Knockmore JNS

Admissions Statement for ASD Class

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1. Introduction

This statement is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. The Board of Management trusts that by doing so, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. Furthermore, the Board of Management and the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the general admissions policy.
Knockmore Junior School is a national school which operates under the patronage of the Catholic Church, Dublin Diocese. We are a mainstream co-educational national school with two ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) special classes.

2. Context of Knockmore Junior School and our ASD Class

The decision to provide a special class for children with a definite diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder was taken by the Board of Management of the school in conjunction with the Principal and Staff in March 2015. The decision was taken later in 2015 to open a second ASD Unit in September 2016.
The decision was taken with a view to provide an education in a mainstream setting for children who have an Autistic Spectrum Disorder, who fulfil the enrolment criteria and for whom a place may be made available.
The decision to provide an ASD class in our school was taken primarily to cater for children resident in the Parish of Killinarden, Tallaght ("the Catchment Area"). Students in the ASD class will be integrated with mainstream school activities in our school where appropriate.

3. Our Mission

We aim to offer a positive meaningful educational experience, which allows the child to develop to his/her full learning potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm.
After a period of time observing, assessing and interacting with the child, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed in consultation with parents and relevant professionals. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and will highlight priority-learning needs. These needs will be targeted through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum.

4. Our Aim

- Our ASD class aims to offer an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream co-educational national school.
- This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream activities as appropriate.

5. Criteria for Enrolment in A.S.D. Class

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 H.S.E. policies are as follows:

1. An Application to Enrol to ASD Class Form provided by the school should be fully completed by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child;

2. This Application to Enrol to ASD Class Form should be accompanied by a certified copy of the original birth certificate and all other Supporting Documentation as referred to in the section “Procedure for Enrolment”;
3. A recent psychological assessment (dated within 12 months of the closing date for applications to enrol) which may include a report from a member of a multi-disciplinary team should be provided.
    - A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. (“Multi-Disciplinary Team”).
    - The Psychological report must come from a psychologist who is registered with the Psychological Society of Ireland.
    - The Multidisciplinary Team must be from an Irish state clinician facility.

    Please note all reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team.

    The withholding of reports and pertinent information from the school Admissions Team will invalidate an Enrolment Application at any time.
4. Report from the child’s current educational setting.
5. The child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder without significant intellectual impairment , within the range of Mild General Learning Disability or above, made using the DSM-V or ICD 10 or equivalent by the psychologist or a member of the Multi-Disciplinary Team.
    - The psychological report must have a recommendation that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child.
    - MGLD or above will facilitate the meaningful integration within the mainstream school.
6. The child must be aged between 4-8 years of age. All children must be 5yrs of age on or before the 31st December of the incoming school year.
7. The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school’s Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.
8. An observation appointment of the child may be useful, in certain circumstances, in his/her preschool setting must be organised with the school before the closing date for applications. If the child is not attending preschool he/she may be observed in the home setting or brought to the school if this is not possible.
9. An Acceptance Form as issued by the school must be returned to the school within the required time period.
10. Proof of address for children who are resident within the Catchment Area i.e. which is defined as being resident at a postal address within Killinarden , Tallaght , Co Dublin.
11. It is necessary that the applicant has the ability to be integrated into mainstream and that the applicant is amenable in his/her behaviour thus allowing for a safe learning environment for all students and staff.
12. The age and learning needs of the pupils currently enrolled in the class must be taken into account, where offers of enrolment are made to new applicants.
13. An ASD class is an integral part of the mainstream school and is not in a position to provide a suitable education for applicants in the severe/profound categories of autism.

14. The ASD class is included in our junior school, which caters for the needs of children from junior infants to second class, 4yrs to 8 years of age. It is accepted that all pupils transfer to the senior cycle of primary school at the end of second class, aged no more than nine years old.

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.
Pupil teacher ratio is set by the DES as 6:1.

6. Application Procedure for Enrolment

Schedule

The school will commence accepting applications for admission to the special class on	09/10/2020
The school shall cease accepting applications for admission to the special class on	13/11/2020
The date by which applicants will be notified of the decision on their application for admission to the special class is	04/12/2020
The period within which applicants must confirm acceptance of an offer of admission is	18/12/2020

- Enrolment Applications for the 2021/2022 school year will be accepted from the Friday 9th of October 2020. The closing date for the submission of enrolment applications is Friday 13th November.
- All applications received will begin to be processed from week beginning, 16th of November (or the next working day in case of school closure) It will not be possible to acknowledge applications before this date as the process is sealed.
- Requests for application to enrol forms and queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to:

School Secretary,
Knockmore Junior School,
Knockmore Avenue,
Killinarden,
Tallaght
Telephone: (01) 4525266
office@knockmorejns.ie

Receipt of acknowledgement of an application to enrol 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 manager/Board of Management in accordance with our admissions policy.

The Enrolment Application must be accompanied by **all** of the following supporting documentation ("Supporting Documentation") supplied by parents:

1. A photocopy of child's Birth Certificate
2. **Two** of the following original documents, as proof of address within the catchment area (these must be dated within two months of application):
   - ESB Bill
   - Gas Bill
   - Telephone Bill
3. **A Diagnosis from a psychiatrist, psychologist, that has assessed and classified the child as having autism or autistic spectrum disorder according to DSM-V or ICD 10 criteria or equivalent and a recommendation for a placement in a special class within a mainstream school. Psychologist's reports must be dated within the 12 month period from the time the application is made.**

NB If the school does not receive this documentation with the Application to Enrol 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.

When a parent/guardian has made an application to the school for a place in the ASD class on behalf of a child, the Principal will undertake to communicate to the parent/guardian the decision of the Board of Management within two calendar weeks of the application closing date. The decision will be communicated to the parents/guardians in writing or by email.

7. Support from Outside Agencies

Please note that support by outside agencies such as the H.S.E. will not be provided by the school. Children who require speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, etc., will be dependent on the local H.S.E. services such as *Chamber House Services, Tallaght.* The school does not have the resources to follow up on these services and it is up to the parents/guardians to ensure that all possible services are applied for and being availed of.

8. Admissions Team

Each application will be processed by the Admissions Team. The team will include the School Principal, the Senior Management Team and/or the Special Class Teacher. 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.

9. Deciding Enrolment

In the first instance, the Board of Management will only consider applicants who meet the criteria as laid out in section 5.

The Board of management will then, from those applicants, prioritise children as:

1. Children currently enrolled in the school with a diagnosis of ASD and a recommendation for special class placement.
2. Children residing in the catchment area being the parish of Killinarden
3. Children of staff
4. Children residing outside the parish of Killinarden

If two or more children fulfill the criteria, at each level 1-4, then names will be selected randomly with an independent assessor.
All applications will be opened from 16/11/2020. If the school is closed for unforeseen circumstances the applications will be opened on the next available day.

10. Offer of Admission/ Acceptance of school place

- Letters of offer for places in the ASD class will be sent after 3 weeks of the final closing date for applications.
- Parents/Guardians must come to the school following an appointment phone call or email to fill out acceptance forms and NCSE notifications.
- 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 within the two week period, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list for that school year.

11. Post Acceptance

1. Parents/Guardians on the receipt of an offer of a place in the ASD class must contact the school within two calendar weeks of the offer being made accepting or refusing the place. Failure to do so will forfeit the place.
2. 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 SEN team and the Principal of the School.
3. Parents/Guardians will fill in the relevant enrollment forms and application forms for the ASD class- this place is then subject to Confirmation from the S.E.N.O to the school that the child meets the criteria for placement in a special class within a mainstream school.
4. Parents/Guardians may be requested by the school to consent to a further visit by the staff to a child's pre-school/ school/home setting to meet the child.
5. 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.
6. After placement in the class a relevant Individual Education Plan will be provided for the child. This plan will have an input from all parties involved with the education of the child. The S.E.N.O. (Special Education Needs Officer) will also be made aware of the plan.
7. The plan will be updated on a regular basis by staff.
8. A child may 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 may vary depending on their needs.

8. Each child in the ASD class may be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes. This will occur according to readiness for such a length of time of the school day as is deemed meaningful.

12. Oversubscription

Where the number of children who apply is greater than the number of places available in the ASD class.

In the event that the number of children that apply for a place who meet the criteria in section 5 & 9, is greater than the number of places available, such places will be filled on review of Applications to Enrol, received in the following order of priority:

- In the event of the number of children in category **1** exceeds the number of places available, children within this category will be offered a place according to random selection ,with an independent assessor present.

  Thereafter;
- In the event of the number of children in category **2** exceeds the number of places available, children within this category will be offered a place according to random selection ,with an independent assessor present.

  Thereafter;
- In the event of the number of children in category **3** exceeds the number of places available, children within this category will be offered a place according to random selection ,with an independent assessor present.
- In the event of the number of children in category **4** exceeds the number of places available, children within this category will be offered a place according to random selection ,with an independent assessor present.

13. Waiting List

- All unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list for the duration of the academic year applied for.
- The waiting list number will be assigned using the above criteria and process.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed of their child's place on the waiting list in writing.
- Parents/Guardians must reapply for the following year if they were unsuccessful after the waiting list is dissolved on 30/09/21.

14. Late Applications

Applications for places in the ASD class made after the closing date 13/11/2020 will not be considered and will not be placed on the waiting list.

15. Unsuccessful applications.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in meeting the criteria will be kept on file for the school year applied for, in the event that a place may become available after the waiting list has been expended.

This will be ordered using random selection with an independent assessor.

These applicants, as they have not met the criteria or have applied late, will not be placed on the waiting list.

16. Monitoring and Review

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

17. 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 **I**ndividual **E**ducation **P**lan. All pupils including AEN pupils and non AEN pupils 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 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. The Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a child if they contravene the Code of Behaviour.

18. 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 does not meet the criteria as listed above in section 5 above.
2. The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills and the HSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.
3. The school endeavours to support each child on an individual basis and ensure that it is 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.
4. Where it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
5. An applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
6. The parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.
7. An applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.

19. Review/Appeals

Review of decisions by the board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998 and made within two calendar weeks of the decision of the board.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

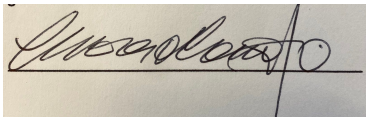
The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

This statement is subject to annual review by the Board of Management

20. Ratification.

This statement was agreed and ratified by the Board of Management on 7th October 2020

Signed,



Charlie O'Connor

Chairperson

Board of Management

Checklist for application to enrol:

	Check	Office use
Completed Application to enrol form		
Copy of birth certificate		
Two proof of address for the catchment area of Killinarden if resident		
Psychological report from ISoP registered psychologist, stating applicant has ASD in accordance with DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria and a recommendation for placement in a ASD special class in a mainstream school		
Additional multi disciplinary reports from the candidate that will support the application, including report from current setting.		