

NDNSP Policy: Enrolment of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The aim of the NDNSP is to provide a national school which is

- multi-denominational;
- co-educational;
- child-centred;
- democratic,

and which is run in accordance with the 'Rules for National Schools' as set down by the Department of Education and Skills. The NDNSP implements legislation in relation to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs, particularly as set out in the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs, 2004.

All children have equal rights of access to the NDNSP. We welcome the inclusion of children with special educational needs into the school and strive to ensure that their parents also feel included in the educational experience of their child/children.

Parents may be aware of their child's special needs at the time of enrolment in the school. In this case, it is important that the school be told about these needs so that we can have appropriate support in place when the child arrives in the school. The provision of such support is subject to the approval of the National Council for Special Education and the Department of Education and Skills.

The form with health questions and seeking general information will be sent with the place offer for Junior Infants in the February / March of the year of enrolment. This gives the school the opportunity to apply for the necessary resources. We are most conscious of how sensitive such questions can be. However, there is no easy way other than the direct one to ask if a child has particular needs.

It is also essential that a physical disability be signalled well in advance as it can take some time, to put the proper ramps etc. in place and to ensure the provision of correct classroom furniture etc. Where specific personal cares needs are involved, such as toileting, feeding etc (see toileting policy) the child should be entitled to the support of a special needs assistant. Where the support of a SNA is not available, the school will make arrangements for this as a teacher - especially an Infant teacher cannot leave up to twenty-eight other children for the length of time it may take to toilet a child.

Where the administration of medicine is involved a doctor needs to adjust medicine times well in advance of starting school so that there is no need for the child to take medicine during school hours, where at all possible. The Board of Management makes a commitment that if, in the view of the teaching staff and BOM and in consultation with parents, a child needs a particular computer or other equipment which the DES or the National Council for Special Education fails to provide, the BOM will do its best to provide this.

All parents are given the option of deferring a place for one year to the class on offer or the next class up. If parents defer to the same class level for more than one year, then the form will ask them to give reasons why they wish to defer to that same class level. If parents do not have a special reason for a second deferral then this option is not open to them. Therefore, if you have already deferred your child in a previous year to Junior Infants, please take care to specify the reason for deferring to this class level again rather than to the next level.

It is in a child's best interest that the school is notified if your child has special needs so that we can begin work with the Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Special Education as early as possible. The focus of this work is to ensure that your child is given the full support they deserve in school. Please be assured that supplying such information in no way affects your child's enrolment in the school.

The NDNSP is committed to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in the school. We believe that it is important that such pupils are supported to actively participate in all the educational and social activities of the school in such a way that they can derive maximum benefit from their time in school. Towards this end, the school has a Learning Support Plan.

This policy was reviewed in March, 2014