



ADMISSION POLICY

Procedures for admission of pupils to Scoil Úna Naofa's ASD Class.

Scoil Úna Naofa will operate one ASD class catering for a maximum of six students.

Staffing

Our ASD unit which will be called Sonas, will have a maximum of six places and will be staffed by a registered teacher and by 2 x special needs assistants (SNAs.) The teacher will receive on-going specialist training through the Special Education Support Service (SESS,) as necessary.

Application Procedure:

The Pre-enrolment form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it. Admission will only be considered if the following criteria are fulfilled:

- The child must be 4 years of age before the first day of the proposed year of school entry.
- The Pre-enrolment form is completed in full before being returned to the school for processing.
- The Pre-enrolment must include an Assessment and classification of autism or autistic spectrum disorder by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist using DSM-IV or ICD-10 criteria OR multi-disciplinary assessment of same by a professional team (including a clinical psychologist, the assessment should be dated within the previous 2 years).
- An explicit recommendation of placement in a Special Class for children with Autism must be provided by a recognised professional (as stated in point 3), with the recommendation not older than 2 years.
- The school must have, together with the appropriate clinical services, the correct and necessary resources in place to attend to the needs of the particular child.
- Consultation with the ASD Admission Team (The admission team is made up of the Principal, a Special Class teacher and one other member of the Learning Support Team) to ensure that the application fulfils the enrolment criteria outlined in this policy.
- Parents/Guardians must sign on the Pre-enrolment form that they have received and read the school's Code of Behaviour and that they and their child will adhere to the code.
- The Health and Safety of the pupils and staff of Scoil Úna Naofa should not be put at risk by the behaviour of a child attending the special class.

Having fulfilled the above criteria, children may be offered a placement in Scoil Úna Naofa's ASD class based on the following criteria, in order or priority:

Criteria for Admission

Places in the ASD Unit will be allocated as follows:

1. Children already enrolled in the school.
2. Children enrolled in our Early Start classes.
3. Children with an ASD diagnosis who are siblings/step-siblings of students currently enrolled in Scoil Úna Naofa and children with an ASD diagnosis residing in St Agnes' Parish priority to those living closest to the school and to the oldest.
4. Children of current Staff with an ASD diagnosis.
5. Children living outside the Parish with an ASD diagnosis (Priority to the oldest).
6. In considering applications from outside the St. Agnes Parish area, places will not be awarded to pupils where the enrolment of the child might interfere with a child from the area getting a placement for the following school year. Therefore, account must always be taken of the waiting list from within the St. Agnes Parish area for the next school year.

In the event that there are two or more students with an ASD diagnosis tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

- the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

If the school does not receive all required documentation with the Pre-enrolment form, the application will not be processed or considered by the school. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that all supporting documentation is correct and is received by the school.

Consultation with the ASD Admission Team to ensure that the application fulfils the enrolment criteria outlined in this policy.

All decisions on applications with an ASD diagnosis for admission to Scoil Úna Naofa will be based on the following:

- Our school's ASD admission policy.
- The school's annual admission notice.
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official Pre-enrolment form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications.
- Suitability for enrolment considering the needs/age/abilities of those currently enrolled and those seeking enrolment.
- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are available.
- The Admission Team agree that the school is able to adequately meet the needs of the child.

The maximum class size in the special class is six pupils.

Where parents chose to proceed with the special class option, the principal shall make a report to the school's Board of Management, with whom the final decision on enrolment rests. (The principal may also recommend that the decision be deferred, pending the receipt of further information on the child.) A recommendation will be made in relation to each application to the Board of Management of the school. The B.O.M. has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the Admissions Team.

External Support Services

Essential services are provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE). These services include Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy. The Board of Management at Scoil Úna Naofa has no function in accessing these services, but merely acts as a relevant conduit for their provision, where available and possible. Furthermore, the Scoil Úna Naofa cannot guarantee any additional service or support that may be available to the student through the offices of the HSE. Scoil Úna Naofa does not have the resources to follow up on these services and it is a matter for the Parents/Guardians alone to ensure that all such possible support services are being accessed and availed of.

Admission

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

- The student has special needs such that even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Skills and the department of Health the school cannot meet such needs and / or provide the student with an appropriate education.
- In the opinion of the board of management the student poses an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of other students, to school staff or to school property.

The school reserves the right to review the child's progress after each year to determine whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the child.

If the school cannot meet the required needs of a child or if a child does not meet the above criteria for placement in our Sonas class, the school will notify in writing, the parents/ guardians of the reasons for the decision.

Behaviour

It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the child's individual education plan. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the class to the extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management of the School, the school reserves the right to advise parents that a more suitable setting should be found for their child.

Parents/Guardians whose child(ren) have been refused enrolment may appeal the decision under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, by accessing the website of the Department of Education and Science. This Enrolment Policy will be reviewed annually.

Evaluation

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

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

July Education Programme (July Provision)

The school is under no obligation to offer the July Education Programme, commonly referred to as July Provision. Where school-based provision is not feasible, 40 hours home-based provision may be granted aided by the Department of Education and Skills. It is the responsibility of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s)

to source information and apply for Home-Based July Provision. Further information may be found on the Department of Education and Skills website at www.education.ie.

This policy was ratified by Scoil Úna Naofa's Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management