle
- Applicants residing in the catchment area
- Applicants for whom this ASD class would be the nearest facility to their home residence.

The Parents/Guardians 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 Education Team and the Principal/Deputy Principal of the school, to discuss the placement/enrolment of their child. Any information requested by the Parent/Guardian will be provided at this meeting.

The Parents/Guardians may be requested to consent to a visit by a member of the Special Educational Needs professional staff at the Ardscoil La Salle, to visit the existing school placement of the student concerned in order to observe the student in a classroom situation.

The Parents/ Guardians will be invited to accompany their child to visit the ASD class and meet staff.

The Parents/ Guardians are also invited, after the acceptance and placement of their child in the ASD class, to be consulted about the Education Plan for their child.

The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be appraised of the Education Plan

A child may be phased gradually into the special class in the ASD class through a mutually agreed process between Parents/Guardians and the Management of the school.

Where it is deemed appropriate, a student in the ASD class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes by school management.

Students that are currently enrolled in an ASD class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer enrolment to Ardscoil La Salle's ASD class during the course of the school academic year

Parents/Guardians must note that Ardscoil La Salle respects the right of the existing school community and the students already enrolled therein, and this consideration is paramount when assessing entry to the ASD class.

The placement of every student within an ASD class will be subject to regular review by the school staff and where appropriate the professional services external to the school, following which decisions will (i) continue within the ASD class at Ardscoil La Salle (ii) integrate fully into the mainstream post-primary, or (iii) seek an alternative and more appropriate educational placement for the student as Ardscoil La Salle is unable to meet the educational needs of the student. In such an instance the support and assistance of the staff at Ardscoil La Salle will be available to assist the family in securing a more suitable learning environment in another educational institution, for the student concerned.

ADMISSIONS TEAM

Each application will be considered by the Admissions Team. The Admissions Team may seek advice from a NEPS psychologist and/or a SENO. 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.

RETURN OF FORMS OF ACCEPTANCE

Letters of offer for places in the ASD class will be sent within **4 weeks** of the final closing date for applications. The letter of offer includes Acceptance Forms which must

be returned within one week of the letters of offer being issued by the school. All acceptance forms must be accompanied by a signed 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 acceptance form with the two week 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 November 14th cannot be considered for the new school year if all places are filled for this school year.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school reserves the right to review the child's progress from time to time whether during or after each year to determine whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child.

Placement Review

Occasionally, concerns regarding the suitability of a child's 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.

Behaviour

It is accepted that 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.

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 & Skills and the Department of Health, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
2. The school endeavours to support each child on an individual basis and ensure that it's an appropriate school placement for the child. However, if it is the opinion of the Board of Management that the student poses an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of other students, to school staff or to school property, a decision may be made not to enrol the child and/or to exclude the child from the school.

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 fulfil the enrolment criteria. Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrollment 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 and to others.
- Admission of the child would make it 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.

General Discharge

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 Class may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into 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.

Designated ASD Class Admissions and Enrolment Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Ardscoil La Salle at its meeting on

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management