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# SCOIL MHUIRE

## ROBINSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Baile Róibín, An Uaimh, Co. na Mí • Robinstown, Navan, Co. Meath

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## Enrolment Policy for the Early Intervention ASD Classes

March 2021

### 1.0 Introduction.

Robinstown N.S. is a Roman Catholic Primary school in the Parish of Dunderry under the patronage of Dr. Thomas Deenihan, Bishop of Meath. It is an eleven teacher school including the Principal. The school is of mixed sex.

The school depends on grants and resources provided by the Dept. of Education and Science and therefore cooperate with regulations laid down by the Department. The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Dept. of Education and Science which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998.

The school supports the principles of:

- (a) Inclusiveness, this includes children with a disability or other special educational needs.
- (b) Equality of access and participation in the school.
- (c) Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- (d) Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life within society.

The school opens at 8.50 am and closes at 2.30 pm. There is a small break from 11.00 am to 11.10 am. The children go out to the yard at 12.30 pm for lunch break and return to class at 1.00 pm. The Early Intervention ASD Classes start at 9.00 am and finish at 1.30 pm.

## **2.0 Enrolment/Admission Policy**

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The maximum class size for the Early Intervention ASD class is 6 pupils, in line with DES and HSE policies. It will be staffed by one teacher and a minimum of one SNA, as dictated by DES Allocation procedures.

The Board will assess each application under the following criteria.

### **Criteria for Enrolment Eligibility:**

1. In order to qualify for consideration for a place in the Early Intervention ASD Class, the school must be furnished with a recent psychological report outlining a primary diagnosis of Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) made using DSM-IV or ICD 10 guidelines.
2. If the child also presents with a general learning disability, it must fall within the mild to moderate range (a diagnosis of which must also be made using a recognised clinical and/or psychological assessment procedure.)
3. There must also be a recommendation from a psychologist that a placement in an Early Intervention ASD Class in a mainstream school is required and appropriate for the child.
4. To enrol in the Early Intervention ASD Class, a child must be at least 3 years of age on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of September in the given enrolment year. He/she is ineligible for a place in the Early Intervention ASD Class if he/she is turning 6 during that academic year.
5. Robinstown NS does not facilitate spilt placements between the Early Intervention ASD Class and other preschools.

Once the psychological report has been forwarded on to the school Principal and he/she is satisfied that all the criteria have been met, parents will be invited to make an application to enrol their child in the school.

### **The Application Process**

A) Those seeking to enrol their child can obtain a Registration Form from the school. This form should be completed and returned to the school with the following documentation:

- Copy of child's Birth Certificate and recent psychological report outlining a primary diagnosis of Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) made using DSM-IV or ICD 10 guidelines.

Applications for the Preschool ASD class must be returned before the published closing date. School Management is not obliged to consider applications which are late, incomplete or do not include the required documentation. *Intentionally submitting inaccurate information on the Application to Enrol form will render it null and void.*

***\*The submission of a Registration Form does not confer a right to enrolment.***

B) School Management will process all applications received during the Enrolment Period and apply the enrolment criteria outlined below when necessary. The closing date for enrolment is usually the last Friday in January.

C) Written notification of the decision will be issued to parents within 21 days of the closing date.

D) Parents of children who have been offered a place must inform the school in writing, within seven working days, that they wish to accept the offer. Failure to do so may result in the re-allocation of the place.

**\*Please note that the submission of a registration form does not confer the right to enrolment.**

Once the Board decides to offer a place in the Early Intervention ASD Class, a letter of offer will issue with an acceptance document, which must be completed and returned within the specified time scale. If the offer is not accepted or the completed

acceptance document is not returned, the Board will then offer the place to the next person on the waiting list, if one exists.

Placement in the Early Intervention ASD Class is subject to annual review.

Priority is given to valid enrolment applications for children in the Parish of Dunderry with children from outside the Parish being considered as recommended/advised by the SENO for the school.

In the event that the number of valid applications exceeds the number of places available, a waiting list will be put in place.

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria (similar to those in the admissions policy for the mainstream classes) in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

- A) Siblings of currently enrolled pupil's; siblings to include step siblings, half siblings and fostered children residing at the same address.
- b) Those permanently resident within the Catholic parish of Dunderry and the traditional catchment area of the school.
- c) All remaining applicants.

**Please note that: A new application (de novo) will be required to be placed on waiting list for each year.**

- In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:
  1. Where the number of applicants within any one of the criteria categories listed above exceeds the remaining number of school places available, the applicants within that category will be prioritized on the grounds of age, beginning with the eldest and proceeding in descending order of age until all remaining places have been allocated.

2. Where two or more pupils are tied for the last remaining available school place [on grounds of shared date of birth], that place will be awarded to the applicant who is oldest by virtue of the time of birth recorded on their birth certificate.

*The maximum class size in the early intervention classes is not to exceed 6 pupils.*

**\*Enrolment in the Early Intervention ASD Class does not entitle the child to a place in a class in the mainstream school.**

Fulfilling the enrolment criteria as laid out above does not guarantee enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space is not available.

The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of the school's Admission Policy. A child may stay in the Early Intervention ASD Class for a maximum of two years and MUST be in his/her primary placement in the year of his/her 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, ethnic minority status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs & values, family or social circumstances.

While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Robinstown NS is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of Management, with due regard for the Patron's wishes, reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- Size of /available space in classrooms.
- Availability of grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science.

- Educational needs of children of a particular age.
- Multi-grade classes.
- Presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs.
- Department of Education and Science maximum class average directives.

Children with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management. Educational resources and facilities as outlined by a professional and/or medical report should be put in place prior to the child's first day in the school. Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents of children who are unsatisfied with the level of educational provision in our school, are advised to consider a special school which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with specific learning/behavioural difficulties.

Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/ Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation, & management. The Board of Management places Parents/ Guardians as responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education and Science's rules for National Schools, a child may be suspended and in exceptional circumstances expelled.

These policies may be added to and revised from time-to-time.

### **3.0 Parental Involvement**

As a Catholic school, we believe that the school is not an isolated unit but a union of many people who come together to give it its life and meaning. The triple partnership of home, school and parish is essential if the school is to live up to its Mission Statement. We aim to establish this relationship through:

- encouraging a shared commitment to the success of each individual child;
- encouraging an ethos of understanding and openness in home-school-parish relationships;

- Helping parents to develop a positive role in complementing and supporting the work of the school in educating their children.

Parental involvement in the life of the school is encouraged in many ways:

- through parent/partnership groups working in school under the auspices of Robinstown NS Parents Association;
- fund raising parent helpers;
- involvement in assemblies, celebrations, concerts and school Masses;
- involvement in sacramental preparation;
- school fetes, sport and gala days.

We are committed to methods of evaluating and improving channels of communication between school and parents. Our evaluation shall be ongoing and continuous, as we make every effort to make parents feel welcome and valued at all times.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 29/09/2021**