



Ardnagrath National School
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Enrolment Policy for Croí agus Caoi Class (March 2019)

Introductory Statement

The Board of Management of Ardnagrath National School 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 Special Class.

Mission Statement

Ardnagrath National School celebrates the uniqueness of each individual. We aspire to promote the holistic development of each child on an intellectual, cultural, physical, moral and spiritual basis. We teach Gospel values and a Christian philosophy of Life, whereby the child can grow in knowledge and understanding and in the acquisition of life skills, attitudes and values.

Ardnagrath National School Special Class for pupils with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnosis is known as “Croí agus Caoi”. It is funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Skills. This class and the school policy is governed by the funding, resources, services and space available.

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

The policy was formulated to ensure that:

1. Teaching staff / S.N.A’s have well defined guidelines on best practice.
2. Parents are aware of these practices.
3. There is consistency throughout the school.
4. Optimum learning experiences are provided for all the children of the school body.

Aims and Objectives of our Special Class

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

Recognising and valuing the role of parents as the primary educators of their children, 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.

No child will be refused admission to Ardnagrath National School on the basis of ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political or religious beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided the necessary supports are in place in the school.

Enrolment Procedure and Admissions Process to the “Croí agus Caoi” 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 Ardnagrath National School; 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 Ardnagrath National School around each application.

Admission to the class remains the responsibility of the Board of Management. The Board of Management of Ardnagrath National School respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. This consideration is paramount when assessing entry to Croí agus Caoi.

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

Enrolment Criteria

Under guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills the maximum class size is six pupils. Children will only be considered for enrolment if they have a definite diagnosis of Autism and have a written professional recommendation for a place in an Autism centre in a mainstream setting. If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, then 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.

- Brothers and sisters (including step siblings, resident at same address) of children already enrolled.
- Children of current school staff.
- Children who live within a 3 kilometre radius of the school.
- All children who apply to the school.
- In the event of being unable to enrol a child in any year, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list in accordance with the criteria as above.
- 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 "Croí agus Caoi" does not guarantee a place in the mainstream classes for any siblings.

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. (National Council for Special Education)
- School Transport Application Forms. The Transport Form is only required in the event that a parent requires access to school transport for their child. The form must be completed and returned 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 / Occupational therapy specialists. (*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.*)**
- **Birth Certificate**
- **Baptismal Certificate (if applicable).**

Please note that the fulfilling of the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available.

If a child from "Croí agus Caoi" voluntarily leaves the school they will forfeit their place in the class and must repeat the admissions process. There is no guarantee of re-admission.

Monitoring and Review of the pupil

The goal for each pupil in the special class is to integrate partially or fully in to the mainstream classes. The school reserves the right to review the child’s progress on an individual basis from time to time during or after each year to determine whether the special class is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child.

Discharge Policy

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from “Croí agus Caoi” once they have reached the age of 13. Pupils who reach the age of 13 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 if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardian, feel that placement is not appropriate. Discharge from the Croí agus Caoi may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school or a new school placement would better suit their needs.

Policy Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy which will be reviewed and amended as appropriate.

Monitoring Procedures

The implementations of this policy will be monitored by the Board of Management. The Principal will report to the Board of Management regarding the process of enrolment. This policy will be amended and updated as required.

Implementation March 2019

Ratification:

Signed(Principal)

Approved by the Board of Management on/...../ 20

Signature