

Limerick East Educate Together

ENROLMENT POLICY FOR ASD Pre-School

Introduction

This policy is set out in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1998. The Board of Management trusts that by so doing, parents will be assisted in relation to enrolment matters. Furthermore, the Board of Management and the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy. Limerick East Educate Together operates under the Rules for National Schools. The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), enacted sections of The Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004), The Disabilities Act (2002), all relevant equality legislation and Department of Education Skills (DES) Circulars.

The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

The Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Pre-school class was proposed by our Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) and approved by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) for the school year 2017-2018. The establishment of this class was contingent on approval for additional accommodation being granted by the Department of Education School's Capital Appraisal Section and also on the necessary funding and resources being furnished to Limerick East Educate Together by the Department of Education and Skills. This School Policy has regard to and is contingent on the funding, resources, services and space available to our pre-school in the future.

Limerick East Educate Together

About our School

Limerick East Educate Together National School is a national school which operates under the patronage of Educate Together. We are a mainstream co-educational national school with an ASD pre-school class. Educate Together schools are national schools that teach the National Primary Curriculum and are open to all, irrespective of social, cultural or religious background. Teachers are fully qualified, as in all National Schools.

Educate Together schools have four underlying principles:

- **Equality based** – children of all denominations and none are equally welcome into our schools.
- **Co-educational** – Educate Together schools are proactive in promoting an approach to learning that encourages and supports the wide variety and range of talents among the children irrespective of gender.
- **Child-centred** - this applies not only to teaching and learning within the classroom but to all decisions at staff and management level, which must have the well-being of the children at their heart.
- **Democratically-run** – parents are viewed as a positive resource for the school. Parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged, where appropriate. The professional role of the teacher is validated at all times.

We in Limerick Educate Together ASD pre-school class want to give the highest quality of education to our children. We want the individual to grow to his/her full potential. Our aim is that this education will prepare each child for life to the best of his/her ability. We recognise and value the role of parents as the primary educator of their children. Together we can provide the skills so that the children

Limerick East Educate Together

begin to develop a love of learning. We take an eclectic approach to teaching our pupils. We don't subscribe exclusively to any one approach to the education of children with Autism.

Our Mission

Established in 2017 under the auspices of the Department of Education and Skills, Limerick East Educate Together ASD pre-school class offers a specialised educational service to children who have a diagnosis of autism from a psychiatrist, psychologist or a member of a Multi-Disciplinary team. Children should have been assessed and classified as having autism or autistic spectrum disorder according to DSM-V or ICD 10 criteria or equivalent and a recommendation for a placement in a pre-school for children with ASD.

With a team of dedicated staff (1 teacher and 2 Special Needs Assistants), the pre-school provides individual attention in a small class setting catering for the uniqueness of each pupil's personality.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's learning.

Our Aim

Our ASD pre-school class aims to offer an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream co-educational national school. We strive to enable the children to attain their educational potential.

Application Procedure for Enrolment

The closing date for the submission of enrolment applications is on the 31st March each year. All applications received on or before this date will be

Limerick East Educate Together

acknowledged within 21 days of the closing date for the submission of applications.

Requests for application forms and queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to:

*School Secretary,
Limerick East Educate Together National School,
The Old Stables,
Mungret College,
Limerick.*

Receipt of acknowledgement of an enrolment application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it guarantee a place in the pre-school class. 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:

1. An original Birth Certificate (together with a photocopy)
2. **A Diagnosis from a psychiatrist, psychologist, or a member of a Multi-Disciplinary team that has assessed and classified the child as having autism or autistic spectrum disorder according to DSM-V or ICD 10 criteria or equivalent and a recommendation for a placement in a pre-school class for children with ASD.**

NB If the school does not receive this documentation with the Enrolment Application form, the application will not be processed or considered by the

Limerick East Educate Together

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.

The list of applicants will be reviewed by the Admissions team, which will consist of the Principal, member of the special education team and a member of the school's BOM.

Factors taken into consideration are:

1. Diagnosis – Child must be diagnosed with ASD with a recommendation for placement in a special class. .
2. The child must be between the age of three and five years upon enrolment/admission. A child who turns six during the academic school year should not be in a pre-school setting and therefore will not be considered for enrolment/admission in the Pre-school. It is compulsory to be enrolled in National School by the age of 6.

Once the admissions team is happy that the child presents as fulfilling the above, places will be allocated in accordance with the criteria below. The admissions team may request further information or a meeting with the child in the school setting if necessary.

The school acknowledges that all children with ASD present with differing profiles. For this reason, all applications must be considered individually. The receipt of the enrolment application forms, psychological report and written recommendation is not a guarantee of enrolment.

Transfers

The school may request other relevant documentation if a child is transferring from another pre-school. All documents need to be received in order for the application to be deemed fully completed.

Limerick East Educate Together

Appeals to a Decision to Refuse to Enrol

Parents/guardians will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to a refusal to enrol in the letter issued 21 days after the closing date for the receipt of applications. (Please note the address at which the applicant resides will be the address used by the school for correspondence regarding enrolment),

If the Board of Management refuses to enrol a child, the parent/guardian of the child may appeal the decision at local level. The appeal must be submitted within 10 school days of the date of the refusal to enrol. It must be made in writing, addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Management, and clearly state the grounds for the appeal. The Board of Management will respond within 10 school days of the receipt of such an appeal.

If following the conclusion of the appeal procedures at school level, a parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the decision made, that parent/guardian has a statutory entitlement under section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, to appeal that decision to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Education and Skills. It should be noted that such an appeal must be lodged within 42 days of the school's refusal to enrol.

Details on appealing decisions on enrolment under Section 29 of the Education Act (as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2007), are available on the Dept. of Education and Skills website at www.education.ie

Limerick East Educate Together

Criteria for Enrolment in Pre-School ASD Class

1. Each child attending The Pre-school must have a definite diagnosis of Autism; the diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological procedure. In addition, applicants must have a written professional recommendation for a place in an ASD pre-school in a mainstream setting.
2. The child must be between the age of three and five years upon enrolment/admission. A child who turns six during the academic school year should not be in a preschool setting and therefore will not be considered for enrolment/admission in the Pre-school. It is compulsory to be enrolled in National School by the age of 6.
3. A child may only be enrolled in the Pre-school for a maximum of two academic school years. Placement in the pre-school is subject to a yearly review. Parents/Guardians will be advised with regard to the child's future schooling with the following options considered:
 - Mainstream.
 - Mainstream with resource teaching support.
 - Special Class attached to a mainstream school.
 - Special School.
 - Home Tuition.

Whilst both the Pre-School and Limerick East Educate Together National School are run by the Board of Management of Limerick East Educate Together National School they have separate enrolment/admissions procedures and criteria.

The maximum class size is six pupils. If the number of eligible children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order.

1. Siblings of current pupils.
2. Siblings of past pupils.

Limerick East Educate Together

If after steps 1, 2, places are still available. Remaining places will be allocated through a lottery system. This will be overseen by three members of the admissions team.

Support by Outside Agencies

Essential services are provided by the Health Service Executive. These services include Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. Limerick East Educate Together National School **has no control over these services, merely acting as relevant setting for their provision. All queries about these services must be addressed to the Health Service Executive and not** Limerick East Educate Together National School.

Post - Acceptance

1. The parents of a child being offered a place in the ASD pre-school class will be invited to visit the school to meet with a member of the Special Ed. Team and the Principal of the School. Any information requested by the parents will be provided at this meeting.
2. The parents may be requested by the school to consent to a visit by the staff to a child's pre-school/home setting to observe the child.
3. After placement in the pre-school class a relevant education plan will be provided for the child. The plan will have input from all parties involved in the education of the child. This plan will be reviewed on a needs basis.

Limerick East Educate Together

Monitoring and Review

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

Behaviour

All efforts will be made by the school to manage challenging behaviours that may occur using various strategies and through the implementation of the child's education plan. All pupils including children with special needs are subject to the School Code of Behaviour and Health & Safety Statement. Where a child's behaviour impacts in a negative way on the other children in the ASD pre-school 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.

Discharge Policy

The number of places available in the Pre-school will be ascertained following the annual Multi-disciplinary team meeting. At this meeting a review of all children attending the pre-school will take place and will result in one of the following:

- Onward progression to the child's preferred mainstream primary school.
- Retention in the Pre-school for a further academic school year. This will not be possible if the child turns six years old in the academic school year following the Multi-disciplinary team meeting i.e. a child should not turn six in Pre-school.

Limerick East Educate Together

- Alternative placement as advised by the multi-disciplinary team associated with the child.

Evaluation

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

This policy was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management on the date below

Date	06.03.18
Chairperson	Jane Harris
Principal	Michael Quealy