

Patron: Rt. Rev'd Paul Colton  
Chairperson: Mr. Stephen Spillane  
Principal: Mr. Eddie Pepper  
Roll No: 13648D  
Registered Charity No: 20111373



The Board of Management,  
St. Luke's National School,  
O'Mahony's Avenue,  
Montenotte, Cork  
T23DF30

## Special Class Admissions Policy:

### Introduction and Rationale:

The decision to provide a special class for children with a diagnosis of Autism in St. Luke's National School was taken by the Board of Management of the school in conjunction with the SENO, Principal and Staff in the school year 2022/23.

The decision was taken with a view to provide an education in a mainstream school setting for children who have a diagnosis of Autism and who fulfil the enrolment criteria of the school.

St. Luke's National School operates a Church of Ireland ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of the United Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

The Special class in St. Luke's is a class for children with a diagnosis of Autism who have been recommended for placement in a Special class or a Special School in a mainstream primary school. All placements will be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the placement continues to be appropriate for each child.

The maximum class size is 6 pupils.

### Application Procedure for Enrolment:

To apply for a place and should a place become available in our Special Class the following procedure is in operation:

1. Enrolment Application Forms for the Special Class will be accepted from January until the end of April each year for enrolment in the special class **should a place be available in the following school year.**
2. All applications will be placed on a **Waiting List** in order of the date of receipt of completed Enrolment Application Form for the Special Class.
3. Applications received within the appropriate time frame (see above) will be acknowledged within one calendar month of the closing day (end of April) for the submission of applications.
4. Requests for Enrolment Application Forms for the Special Class and queries regarding supporting documentation should be made to: Principal, St. Luke's National School, O'Mahony's Avenue, Montenotte, Cork. Telephone: 021 450 3686; [principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie](mailto:principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie)

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

5. The Enrolment Application must be accompanied by all of the following supporting documentation supplied by parents:
  - Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report) **AND**
  - A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports **AND**

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Email: [principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie](mailto:principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie) / [secretary@stlukesmontenotte.ie](mailto:secretary@stlukesmontenotte.ie) Tel: 021 4503686

- 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 and recommendation for a special class for autism.
6. All applications received by the closing date will be considered by the Board of Management. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Late applications will be accepted, these applications will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.
  7. In the event that the number of children that apply for a place is greater than the number of places, such places will be filled on review of Applications received in line with the primary school Admissions Policy found here: <https://www.stlukesmontenotte.ie/enrolment/>
  8. All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on a **Waiting List**, in accordance with the above criteria for places that may become available. All unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 within 42 days from the date of the decision by the Board of Management. **The Waiting List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only.** All applications will be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria in May each year.
  9. Parents who are offered a place must complete and return our regular Enrolment Registration Forms within 14 days of the letter of offer to accept a placement. If the school does not receive acceptance within the 14 day period, the place will be offered to the next child on the Waiting List for that school year.

### Pupils Transferring:

Pupils may transfer into the Special class during the school year subject to availability of places. Pupils transferring must enter the same class level that they are leaving, and have the necessary diagnosis and recommendations as outlined above.

### Placement in the Special Class:

After placement in the class a relevant SSP will be developed and provided for the child. This plan will have input from all parties involved with the education of the child. The Special Class teacher is only obliged to produce one SSP per school year – SMART targets will be reviewed and updated regularly. It is up to the professional opinion of the teacher involved, in consultation with the SEN Coordinator, Class Teachers, SNA's and Principal if the SSP needs to be updated more frequently.

Each child in the Special class will be assigned to an age appropriate mainstream class for integration purposes provided that this is in the best interests of the child. Every opportunity will be used to promote inclusion in mainstream classes provided the child is ready for this step and has the necessary support in place.

A review will take place at the end of each year to assess whether the child's placement is appropriate.

The review will be carried out by school staff with parental involvement and consultation.

If in the event that a placement is inappropriate, the school will liaise with appropriate agencies in an effort to obtain a more suitable placement – be that in the mainstream setting of our school or another school, special setting in another school or placement in a special school.

### Discharge:

It is school policy to facilitate the discharge of pupils from the classroom once they have reached the age of thirteen. It will be deemed compulsory that the year that the student turns 13 will be their last year in St.

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Luke's. Pupils who reach the age of thirteen after September 30th in any year will be permitted to complete that academic year. This means a June discharge in the following year.

**The onus will be on the parents to negotiate the placement with a suitable secondary school.**

St. Luke's National School will facilitate all transfer of records/reports as well as assist with any information required with regards to the student and St. Luke's NS will be deemed to have authority to forward all relevant reports and assessments to the Secondary school unless specifically instructed in writing not to do so.

Discharge may also be considered after the first and/or any subsequent year if following psychological assessments and consultation with the parents/guardians, it is felt that the placement is no longer appropriate and serves the best interest of the child.

Discharge from the Special Class may also be considered when a pupil is fully integrated into the mainstream setting in our school and no longer requires Special Class placement/support.

**The Board of Management has the right to overrule any decision made in this regard.**

### Implementation:

This Policy initially came into effect from **August 2023**.

**This Policy has been updated in September 2025 to reflect information and directives contained in Circular 0039/2025**

### Review:

The policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary in line with Circulars. The SEN co-ordinator will initiate and coordinate this review.

### Ratification and Communication:

This policy has been ratified by the Board of management in **September 2025**. The policy will be communicated to parents and staff and made available to all staff and parents on our school website.

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

Chairperson BOM

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

Principal

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Email: [principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie](mailto:principal@stlukesmontenotte.ie) / [secretary@stlukesmontenotte.ie](mailto:secretary@stlukesmontenotte.ie) Tel: 021 4503686