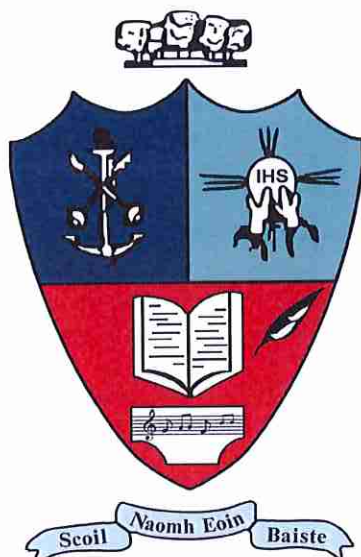


**St. John the Baptist
Junior Boys' School**

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Enrolment Policy

Autism Class

Enrolment Policy for Autism Class

Introductory Statement

The Board of Management of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School has set out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Disabilities Act 2000.

The ASD Class (SOLAS) attempts to enable all students with ASD to belong to an educational community without prejudice and within which individual difference is celebrated.

The class reflects the inclusive ethos of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School and wherever possible the pupils in the ASD class are integrated within the mainstream school.

Rationale

In setting up the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) class in St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School, the decision was taken with a view to providing an education in a mainstream setting for children who have an autism disorder and who fulfil the enrolment criteria.

The decision was taken primarily to cater for children resident in the catchment area of the three parishes of St. John the Baptist Clontarf, St. Anthony's Clontarf and St. Gabriel's Dollymount in Dublin. The Board of Management notes that it is open to any primary school to set up such a class.

St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School is a Junior School which caters for boys from Junior Infants to Second Class. The school runs on a four year cycle after which pupils may transfer to a mainstream setting in St. John the Baptist Senior Boys' School if they so wish. It is important that parents/ guardians are cognizant that they may need to seek another ASD class placement once their son reaches the end of Second Class. This onus is on parents/guardians and is outside of the remit of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School.

The ASD class at St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School is a class for boys who have been recommended for placement in an ASD class in a mainstream primary school. All placements will be reviewed regularly, in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for the child. The maximum class size is 6 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.

Aims

We aim to offer a meaningful positive educational experience promoting growth and learning, which allows the child to develop to their full learning potential in an inclusive atmosphere which offers clarity, predictability and calm.

Our ASD class is a resource that is attached to a mainstream school and should not be viewed as a special school setting. Boys in the ASD class are taught by qualified primary school mainstream teachers and they should not be viewed as special school teachers who have specific expertise in the area of ASD.

Access to speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc. will be dependent on local HSE services and is outside the remit of the school. 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 services are being accessed and being availed of and that all reports and recommendations are provided to the class teacher for planning purposes.

The class for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has been developed with the cooperation and support of the NCSE and the Department of Education. **The school views the ASD class as a resource which is specifically tailored to creating an autistic learning environment while also acknowledging that the school is a mainstream school.**

The ASD class aims to facilitate the optimum inclusion in education as part of the school community as appropriate, with regard to general levels of learning disability, available resources and suitability for inclusion into the mainstream classroom.

We wish to provide a broad curriculum which focuses on the strengths and abilities of each child while supporting their areas of need.

Placement

Each child in the ASD class will be assigned to an age-appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes provided that this is in the best interests of the child, while having due regard for 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.

Placement Review

The school reserves the right to review the child's progress at a minimum of twice a year and to recommend whether the placement is appropriate for the child.

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 meet the child's needs, or a review of the safety of the child, 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 and should be given ample opportunity to engage in the discussion around the placement and concerns arising. In the event that it is determined that the child is not suitably placed in the school, the Board of Management may request a multidisciplinary team assessment be carried out in order to determine the best course of action regarding future placement.

July Provision will not be offered or met by the school.

Behaviour

It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult and challenging 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 Educational Plan. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the school 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

It is deemed compulsory that the year the pupil has completed their fourth year of primary education (regardless of whether all four years were completed in St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School) will be their last year in the school. The onus will be on the parent/guardian to negotiate a suitable placement for the remaining four years of primary school, should they feel that transition to a full time mainstream classroom in St. John the Baptist Senior Boys' School is not suitable.

St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School will facilitate all transfer of records/reports as well as assist with any information required with regards to the pupil and St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School will be deemed to have authority to forward all relevant reports and assessments to the child's senior primary school placement, unless specifically instructed in writing not to do so.

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 has the right to overrule any decision made in this regard. When a report outlining the child's care or educational needs is deemed inadequate or out of date, the Principal/ Board of Management may insist that the parents/ guardians obtain an up to date educational and/ or psychological report.

Enrolment Procedure

The full procedure with regard to St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School can be found in our Admissions Policy which is available on our website.

Please refer to the school's annual admissions notice with regard to the application opening and closing dates, decisions and number of available places.

Receipt of acknowledgement of an application does not constitute an offer of a place, nor does it guarantee a place in the school.

As per circular 0080/2024 prior to application for a place in the autism class, **parents/guardians should notify the NCSE before 1 February in the preceding school year**, together with relevant reports. This process enables the NCSE to check and verify that the recommendations and reports for the child meet the specified eligibility criteria. Parents/Guardians will then receive a written confirmation from the NCSE confirming the outcome of the NCSE's review of the supporting evidence provided, which they can then give to the school as part of their application of enrolment to the autism class.

When a place becomes available and is offered and accepted, the parents/ guardians and the principal will complete the 'Notification to NCSE of enrolment in a special class within fourteen calendar days of confirmation that the offer of admission has been accepted. This is Form 7 available on www.ncse.ie.

Category 3 applicants (as per the school's enrolment policy): Applicants will be limited to those living within a radius of 10k, or a typical journey time of no longer than 20 minutes. This should allow for a shorter commute which will ideally reduce potential for children to arrive at school dysregulated. Our priority is to provide a predictable and consistent experience for every child.

Enrolment Application

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

- The child must have a diagnosis of Autism/ Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV/V or ICD 10 by an educational psychologist or a professional recognized clinician.
- Original birth certificate
- A written psychological assessment/ report 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 and Language Therapist, Social Worker and Physiotherapist.
- This report should also 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 children of a similar age.
- There must be a recommendation (within two years of the proposed admission date) 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.

The Board of Management is responsible for and must respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled. The Board of Management

reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe that the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child.

Ratification and Communication

A draft of this policy was produced and discussed by the In School Management team, the Special Education Team.

The Board considered it at its meeting of 15th October 2024.

The Policy was approved by Archbishop's House on 23rd October 2024 and is operational from that date.

Signed: *Elaine McKiernan*

Date: 23/10/2024

Chairperson of BOM