



## ***Scoil Nano Nagle***

Bawnogue, Clondalkin, Dublin D22VF68.

[www.scoilnanonagle.com](http://www.scoilnanonagle.com)

☎ : (01) 4571306    email: [principal@scoilnanonagle.com](mailto:principal@scoilnanonagle.com)  
Roll: 19509T

---

# **Enrolment Policy for Special Class for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

## **Introduction**

Scoil Nano Nagle is a national school which operates under the patronage of the Catholic Church, Dublin Diocese. We are a mainstream, co-educational junior national school with two ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) classes. This policy was approved by the school patron on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2023. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

These classes will be funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Skills with additional financial support from Board of Management resources. The maximum class size is six pupils. Each class is allocated one full-time Teacher and at least two Special Needs Assistants subject to NCSE approval. Children are eligible to attend the ASD classes between the ages of four and nine years only.

Taking into account the regulations and programmes of the Department of Education and Skills, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act 1998, and the funding available, Scoil Nano Nagle supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need.
- Equality of access and participation in the school.
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
- Respect for diversity of values and beliefs.
- Traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability (i.e., severity of ASD), 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.

### **Vision Statement:**

In setting up the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) special classes in Scoil Nano Nagle the aim of the Board of Management and staff is to develop an educational setting which is focused on the needs of all the children. The Board of Management is committed to providing the highest quality of education for the children concerned.

The Board of Management (BOM) has developed this policy for the ASD Special classes in conjunction with the overall policy for the school. The policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status ACT 2000, the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 and the Education Act 2022.

### **Our Aim**

Scoil Nano Nagle welcomes all students for whom we can provide an appropriate education. Our ASD classes will aim to offer an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream school. In this setting, we endeavour to nurture self-esteem and promote growth and learning in an atmosphere of inclusion, mutual respect, predictability and calm. Through the provision of a broad curriculum, we will focus on the development of each pupil's individual strengths and identify and provide for their special educational needs to enable them to reach their full potential.

### **Registration of Interest to Apply for Enrolment**

The registration process begins with a referral from the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) or a telephone call or a visit from the parents/guardians.

### **Enrolment Criteria**

Enrolment to these classes will only be available to children with ASD who are 4 to 8 years of age on 1st September on the year of entry who, with the support available in Scoil Nano Nagle, will have the capacity to at least partially integrate into a mainstream class. Class 1, the junior special class for pupils with ASD aims in as far as is possible to cater for junior and senior infant pupils and Class 2, the senior special class for pupils with ASD for first and second class pupils.

The maximum enrolment in each ASD class is six pupils. The Board of Management reserves the right to enrol less than this if it is deemed in the best interest of the class, the pupils and the school. If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of

places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order, beginning with number one – subject to meeting all the criteria and completing all the procedures outlined in this policy.

- A. Children transitioning from the school's own Early Start unit.
- B. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and/or children living within Bawnogue Parish boundaries (*Lealand; Lindisfarne; Melrose; Alpine Heights; Ashwood; Cherrywood Villas, Crescent, Grove, Drive; Nangor Crescent; Bawnogue Cottages, Cuthbert Meadows*). (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking).
- C. Children of staff members. (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking).
- D. Children from outside the parish. (The eldest child will have priority in this ranking).

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:

The eldest pupil will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

Subject to sufficient places being made available in the ASD classes, the procedure for enrolment, incorporating the Department of Education and Skills and H.S.E. policies, are as follows:

- 1) An enrolment application form should be fully completed by the parents/guardians on behalf of the child.
- 2) Please note applications will only be accepted on the basis of a psychological report with a primary diagnosis of Autism, provided by a qualified professional. A child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-V or ICD 10 by a psychologist or psychiatrist with a recommendation for ASD specific education/special class within a mainstream school i.e. 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. This recommendation must have been made within the last two years.

3) The child must have the potential (independence with SNA access for the full school day) to be included in a mainstream class with his/her age-based cohort before leaving Primary School.

4) The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

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

### **Procedure for Enrolment**

Enrolment application forms for the forthcoming school year will be accepted during the period specified in the School's Annual Admission Notice for receiving applications. Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice.

Receipt of an enrolment application form 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 expression of interest for admission to our school. Decisions in relation to applications for the enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our Admission Policy.

### **The Admissions Team**

The Admission Team will:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in each ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in each class will be six.
- Review 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.
- Identify qualifying applicants with reference to these criteria.
- Prioritise each qualifying applicant with reference to selection criteria.
- Make a recommendation based on these findings to the Board of Management.

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 has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the Admissions Team. In particular, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child. All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on a waiting list, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. All unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 within 42 days from the date of the decision by the Board of Management. The waiting list is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only.

### **Offer and Acceptance of a Place**

A letter of offer for a place in an ASD Class will be sent within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice. If the school does not receive notice of acceptance of a place within the timeline outlined in the Notice, it will be offered to the next child on the Placement List for that school year.

### **Late Applications**

Applications for places in an ASD class made after the date as outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice will not be considered.

### **Placement**

1. After placement in an ASD Class, a relevant Student Support File will be provided for the child. The plan will have input from all parties involved with the education of the child. The Student Support File will be updated once a year.
2. Each child in an ASD Class will be assigned to an age-appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes, provided that this is in the best interest 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 support in place in the ASD class.
3. A review will take place at the end of the child's first year to assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.
  - The review will be carried out by school staff with parental involvement.
  - The outcome of the review will be examined by the Board of Management.
  - If in the event that a placement is inappropriate, the school will liaise with appropriate agencies in an effort to obtain a more suitable place.

## **Behaviour**

It is acknowledged by Scoil Nano Nagle that a minority of pupils with special educational needs may display challenging and/or violent behaviour. Scoil Nano Nagle has a duty of care to all its pupils and staff. Our management of challenging and/or violent behaviour is consistent with each child's right to be treated with dignity and to be free of abuse.

All efforts will be made by school staff to prevent, manage and reduce challenging behaviour and/or violent behaviours through positive pupil/teacher/SNA relationships, the use of available therapeutic interventions and the implementation of behaviour plans as part of the pupil's IEP. All pupils are subject to the school's Code of Behaviour and Safeguarding Statement. Where a pupil's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other pupils in the special class or on pupils in the integration (mainstream) class to the extent that those pupils' right to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management, the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable setting should be found for their child.

## **Discharge**

It is the school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the classroom once they have reached the age of nine. This means a June discharge in the following year. It will be the responsibility of the SENO and the parents to find an appropriate educational setting in which to allow the child to complete his/her primary education.

Scoil Nano Nagle will facilitate all transfer of records/reports, as well as assist with any information required with regard to the student and the school will, with written consent, forward all relevant reports and assessments to the 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 has the right to overrule any decisions made in this regard.

## **Support by Outside Agencies**

Parents should note that a guarantee of support by outside agencies such as the H.S.E. cannot be provided. Children who require speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, etc. will be dependent on the local H.S.E. services. 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 being availed of.

**Review**

This policy is subject to annual review by the Board of Management.

It was ratified on: February 7, 2023

Signed:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Martha Lynch

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 07/02/23

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fiona Carmody

Acting Principal

Date: 07/02/23.