



## **ADMISSION PROVISIONS FOR ASD CLASS**

**ST TIERNAN'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

**PARKVALE, BALALLY, DUNDRUM, DUBLIN 16 KW26**

**Roll No: 91343T**

**School Patrons:**

Le Chéile Schools Trust  
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB

Ratified September 2024

## **1. Background**

St Tiernan's Community School is a co-educational multi-denominational Community School operating under the patronage of the Le Chéile Schools Trust and Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB.

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admissions to schools) Act 2018, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 and the Equal Status Act 2000.

This policy must be read in conjunction with and is part of the overall Student Admissions Policy for St Tiernan's Community School. The Special Class for students with Autism is funded and resourced by the Department of Education. The Board of Management of the school has the responsibility for the ongoing management of the Special Class, having regard to the funding, resources, services and space available.

### **1.1. Aims**

The aim of St Tiernan's Community School is to offer a kind and caring educational experience which supports the wellbeing and the academic, spiritual and creative growth of every student.

The aim of the Special Class is to offer a specific learning environment within a mainstream post-primary school. This setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream educational activities that are available and that are deemed appropriate to the ongoing education of the student.

After a period of time observing, assessing and inter-acting with the student, a Student Support Plan will be developed following consultation with parents/guardians and with other relevant professional staff (e.g. NEPS psychologist, co-ordinator/teacher(s) of Special Educational Needs/Autism, occupational therapist, school principal/deputy principal etc), as deemed appropriate.

### **1.2. 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 St Tiernan's Community School has no function in accessing these services, but merely acts as a relevant conduit for their provision, where available and possible.

Furthermore, St Tiernan's Community School cannot guarantee any additional service or support that may be available to the student through the offices of the HSE. St Tiernan's Community School 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.

### **1.3. Pre-enrolment Criteria**

All applicants must have an assessed primary diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The assessment must be in line with the established Department of Education criteria of DSM-V and FCD 10 (DSM and FCD are the criteria used by health professionals to diagnose Autism). All applications must be accompanied by an assessment, carried out by an educational/clinical psychologist, psychiatrist or from a multi-disciplinary team (clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, social worker, and/or physiotherapist).

The report must recommend placement in an Autism specific class in an ASD Unit for the child. The report should have been issued within twelve months of the application to the school.

All applications in operation on a child should be provided to the school for assessment by the Admissions Team, made up of the SEN Coordinator, the Special Class Coordinator, the Deputy Principal and the Principal. The withholding of such reports from the school may invalidate an enrolment application at any time.

Parents/Guardians should note that under the official DES guidelines, the number of student places available in the special class at St Tiernan's Community School is six students for the school year 2025/2026 (Class 1), six students for the school year 2026/27 (Class 2). It is not envisaged that another class will open in September 2028. This policy refers to any places that may become available in the two classes already established in the school.

It should be noted that fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily guarantee the student a place in the ASD Class. The Board of Management require that parents/guardians must accept that the enrolment process only proceeds where the educational and physical needs of the applicants as identified can be met within the ASD Class.

The parents/guardians of the applicant must accept and agree to St Tiernan's Community School's Code of Conduct and the terms of this policy.

The Special Class at St Tiernan's Community School will only cater for children who are 12 years or more, and less than 18 years of age, on 1st of September of the school year in question.

### **1.4. Enrolment**

All applications for enrolment in the Special Class will be considered within the context of the school's Admission Policy. Where the Special Class in St Tiernan's Community School is not oversubscribed, all students whose needs fall within the category of special educational needs provided for by the Special Class will be offered a place in the Special Class, subject to the Admissions Policy.

### **1.5 Oversubscription**

Priority will be given to students as per the criteria mentioned in 1.8 below. The feeder schools specified in the criteria are as follows:

- Ballinteer Educate Together,
  - Curtlestown NS, Enniskerry
  - Divine Word NS, Marlay
  - Edmondstown NS, Edmondstown
  - Enniskerry NS, Enniskerry
  - Good Shepherd NS, Churchtown
  - Holy Cross NS, Dundrum
  - Holy Trinity National School, Glencairn
  - Kiltiernan NS, Kiltiernan
  - Our Lady of the Wayside, Kiltiernan
  - Our Lady's Boys' NS, Ballinteer
  - Our Lady's Girls' NS, Ballinteer
  - Queen of Angels, Wedgewood
  - Ranelagh Multinational School, Ranelagh
  - Scoil Mhuire NS, Whitechurch
  - St Attracta's NS, Meadowbrook
  - St Columbanus NS
  - St Mary's NS, Lamb's Cross, Sandyford
  - St Olaf's National School, Balally Drive
  - St Patrick's NS Glencullen
  - Taney NS
  - St Laurence's National School, Stillorgan
- Whitechurch NS, Whitechurch

### **1.6 The Catchment Area**

The catchment area for St Tiernan's Community School is defined as the area bounded by: the parishes of Balally, Dundrum and Sandyford/Kiltiernan/Glencullen.

Applications to enrol a student in the Special Class will only be considered in the year of entry of the applicant to St Tiernan's Community School, ie, for September 2025 enrolment we will process applications from the November 2024 enrolment period.

### **1.7. Application Process**

The process begins with a referral from a feeder school, an external agency or a telephone call or a visit in person to St Tiernan's Community School by a parent/guardian.

An Application Form, a copy of which is available from the school or on the website, should be fully completed and submitted by the parent/guardian on behalf of the applicant.

The closing date for receipt of such completed applications by the school is the last working day of October in the year prior to enrolment.

Parents/Guardians seeking a place in the special class should clearly state this on the enrolment application form.

Parents/Guardians should note that the application process for placements in the Special Class differs to that for student applications for enrolment in mainstream classes.

All parents will receive a letter two weeks after the closing date of the enrolment period acknowledging receipt of the initial application form and requesting additional documentation.

Parents/Guardians seeking a place in the special class will be requested to complete a longer Enrolment Application Form which should be accompanied by an original birth certificate of the applicant and accompanied by all the up-to-date and pertinent educational psychological assessments(s) and diagnostic report(s).

The Enrolment Application form must also be accompanied by School Reports and relevant documented information from all previous schools that the applicant attended.

There must be signed consent from the parents/guardians granting the Board of Management of St Tiernan's Community School permission to access and share any other reports relevant to the application.

Fully completed Enrolment Application Forms are then recorded in the school.

Entry on to the St Tiernan's Community School applications file secures a place on the list of applicants only. Only applications that then meet the criteria for enrolment, subject to available space and maximum student numbers, will be considered.

**Two** of the following original documents, as proof of address within the catchment area must accompany the application for enrolment - ESB (or alternative provider) bill, gas bill, landline telephone bill or television supplier bill.

The advice, support and recommendation of the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) for the area/region, based on the needs of the applicants, will be considered in the decision making process associated with enrolment of applicants in the Special Class at St Tiernan's Community School.

It is important that parents/guardians note that St Tiernan's Community School may in certain clarified circumstances, and following an assessment and investigation, be unable to meet the special educational or physical needs of the applicant on the grounds that;

- (i) the applicant is deemed a risk, on health, safety, welfare or security grounds to themselves and/or other, or
- (ii) admission of the applicant will make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the education provision by St Tiernan's Community School as an educational establishment of its services to others. All

recommendations will then be considered by the Enrolment Team. The principal will make the final school decisions on all applications to enrol.

### **1.8. Criteria for Enrolment in the Case of Oversubscription**

Where the number of applicants on the applications file exceeds the number of places available, the following ranked criteria will then apply in this order to all applications received:

1. Students already enrolled within mainstream classes and who meet the criteria for placement in the Special Class as outlined in 1.3 above.
2. Students who have been accepted to a mainstream place in St Tiernan's Community School and who meet the criteria for placement in the Special Class as outlined in 1.3 above.
3. Applicants with siblings already enrolled in St Tiernan's Community School, and in attendance at the school during the enrolment period (May to September of the year of application).
4. Applicants attending the feeder schools named above and who are resident in the catchment area, which is outlined above.
5. Applicants for whom the Special class would be the nearest facility for students with Autism in their area.

Parents/Guardians should note that where the number of applicants at any stage of the criteria numbered above exceeds the number of spaces available within that criterion, St Tiernan's Community School will apply a random lottery to assign any available places in the school, or on the waiting list, to those applications.

### **1.9. Dual Enrolment**

All students in the Special Class are automatically eligible to a place in the mainstream year groups appropriate to their age/level of education reached. This will allow students the flexibility of joining a mainstream class where it is determined by staff and parents/guardians that they should do so.

### **1.10. The Transition from Primary to Post Primary**

Parents/Guardians should note:

- a The parents/guardians of a child being offered a place in the Special Class will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Education Team and the Principal/Deputy Principal of the school, to discuss the placement/enrolment of their child. Any information requested by the parent/guardian will be provided at this meeting.
- b The parents/guardians may be requested to consent to a visit by a member of the Special Educational Needs professional staff at St Tiernan's Community School to visit the existing school placement of the student concerned in order to observe the student in a classroom situation.
- c The parents/guardians will be invited to accompany their child to visit St Tiernan's Community School Special Class and meet staff.

- d The Parents/ Guardians are also invited, after the acceptance and placement of their child in the Special Class, to be consulted about the Education Plan for their child.
- e The NEPS psychologist and SENO will be appraised of the Student Support Plan
- f A child may be phased gradually into the special class through a mutually agreed process between parents/guardians and the management of the school.
- g Where it is deemed appropriate, a student in the Special Class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purpose by school management.

### **1.11. Transfer from Other Schools**

Students enrolled in a Special Class in another post-primary school applying for transfer enrolment to St Tiernan's Community School Special Class at the end of a school academic year will be placed on a waiting list, if they meet the criteria listed above.

Students who are currently enrolled in a Special Class in another post-primary school applying for transfer enrolment to St Tiernan's Community School Special Class during the academic year; will be placed on a waiting list if they meet the criteria outlined above.

Parents/Guardians must note St Tiernan's Community School respects the right of the existing school community and the students already enrolled therein, and this consideration is paramount when assessing entry to the Special Class.

### **1.12. Review of Placements**

The placement of every student within a Special Class will be subject to regular review by the school staff and, where appropriate, the professional services external to the school, following which decision will mean that the student will:

- (i) Continue within the Special Class at St Tiernan's Community School
- (ii) Integrate fully into the mainstream post-primary, or
- (iii) Seek an alternative and more appropriate educational placement for the student as is unable to meet the educational needs of the student. In such an instance the support and assistance of the staff at St Tiernan's Community School will be available to assist the family in securing a more suitable learning environment in another educational institution, for the student concerned.

### **1.13. Behaviour**

As already indicated above the Parents/Guardians of the applicant for enrolment must accept and agree to St. Tiernans Community School Code of Behaviour/Discipline and the terms of this policy. Children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by staff at the school to manage such behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the Student Support Plan.

All students including those with special educational needs are subject to the s the Code of Conduct and the terms of the Health and Safety Statement adopted by the Board of Management at the school.

Where any student's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other students in the Special Class, or the students in a mainstream class, to an extent that their constitutional right to an education is being interfered with, as judged by the Board of Management of the school, then the school reserves the right to advise parents/guardians that a more suitable educational setting should be found for their child.

The Board of Management of St Tiernan's Community School reserves the right of admission and to refuse to enrol a student, within the terms of this policy.

#### **1.14. Acceptance of a Place**

If the student in respect of whom the application is made is offered a place, the applicant will be issued with an Acceptance Form by the school.

The applicant shall indicate acceptance of an offer by fully completing and returning the Acceptance Form within two weeks of issuing by the school. This includes indicating whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school.

Failure to fully complete and return the Acceptance Form to the school within two weeks of issuing by the school, may result in withdrawal of an offer, in line with the grounds for withdrawal of an offer as set out below.

#### **1.15. Refusal to Enrol**

Where a student in respect of whom an application is being sought has not been offered a school place, the Applicant will be provided in writing with:

- i. The reasons that the student was not offered a place in St Tiernan's Community School
- ii. Details of the student's ranking against the published selection criteria
- iii. Details of the student's place on the waiting list, if applicable; and
- iv. Details of the Applicant's right to appeal the decision.

In addition to the conditions for consideration of an application as set out in the General Admissions Policy, an offer of admission may not be made where the information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect

#### **1.16. Withdrawal of an Offer**

An offer of admission may be withdrawn where:

- i. The information contained in the application is false or misleading in a material respect, or
- ii. The applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission within two weeks of the offer of a place  
or



- iii. An applicant has not indicated whether or not s/he has applied for and is awaiting confirmation of an offer from another school(s) and if so, the details of the school(s); and whether or not s/he has accepted an offer of admission from another school(s) and if so, the details of the offer(s).

If an offer of a place is withdrawn by the school, the student on whose behalf the application was made shall lose his/her place on the admission list or waiting list for that academic year and any subsequent applications for the same academic year on behalf of that student shall be treated as a late application.

## **2. APPEALS**

2.1. Appeal where refusal was due to oversubscription an applicant who was refused admission because the school is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision must submit his/her appeal in writing, via a Section 29 Appeal Application Form, available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of St Tiernan's Community School at office runai@tiernans.ie. Such an appeal must be brought within 21 calendar days of receipt by the applicant of the school's decision to refuse to admit.

However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead. If an applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, or the Board of Management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

### **2.2. Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription**

An applicant who was refused admission to St Tiernan's Community School for a reason other than the school being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision, may choose to put his/her appeal in writing, via a Section 29 Appeal Application Form, available from the school office and on the school's website, for it to be reviewed by the Board of Management of St Tiernan's Community School.

Such an appeal must be brought within fourteen calendar days of receipt by the applicant of the school's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead.

Alternatively, she/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

If an Applicant who chooses to appeal to the Board of Management is not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, the Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

### **2.3. Basis for Appeal**

As required by section 29C (2) of the Education Act 1998, an application to appeal must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the school’s Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to appeal the decision. This policy is subject to periodic review by the Board of Management of St Tiernan’s Community School.

Signed:

Signed:

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(Chairperson, Board of Management)

(Principal and Secretary to the Board of Management)

Date:

Date:

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