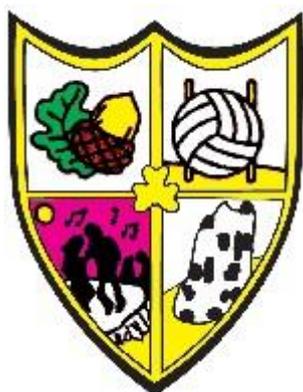


Clocha Rince NS



Policy on Enrolment to Tír na nÓg Unit for Autism

Background

This policy is a revision of the policy developed in 2011 in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998, the Education Welfare Act, 2000 and the Disabilities Act 2002. The policy was developed by teachers, Special Needs Assistants, parents, Board of Management and Behavioural Consultant, Shannon Eidman. The current review took place in line with a review of the mainstream school Enrolment Policy in spring, 2016. Please refer to the Enrolment Policy for mainstream for general information about the school.

General Information

The Board of Management of Clocha Rince NS has set out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2005 (which has yet to be fully implemented).

This policy has regard to the funding, resources, services and space available at any given time.

The Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Enrolment Procedures

In order for a child to be enrolled in Tír na nÓg, a place must be available and he/she must fully fulfil the following criteria:

- ❖ Full psychological assessment specifying Autism (*a diagnosis of autism whose level of functioning is mild to moderate on the spectrum*), by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist. This should be recent, within the last 24 months.
- ❖ School Application to Enrol Form fully completed. By choosing Tír na nÓg as the class into which you wish to enrol your child, you are indicating that you wish your child to be enrolled in the ASD Unit.
- ❖ Communication and performance levels on cognitive assessment should not fall below the upper moderate general intellectual disability range.
- ❖ The child should be able to use a regular toilet with or without assistance.
- ❖ All relevant reports and assessments must accompany the 'Application to Enrol Form', including Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language reports, if relevant. Where there is insufficient information provided about a child, the Board of Management may not be able to process the enrolment application until such time as sufficient information, as deemed appropriate by the Board of Management, is made available.
- ❖ Parents/Guardians of prospective candidates must meet with the Principal and Class Teacher as part of the application process.
- ❖ The Board of Management reserves the right to take into account any other criteria it deems relevant.

If the number of children who meet the above criteria 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:

1. Brothers and sisters of existing pupils in Clocha Rince mainstream - priority to eldest applicant.
2. Children living in the Parish of Balyna and within the school's traditional catchment area - priority to nearest applicant.
3. Children living outside the Parish and school's catchment area - priority to those living nearest the school.

Application Procedure

- Parents/Guardians seeking to enrol their child(ren) in Clocha Rince NS ASD Unit (Tír na nÓg) are requested to return a completed 'Enrolment Application Form' (available from the school office or school website www.clocharince.ie). This form must be accompanied by an original Birth/Adoption Certificate and a Baptismal Certificate where relevant.
- 'Enrolment Application Forms' will have the following policies attached:
 - Welcome booklet
 - Code of Behaviour and Discipline & Anti-Bullying Policy

Where the 'Enrolment Application Form' is downloaded from the web-site, parents/guardians may view these policies on-line or request a hard copy from the school office.

- All applications are kept on file until a place becomes available. When a place becomes available, all applicants will be contacted to ascertain whether their application is still 'live'; i.e. the applicant requires the application to be considered. The 'live' applications will be considered in the context of the selection criteria listed above.
- **Parents/Guardians should be aware that the length of time since the application was made is not a criterion when processing applications.**
- Parents/Guardians will receive verbal confirmation on the availability of a place in the ASD Unit within 21 days of the application. In the event that there is not a place of enrolment available, the applicant will be informed that their application will be kept on file.
- Incomplete applications will be returned and only marked 'received' once all requested documentation is made available.
- Parents/Guardians applying for applying for a place of enrolment should ensure they familiarise themselves with all school policies. Policies are available on the school website. A hard copy of policies may be provided upon request.

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will be informed in writing that their application has been successful and that a place of enrolment is available for their child(ren). Upon receipt of this written notice parents/guardians must:

- Return their 'Acceptance of Enrolment' form to the school within 10 days
- Sign the 'Acceptance of Enrolment' form which gives an undertaking to support all school policies.
- Agree to furnish the school with a copy of their child's file from their previous school, where appropriate.
- Agree to furnish the school with all further educational/psychological/multi-disciplinary reports on the pupil.
- Inform the school of any family law issues which are relevant to the pupil.
- Inform the school of any issues relevant to the full development of their child.
- Inform the school of any contagious infections the pupil may suffer whilst enrolled in Clocha Rince NS.

On acceptance of a placement the parent/guardian must recognise and acknowledge that the Board of Management may terminate a placement should they deem the placement unsuitable and/or consider the continued enrolment of the pupil to be a threat to the health and safety of the pupils in the ASD Unit and/or to the mainstream pupil population and/or to the school staff.

Any such decision may be appealed to the Board of Management. Any subsequent decision may be further appealed to the Department of Education and Skills Appeals Board. The Principal will provide a parent/guardian with all information in this regard. (See 'Appeals' section of this document).

The successful enrolment of a child in Tír na nÓg does not ensure a place of enrolment in a mainstream class in Clocha Rince NS.

Individual Consideration and Yearly Review

All children with autism present with differing profiles. For this reason all applications to enrol are considered individually.

Each child's enrolment in the unit is reviewed on an individual basis annually at Clocha Rince National School. A review of suitability of placement may occur at any stage of the child's enrolment in the ASD Unit. This review may be at the request of the parents/guardians and/or the principal of the school. The review will include input from all relevant parties and will be chaired by the Principal of Clocha Rince National School. Following a review, a recommendation and/or decision will be made.

Please note that fulfilling enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if the necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment to ensure an ability by the school to deliver an appropriate education to the pupil are not available.

The Board of Management of Clocha Rince NS respects the right of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. This consideration must be paramount when assessing applications to Tír na nÓg and will be a factor when deciding on the result of the application.

Age

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Skill's **Rules for National Schools**, which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards. Pupil must have reached the age of 4 by September 1st of the year of enrolment.

Equality

Equality of access is a key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, language, accent, gender, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs, family or social circumstances.

Co-operation with School Policy

Children enrolled in our ASD Unit are, in so far as appropriate to their level of autism, required to co-operate with and support the school's 'Code of Behaviour and Discipline & Anti-Bullying Policy' as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. This same support is expected from parents/guardians. The Board of Management places responsibility on parents/guardians for ensuring that their child/children co-operate with all school policies.

In accordance with the DES Rules for National Schools and the school's Code of Behaviour and Discipline, a child may be suspended or expelled.

All school policies will be reviewed from time to time.

Refusal to Admit

The Board of Management may refuse the admission of a pupil if:

- The class is oversubscribed.
- The parents/guardians have refused to accept school policy.
- The pupil does not have a diagnosis of autism by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist with a recommendation of enrolment in a unit for children with autism.
- The pupil does not have a diagnosis of autism by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist with a recommendation of enrolment in a unit for children with

autism and whose level of functioning is no lower than the upper moderate general disability category.

- The child is not able to use a regular toilet with or without assistance.
- The Board of Management forms the opinion that the child is a danger to himself/herself and others.

The Board of Management reserves the right to take other factors into account which they deem to be relevant.

Appeals

The Board of Management of a school is also obliged under section 19(3) of the Education Welfare Act 2000 to make a decision in writing in respect of an application for enrolment within 21 days (whereby all specified and other information has been received by the school, and if not, 21 days following receipt of same) or, in the case of applicants into Junior Infants, 21 days after the deadline for enrolment date. The Board must inform the parents/guardians in writing of its decision.

Parents/Guardians who have been refused enrolment will be informed by letter of their entitlement to appeal the decision of the Board of Management. They will be informed that they may appeal the decision to the Board of Management, if they feel the decision is contrary to the school's Enrolment Policy. A parent/guardian wishing to appeal such a decision should write directly to the Board of Management outlining their ground for the appeal. The case will be discussed by the Board of Management within 8 days of receipt of the letter and the outcome will be promptly in writing to the parents/guardians. If the refusal to admit remains the parents/guardians will be directed to visit the Department of Education and Skills website and consult circular 22/02.

Where a section 28 appeal to the Board of Management fails, the parent/guardian of the student or, where the student has reached 18 years of age, the student himself/herself, following the conclusion of any appeals at school level, has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act 98 (as amended by section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007), to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. A committee is established to hear the appeal with hearings conducted with the minimum of formality. In most cases hearings must be dealt with within 30 days. Where appropriate, the Secretary General may give whatever directions to the Board of Management that are considered necessary to remedy the matter complained of.

Details on appealing decisions on enrolment under section 29 of the Education Act 98 (as amended by section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007), are available on the Departments website; www.education.ie.

In event that an appeal is investigated by the DES, a response will be prepared by the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Section 12 of circular 22/02 will be consulted which relates to the Processing of an Appeal.

Discharge from the ASD Unit

1. Pupils who have completed 8 years of Primary education are discharged on the June marking the end of their eighth year.
2. Pupils who reach the age of 13 on or after September 1st in any school year may complete that particular academic year in the school resulting in a June discharge i.e. all pupils leave on the June after their 13th birthday.
3. Pupils in (1) and (2) above may avail of the July Programme during the July of the school year they are discharged.
4. Pupils who are considered by the school to be fully integrated into mainstream will be discharged.
5. Discharge from the unit may also occur if the school authorities and relevant professionals, in consultation with the parents, feel that the child's placement is not appropriate.

Implementation, Ratification and Communication

This policy will be implemented immediately following ratification by the Board of Management.

The policy was ratified at a Board of Management meeting on _____.

It will be placed on the school web-site and parents will be informed via the school newsletter.

The policy will be reviewed in the 2018/19 school year or earlier if necessary.

Signed: _____ Chairperson

Date: _____