



Enrolment Policy for Scoil an Chlochair Autism Classes

This policy was updated and ratified on the 23rd of September 2025 and incorporates all of the requirements laid out in Circular 0039/2025.

Vision Statement:

In setting up the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Class in Scoil an Chlochair, the aim of the Board of Management (BOM) is to develop an educational setting which is focused on the needs of all of the children. The Board of Management is committed to providing the highest quality of education for all children. The Board of Management of Scoil an Chlochair has developed this policy for the Autism Class in conjunction with the overall policy for the school. The policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act of 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000, the Disabilities Act 2005 and the EPSEN Act 2004. The Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Class is to promote growth and learning in an atmosphere of inclusion and mutual respect by focusing on pupils' strengths, and to identify and provide for their special educational needs to allow them to reach their potential in life.

To achieve this we have many objectives, some of which are to:

- Enable each child to benefit from an integrated and inclusive education;
- Work towards the age appropriate national curriculum targets;
- Enhance the communicative and social skills of the children;
- Enhance the emotional development of each child;
- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in the Autism Class, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education;
- To strive towards the full or partial integration of children in the Autism class into mainstream education, having regard for levels of ability, available resources and suitability for such integration

Enrolment

The number of admissions depends on the number of places available. This may vary from year to year up to a maximum of 6 children per class. **We have 2 Autism classes in our school meaning a maximum of 12 class places altogether.**

The Department and the NCSE consider that to support better forward planning and to provide earlier clarity for families of children with special educational needs, the timeline by which parents are to notify the NCSE that a child requires a special class or special school place has changed to the **1st of October**.

Parents/guardians must notify the NCSE via the parents notify system which is outlined on the NCSE website at <https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school> before the **1st of October every year** for placement in a special class for the following school year.

Parents/guardians engaging with this process **will be provided with a letter** from the NCSE confirming the outcome of the NCSE's review of the supporting



evidence provided which they can then give to the school/s as part of their application for enrolment in a special class or special school.

Applications for enrolment will be taken during the school's enrolment week if places are available for the following school year (please see details in the school's Enrolment and Admission policy).

In the event of places becoming available during the school year the same enrolment criteria (below) will be applied.

In the event that the number of children seeking enrolment into the Autism class exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list for that year in accordance with the school's enrolment policy.

Enrolment Criteria:

The maximum class size is six pupils per class. The number of Autism class based places available will also depend on the number of mainstream pupils of that grade and the number of children with Special Educational Needs already integrated. If the number of eligible 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:

- 1 A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.
- 2 Pupils currently enrolled in our mainstream school and seeking to transfer to the Autism class, priority eldest.
- 3 Siblings of existing pupils, priority eldest.
- 4 Children living within the parish, priority eldest.
- 5 Children currently enrolled in the local Kilbeggan pre-schools, priority eldest.
- 6 Children of past pupils living locally, priority eldest.
- 7 Children currently enrolled in another local mainstream school, priority eldest.
- 8 Children living in closer proximity to Kilbeggan.
- 9 If spaces are still available, places will be allocated randomly, once an assessment has been made by the Enrolment Advisory Board.

Assessment Criteria for Admission to our Autism Classes

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report)

AND

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports

AND

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same



AND

- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.

Autism Class Enrolment Advisory Board

Applications will be considered by the school's Autism Class Enrolment Advisory Board. This board will consist of the school Principal, a member of the Board of Management and a teacher from the Autism Class. In addition, the Autism Class Enrolment Advisory Board will seek advice/input from a National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) psychologist. The Autism Class Enrolment Advisory Board will advise the Board of Management on the placement of a child. The final decision as to the placement of a child in the Autism Class lies with the Board of Management.

Offer of Placement

A child will be offered a place in our Autism Class if all of the assessment criteria described above are met and there is a place available.

Refusal of enrolment

If, prior to enrolment, it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child for placement in our Autism classes, the child will not be enrolled in the school for the following year and the following actions will take place:

1. The school will notify, in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision.
2. The school will notify, in writing, The National Educational Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the Department of Education and Skills of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

The school reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any student where either: -

1. The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills and the Department of Health the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an education in line with the assessments, recommendations and needs analysis received, and the Individual Educational Profile drawn up by the school.
2. In the opinion of the Board of Management the student poses a risk to the health and safety of the other students, to school Staff or to school property.

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.
- All relevant documentation is not supplied by applicant
- 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 Class, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.



Right of Appeal

Any applicant who applies for and is not offered a place in Scoil an Chlochair has the right to appeal the decision.

1. Parents/guardians who are unhappy with an enrolment decision may appeal to the Board of Management. This appeal must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board, stating the grounds for the appeal and lodged within ten days of receiving the final refusal.
2. If unhappy with the outcome of this appeal, parents/guardians may then appeal to the Department of Education and Skills on the official form provided by the school. This appeal must be lodged within 42 days of receipt of the final refusal from the school.

The First Year

The first year will be used to;

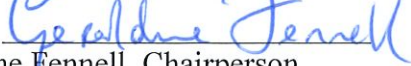
- Assess the child's educational needs.
- Develop a School Support Plan to address identified needs.
- Assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.

If, in the course of the year, it transpires that the school cannot meet the required needs of the child the child will not be re-enrolled in the school for the following year and the following actions will take place:

1. The school will notify, in writing, the parents/guardians of the rationale for the decision.
2. The school will notify, in writing The National Educational Welfare Board, the National Council for Special Education and the Department of Education and Skills of the decision and the requirements necessary for the school to meet the specified needs of the child.

Taking into account the Department of Education and Skills 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, traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria.

Signed: 
Geraldine Fennell, Chairperson
Board of Management, Scoil an Chlochair

Date: 23/09/2025