



**Scoil Naomh Áine Presentation School**  
New Road, Clondalkin Village, Dublin D22X577  
Tel: 01 4591645 Fax: 01 4111871

Email: [admin@scoilaine.ie](mailto:admin@scoilaine.ie)

Web: [www.scoilaine.ie](http://www.scoilaine.ie)

Principal: Marie Beattie

Deputy Principal: Karen McKeivitt



## **ENROLMENT / ADMISSIONS POLICY**

### **As it Pertains to a Special Class for Pupils with Autism**

#### **Introduction**

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, Section 15 (2) (d) and the School Admissions Act 2018, the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Áine is setting out in this statement the policy of the school in regard to the enrolment and admission of children to a special class for pupils with Autism. The Board trusts that this statement of policy will be of assistance to parents/guardians in relation to enrolment and admission matters.

#### **General Information**

Scoil Naomh Áine is a Roman Catholic primary school which operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. As a Roman Catholic school, Scoil Naomh Áine aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. Both the Gospel and the legacy of Nano Nagle challenge the school to be inclusive, to be especially mindful of the disadvantaged and those with special educational needs.

The school is managed by a Board of Management. The school is funded by the Department of Education & Science (D.E.S.) and operates within the guidelines and regulations set down from time to time by that Department. The school established a Special Class for pupils with Autism in the 2020/21 school year. The class caters for boys and girls from Junior Infants to First Class. The class will cater only for girls from Second to Sixth Class. At present, six pupils are enrolled in the special class, in Senior Infants and First Class.

#### **Mission Statement of Scoil Naomh Áine**

Scoil Áine Clondalkin is a Catholic School which aims:

- To create a caring and supportive atmosphere for the whole school community.
- To foster respect for self and others and to be sensitive to individual needs.
- To secure a broad and balanced curriculum and wide range of experiences
- To work in partnership with parents to give each child the knowledge, skills, motivation and confidence to make the most of future opportunities.

#### **Ethos**

The school accepts and supports the constitutional right and duty of the parents to provide for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical and social education of their children. The focus of the school's philosophy is the education of the whole child to reach his/her potential. We show special concern for the disadvantaged, respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each person. Working together as a school community, the Board of Management, Principal, staff, parents and pupils strive to provide an environment which allows all students to develop intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually to their maximum potential and fulfil their role in society.

#### **School Details**

- Scoil Áine is a vertical school, comprising all classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. It is a mixed school until pupils reach Second Class. Boys apply to St. Josephs BNS or alternative schools whilst in 1<sup>st</sup> Class.
- Scoil Áine depends on the grants and teacher resources provided by the D.E.S. It operates within the regulations laid down by D.E.S. The school policy must have regard to the resources and funding available.

- Within the context and parameters of the D.E.S. regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:
  - Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special needs
  - Equality of access and participation in the school
  - Parental choice in relation to enrolment
  - Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and the ways of life in society.

### **Procedures for the enrolment of children in a special class for children with Autism**

- The registration process begins with a referral to the Autism Class from the SENO (Special Education Needs Officer), and/or contact from the parents.
- 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, within the last two years. A child must have a primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM-IV or ICD 10 by a psychologist or psychiatrist and 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.
- In the school year 2020/21 a Junior Autism Class was established (Junior refers to children between the ages of 4 and 8 years of age on or before the 31st May 2020). This demand will be reviewed in subsequent years.
- The parents / guardians must fill in and return a School Enrolment Form as for all pupils. Enrolment Application Forms for 2023/24 school year will be accepted from 3rd October 2023.
- The closing date for the submission of enrolment applications is 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- All applications received on or before this date will be acknowledged within 3 weeks of the closing day for the submission of applications.
- The Department of Education & Skills states that the ratio for each class is a maximum of six pupils to one teacher and two special needs assistants. There must be more than three pupils to access the second special needs assistant.
- This policy states that the parents/guardians (and the prospective candidates for the class if required) must meet the Principal, the class teacher and any other relevant parties before the child starts school. A meeting of new parents will be held prior to commencement in the school, as with all pupils.
- The class is co-educational.
  - It caters for boys from Junior Infants to First class only i.e. the child will be dually enrolled in an age appropriate mainstream class. Their education in Scoil Áine National School will finish upon the completion of First Class as is the case for all boys enrolled in the school.
  - It caters for girls from Junior Infants to First Class initially, with the potential in the future to extend this to Sixth Class, subject to annual review i.e. the child will be dually enrolled in an age appropriate mainstream class. Their education in Scoil Áine National School will finish upon the completion of Sixth Class as is the case for all girls enrolled in the school.
- The Principal implements the enrolment policy on behalf of the Board of Management.

- *Scoil Naomh Áine will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council. Scoil Naomh Áine will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under section 37A and 67(4)(b).*
- **Please note that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient classroom space and/or resources are not available.**

## 1. Decision-making

Decisions in relation to admission are made by the Board of Management in accordance with the school's enrolment policy. The Board of Management is bound by the D.E.S. rule which states that children may only be enrolled from the age of 4. We, in Scoil Áine have decided to accept children into Junior Infants who will have reached the age of 4 years on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> May of the calendar year of entry.

The following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment in the event of the number of applications exceeding the number of places available:

- 1) Children in mainstream in Scoil Áine for whom a special class is recommended in a psychology report
- 2) Sisters and brothers of pupils in the school
- 3) Children living within the Clondalkin Parish boundary
- 4) Children living outside the Clondalkin Parish boundary

*See map attached.*

Should there be more applicants than school places in any of the above categories, spaces shall be granted by consultation with the Board of Management where priority will be given to pupils who live closest to the school.

Should the number of applicants exceed the number of places, a waiting list shall be drawn up following the above criteria. Any applicants who apply after the closing date will be added to this waiting list. These additions to the waiting list will be made in accordance with the above criteria.

This waiting list will remain in operation until the day before a new enrolment period. All applicants on the waiting list will need to reapply during a new enrolment period.

**N.B. If the school does not receive the required documentation with the Enrolment Application form, the application will not be processed or considered by the school. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/Guardian(s) to ensure that all supporting documentation is correct and is received by the school**

## General Discharge policy

It is the school's policy that all boys complete their education in Scoil Áine at the end of First Class. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians, in consultation with the SENO, to source a suitable subsequent placement for the pupil.

It is the school's policy that all girls complete their education in Scoil Áine at the end of Sixth Class. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians, in consultation with the SENO, to source a suitable subsequent placement for the pupil.

Discharge may also be recommended if the school, after consultation with the parents/guardians, feel that the placement is not appropriate. Discharge from the class may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into mainstream school.

All placements are subject to annual review or earlier at the request of parents and/or the school. The review will include input from all agencies involved, the parents/guardians and the school. Following the review, a

recommendation may be made that the child be enrolled in a school that can meet his/her needs or be fully enrolled in a mainstream class.

### **Code of Behaviour**

While some 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 School Support Plan. All pupils including special needs pupils are subject to the School Code of Behaviour and Health and Safety Statement. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the ASD class or another mainstream 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.

### **Refusal to Enrol and/or a Decision to Exclude**

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional circumstances where either:

- I. The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education OR
- II. In the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to other pupils, school staff and/or school property.

### **Right of Appeal**

The Board's decision will be given in writing and the reason for the refusal will be clearly stated. The parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and will be supplied with the Appeal Application Form. The appeal will be made to the General Secretary, Appeals Administration Unit, D.E.S., Marlborough St, Dublin 1, on the relevant form. The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians. (C. 22/02). The school must be informed in writing of the decision to appeal.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **January 26<sup>th</sup> 2023**

It was approved by Monsignor Dan O'Connor, Education Secretariat, Dublin Diocese on **January 31<sup>st</sup> 2023**

*Ronan Leydon*

Mr Ronan Leydon, Chairperson

*We aim to review this policy annually.*

