



Admissions to the Scoil Áine Naofa Senior National School Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Class (Admissions for Academic Year 2026-27)

We are a mainstream, co-educational, senior (3rd to 6th class) national school with one ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) class opening in September 2026. Scoil Áine Naofa welcomes all students for whom we can provide an appropriate education. Our ASD class aims 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.

This class will be funded and resourced by the Department of Education with additional financial support from Board of Management resources. The maximum class size is six pupils. Each complete class is allocated one full-time Teacher and two Special Needs Assistants. If class size is less than six pupils, Special Needs Assistants are appointed on a pro-rata basis. Children are eligible to attend the ASD class between the ages of 8 and 13 years only.

Considering the regulations and programmes of the Department of Education, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, 1998, and the funding available, Scoil Áine Naofa Senior National School 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.

Criteria for Enrolment

A child will be deemed eligible for an offer of placement when all the following criteria have been met, in addition to the enrolment criteria.

1. A fully completed application form for enrolment has been submitted to the school by the parents/guardians by post (Including hand delivery), during the admissions window specified in the Annual Admissions Notice.
2. The child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM - 5 or ICD 11 by a psychologist and/or psychiatrist.
3. A recent recommendation must be provided that indicate that a placement in a special class for children with autism in a mainstream school is warranted.
4. The child is at least 8 years of age on or before 1st May prior to starting school.
5. 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.
6. 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 assessment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient space is not available.

Enrolment Criteria

Enrolment to this class will only be available to children with ASD who are at least 8 years of age on 1st May on the year of entry who, with the support available in Scoil Áine Naofa Senior National School, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.

The maximum enrolment in the 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.

Children who meet the criteria above will be selected for the autism class according to the following priorities in the event of oversubscription:

1. Children enrolled and have attended Scoil Áine Naofa Senior National School.
2. Children resident in Airlie Heights, Woodview Heights, Woodview, Dodsboro Cottages, Dodsboro Rd. (South of N4) Hillcrest, Cherry Lawns, Greenpark Road, Meadowview Grove, Westbrook Park, Tandy's Lane (South of N4), Vesey Park, Newcastle Road/Beaumont Cottages, Esker Drive, Cannonbrook, St. Finian's, Arthur Griffith Park & Court, Finnstown Fairways, Finnstown Abbey/Priory/Cloisters, Hansted, Finnstown Hall, Esker Cottages, Johnsbridge /Johnswood Grange, Manor, Old Forge, Westbury Somerton.
3. Children resident in the parish of St. Patrick's, Esker.
4. Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school.
5. Children of staff.

6. Children residing outside the parish.

7. All other eligible applicants.

8. Lottery.

Having met the criteria for admission to the ASD Class, applications are considered against the published selection criteria. Places will be offered in the first instance to those who meet the first criterion.

Subsequently, where the class still has places available the remaining Applicants are considered against the second criterion and those Applicants who meet this criterion will be offered a place within the ASD Class.

This process will continue (following 1 to 8 above) until all available places have been offered and accepted and a waiting list will be created if necessary. Where two or more applications are tied in the selection process, Scoil Áine Naofa Senior National School Board of Management will apply a random lottery (No. 8) to assign any available places in the school, or for placement on the waiting list.

Procedure for Enrolment

Parents can apply for the ASD Class during the Admissions window as outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice. This usually takes place in October. For the opening year of the ASD Class the Admissions window will be during term 3 of the 2026/27 academic year. The Enrolment Form must be fully completed and submitted by the parent on behalf of the student. The closing date for receipt of such completed applications by the school is published in the Annual Admission Notice for the relevant year.

The application form for the Special Class will be on our website <https://www.scoilaine.com/> Receipt of acknowledgement of application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it guarantee a place in the school. Decisions in relation to applications for the enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

This Enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by an original Birth Certificate of the applicant and proof of address accompanied by all the up to date and pertinent educational psychological /professional assessments(s) and diagnostic report (s). The Enrolment Application form must also be accompanied by the child's latest School Report and relative documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended. Only full applications that meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered for a place.

The Admissions Team

The Admissions Team will:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in the ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in the class will be six.
- Review all applications and all documentation relevant to a child applying for a place in the ASD Class.

Verify that there is a recommendation from a psychologist/relevant professional for placement in an ASD 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.

Confirmation of a Placement

A letter of confirmation of a place in the ASD Class will be sent as per the dates in the Admissions Notice.

Withdrawal of an Offer

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

- The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or
- The applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer on or before the date set out in the annual Admissions Notice of the school for the academic year for which s/he is applying, or in the case of a late application, or second or third round offer, within two weeks, or
- An applicant has not indicated whether s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s); whether or not s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s).

If an offer is withdrawn by the school, the student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place on the ASD Class Admission list or Waiting List for that academic year and any subsequent applications for the same academic year on behalf of that Student shall be treated as a late applicant.

All offers by the school are subject to NSCE Application and Approval. Offers cannot be deferred. A full reapplication would be required.

Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list. The waiting list will close at the end of the academic year to which the application relates.

Late applications will be considered on a first come first served basis. Waiting lists will not carry through to the *following academic year and a new application will be required.*

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.

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.

Review

This policy is subject to annual review and will be reviewed in September 2026 by the Board of Management.

It was ratified on: Monday 20th May 2024

Ratification of this ASD Special Class – Admission's Policy

This version of the policy was adopted by the Board of Management on the Monday 20th May 2024 and refers to enrolment to the school's ASD Class for the August/September 2024 intake academic year.

Signed: 
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: Thursday 20th June 2024

Signed: 
Principal/Secretary of Board of Management

Date: Thursday 20th June 2024

This ASD Special Class Admissions Policy must be read as part of the school's overall Admissions policy available on the school's website <https://www.scoilaine.com/>