



St. Joseph's Special School

Castletymon Road, Balrothery, Tallaght. Dublin 24 01 451 5961 admin@sjss.ie www.sjss.ie

Registered Charity Number: 20140210 Roll Number: 19520H

Enrolment Policy

Introduction.

St. Joseph's School is a Catholic co-educational special school under the Patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. As a Catholic school, the school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils' cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aptitude and ability. The school actively seeks to promote an ethos which is welcoming, caring, compassionate, safe, understanding and supportive and which acknowledges the inherent dignity and value of each human being.

Rationale.

St. Joseph's School operates under the rules for National Schools, The Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000) and the EPSEN Act (2004) (Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs) and relevant legislation pertaining to child protection and National Schools. The Chairperson of Board of Management and School Principal will be happy to assist with matters arising from the policy.

Aims.

This enrolment policy enables the following criteria be clearly understood and procedures followed.

- to provide clarity of purpose for parents/guardians, and referring parties.
- to adhere to school designation as determined by the Department of Education and Skills.
- to provide clarity of purpose for staff.
- to be consistent in upholding the ethos of the school.

Education Provision.

St. Joseph's School is designated by the Department of Education and Skills as a school which caters for pupils aged 4-18 years of age who function in the mild general learning disability range of intellectual disability. In addition to their primary intellectual disability, St. Joseph's Special School also caters for pupils presenting with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Children with additional needs which include Speech and Language, Physical and Sensory Disabilities with a mild general learning disability will be eligible for consideration.

The school provides access to Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied programmes through the Primary and Post Primary Curriculum with differentiation as appropriate.

The ASD Unit provides students with a diagnosis on the Autistic Spectrum range with a child centred Autism specific education which draws on a range of evidence based methodologies to include:-

- ABA
- TEACCH
- PECS
- LAMH

Students who attend the ASD Unit have access to a broad balanced developmental range of curricular experiences as set out within the Primary Curriculum.

St. Joseph's School is not designated, resourced or staffed to meet other specific needs of pupils which may include the following:

- Children with moderate to severe emotional behavioural difficulties.
- Children with high medical needs.
- Children in the moderate to severe intellectual disability range.

Mission Statement

St. Joseph's School is a Co-Educational Special School for pupils aged 4-18 years with a Mild General Learning Disability, and who may present on the Autism Spectrum. (ASD).

St. Joseph's School is a happy child centred friendly and caring school, where pupils are encouraged to work to the best of their ability. The staff is committed to the development and education of each pupil to reach their full potential.

The school provides a supportive environment, for pupils, parents and staff.

School Patron

St Joseph's School is actively supported on an ongoing basis by its Patron, the Archbishop of Dublin. The school provides an educational service to children residing in Tallaght and surrounding areas. Referrals from outside the area are

considered on a case by case basis and often depend on suitability of placement and transport arrangements.

Admission and Selection.

The selection of pupils for enrolment and discharge is a matter for decision by the Board of Management following consultation with the school Principal and the schools Admission Committee. Resources of the school are considered at the time of each application.

Referral Procedure

1. Referrals are accepted from parents/guardians, school principals, psychologists, Department of Education and Skills, Health Services Executive (HSE) and other assessment agencies.

2. Parents and professionals wishing to enrol a child in the school should send a letter of referral and a recent psychological report (within 2 years) to the principal, St. Joseph's Special School, Balrothery, Tallaght, Dublin 24, and a relevant application to the NCS

3. The following reports/documents may also be required:

- Previous school/pre-school report
- Speech and language therapy assessment
- Physiotherapy report
- Occupational therapy report
- Social Work report
- Psychiatric assessment
- Any other relevant report.
- Birth Certificate
- PPS Number

4. Pupils are accepted for a September enrolment. In order to allow for sufficient time for appropriate assessments to be completed and reviewed, referrals are accepted any time up to 1st March in any school year. Referrals received after 1st March may not be processed in time for admission to the school the following September.

The decision making process.

1. The School Board of Management delegates the Admission and Enrolment process to the school Admissions Team. The team is comprised of School Principal, and two teachers. The admissions team will review the referral reports to assess needs and to determine whether the school has a suitable placement for the prospective pupil. The School Principal, on behalf of the Admissions

Team advises the Board of Management on matters relating to the enrolment of pupils in the school.

2. Referrals are formally acknowledged by the Principal.

3. The School Principal will meet with the prospective pupils and parents/guardians.

4. The School Principal may consult with and seek the advice of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) and the School Inspector.

5. On receipt of all the relevant reports and on completion of necessary meetings/visits, a decision will be made by the Admissions Team as to the suitability of St. Joseph's School for the prospective pupil., pending approval of the SENO.

6. In considering prospective pupils for enrolment in the School, the Admissions Team will take the following factors into account:

- Appropriateness of the placement.
- Educational interests of all pupils in the school.
- Resource implications.
- Effective operation and management of the school.
- Department of Education and Skills guidelines for class size, staffing.
- Provision and catchment area.

7. The school Principal will notify the parents of the decision of their application. Parents will be requested to complete the school enrolment form when a school placement is offered. An appropriate start date will be agreed.

8. On occasions it may be necessary to adapt the school day for individual pupils to meet their specific needs.

9. Where placement has not been offered, parents will be informed in writing of the reason enrolment has been refused. If the family/guardian is unhappy with this decision, they may make an appeal, in the first instance to the Chairperson of the Board of Management, St. Joseph's School. This appeal must be made within two weeks of receiving the decision in writing.

10. If the parents/guardians are dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal to the Chairperson of the Board of Management, they are advised of their right to appeal the decision under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

11. At present, appeals may be made to the Department for Education and Skills, using a Section 29 Appeals Application form. The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision was notified to the parents. This form is available on the DES website www.education.ie. The school can provide a copy of the form to parents on request.

12. The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Skills' rules for National Schools which provide that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards, though compulsory attendance does

not apply until the age of 6 years. Except in exceptional circumstances, pupils should not exceed age of 18 years before 1st September of the final school year.

Admission Date

Normally admission to the school will occur within the first week of the new academic school year. Admission at any other time throughout the school year will be at the discretion of the Board of Management.

School Policies

Parents/Guardians and pupils of St Joseph's School are required to co-operate with and support the school Code of Behaviour and all other policies developed and approved by the School Board of Management. Parents/Guardians are requested to sign the school enrolment form and other relevant forms acknowledging their agreement with school policies. A full list of policies is available for viewing in the school. These policies may be added to and revised /reviewed annually.

Placement Review

Occasionally concerns regarding the suitability of a child's placement in the school arise. Any such concerns are referred for a case review, comprising of the Principal, Teacher, and associated senior staff. In the event of an indication that the child may not be suitably placed, the Board may request that clinical assessments are carried out to determine the best options available to the pupil. Parents are fully informed of any such concerns.

Re-enrolment

A child removed from the rolls in accordance with the terms of Rule 64 of the 'Rules for National Schools', shall at any time after she/he was so removed and at the request of her/his parents or guardian, be re-enrolled in the school, notwithstanding any alteration to the enrolment policy in the school which may have been formulated during the period when the child was not on the roll, and subject only to there being a place available in the school" (Circular 4/97)

Suspension/Expulsion

In accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23.2; a child may be suspended or expelled. This action will only be taken where there is no alternative and where the safety of pupils and/or staff is at risk. The procedures of the National Educational Welfare Board will be followed at all times.

Transition/Discharge process.

At the beginning of a pupil's final year in school, the transition/discharge process is discussed with the parents of the pupils at their IEP meeting. In the second term of that year, a comprehensive report is prepared by the class

teacher and a full psychological assessment may be undertaken. The pupil and their family are informed of the options available to them in appropriate training or other services and arrangements are made to accommodate visits and engage in the transition process where it is appropriate.

Policy Revision

It is recognised that this enrolment policy may need to be revised/modified from time to time in the light of ongoing evaluation of new approaches and the implications of relevant future policy.

Child Protection.

The school has a Child Safeguarding Statement in accordance with DES guidelines

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Management on an annual basis and when the need arises. The Board of Management will ensure that adequate training and support is provided for all staff.

This policy is a collaborative document and is disseminated to the school community.

Storage Procedures: In St. Joseph's School.

Ratified by: Board of Management, St. Joseph's School in January 2017

Reviewed 8th March 2018