



Our Lady's Boys National School, Ballinteer

ASD Class Enrolment Policy

Introductory Statement

Our Lady's Boys National School is a mainstream primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Dublin.

Our Lady's Boys NS ASD Class Enrolment Policy was formulated during the school year 2018/2019 involving consultations among staff, parents and Board of Management members. This policy was formally ratified by the Board of Management on 21st October 2019.

The ASD classes at Our Lady's Boys NS are 2 classes for children with ASD who have been recommended for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream primary school and who have the potential to integrate into a mainstream appropriate class.

All placements will be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child. The maximum class size is 6 pupils. Access to speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc. will be dependent on local HSE services.

Our Aims

We aim to offer a positive meaningful educational experience, which allows the child to develop to his full learning potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm.

Our ASD classes offer an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream national school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion in mainstream education as part of the school community as appropriate, with regard to levels of general learning disability, resources and suitability for such inclusion.

At our Lady's Boys NS, we are committed to nurturing the full potential of all who work and learn in our school community in a positive, inclusive, safe and happy environment.

Procedure for Enrolment

In order for a child to be enrolled in Our Lady's BNS ASD class, a place must be available and he must fully fulfil the following criteria:

- Our Lady's BNS Enrolment Application Form for Placement in the ASD Class for Children with Autism must be fully completed
- A multi-disciplinary team report including a psychological assessment (using standardised measure) with a diagnosis of ASD (ICD 10) within the last two years and a recommendation for a placement in a special class for autism, attached to a mainstream school within the last 12 months to be presented with the application.
- All relevant reports and assessment must accompany the application including OT and/or Speech and Language report, if relevant. Where there is insufficient information provided about a child, the Board of Management may not be in a position to make a decision
- The verbal and performance levels of cognitive assessment must be at minimum within mild general learning disability range.



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- The child must be able to use a regular toilet with or without assistance
- A child with behavioural difficulties should be in receipt of ongoing support from an ASD team
- Attendance at a pre-school, preferably a pre-school for children with autism is desirable
- It is preferable that the child would have reached the age of five years before enrolling
- The Board of Management reserves the right to limit the age range in each class to four years from youngest to oldest
- Parents/Guardians of prospective candidates may be invited to meet the Principal (as a Board of Management representative) and class teacher as part of the application process
- The class is not designed for children with multiple disabilities
- Prior to enrolment, all potential applicants may be visited by a member of the ASD team to observe the student in their existing placement and to provide feedback to the Board of Management
- The Board of Management reserves the right to take into account any other criteria they deem relevant.
- There is a requirement to only apply once, further information may be required by the Board, when reviewing applications in subsequent years.

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

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

In certain circumstances and following assessment, Our Lady's BNS may be unable to meet the needs of a pupil with ASD on the grounds that they are considered a risk to themselves or others.

Decision Making

Decisions in relation to enrolment of pupils are made by the Board of Management in accordance with the school policy. The Board of Management will, where possible notify parents in writing of its decision within 21 days of the closing date for receipt of applications. The number of spaces in the ASD class for children with autism may not be finalised until later in the school year and parents will be notified accordingly.

If the number of children **who meet the enrolment criteria** exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will be considered

- A Siblings of current pupils of the school
- B Children of current school staff
- C Children living within the Ballinteer parish
- D Children living outside the Ballinteer parish



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All applications within each category will be considered in chronological order of date of receipt of completed and valid enrolment forms. Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Class are valid once Criteria for Enrolment in the ASD Class have been fulfilled. (See Criteria for Enrolment).

If available, places will be allocated as per waiting list, once an assessment has been made by the Board of Management.

On acceptance of a placement the parent/guardian must recognise and acknowledge that the Board of Management may terminate a placement should the Board, in consultation with the multi-disciplinary team, deem the placement unsuccessful.

Applicants who are offered a place and choose not to accept, may defer their enrolment application and will be placed on a waiting list for the following year.

Step 1

Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Class will be accepted until the closing date for submission of enrolment applications which is the 30th April annually. All applications will be placed on a Waiting List in order of the date of receipt of completed Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Classes. Applications received on or before this date will be acknowledged within one calendar month of the closing day for the submission of applications.

Requests for Enrolment Application Forms for the ASD Class and queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to:

The Principal, Our Lady's Boys NS, Broadford Rise, Ballinteer, Dublin 16 D16 CX60
Telephone: 01 494 6647

*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.*

The Enrolment Application must be accompanied by all of the following supporting documentation supplied by parents:

- The child must have a diagnosis of Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV/V or ICD 10 by a psychologist or team.
- Birth certificate.
- A written psychological assessment/report (dated within two years prior to the application being submitted) or a written report from a multi-disciplinary team must be provided. A multi-disciplinary team may consist of a Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Social Worker and a Physiotherapist. Please note all reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team.



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- There must be a recommendation by the relevant professionals in the report that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child. In this regard it should be noted that the academic ability of the child will be taken into account when considering an application and will be subject to continuous assessment and review.

Step 2

All applications received by the closing date will be considered by the Admissions Team. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. The team will include the School Principal, Special Needs Team including the ASD Class Teachers. The Admissions Team may seek the advice of the school's allocated NEPS psychologist.

The function of the admissions teams is to:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in the ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in the class will be 6 pupils.
- Review all applications and all documentation relevant to a child applying for a place in the ASD class.
- Verify the class's suitability in meeting the needs of the child.
- Verify that there is a recommendation from a psychologist for placement in a special class in a mainstream school.
- Verify the suitability of the child for potential meaningful integration in an age appropriate mainstream class.
- Verify the child's age for the year of enrolment.
- Verify that the child has an intelligence score in the Average or Low Average range (a Full Scale Intelligence Quotient score of 75 or greater) when compared to other children of a similar age.
- Identify qualifying applicants with reference to these criteria.

Step 3

In the event that the number of **qualifying** children (based on the criteria outlined in Step 2), that apply for a place is greater than the number of places, such places will be filled on review of Enrolment Applications received in the following order of priority:

- A Siblings of current pupils of the school
- B Children of current school staff
- C Children living within the Ballinteer parish
- D Children living outside the Ballinteer parish

In the event of the number of children in any category exceeding the number of places available, qualifying applicants will be offered a place in accordance with a 'first come, first served' basis as per the Waiting List.

Step 4

All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on the Placement List, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. All unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 within 42 days from the



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date of the decision by the Board of Management. The Placement List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only. All applications will be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria in April each year.

Step 5

Parents who are offered a place must complete and return our regular Enrolment Registration Form within two weeks of the letter of offer to accept a placement. If the school does not receive the Registration Form within the two week period, the place will be offered to the next child on the Placement List for that school year.

Pupils Transferring

Pupils may transfer to the ASD class during the school year subject to availability of places. Pupils transferring must enter the same class level that they are leaving, and have the necessary diagnosis and recommendations as outlined above.

Placement

1. After placement in the class a relevant Pupil Personal Plan will be provided for the child. This plan will have an input from all parties involved with the education of the child.
2. Each child in the ASD class will be assigned to an appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes provided that this is in the best interests of the child, while having due regard to the educational benefit of all pupils enrolled in our school. Every opportunity will be used to promote inclusion in mainstream classes provided the child is ready for this step and has the necessary supports in place.
3. A review will take place at the end of the child's first year to assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.
4. The review will be carried out by school staff with parental involvement.
5. The outcome of the review will be examined by the Board of Management.

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. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the 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.

Discharge



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It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the classroom once they have reached the age of thirteen. It will be deemed compulsory that the year that the student turns 13 will be their last year. Pupils who reach the age of thirteen after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year. The onus will be on the parents to negotiate the placement with a suitable secondary school.

Discharge may also be recommended after the first and/or any subsequent year if following psychological assessments and consultation with the parents/guardians, it is felt that the placement is no longer appropriate and serves the best interest of the child. The Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Success Evaluation

The suitability and effectiveness of this 'Enrolment Policy' will be reviewed from time to time having regard to:

- a) Efficient and successful operation of the enrolment process
- b) Feedback received from parents/guardians and members of staff
- c) Feedback received from other 'stakeholders', including the Parent's Association, Dept. of Education and Skills personnel, NEPS, SENO

Review of Policy

The Board of Management of our Lady's Boys NS is keenly aware of how challenging the transition from home to school can be for its pupils and their parents. Likewise, the Board recognises the demands that can be involved where a pupil is transferring from another school to Our Lady's Boys. The Board of Management is anxious to ensure that it facilitates the enrolment of all its pupils in a manner that is as pleasant and as positive as possible. Sensitive to the needs and concerns of the pupils, their parents/guardians, and their teachers and other staff members, and in the interest of the best management of the school, the Board of Management has outlined the above Enrolment Policy. The responsibility for its day to day implementation rests with the Principal and the teaching staff subject to the direction and authority of the Board of Management.

This Policy is subject to review at the discretion of the Board of Management and will be kept under on-going review. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend or delete



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any aspect of this policy without notice. The Board of Management reserves the right to review the viability of the special classes on a yearly basis.

Ratification and Review of Policy

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on the

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management