



# Scoil Bhríde Clara



## Enrolment Policy for Scoil Bhríde Clara Sunrise Class

### Introductory Statement

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde Clara 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, the Disabilities Act 2002, and the ESPEN act 2004. The Board trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment, and it will also provide clarity for the chairperson of the Board of Management, the Principal Teacher, staff and parents in relation to enrolment into the Sunrise class.

### Mission Statement

*“Scoil Bhríde is an all girls Catholic Primary school, which strives to provide a caring environment in a community of pupils, staff, parents/guardians and management. The uniqueness of each individual is nurtured and developed, enabling the student to live a full life and to realize her potential as an individual”.*

### Background

On October 3rd 2016, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde Clara was formally requested by the Special Educational Needs Officer to consider the establishment of an all girls special class for children with an ASD diagnosis. Following the submission of the Boards official application the establishment of this class was sanctioned on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2016

Scoil Bhríde Special class for girls with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, known for future reference as “Sunrise” will receive students from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 and will be funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Science. This class and the school policy has regard to the funding, resources, services and space available.

The class will cater for a maximum of six pupils and and at its maximum will have 1 WTE Teaching Post and 2 WTE Special Needs Assistants. Special Needs Assistants will be assigned in accordance with the enrolment of pupils.

The policy was formulated to ensure:

1. Teaching staff have well defined guidelines on best practice
2. Parents were aware of these practices
3. There was consistency throughout the school
4. Optimum learning experiences were provided for all the children of the school body.

### Aims and Objectives of Sunrise

- To ensure, in accordance with our Mission Statement that each pupil will grow to her full potential and to prepare her for life to the best of her ability.
- To provide a high quality, appropriate educational service to all children in the Sunrise, within the requirements of all recent legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education
- To strive towards the integration of children in Sunrise 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 class.

We recognise and value the role of parents as the primary educators of their children and together we will provide a learning environment suited to the needs of each individual child. We take an eclectic approach to teaching our pupils and don't subscribe exclusively to any one approach to the education of children on the Autistic Spectrum but are open to taking into consideration the approach that suits each individual.

## **Enrolment Procedure and Admissions Process to the Sunrise class will be as follows**

1. A referral from the HSE Early Intervention Team and HSE 5-18 School Age Team, NEPS, or a telephone call or visit in person from the parents.
2. A school Pre Admissions form is then completed. This application must be accompanied by an up to date Educational Psychological Assessment and diagnostic report from the relevant professional which confirms diagnosis of ASD in line with current DES criteria. The assessment and / or report must include a recommendation stating the applicant requires the support of a special class setting as a result of complex needs.”
3. Fully completed applications are then recorded and filed in the School Enrolment file.
4. All the above information will be forwarded to the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) as part of the admissions process.
5. All applications to the class may be assessed before admission by a multi- disciplinary team which may consist of the following members: Principal of Scoil Bhríde NS; Class Teacher; NEPS Representative; HSE Representative – member(s) of the Early Intervention Team/School Age Team; Special Education Needs Organiser.
6. Places are offered on a needs basis; it is not a first come first served basis.
7. The school will inform all applicants in writing if they have or have not been offered a place.
8. Confirmation of acceptance must be received within 14 days of receiving an offer of a place complete with required documentation.
9. Failure to do so will result in the forfeiting of the place and a new application must be made to reinstate the child on the list of applicants for placement in subsequent years.

The multi-disciplinary team will review all applications to the class. Verification of the class suitability to meet the applicants' needs will be discussed. Recommendations will be made to the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde around each application. Admission to the class remains the responsibility of the Board of Management.

The local schools with Special Classes for pupils with ASD diagnosis endeavour to offer their places at the same time.

## **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, in accordance with our general enrolment policy the following criteria will apply once a definite diagnosis of Autism has been provided by a qualified professional.

- Priority will be given to pupils already enrolled in Scoil Bhríde who have been recommended for a place in “Sunrise”.
- Sisters of existing pupils.
- Catholic children living within the parish.
- All other children who live within the Parish boundaries but are not Catholic are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the children from (1) and (2) and (3) have been allocated places
- Children outside the parish who have been recommended for a place.
- If spaces are still available, they will be allocated as per waiting list, once an assessment has been made by the Admissions team.
- Allocation of a place in Sunrise does not guarantee a place in the mainstream classes for any siblings.

## **Discharge Policy**

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from Sunrise once they have reached the age of twelve. Pupils who reach the age of twelve after September 30<sup>th</sup> 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 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 or a new school placement would better suit their needs.

The above enrolment criteria do not apply when there are no spaces available in the class.

Once the place has been offered and accepted in writing the following documentation must be completed.

- A standard school enrolment form which includes information for the Primary Online Database (P.O.D.)
- NCSE Special Class Enrolment form
- School Transport Application Forms. Transport Form is only required in the event that a parent requires access to school transport for their child to be completed and return by the end of April.

To support the enrolment procedure the following documents will be required to accompany the enrolment form:

Psychological Assessment and Assessments from other relevant Professionals e.g. Speech and Language/Occupation Therapy/Birth and baptismal certificate.

***Please note also if a child from Sunrise voluntarily leaves the school she will forfeit their place in the class and must repeat the admissions process. There is no guarantee of re-admission.***

**The first year in Sunrise 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 this Special class, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

### **Health Service Executive Input**

Essential services are provided by the Health Service Executive. These services include Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy. ***Scoil Bhríde Sunrise Class has no control over these services, merely acting as relevant setting for their provision. All queries about these services must be addressed to the Health Service Executive and not Scoil Bhríde.***

### **Integration and Inclusion of pupils from Sunrise into Mainstream Classes.**

The need for a policy on inclusion was developed from the collective desire of the teaching staff to have a defined and uniform whole school approach to the issue of integration. The policy was devised following consultation with all stakeholders including the Principal, mainstream and special class teachers, the National Educational Psychological Service, National Council for Special Education and the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills.

Section 2 of the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 states 'A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with:

- The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this act, or
- The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated'.

The amount of integration/reverse integration that each child receives in Scoil Bhríde is collectively decided upon by those professionals who deal with the child each day i.e. teachers (both special education teachers and mainstream), the Principal and support staff. The views of other interested parties such as Psychologists, Speech Therapists and Occupational Therapists will be taken into account. However, the staff's decision is final.

### **Aims**

1. To provide a teaching and learning experience that enables pupils from Sunrise Class become exposed to learning in a mainstream setting
2. To enable the children in the mainstream classes to observe and interact with children with special needs, encouraging understanding and tolerance
3. To develop the social skills and self-esteem of the children in Sunrise

**The policy is open to review at all times. Due to its class impact number the school insists that a maximum of 2 children per mainstream class be integrated at any given time.**

### **Reverse Integration**

A policy of reverse integration extends to all classes and will be based on the individual pupils.

### **Implementation**

The school promotes a policy of integration with age appropriate peers on a social level and ability appropriate on a curriculum level.

### **Staff Roles**

#### **Principal**

With reference to the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004, the role of the principal entails:

1. Direct responsibility for co-ordinating an effective whole school approach to integration
2. Responsibility for the provision of in-service training and adequate resourcing
3. Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and making relevant adjustment following consultation
4. Working with parents and out-of-school agencies.

#### **Special Class Teachers**

1. Will identify the appropriate curriculum area the child in the Sunrise should experience.
2. Ensure SNA support is available during any period of integration
3. Collaborate and consult with mainstream teachers in setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant short-term and long term targets
4. Assume responsibility for an on-going Individual Education Plan in consultation with the relevant support services, parents and the Principal. At present the class teacher is only obliged to produce one IEP per school year. It is up to the professional opinion of the teacher involved if the IEP needs to be updated more frequently.

#### **Class Teachers**

1. Will differentiate teaching programmes to meet the needs of the child from Sunrise
2. Provide a suitable seating arrangement in a mainstream setting
3. Collaborate with the Special Class Teacher and the SNA
4. Provide feedback on progress.

### **Special Needs Assistants/Care Assistants**

Sunrise will be allocated SNA's by the area Special Educational Needs Organiser.

Generally, the SNA'S are allocated to the school and employed by the Department of Education. They are not assigned to any one child and there is great scope in their job specification to move between classes when needs arise. Their main role is to assist the class teacher with the specific goals and targets set down in the child's IEP.

### **Staff Development**

Opportunities for in-service staff development, in relation to the implementation of a workable system of integration will be provided once a year by a suitably qualified practitioner. Information about the general operation of the school is enclosed in the school information booklet for pupils enrolling for the first time. This booklet is enclosed with the schools information pack.

### **Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy. This policy will be reviewed annually and will be amended and updated as required. The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. This consideration is paramount when assessing entry to the Autism Unit.

# Scoil Bhríde Sunrise Class

## Parental Letter of Acceptance

I/We the parents of \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ accept the place offered to us in Scoil Bhríde Sunrise Class.

I/We agree to the terms and conditions of enrolment to Sunrise Class

Signed: _____ Parent _____ Parent
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Signed: _____ Nora Kavanagh-Principal
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Signed: _____ Sandra Grennan-Deputy Principal
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Signed: _____ Class Teacher
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Signed: _____ Mary Ledwith-Chairperson Board of Management
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