

Designated Autism Unit

Admissions and Enrolment Policy



**Scoil an Chuileannaigh,
Beaufort,
Killarney,
Co. Kerry.
Telephone: 064-66-44788**

This policy was adopted and revised the Board of Management of Scoil an Chuileannaigh at its meeting held on 12th June 2012

**Signed: *Griffith J Griffiths*
(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

**Signed: *Máire Bn Uí Chroinín*
Principal**

Enrolment Policy for Cullina N.S. Autism Unit

Introduction

The Board of Management of Cullina National School has set out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000 and the Disabilities Act 2002. The Board trusts that by doing so parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment, and that furthermore, the Chairperson of the Board Mr Griffiths, and the Principal Moira Cronin, will be happy to clarify any subsequent matters arising.

General Information:

Patron:	His Lordship, Bishop of Kerry is the Patron of Cullina National School
Chairperson of the Board:	Mr Griffiths
Principal:	Mrs Moira Cronin
Name of School:	Cullina National School
School Address:	Beaufort Killarney Co Kerry
Telephone:	0646644788
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Cullina N.S. Autism Unit:

The Autism Unit was established in September 2003, funded and resourced by the Department of Education. Cullina N.S. Autism Unit currently comprises on one Junior Autism Class, and one Senior Autism Class. Teachers work in consultation with the A.S.D. Team, and school staff have access to specific training relating to supporting children diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

According to The Department of Education Circular 9/99, the current pupil teacher ratio applicable is 6:1. This includes 1 Special Class Teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants per 6 children. The number of admissions depends on the number of places available, which may vary from year to year.

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 all aspects of school life
- Respect for the diversity of: values, beliefs, traditions, and languages

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs or family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if;

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
- Places are not available. (In the event that the number of children seeking enrolment into the A.S.D. Classes exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a

waiting list in accordance with the date the school receives appropriate Psychological Assessment Reports.

- 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 Admissions Team of the Autistic Unit, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

Enrolment Procedure and Criteria:

- Enrolment begins with a referral from The Brothers of Charity Early Intervention Team, or a telephone call from parents to make an appointment to visit the school and meet with The Principal and Special Class Teacher
- Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child's individual needs, current educational provisions and present level of functioning.
- All parents wishing to enrol their child in The Autism Unit will be required to provide a Psychological Assessment Report from a Registered Psychologist.
- The Psychological Assessment Report should have been completed within 12 months prior to the child being enrolled in The Autism Unit, and should clearly specify that the child has a confirmed diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- The Psychological Report should state that the child comes within the mild range or above of intellectual ability.
- A reference to the child's current cognitive functioning as well as current behaviour analysis as ascertained by valid and reliable psychometric tests and clinical impressions should be noted.
- The age profile of the children enrolled in The Autism Unit must correspond with the age profile of all other children within Cullina National School.
- The Principal and Special Class Teachers will consult with the relevant Psychologists, Therapists or members of the A.S.D Team to clarify any outstanding matters regarding assessment, and to determine whether or not the placement is suitable for the child.

Application Process:

- Where a child satisfies the Enrolment Criteria as shown above, the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should complete an Enrolment Form
- In the case of Catholic children, an original Baptismal Certificate is required.
- For children of other faiths an original Birth Certificate/Adoption Certificate is required.
- A child must have reached the age of 4 years on or before the 31st August of the year that he/she starts school.
- The application will be considered by The Admissions Team. The Admissions Team comprises of: The Board of Management Chairperson, School Principal, Psychologist and Special Class Teacher. The Admissions Team recommendation is forwarded to the Board of Management who will have the final decision.

Period of Transition:

It is recommended that once a child is enrolled in The Autism Unit; a period of transition will be offered before the child is immersed into a full school day. The aim of the Transition Period is to

help minimize any anxieties the child may have when starting school, by gradually introducing school staff, classmates and routines. A child may initially attend on a part time basis until the child has adapted to their new environment. This will be individually agreed and monitored in consultation between school staff and parents. In all cases, admissions must be monitored and reviewed.

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide a quality driven, appropriate educational service to all children in The Autism Unit, within the requirements of all legislation pertaining to Special Needs Education
- To strive towards the integration of children enrolled in The Autism Unit 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 enrolled in The Autism Unit.

Curriculum/Teaching Strategies:

Teaching methods include elements of various styles and techniques including:

- All children follow the Mainstream Curriculum and integrate with their peers in the Mainstream Classes where appropriate
- I.E.P. (Individual Education Plans) are written at the start of the school year in consultation with parents and the A.S.D. Team. Targets are monitored on a regular basis, with review meetings taking place in January and June.
- T.E.A.C.C.H. – Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children
- P.E.C.S. – Picture Exchange Communication System
- S.P.E.L.L. – Structure, Positive, Empathy Low Arousal, Links
- Social Stories
- The Special Class Teachers will work in consultation with the A.S.D. Team to ensure the needs of each child are addressed appropriately. The A.S.D. Team may include the following members: Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Clinic Manager, Key Worker and Social Worker.

Discharge Policy:

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the Autism Unit once they have reached the age of 12. 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 after the first year if the admissions team, after consultation with the parents/guardians, feel that the placement is not appropriate.

Evaluation:

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