



## ASD Class Admissions Policy

Reviewed: 07/09/2021

Ratified by Board of Management: 07/09/2021

Signed: Cathy Burke Date: 07/09/2021

**Chairperson Board of Management**

Signed: Geraldine Delaney Date: 07/09/2021

**Principal**

## **Autism Spectrum Disorder Class (ASD) Admissions Policy**

### **Admission Policy to ASD Class**

This policy must be read in conjunction with and is part of the overall Admission Policy for Pobalscoil Iosolde. The aim of the ASD Class is to offer a positive & meaningful educational experience to each student that allows her/him to develop to their full learning potential, in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm. After a period of time observing, assessing and inter-acting with the student, an Individual Education Plan will be developed following consultation with Parents/Guardians and with other relevant professional staff (e.g. NEPS Psychologist, Co-ordinator/Teacher(s) of Special Educational Needs/ASD, Occupational Therapist, School Principal/Deputy Principal etc), as deemed appropriate.

The aim of the ASD Class is to offer a specific learning environment within the mainstream post-primary school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream educational activities that are available and that are deemed appropriate to the ongoing education of the student.

### **External Support Services**

Essential services are provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE). These services include Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy. The Board of Management of Pobalscoil Iosolde has no function in accessing these services, but merely acts as a relevant conduit for their provision, where available and possible. Furthermore, Pobalscoil Iosolde cannot guarantee any additional service or support that may be available to the student through the offices of the HSE. Pobalscoil Iosolde does not have the resources to follow up on these services and it is a matter for the Parents/Guardians alone to ensure that all such possible support services are being accessed and availed of.

### **Pre enrolment**

All applicants must have an assessed primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The assessment must be in line with the established DES criteria of DSM-V and ICD 10. All applications must be accompanied by an assessment, carried out by an Educational/Clinical Psychologist approved by the DES, recommending the applicant as suitable.

A prospective student for the ASD Class must have a professional recommendation from a NEPS Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist or from a multi-disciplinary team (Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker, and/or Physiotherapist), for placement in an autism specific class. All applications in relation to each child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team\*/Board of Management. The withholding of such reports may invalidate an enrolment application at any time.

Parents/Guardians should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in each ASD Class is 6 students. It should be noted that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD Class.

The Board of Management require that Parents/Guardians must accept that the enrolment process only proceeds where the educational and physical needs of the applicants as identified can be met within the ASD Class.

The Parents/Guardians of the applicant must accept and agree to the Pobalscoil Iosolde Code of Positive Behaviour and the terms of this policy

The ASD Class in Pobalscoil Iosolde will only cater for children that are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on the 1st of September of the school year in question.

*\*Comprised of the School Principal, Chair of the Board of Management, Nominated Member of the Board of Management & ASD Co-Ordinator.*

## **Enrolment**

All applications for enrolment in the ASD Class will be considered within the context of the school's Admission Policy. Where the number of applicants exceeds the places available, priority will be given in the following order:

- Current students enrolled in the school
- Siblings of current students in Pobalscoil Iosolde who apply
- applicants resident within the defined school Catchment Area (see General Students Admission Policy) and are attending;
  - (1) an ASD class in feeder schools (if applicable) OR
  - (2) attending the local feeder National Schools - St. Lorcan's BNS, Palmerstown St Brigid's GNS, Palmerstown & St. Patrick's NS, Chapelizod OR
  - (3) applicants not attending the above named feeder schools but for whom Pobalscoil Iosolde would be nearest to their home address.

Parents/Guardians should note that where the number of applicants at any stage of the criteria numbered above exceeds the number of spaces available within that criterion, then the date of birth of the applicant will be considered with priority being given to the oldest applicant and continuing thus forth until all places are filled. If two or more applicants share the same date of birth, then places will be allocated by lottery.

## **Application Process**

An Enrolment application Form, a copy of which is available from the school, should be fully completed and submitted by the parent on behalf of the applicant. The closing date for receipt of such completed applications by the school is published in the Annual Admission Notice for the relevant year.

This Enrolment Application Form should be accompanied by an original Birth Certificate of the applicant and accompanied by all the up to date and pertinent educational psychological assessments(s) and diagnostic report(s). The Enrolment Application form must also be accompanied by School Reports and relative documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended. Proof of address is necessary.

Only applications that meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered.

Students that are currently enrolled in an ASD Class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer during the course of the school academic year.

Students enrolled in a ASD Class in another post-primary school will not be considered for transfer at the end of a school academic year unless the family have moved residence into the catchment area of Pobalscoil Iosolde.

The advice, support and recommendation of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) for the area/region, based on the needs of the applicants, will be considered in the decision making process associated with enrolment of applicants in the ASD Class.

It is important that Parents/Guardians note that Pobalscoil Iosolde may, in certain clarified circumstances and following an assessment and investigation, be unable to meet the special educational or physical needs of the applicant on the grounds that

- (a) the applicant is deemed a risk, on health, safety, welfare or security grounds to themselves and/or other, or
- (ii) admission of the applicant will make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the education provision by Pobalscoil Iosolde as an educational establishment of its services to others.

The Admissions Teams in conjunction with the Board of Management will make the final decision on all applications to enrol.

### **On acceptance of a place**

- The Parents/Guardians of a child being offered a place in the ASD Class will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Education Team and the Principal/Deputy Principal of the school, to discuss the placement/enrolment of their child. Any information requested by the Parent/Guardians will be provided at this meeting.
- The Parents/Guardians may be requested to consent to a visit by a member of the Special Educational Needs professional staff in Pobalscoil Iosolde, to visit the existing school placement of the student concerned in order to observe the student in a classroom situation.
- The Parents/Guardians will be invited to accompany their child to visit Pobalscoil Iosolde ASD Class and meet staff.
- The Parents/Guardians may be consulted about the Education Plan for their child.
- The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be appraised of the Education Plan
- A child may be phased gradually into the ASD Class through a mutually agreed process between Parents/Guardians and the Management of the school.
- Where it is deemed appropriate, a student in the ASD Class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purpose by school management.

The placement of every student within the ASD Class will be subject to regular review, by school management, staff and where appropriate the professional services external to the school. Decisions will follow whether to

- continue within the ASD Class in Pobalscoil Iosolde
- integrate fully into the mainstream post-primary
- seek an alternative and more appropriate educational placement for the student if Pobalscoil Iosolde is unable to meet the educational needs of the student.

In such an instance the support and assistance of the staff of Pobalscoil Iosolde will be available to assist the family in securing a more suitable learning environment in another educational institution, for the student concerned.

### **Code of Positive Behaviour**

As already indicated above the Parents/Guardians of the applicant for enrolment must accept and agree to Pobalscoil Iosolde Code of Behaviour/Discipline and the terms of this policy.

Children with additional educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by staff at the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the student's Individual Educational Plan. All students, including those with additional educational needs, are subject to the school Code of Behaviour/Discipline and the terms of the Health and Safety Statement adopted by the Board of Management of the school. Where any student's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other students in the ASD Class or the students in a mainstream class, to an extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with, as judged by the Board of Management of the school, then the school reserves the right to advise Parents/Guardians that a more suitable educational setting should be found for their child.

The Board of Management of Pobalscoil Iosolde reserves the right of admission and to refuse to enrol a student, within the terms of this policy. Parents/Guardians of applicants who are refused admission to Pobalscoil Iosolde will be advised of their right to appeal the matter to the Secretary General, DES under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

**Ratified by Board of Management on** 07/09/2021