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# School Enrolment Policy

Welcome to St. Paul's National School. St. Paul's is a Catholic School, which was founded in 2005. It operates under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills and under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Meath. The school follows the curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills.

The parents and guardians of all pupils at St. Paul's, by accepting places in the school, are deemed to accept the code of behaviour and ethos of the school on behalf of their children as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. These policies may be amended and revised from time to time and are available on the website or, on request, from the office.

Within the context and parameters of the Department's regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out by the Education Act 1998, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with disability or with other additional needs
- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to the school, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life

On enrolment we will be collecting your personal data and that of your child. This will be used to contact you in relation to your child and other school matters.

**Current procedures for enrolment**

The Board of Management hereby sets out its policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, and trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Mrs. Maeve Gallagher, and the Principal, Ms. Morag McGowan, St. Paul's National School (Telephone number (01) 8257246) will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from this policy.

Parents who wish to have their child enrolled in St. Paul's **must first register their child with the school**. Parents are requested to register in one school only. There will be communication between all the schools in the parish to establish the enrolment for each school. **In the January of the year in which the child is due to start, an application for enrolment will be sent out to the parents of each child who has been registered**. This must be completed and **returned**, with the child's original Birth Certificate and a recent utility bill, in order that the child **may** be considered for enrolment. **This is only an application for enrolment and in no way offers or guarantees a place in the school.**

The Board of Management shall, each year, set the enrolment date for new pupils, **the closing date for receipt of applications for enrolment, this year, is 3.00pm on Friday 25th of January 2019**. **Enrolment forms must be signed by both parents /guardians, if possible.** Contact will be made with Ratoath Junior National School and Rathbeggan National School to ensure that children are not on other enrolment lists. Places shall be allocated in February, from among these applicants, using the following criteria.

**As a prerequisite for enrolment, only children who have reached the age of four years on or before the 1st April, prior to the September in which they are starting school, will be considered for enrolment.**

**Criteria for the admission of Junior Infants**

In the event of applications for enrolment exceeding, or being expected to exceed, the number of places available the Board of Management will allocate places using the following criteria and in that order. If the number of applicants under category (1) outnumbers the places available, children will be prioritised and enrolled in order of age, beginning with the eldest. The same applies to the other categories should places then be available.

1. Brothers and sisters, including foster or step siblings, of children currently in Junior Infants to Fifth Class in St. Paul's National School
2. Brothers and sisters of past pupils of the school – this category will be removed after this year; for enrolment from 2020 on.
3. Children of Staff members.
4. All children who live within the Parish boundary
5. All children who are not resident within the Parish boundary.

The guidelines on class size, as set out by the Department of Education & Skills (DES), will be observed. Where any given class size has reached DES guideline numbers, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse admission. The Board of Management will revise its enrolment policy annually and the criteria for admission may be amended in response to prevailing circumstances.

Children who are currently enrolled in Junior Infants in another school will not be enrolled to start in Junior Infants in St. Paul's.

**Enrolment of pupils transferring from another school**

Pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and in relevant cases with the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. All reports and relevant documentation from previous school must be forwarded in advance of enrolment.

**Enrolment of pupils transferring from other countries**

As with pupils transferring from other schools, pupils may transfer to the school at any time, subject to school policy, available space, and in relevant cases with the approval of the Department of Education and Skills. In the case of children who are transferring from other countries however, experience has shown that in particular cases it may take 2 to 3 weeks of assessment by the school before suitable class level is determined. Parents are required to forward all relevant reports and documentation from the child's previous school.

**Enrolment of Children with Additional Needs**

The Board shall require a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report. Where a report is not available, the Board shall require that the parents furnish reports as soon as possible.

The purpose of the report(s) is to assist the school in establishing the educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or additional needs and to profile the support services provided. Following receipt of the report, the Board shall assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report.

Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it shall apply for provision of necessary resources. These resources may include, for example, access to, or the provision of, any or all of the following: additional support teaching, Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport, and / or other services.

The school shall meet with the parents of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's capability in meeting those needs.

**Exceptional Circumstances**

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any pupil in exceptional circumstances, for example where, in the opinion of the Board of Management, the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to school staff, school property, other pupils or their education.

**Appealing a decision to refuse to enrol a pupil**

If a decision is communicated, by the school Principal, to a parent indicating that the school is unable to accept a pupil, that parent can request a copy of the enrolment policy and enquire as to what section/sections of the policy justify the refusal.

The school, in informing a parent of its decision, should advise parents of the right to appeal to the Secretary General, Department of Education & Skills. This appeal must be made within 42 calendar days of the decision not to enrol. The appeal forms may be had from Post Primary Administration, Tullamore or on www.education.ie. The appeal will be processed by the Appeals' Administration Unit and the parents will be informed of its decision in due course.

**Pupils transferring to another school**

Once a pupil has been offered a place in St. Paul's National School, transfer to another school may only be affected in accordance with Tusla procedures. St. Paul's N.S. must be informed, in writing, of the new school details, including the school address and contact numbers. Names of children transferring to the local secondary school will be shared with that school to facilitate their transfer.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 4th of December 2018**

# Enrolment Policy for St. Paul's National School ASD Classes

**Vision Statement:**

In setting up the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Classes in St. Paul's National School 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) of St. Paul's has developed this policy for the Autism Classes in conjunction with the overall policy for the school. The policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 and the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act, 2000 (EPSEN 2000)

The aim of the Class is to promote growth and learning in an atmosphere of inclusion and mutual respect by focusing on pupils' strengths, and to identify and provide for their special educational needs to allow them to reach their potential in life.

To achieve this we have many objectives, some of which are to:

- Enable each child to benefit from an inclusive education
- Work towards national curriculum targets as far as possible but in the best interests of the child
- Enhance their communication, social and personal skills and to promote independence.
- Enhance the emotional development of each child.

**Class Size**

St. Paul's ASD classes will be made up of a Junior Class and a Senior Class and places will be allocated to a maximum of 6 children per class, on condition that the necessary resources are provided, and continue to be provided, by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the Health and Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

The ASD classes at St. Paul's cater for children of primary school going age i.e. 4-13 years. No child can be older than 13 years during his or her last year in the school. Where the classes are oversubscribed, places will be allocated on the basis of the enrolment policy for the mainstream school. A range of teaching methodologies will be used in the ASD classes. The methodologies employed will aim to optimally address the needs of all of the children in the ASD classes. This will accord with the eclectic approach recommended by the Department of Education and Skills.

The individual needs of each child are constantly reviewed to ensure that the ASD class continues to be the most appropriate setting to meet the needs of the child. A review of pupils' progress and their Individual Education Profiles will be carried out in consultation with the parents (and other professionals where necessary).

**Inclusion into Mainstream classes:**

The concept of inclusion promotes the active participation of the learner as the primary aim rather than simple placement or accommodation. The goal therefore is inclusion, not integration. Essentially, the difference is between 'being there' and 'taking part' with integration prioritising the placement of pupils in particular settings and inclusion promoting actual participation and accommodation.

<u>We shall therefore use the language of 'inclusion' in St. Paul's when we refer to the participation of children in mainstream class activities and settings</u>.

As previously stated, the aim of the special class is to promote growth and learning in an atmosphere of inclusion and mutual respect by focusing on pupils' strengths; and to identify and provide for their special educational needs to allow them to reach their potential in life.

Where possible the children will be included in an age/ability appropriate mainstream class for part or all of the day. This can be for social or academic inclusion. Inclusion is only considered when the inclusion of the child, with or without an SNA, will not impact negatively on the education of the other children or on the health and safety of the pupils or staff of the school.

Where the child has been included, the success of the inclusion will be monitored closely by the special class teacher, the mainstream class teacher and the principal. The inclusion will be discussed at each IEP meeting and at other intervals considered necessary by the parents or school staff. Where inclusion is proving successful the involvement of the children, and the duration of their stay, in the mainstream class will be extended.

While all children will benefit from an inclusive environment, some children may be included either fully or partially in the mainstream class. Where it is agreed that the child's best interests are served by spending the entire school day in the mainstream class; they will subsequently be enrolled in a mainstream class. To this end the involvement of the child and the duration of their stay in the mainstream class will continue to be extended until they

deemed ready for full time inclusion and capable of reaching their full potential, socially and academically, within the mainstream class. Prior to this change being made, the decision will be discussed with parents and the principal will consult NEPS for advice and a revised recommendation. Having received the revised recommendation, an application will be made to the SENO for support for the child within the mainstream class.

**Enrolment**

The number of admissions depends on the number of places available, which may vary from year to year.

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In the event that the number of children seeking enrolment into the ASD classes exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list for that year in accordance with the school enrolment policy;

1. Brothers and sisters, including foster or step siblings, of children currently in Junior Infants to Fifth Class in St. Paul's National School, or brothers and sisters of past pupils of the school.
2. Children of Staff members.
3. All children who live within the Parish boundary
4. All children who are not resident within the Parish boundary.

Offers of places to the ASD classes will be made as soon as possible but may be after the mainstream places have been offered.

**July provision will not be offered or met by the school.**

A child may be phased in gradually to the ASD class.

**ASD Class Enrolment**

Applications will be considered by the school's ASD Class Enrolment Advisory Board. This board will consist of the school Principal, a member of the Board of Management, a teacher from the ASD class and a National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) psychologist, if possible. The ASD Class Enrolment Advisory Board will advise the Board of Management on the placement of a child. The final decision as to the placement of a child in the ASD class lies with the Board of Management.

**Assessment Criteria for Admission to our ASD classes**

This assessment will involve meeting the parents/guardians and child at the school.

A child will be offered a place in accordance with our enrolment policy when <u>all</u> of the following criteria have been met:

1. A fully completed application form for enrolment and all available reports have been submitted to the school by the parents/guardian.

2. The child must have a multi-disciplinary report with a diagnosis of a qualifying Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM IV or V) and with a recommendation to attend an ASD class attached to a mainstream school. This diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological assessment procedure.

3. A recent recommendation (within two years of the proposed admission date) must be provided by the above professional indicating that a placement in an ASD class in a mainstream school is warranted. A needs analysis/recommendation in respect of each child will also be required in order to provide the best education possible for the children.

4. The school has in place the resources as per DES guidelines to meet the special needs of the child.

**Support by Outside Agencies**

Parents please note that a guarantee of support by outside agencies such as the HSE or Enable Ireland cannot be provided by the school. Children who require speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc will be dependent on local services, public or private. 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 accessed and being availed of and that all reports and recommendations are provided to the class teacher for inclusion in the child's IEP, where possible.

**Offer of Placement**

A child will be offered a place in our ASD class if all of the assessment criteria described above are met and there is a place available. If, prior to enrolment, it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child for placement in our ASD class, the child will not be enrolled in the school for the following year and the following actions will take place:

1. The school will notify, in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision.

2. The school will notify, in writing, the SENO (the National Council for Special Education) of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

If, in the course of the year, it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child the child will not be re-enrolled in the school for the following year and the following actions will take place

1. The school will notify, in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision.

2. The school will notify, in writing, the SENO (the National Council for Special Education) of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

**The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student where either:-**

1. The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Health the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an education in line with the assessments, recommendations and needs analysis received, and the Individual Educational Profile drawn up by the school.

2. In the opinion of the Board of Management the student poses a risk to the health and safety of the other students, to school Staff or to school property.

Any applicant who applies for and is not offered a place in St. Paul's has the right to appeal the decision, under Section 29, with the Department of Education and Skills.

**Policy ratified at a Board of Management meeting on the 4th of December 2018**