

# Scoil Iognáid de Rís

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## Autism Class Enrolment Policy



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# Autism Class Enrolment Policy



## School Profile

**School Name** Scoil Iognáid de Rís, CBS Primary School.

**School Address** Stephen Street, Kilkenny.

## School Details

Scoil Iognáid de Rís is a voluntary Roman Catholic Primary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). The School is grant aided by the Department of Education and Skills and is currently a co-educational school (Junior Infants – 1<sup>st</sup> class (boys and girls), and boys from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

Scoil Iognáid de Rís, is a mainstream primary school which caters for pupils in Junior Infants – 1<sup>st</sup> class (boys and girls), and boys from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. We have a Catholic ethos and operate under the patronage of the Bishop of Ossory.

Since September 2023, Scoil Iognáid de Rís admitted girls and boys into junior infants. Over a period of eight years, the school will phase in co-educational classes through a year on year process and become a fully co-educational vertical school from junior infants to sixth class in 2030.

## School Management

The Board of Management of Scoil Iognáid de Rís is a statutory board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

## Mission Statement

Inspired by its founder, Scoil Iognáid de Rís aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

## Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, Scoil Iognáid de Rís seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values.
- Promoting partnership in the school community.
- Excelling in teaching and learning.
- Creating a caring school community.
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

# Autism Class Enrolment Policy



## Introduction

The Board of Management of Scoil Iognáid de Rís 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.
- the Disabilities Act 2002.
- the Education of Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.

The BOM trusts that this policy will assist parents/guardians, Principal and BOM.

## School Context

Scoil Iognáid de Rís, is a mainstream primary school which caters for pupils in Junior Infants – 1<sup>st</sup> class (boys and girls), and boys from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. We have a Catholic ethos and operate under the patronage of the Bishop of Ossory.

In 2023 the decision to provide a special class for children with a diagnosis of Autism was made by the BOM in conjunction with the Principal and the Staff.

The decision was taken with a view to providing an education in a mainstream setting for children who have an Autism diagnosis and who fulfil the enrolment criteria. The maximum class size will be six pupils with one teacher and two special needs assistants. The second SNA will only be assigned to the class on the enrolment of a 4th student. This class will be funded and resourced by the Department and Education and Skills.

## Aims

- Our Autism Class will offer an Autism specific learning environment within a mainstream setting.
- We aim to offer a positive, meaningful educational experience in our Autism Class which allows pupils to develop to their full potential.
- We will strive to create a supportive and caring environment for each pupil.
- We plan to provide a broad curriculum which focuses on the abilities, strengths and needs of each pupil.
- We will provide optimum inclusion in mainstream education as appropriate, with regard to levels of learning disability, resources and suitability for such inclusion.
- We aim to prepare each pupil for life, putting emphasis on communication, daily living skills, socialisation and literacy skills.
- We recognise and value the role of parents/guardians as the primary educator of their child.

# Autism Class Enrolment Policy



## Enrolment Criteria

Enrolment in our Autism Class will be considered where it has been demonstrated that a pupil requires the support of an Autism Class because they are unable to learn effectively in a mainstream class for most or all of the school day even with appropriate supports.

Children and young people are eligible for enrolment in a special class for autism when the following is provided in support of such an application:

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of special educational needs (e.g. Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multi-disciplinary report) AND
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports AND
- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same AND
- A letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis is and recommendation for a special class for autism.

The BOM reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child or if they do not satisfy the above criteria.

## Enrolment Procedure

- Applications for enrolment to our Autism Class will be taken in line with our mainstream enrolment procedure.
- The application must be accompanied by all relevant documentation.
- Applications will be dated and numbered in order of receipt.
- At closing date (approx. March) each application will be considered by the Autism Admission Team (Principal, member of ISM team, SET Teacher) who may seek advice from our local SENO or other professionals.
- Accompanying reports will be examined to determine suitability of placement.
- The Admissions team will then advise the BOM on the suitability of each application.
- The BOM will then ratify the successful applicants.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing.
- Parents/guardians will then have to sign and return an Acceptance Form which will be enclosed along with a return date.
- Unsuccessful candidates will be placed on a waiting list for 1 year only.
- Should your child or young person be placed on a waiting list for a place, their personal data may be shared with the National Council for Special Education for the purposes of planning for the provision of special education placements.

## Right of Appeal

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal a refusal by the Board to admit their child under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

The parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the decision, and will be supplied with the Appeals Application Form. (Circular 22/02). The appeal will be made to: The General Secretary, Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, on the relevant form.

The school must be informed in writing of the decision to appeal.

## Excess Applications

In the event that applications for enrolment exceed the number of places available the following decision making process will apply.

The criteria for deciding on acceptance or refusal of applications, where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, is set down below in an open, transparent and fair manner.

1. Children with a diagnosis of Autism currently enrolled in the school.
2. Siblings and step siblings of children already enrolled in Scoil Iognáid de Rís.
3. Children living in St. Mary's parish.
4. Children whose older sibling(s) have attended Scoil Iognáid de Rís.
5. Children of past pupils (this can only apply to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces set out in the school's Annual Admission Notice)
6. All other applicants, priority eldest.

## Review

As learning needs may change over time, a pupil's enrolment in an Autism Class will be kept under continual review by the school. A review will take place once a year and will include a careful examination of the pupils progress in achieving their learning targets.

This review will consider the views of parents/guardians, teachers and other relevant professionals. It will also examine the suitability of the special class placement and whether the pupil's needs might be better addressed in a mainstream or more supported setting (special school). Following a decision that the Autism Class is no longer the most appropriate place for a pupil they may move to a mainstream class in our school if that is recommended.

# Autism Class Enrolment Policy



## Discharge

The Autism Class will cater for pupils of primary school age (4-13 years). Pupils will be discharged from this class once they have reached the age of 12 (at the end of the academic year when they reach their 12th birthday).

Discharge may also be recommended after the first year if the Admissions Team feels the placement is not appropriate.

Discharge from the Autism Class may also happen if a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream school.

This policy has been formulated in conjunction with the School Staff and the Board of Management. It is compliant with the

- Education Act 1998.
- Education Welfare Act 2000.

## Ratification

This policy was approved by the Board of Management at its meeting on 23/09/2025.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal/Secretary to the  
Board of Management

Date: 23/09/2025

Date: 23/09/2025