

Enrolment Policy for Autism Class

The Board of Management of Scoil na Maighdine Mhuire has set out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act of 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Disabilities Act 2002. The Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment.

General Information:

Name of school: Scoil na Maighdine Mhuire

Address: Ennis Road, Newmarket on Fergus, Co. Clare

Telephone: 061 368333

E-mail:office@scoilnamaighdinemhuire.ie

The special Autism Unit was established in 28-09-2015 funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Science. This school policy has regard to the funding, resources, services and space available.

Enrolment Procedure

Registration process begins with a referral from the Autism Team, a telephone call or a visit from the parents. Applications, incorporating date of application, date of birth, address and telephone number are entered in the Applications book. Applications will only be processed on the basis of a diagnostic or psychological report recommending that a placement in a special class in a mainstream school is the appropriate setting for a child.. Once this process has been completed the applicant secures a place on the list of applicants to enrol. A school application form, incorporating family details and medical history is completed for children who have secured a place.

Enrolment Criteria

The maximum class size is six pupils. If the number of children 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, once a definite diagnosis of Autism has been provided by a qualified professional.

- Pupils already enrolled at the school
- Brothers and sisters of existing pupils
- Children living within the parish
- Children from within an eight kilometre radius of the school
- Undergo team assessment by admission team, when one is established
- If spaces are still available, places will be allocated as per waiting list. Once an assessment has been made by the Admissions team

The first year will be used to;

- Assess the child's educational needs
- Develop an I.E.P. to address identified needs
- Assess whether the child's placement is appropriate

Taking into account the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding available, the school supports the principles of;

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special education need
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs
- Traditions, languages and ways of life in society

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, (i.e. severity of Autism diagnosis) traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria. Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if;

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
- Sufficient classroom space is not available
- The Admissions Team decide that the school is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child

Taking all of the above into account, and based on the advice of the enrolment team of the Autistic Unit, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Aim and Objectives

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in the Unit, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education
- To strive towards the integration of children in the Unit into mainstream education, having regard for levels of disability, available resources and suitability for such integration
- To enhance the communicative and social skills of the children in the Unit

Health Board Input

Essential services are to be provided by the Health Service Executive. These services include Speech and Language therapy, Occupational therapy and Sensory activities.

Discharge Policy

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the unit once they have reached the age of twelve. Pupils who reach the age of twelve after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year. Discharge may also be recommended after the first year if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardian, feel that placement is not appropriate. Discharge from the unit may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy. This policy will be amended and updated as required.

Designated Autism Unit

Admissions and Enrolment Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Scoil na Maighdine Mhuire at its meeting held on:

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management.