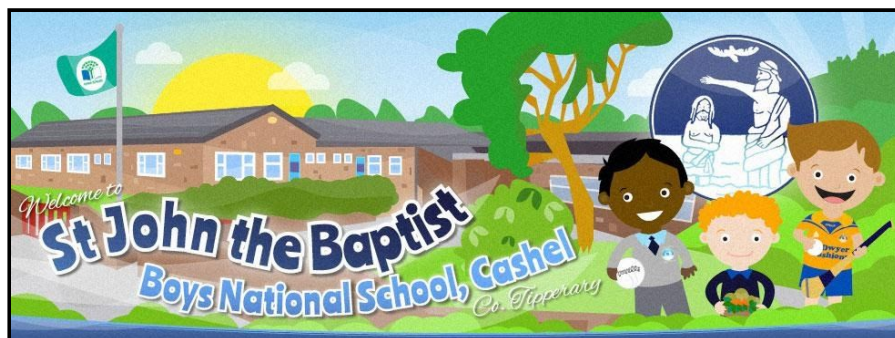


Draft Application for Admission in Special Class for Children with ASD Policy



About our Class and School

The Special Class for Children with ASD commenced in September 2018. It is a co-educational unit but is managed by the Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS. It will eventually expand to cater for two classes of six children in each class.

We want to give the highest quality of education to the pupils in our care. We want the individual to grow to his/her full potential. Our aim is that this education will prepare each child for life to the best of his/her ability. We recognise and value the role of parents as the primary educator of their children. Together we can provide the skills for a loving approach to learning. We take an eclectic approach to teaching our pupils. We don't subscribe exclusively to any one approach to the education of children with Autism.

Aim of St John the Baptist BNS Special Class for Children with ASD

The aim of the special class is to provide a caring learning environment which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's full educational potential. The achievement of this aim informs all the planning processes and activities which occur in our school. The Principal, teachers, support staff and parents are partners in the children's education, with co-operation and communication between home and school vital ingredients in the educational process.

We share the same purpose – the care and well-being of the children in our care. It is envisaged that the child will engage in a positive, meaningful educational experience which will allow the child to develop his/her full learning potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability, understanding and calm.

St John the Baptist BNS Special Class for Children with ASD is a referral school. For this reason, a great emphasis is placed on the areas of communication, daily living skills, socialisation and literacy. Demand for places generally far exceeds capacity. Each child's placement in the special class will, where resources allow, be reviewed after a two-year period following a psychological assessment and input from a multi-disciplinary team.

Vision Statement

Established in September 2018 under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills, St John the Baptist BNS Special Class for Children with ASD offers a specialised educational service to children who have been fully diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder and it has been recommended that the best educational environment for these children is a special class located within a mainstream primary school.

The special class strives to create a supportive and caring environment for each pupil. With a dedicated teacher and Special Needs Assistants, the school provides individual attention in small classes catering for the uniqueness of each pupil's personality. Families of students are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's learning. The aim is to enable the children to attain their educational potential and fulfil their role in society.

Our Vision: The school community “ag obair le chéile” to be the best that we can be.

Enrolment

The Board of Management reserves the right of admission within the terms of this policy. The Board of Management will not, however, refuse a child for reasons of ethnicity, disability, accent, language, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values, family or social circumstances.

All the children must reside in the **South East Health Service Executive Area** and fulfil the enrolment criteria.

Enrolment Procedure

The process of enrolment begins with:

1. A referral from the Autism team or a telephone call or visit in person from the parents.
2. A school application form (see below), showing family details and medical history, is completed. **This application must be accompanied by an up-to-date (considered 1 to 2 years) educational psychological assessment and diagnostic report which confirms the diagnosis of ASD in line with current Department of Education and Skills criteria.**
3. **He/she must also have a written professional recommendation for a place in a special class for children with autism in a mainstream setting.**
4. Reports from a multi-disciplinary team, if applicable, should also be provided. A Multi-disciplinary team may consist of Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Worker and/or Physiotherapist. Please note that all reports in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admission Team.
5. Fully completed applications are then recorded in the applications file. This information will also be forwarded to the Special Education Needs Organiser as part of the admissions process.
6. *Integration is taken into consideration – The child must be capable of integrating into mainstream, even at a minimal level, at an appropriate age level.
7. Appropriateness – The child must be capable of accessing the Primary School Curriculum.
8. Age appropriateness – The child must be within the age range of the proposed class he/she is hoping to attend.

***Special arrangements are in place for the integration of a girl into the adjoining girls' school (St John the Baptist Girls Primary School) and these can be discussed in more detail with the Principal.**

9. The Admissions team may request further information, a meeting with the parents, a meeting with the parents and child in the school setting and may request a second opinion from a relevant professional if deemed necessary/appropriate.

Places will then be allocated in accordance with the criteria below.

Criteria for Enrolment (Please note that school in the criteria below refers to St John the Baptist BNS and St John the Baptist Girls Primary School)

Under guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills, the maximum class size is six pupils. If the number of children on the list of applicants exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in order:

1. Priority will be given to pupils who fulfil the criteria and who are already enrolled in the school and wish to transfer to the special class.
2. Sisters/brothers of children already in the school.
3. Children whose primary residence is in the immediate area, starting with those closest to the school. If the class is oversubscribed within the application of this criterion, then the furthest from the school (by road) will be eliminated first.
4. Sister/brother of past pupils in the school.

Please note that the fulfilling of the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

1. Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
2. Sufficient classroom space is not available.

The Board of Management of St John the Baptist BNS respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. *This consideration is paramount when assessing entry to St John the Baptist BNS.*

Discharge Policy

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the class once they have completed 6th class and/or reached the age of twelve after September 30th in any year. Discharge may also be recommended if the Admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardians, feel that placement is not appropriate. Discharge from the special class may also occur if the pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

Timetabling

The Admissions team reserve the right, in consultation with all stakeholders, to amend the regular timetable for a pupil/pupils (on an interim basis) if it is deemed appropriate to do so in order to ensure that teaching and learning opportunities for all pupils are maximised.

Building

Current accommodation is a modern modular unit. A new build (2 ASD classes) will follow.

Deadline for Applications for Admission

Deadline for admission – **the last day in February each school year.**

Ratification and Communication

- Board of Management
- Policy to be communicated to all teachers and support staff
- Policy to be available to parents and prospective parents

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 31 January 2020.

It is subject for review when and where necessary.

Signed: **Monica Shannon**
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: **Will Ryan**
(Principal Teacher)