

ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT POLICY

SECTION 1: School and Patron Body Description

Introduction

The enrolment policy for Enable Ireland Sandymount School has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 in order to assist parents/guardians and other referring agencies in application and enrolment matters. The Principal of the school and / or the Chairperson of the Board of Management (BOM) will be happy to answer any queries relating to this policy.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School

Enable Ireland Sandymount School operates within the regulations and the standardised school year as laid down by the Primary / Special Education Sections of the Department of Education and Skills (DES). Curricular programmes prescribed by the DES are followed which may be amended in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

Enable Ireland Sandymount School has been designated as a Special National School. The School is funded with grants, teacher resources and other staffing resources provided by the DES. The school is co-educational, catering for boys and girls aged between four and eighteen years who have a primary diagnosis of Physical Disability.

The School has capacity for a maximum of 8 classes. Students with a physical disability are placed in age appropriate junior and senior class groups. There is one specifically designated for pupils who have a severe or profound intellectual disability and who require specific approach in the classroom. Students with a physical disability are placed in age and needs appropriate class groups.

Patron Body

The school operates under the patronage of Enable Ireland which is a non-denominational voluntary organisation providing services to children and adults with a physical disability. The rights of the Patron body are set out in the Education Act 1998.

The school is guided by the ethos of Enable Ireland which is committed to providing an environment for people with a disabilities to be educated, work and participate in leisure activities in community settings and enjoy experiences, opportunities and lifestyles similar to their peers.

Enable Ireland is funded by the HSE to provide services within a defined geographical catchment area. This Service Level Agreement (SLA) is legally binding and covers the Integrated Service.

Areas (ISA's) of Dublin South City and Dublin South East. Enable Ireland is not funded to provide services outside of this boundary. A copy of the map and the boundary can be viewed in Enable Ireland Sandymount School.

Collaboration with clinicians

Teaching and school staff collaborate with clinicians as appropriate to enhance the educational potential for students and where required to devise guidelines and programmes to maximise the child's educational and social functioning.

SECTION 2: Application Procedure

Timeline for applications to Enable Ireland Sandymount School

1. Enable Ireland Sandymount School will accept applications for enrolment from September to February 28th of the proposed year of enrolment.
2. Application procedures will be completed by mid-March in order to comply with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) deadline for the school's application for staff resources for the next school year commencing in September.
3. Applications received later than mid-March may not be processed in time for admission to the school the following September.
4. Offers of school places for the academic year commencing in September will be issued in writing before the end of April in that year.

Application Procedure

The following procedure will apply to all applications for placement in Enable Ireland Sandymount School:

- Parents write or phone the school to express interest in enrolling the child in the school.
- The child's name, address and contact details are placed on the school's record of expression of interest for a particular year of entry.
- A copy of the Admissions policy, Application form and a cover letter detailing the required documentation and closing date for applications for the relevant year of intake is forwarded to the child's parents.
- As part of the application for their child, parents are asked to return the following required documentation:
 - Completed application form
 - Full birth certificate;
 - Confirmation from a Consultant Paediatrician that the child presents with a primary physical disability.
 - Recent Psychological assessment report
 - Any other available professional reports such as:
 - Speech & Language Assessment
 - Occupational Therapy Report
 - Social Work Report
 - Recent School Report
- As part of the referral and assessment process the School Principal or delegate and the relevant clinicians may meet the parents / guardians and the student, if appropriate, to assess needs and clarify any particular issues.
- Where possible and / or appropriate some members of the clinical team and /or the Principal or delegate may visit the applicant child in her / his current educational setting.
- Clinicians may make recommendations to the Principal as appropriate.
- The Principal may consult or seek the advice of the School Inspector or the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO).
- The Principal will make a recommendation to the BOM. The Board of Management will make the final decision with regard to offers of places.

- A letter of offer will be sent on behalf of the BOM to the parents of each child who is being offered a place.
- Any offer will be subject to parents providing written agreement for their child to adhere to the school's Code of behaviour as well as all other policies. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child co-operates with these policies in an age and ability-appropriate way.
- Parents will be requested to respond by a date specified in the letter of offer. A time will be arranged for them to visit the school to enable the completion of applications to the NCSE for school transport and SNA support, if applicable.

Section 3: Applicable Principles; Threshold Criteria; Order of Priority and Criteria for Assessment

Introduction

It is important to note that the completion of an application form or written application to the school or the placement of a child's name on a list, however early, does not confer an automatic right to a place in the school. Assessment of all applications will be considered by the BOM based on applicable principles, threshold criteria, order of priority and criteria for assessment outlined below.

Applicable Principles

No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

Threshold Criteria One

Applications for admission to Enable Ireland Sandymount School will only be considered where a child meets all of the following threshold criteria:

1. The child has a primary diagnosis of Physical Disability.
2. The child is living within the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area outlined on the attached map.
3. The child is/will be at least 4 years old and not more than 18 by the 1 September of the year of entry.

If the BOM consider that a pupil satisfies the Threshold Criteria set out above, the application will then be assessed on the basis of following order of priority and applicable principles.

Order of Priority

All applications for suitable age and needs designated classes will be assessed in the following order of priority:

1. Children who meet the threshold criteria and who are already in receipt of services from the Early Services team (age 0-5years) in Enable Ireland or children who are receipt of services from the Enable Ireland Inclusive Education Team (STEMS).
2. Children who meet the threshold criteria and who live in the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area will then be considered.

3. In exceptional circumstances applications from children who meet threshold criteria numbers 1 and 3 but who live outside the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area may be considered if suitably designated vacancies remain in school and there is no vacancy in the other Special Schools for physical disability in their own catchment area. Please also refer to section 5.1 below.

Criteria for Assessment of Applications which meet the Threshold Criteria

Applications that meet the Threshold Criteria will be assessed by members of the BOM in order of the priority outlined above and on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) The Board of Management are satisfied that the overall needs of the child can be met at Enable Ireland Sandymount School;
- b) The pupil/teacher ratio will be appropriate to the needs of the child;
- c) The composition of the proposed class group has a suitable needs and age designation to ensure a positive educational experience for all existing pupils and any new applicants;
- d) The child will be able to tolerate and benefit from a classroom environment alongside other children;
- e) The impact on the educational and welfare interests of all pupils in the school;
- f) Staffing, equipment and environmental resource implications;
- g) Effective operation and management of the school to create a positive learning and working environment including safety, health and welfare issues.

Subsequent Threshold Criteria (Process will begin only after Easter in the admitting year)

In a year when the school has followed its enrolment policy and there is still availability in the reception class the school will operate a subsequent enrolment process. This second process will only commence on completion of the first process.

Applications for admission to Enable Ireland Sandymount School will only be considered where a child meets all of the following threshold criteria:

1. The child has a primary diagnosis of Severe or Profound Intellectual Disability.
2. The child is living within the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area outlined on the attached map.
3. The child is/will be at least 5 years old and not more than 18 by the 1 September of the year of entry.

If the BOM consider that a pupil satisfies the Threshold Criteria set out above, the application will then be assessed on the basis of following order of priority and applicable principles.

Order of Priority

All applications for suitable age and needs designated classes will be assessed in the following order of priority:

1. Children who meet the threshold criteria and who are already in receipt of services from the Early Services team (age 0-5years) in Enable Ireland or children who are receipt of services from the Enable Ireland Inclusive Education Team (STEMS) or children receiving clinical services from a local disability network team.

2. Children who meet the threshold criteria and who live in the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area will then be considered.
3. In exceptional circumstances applications from children who meet threshold criteria numbers 1 and 3 but who live outside the Enable Ireland Sandymount School catchment area may be considered if suitably designated vacancies remain in school and the designated special school in the child's catchment area has refused (in writing) to enrol the child. Please also refer to section 5.1 below.

Criteria for Assessment of Applications which meet the Threshold Criteria

Applications that meet the Threshold Criteria will be assessed by members of the BOM in order of the priority outlined above and on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) The Board of Management are satisfied that the overall needs of the child can be met at Enable Ireland Sandymount School;
- b) The pupil/teacher ratio will be appropriate to the needs of the child;
- c) The composition of the proposed class group has a suitable needs and age designation to ensure a positive educational experience for all existing pupils and any new applicants;
- d) The child will be able to tolerate a classroom environment alongside other children;
- e) The impact on the educational and welfare interests of all pupils in the school;
- f) Staffing, equipment and environmental resource implications.

Effective operation and management of the school to create a positive learning and working environment including safety, health and welfare issues.

Section 4: Waitlist, Late Applications and Refusal to Enrol

Waitlist

- Where the number of applications exceeds the number of vacancies in the school or exceeds the number of vacancies available in age or needs appropriate designated classes, the Board of Management will form a waiting list.
- Parents and guardians will be informed in writing that their child's name has been placed on the waiting list for that year.
- The school waiting list will cease to be operational each year on 1 January. If parents/guardians of children already on the waiting list confirm with the school prior to 31 December that their child still requires a place, then that child's name will be transferred on to the new enrolment list for the next academic year on 1 January according to the order of priority listed above. No favour is conferred by previous entry on a wait list.

Late Applications

The application and assessment process will normally take place from January to April of the proposed year of enrolment. However, if there are vacancies in the school after all applications have been processed, late applications may be considered and assessed according to the applicable principles, threshold criteria, priority and criteria for assessment described above.

Exceptional circumstances warranting refusal of an enrolment

The BOM reserves the right to refuse enrolment to a pupil in exceptional cases. The following is not an exhaustive list but examples of where such an exceptional case could arise are as follows:

- The pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education and Science and/or the NCSE, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education;
- The members of the Board of Management are of the view that based on the available information and assessments that the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to themselves or other pupils, to school staff or to school property.

Section 5: Additional considerations, evaluation, review and ratification of this policy

Additional considerations

Where vacancies remain in the school, the Board of Management may, in exceptional circumstances and in its absolute discretion, consider applications in respect of children living outside the catchment area as defined above. The BOM will not be required to consider children from outside the defined catchment area and doing so or having done so in previous cases does not create a precedent for any future applications from outside the defined catchment area.

Evaluation of this Policy

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy. This policy will be amended and updated, as required. The School Principal and the BOM will take responsibility for review of this policy.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 14 September 2017. The policy will be distributed to parents of children in the school. Arrangements will be made to communicate the policy to all parents on application to the school.

Appendix 1:

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOM	Board of Management
EISS	Enable Ireland Sandymount School
SLA	Service Level Agreement
ISA	Integrated Service Area (HSE)
IEP	Individual Education Programme
STEMS	Special Team for Education in Mainstream Schools
NRDC	New Referrals and Discharge Committee
SERC	Special Education Review Committee
SENO	Special Education Needs Officer in the Education Welfare Board
NCSE	National Council for Special Education