

# St. Kevin's National School, Greystones

## Autism Class Enrolment Policy 2023/2024

### 1. Introduction

St. Kevin's National School is a mainstream co-educational primary school in Greystones, County Wicklow with an enrolment of approximately 500 pupils. With a growing awareness of the increasing need for provision for pupils with autism in our local area and with a strong desire to support our community, the decision to provide a special class for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was taken by the Board of Management of the school in conjunction with the Principal and Staff in September 2019. We are proud to be part of the Autism Friendly Schools programme with the As I Am organisation.

### 2. Our Mission

Our first special class for supporting children with Autism opened in September 2021. The purpose of this class is to support children with Autism who are experiencing, or would experience difficulty in a mainstream class setting, to access the curriculum and maximise their potential for learning and personal development.

We strive to offer a positive meaningful educational experience, which allows the child to develop to their full learning potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm.

All placements will be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child.

The maximum class size is 6 pupils. Access to speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc. will be dependent on local Health Service Executive (HSE) services.

### 3. Our Aim

Our Autism class aims to offer an autism-specific learning environment within a mainstream co-educational national school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream activities as appropriate.

### 4. Criteria for enrolment

Enrolment in the Autism class at St. Kevin's National School will only be available to children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis who, with the supports available in St. Kevin's, will have the capacity to, at least, partially integrate into a mainstream class.

A child will only be deemed eligible for an offer of placement when all the following criteria have been met:

- 1) Assessment and classification of autism or autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist using DSM-IV/V or ICD-10 criteria OR multi-disciplinary assessment of same by a professional team, including a clinical psychologist.

- 2) An explicit recommendation of placement in a Special Class for children with Autism must be provided by a recognised professional (as stated in point 1), with the recommendation not older than 1 year.
- 3) A fully completed application form for enrolment has been submitted by the parents/guardians to the school.
- 4) 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.
- 5) The educational provision being provided to the children attending the Autism class in St. Kevin's will not be detrimentally affected by the level of special intervention required for the new child.
- 6) The Health and Safety of the staff and children of St. Kevin's National School will not be put at risk by the presence and behaviour of a child attending Autism class in St. Kevin's.

The parents of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

### **5. Application Process**

1. Enrolment application forms will be accepted during the submission dates set out in our Annual Admissions Notice on our school website.

While the enrolment application form is available to download on our school website at <https://www.stkevins.ie/enrolment/autism-class>, requests for a paper version of the form as well as queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to [office@stkevins.ie](mailto:office@stkevins.ie)

*Receipt of acknowledgement of an enrolment application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it not guarantee a place in the school. It is simply the recording of an application for admission to our school. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our enrolment policy.*

The enrolment application must be accompanied by all of the following supporting documentation supplied by parents/guardians:

- An original Birth Certificate
  - Two original documents, as proof of address: Utility bill, Bank statement, Insurance policy, Social insurance document or a Document issued by a government department showing your address. These must be dated within three months of application.
  - A written assessment and classification of autism or autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist using DSM-IV/V or ICD-10 criteria OR multi-disciplinary assessment of same by a professional team, including a clinical psychologist.
  - A written recommendation by the relevant professionals that a special class placement in a mainstream school is both necessary and suitable for the child. This recommendation should be no older than one year.
  - Any other relevant reports – speech & language therapy/ occupational therapy and psychological reports.
2. Where there are spaces available in the class for applicants, all applications received by the closing date will be considered by the Admissions Team. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. The team will include the School Principal, Autism class teacher and Special Education Team coordinator.

3. The Admissions Team will make a final recommendation to the Board of Management. The Board of Management is responsible for and must respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular the children already enrolled. The Board of Management has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the Admissions Team. In particular, The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child.

## **6. Offer of a Place**

If offered a place, an Acceptance Form will be issued to parents/guardians and must be returned to the school within fourteen days of issue to accept the place being offered. If this confirmation is not received within this timeframe, the school will take it that the place is not being accepted and the place will be reallocated.

The parents/guardians of a child being offered a place in the class will be invited to visit the school to meet with the Autism class teacher and the Principal of the school. Any information requested by the parents will be provided at this meeting. The parents/guardians will be invited on another occasion to come with their child to the class to meet with staff and see the classroom.

Once the child has started in St. Kevin's Autism class and after a period of time observing, assessing and interacting with the child, an Individual Education Plan will be developed in consultation with parents and relevant professionals. This will be reviewed on an on-going basis and will highlight priority-learning needs. These needs will be targeted through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Each child in the Autism class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes where appropriate.

## **7. Oversubscription**

In the event that the Autism class is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria, in the order listed below, to those applications that fill the criteria as outlined in Section 4, and are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

1	Internal school transfer.
2	Siblings and stepsiblings of children already enrolled in the school and/or children resident in the catchment area of the parish of St. Killian and Holy Rosary (See Appendix A).
3	Children of permanent school staff members.
4	Children residing outside the catchment area of the parish.

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

### **a) The oldest child will be offered the place.**

All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on a Placement List, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. The Placement List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only. All applications will be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria in April each year.

## 8. Review/Appeals

The parents/guardians of the student may request the Board of Management to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998. The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The Board of Management will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the Board of Management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

## 9. Inclusion

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 in Section 4. 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 Admission 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 Admission Team for the Autism class, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

It is hoped that the children entering our Autism class would not require this provision for the duration of their primary school education. Integration with typically developing peers in inclusive mainstream classroom environments, in so far as possible, is the Board's aim.

The nature of all integration shall be determined by the Autism class teacher following reviews at appropriate intervals and in consultation with the parents, mainstream class teacher, Principal and SNAs.

## 10. 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.

## **11. Discharge Policy**

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the Autism class once they have completed 6<sup>th</sup> class or have reached the age of thirteen. It will be deemed compulsory that the year that the student turns 13 will be their last year. Pupils who reach the age of thirteen 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.

The onus will be on the parents to negotiate the placement with a suitable secondary school. St. Kevin's National School will facilitate all transfer of records/reports as well as assist with any information required with regards to the student and St. Kevin's National School will be deemed to have authority to forward all relevant reports and assessments to the Secondary school unless specifically instructed in writing not to do so.

Discharge may also be recommended after the first and/or any subsequent year if following psychological assessments and consultation with the parents/guardians, it is felt that the placement is no longer appropriate and serves the best interest of the child. Discharge from the special classes may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school. The Board of Management has the right to overrule any decision made in this regard.

## **12. Ratification and Review**

This Enrolment Policy will be reviewed annually. The Board of Management reserves the right to alter this policy, subject to its statutory obligations. Should this policy be altered, applicant's parents/guardians will be advised in writing, and will be supplied with an amended policy. All alterations will come into effect 30 days after the date of notification.

**Appendix A - St. Kevin's National School Catchment Area - Parish of St. Killian and Holy Rosary**

Adare Close	Eden Road	Pavillion Road
Applewood Drive	Ennis Lane	Portland Place
Applewood Heights	Erskine Avenue	Portland Road
Arch Villas	Fairfield Park	Quarry Road
Beechbrook Pk	Farm Lane	Rathdown Court
Bellevue Heights	Glenheron	Rathdown Lawn
Bellevue Park	Grattan Park Upper	Rathdown Park
Bellevue Road	Grattan Park Lower	Rathdown Road
Blacklion Manor	Harbour Court	Redford Court
Bowe Lane (off Church Rd.)	Hawkins Lane	Redford Park
Burnaby Avenue	Heathervue	Redford Rise
Burnaby Court	Hillside	Rivendell Grove
Burnaby Heights	Hillside Road	Riverfield
Burnaby Lawn	Kendalstown Rise	Seaview
Burnaby Manor	Kenmare Heights	Sea Green
Burnaby Mews	Killincarrig Rd. opp. Vino Pasta	Sidmonton Road
Burnaby Mill	Kimberly Rd.	Somerby Road
Burnaby Park	Kindlestown Hill	South Place
Burnaby Road	Kindlestown Lower	St. Brigid's Park
Burnaby Way	Kindlestown Park	St. Crispins
Burnaby Wood	Kindlestown Road Lr. left & right	St. Vincent's Road
Carrig Meadow	Kindlestown Road Upr. left & right	Strand Cottages (The Bawn)
Carrig Mill	Kinlen Road	Templecarrig Left
Carrig Villas	La Touche Close	Templecarrig Right
Castlefield Tce.	La Touche Park	The Harbour
Castle Villas	La Touche Place	The Poplars
Charlesland Court	La Touche Road	Trafalgar Court
Charlesland Grove	Manor Avenue	Trafalgar Road
Charlesland Park	Marine Road	Turnpike Lane

Charlesland Wood	Marine Terrace	Victoria Close
Charlesland Seabourne Glen	Marine Village	Victoria Court
Charlesland Seabourne View	Mill Bank	Victoria Road
Charlesland The Anchorage	Mill Brook	Waverly
Church Gate	Mill Court	Whitshed Road
Church Lane	Mill Grove	Willow Bank
Church Road left & right	Mill Grove Close	Willowmere (entrance Redford Pk)
Church Road The Manor	Mill Road	Windgates Road Left
Cliff Rd.	Mounthaven	Windgates Road Right
Crowe Abbey	Mountainview Park	Windgates Upper
Delgany Road (Mill Road)	New Road – Killincarrig	Woodlands
Delgany Glen: House No. 1-31 inclusive	New Road - off La Touche Park	Woodlands Court
Dromont	North Shore	
	Oaklands	
	Oaklands Court	