



**ST. ATTRACTA'S SENIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL**  
**MEADOWBROOK, DUBLIN 16**

**SCOIL SHINSIREACH NAOMH ATHRACHT**  
**CLUAIN GHLAISE, ÁTH CLIATH 16**

**UIMHIR ROLLA: 19716B**

**School Patron: ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN**

**Admission Policy**  
**Polasaí Iontrála**

**March 2024**

# **Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise, Áth Cliath 16**

## **Admissions Policy**

### **St. Attracta's Senior National School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16.**

#### **1. Introduction**

St. Attracta's Senior National School is a Catholic co-educational school, which provides an education for girls and boys from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class (inclusive). The school operates under the patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The school has a Catholic ethos inclusive of pupils of different persuasions whose religious beliefs and outlooks are respected.

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the school has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

This Admission Policy was approved by the school patron on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

The approved Admission Policy document has also been noted in the Board of Management Minute Book.

The Admission Policy is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for Saint Attracta's Senior National School's admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned. This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

#### **2. Characteristic Spirit and General Objectives of Saint Attracta's Senior National School**

St. Attracta's Senior National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) the formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Saint Attracta’s Senior National School shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

## **Mission Statement**

*Saint Attracta’s Senior National School is a Catholic co-educational primary school which provides a happy caring and secure learning environment in which the individual student is enabled to achieve his/her full potential. St. Attracta’s Senior National School promotes excellence in teaching and learning. The school community that we create is welcoming, safe, respectful and inclusive of all its members. All aspects of the child, academic, spiritual, moral and cultural are cherished.*

### **3. Admission Statement**

Saint Attracta's Senior National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

Saint Attracta's SNS will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

Saint Attracta's Senior National School will comply with any direction served on the patron or the board, as the case may be, under section 37A and any direction served on the board under section 67(4B) of the Education Act.

### **All Denominational Schools**

Saint Attracta's Senior National School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes certain religious values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Roman Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, nationality, special educational needs, disability, language/accent, gender, traveller status, asylum seeker/refuge seeker status, religious/political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

#### **4. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school**

St. Attracta's Senior National School is committed to a policy of inclusiveness, and welcomes children with special educational needs (SEN) provided that the resources and services required to meet the needs of these children are available within the school. See Appendix 3 for further information in relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special educational needs.

#### **5. Admission of Students**

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see Section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

#### **All denominational schools**

Saint Attracta's Senior National School is a co-educational Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of Roman Catholic faith where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

#### **6. Oversubscription and Application Criteria**

In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice:

- Category 1:** Children in second class in St. Attracta's Junior National School. Brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address) of children who attend / attended St. Attracta's Schools, children living within the geographical parish boundaries of Meadowbrook (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking) (See Appendix 1: List of Meadowbrook Parish Roads).
- Category 2:** Children of staff (the eldest child will have priority in this ranking).
- Category 3:** Children residing outside the parish (the eldest child will have priority).

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, the oldest student will be given priority. If two applicants have the same date of birth, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.

## 7. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act (1998), Saint Attracta's Senior National School will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (d) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (e) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (f) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the school; *other than siblings of a student attending or having attended the school as per Enrolment Criteria.*
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,  
*This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the annual admission notice of the school for the school year concerned.*

## 8. Decisions on Applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Saint Attracta's Senior National School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- Our school's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications.

(Please see section 14 below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and section 15 below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection Criteria that are not included in our school admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our school.

## **9. Notifying applicants of decisions**

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our school, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the parents/guardians of the applicant, including, where applicable, details of the student's ranking against the selection criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision.

## **10. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant**

In accepting an offer of admission from Saint Attracta's Senior National School Parent/Guardian must indicate:

- (i) whether or not they have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If they have accepted such an offer, they must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
- (ii) whether or not they have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, they must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

## **11. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn**

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Saint Attracta's Senior National School where:

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the school.
- (iii) the parent/guardian of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
- (iv) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 above.



## **12. Sharing of Data with other schools**

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

- (i) an application for admission to the school has been received,
- (ii) an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
- (iii) an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

- (i) the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
- (ii) the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
- (iii) the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
- (iv) a student's personal details including his or her name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

## **13. Waiting List in the event of Oversubscription**

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Saint Attracta's Senior National School were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Saint Attracta's Senior National School is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy. Applicants whose applications are received after the closing date, outlined in the Annual Admission Notice, will be placed at the end of the waiting list in order of the date of receipt of the application.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

## **14. Late Applications**

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to Schools Act (2018) and any regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application no later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list as set out in Section 13.

## **15. Procedures for admission of students to other years & during the school year**

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group and procedures in relation to the admission after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

Parents/Guardians of children in above categories are given an Application Form and a Transfer Form for enrolment along with a guidance letter, a School Prospectus and a copy of the school's Code of Good Behaviour & Discipline, which parents are obliged to accept as a condition of enrolment. The Application Form should be filled out and returned in order to have a place allocated or to be placed on a waiting list.

Applications must be returned to the Senior School Office.

The Board is not obliged to consider applications which do not adhere to the stipulated procedure, are incomplete, **or** which do not include the relevant documentation. All parents must ensure that they do all of the following when submitting an Application Form:

- Complete both sides of the Application Form
- Fill in the class in which the child is due to start
- Sign and date the Application Form
- Fill in the child's PPS Number

Parents whose children are transferring from schools other than the Junior School must also

- Fill in a Transfer Form
- Attach a copy of the child's Birth/Adoption Certificate

- Attach a copy of the child's most recent School Report and include details of the results of the child's most recent standardised tests, a record of the child's attendance/s in previous school/s.
- Enclose a stamped envelope, addressed to the parent/guardian so that the school can acknowledge receipt of the Application
- Submit all of the above in an envelope addressed as follows: The Principal, St. Attracta's Senior National School, Meadowbrook, Dundrum, Dublin 16. D16HW66

The accuracy and honesty of information provided on this application form is hugely important in ensuring provision of the correct level of resources for each child and the best placement of the child. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018) information on this form may be held on computer for school purposes only. No personal information on this form will be used for any other purpose. However, names, addresses, and dates of birth may be issued to the Department of Education & Skills or the Health Service Executive for hearing and vision and dental testing or for public health purposes such as vaccinations etc.

Places are offered to children transferring from another school on a first come first served basis, provided a place is available in the class stream. However, admission during the school year should only take place in exceptional circumstances as it can be disruptive for both the child who is transferring and the class into which the child is admitted.

Parents/Guardians are advised to inform the child's current school that the child will be leaving that school. Parents/Guardians are also informed that the principal, as a matter of courtesy, will make contact with the child's previous school.

Parents/Guardians of prospective pupils are required to furnish the principal with reports from the child's previous school. Information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress will be communicated between schools, using the Primary Online Database (POD). See Appendix 2.

## **16. Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees**

The board of Saint Attracta's Senior National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions as a condition of:

- a) an application for admission of a student to the school, or
- b) the admission or continued enrolment of a student in the school.

## **17. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction**

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents/guardians has requested that the student attend the school without attending religious instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students.

Bearing in mind the Catholic ethos of the school, every effort will be made to be as inclusive as possible. While Catholic education and the ethos of the Catholic school permeates all aspects of school life, children of other faiths and of none will be accommodated in so far as possible.

Children take part in daily collective prayer and religious feasts and seasons are celebrated throughout the year. This may be within their own classroom, or with the whole school, e.g. at assemblies. Children are also prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation in sixth class.

Children who do not wish to participate in the daily formal Religion classes will remain in the classroom but appropriate work based on other curricular areas will be assigned to those pupils during this time. These pupils will not be expected to participate in religious instruction in class.

Where a request is made in writing, non-Catholic children may be excused or withdrawn from attendance at Catholic liturgies in the Church. In consultation with parents, suitable alternative arrangements will be made to facilitate this.

## **18. Reviews/Appeals**

### **Review of decisions by the Board of Management**

The parent/guardian of the student may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills. The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

**Note:** Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **Right of Appeal**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1) (c) (ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

## 19. Special Class for Pupils with Autism

We are a mainstream, co-educational senior school with one ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) class opening in September 2024.

Saint Attracta's Senior National School welcomes all students for whom we can provide an appropriate education. Our ASD class will aim to offer an autism specific learning environment within a mainstream school. In this setting, we endeavour to nurture self-esteem and promote growth and learning in an atmosphere of inclusion, mutual respect, predictability and calm. Through the provision of a broad curriculum, we will focus on the development of each pupil's individual strengths and identify and provide for their additional educational needs to enable them to reach their full potential. The class will be funded and resourced by the Department of Education with additional financial support from Board of Management resources. The maximum class size is six pupils. Each complete class is allocated one full-time teacher and two Special Needs Assistants. Children are eligible to attend the ASD class between the ages of eight and twelve years only.

Taking into account the regulations and programmes of the Department of Education, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, 1998, and the funding available, Saint Attracta's Senior National School supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational need
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity and beliefs
- Traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

The Board of Management will not refuse a child on the basis of ethnicity, disability, Traveller status, refugee status, political beliefs, family or social circumstances, provided they fulfil the enrolment criteria. Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

- Sufficient classroom space is not available
- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available

### Assessment Criteria for Admission to our Special Class for children with Autism

A child will be deemed eligible for an offer of placement when all the following criteria have been met, in addition to the enrolment criteria.

1. A fully completed application form for enrolment has been submitted to the school by the parents/guardians during the admissions window specified in the Annual Admissions Notice.
2. The child must have a **primary diagnosis** of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder made using the DSM V or ICD 11 by a psychologist or psychiatrist.

3. A **recent recommendation** (within two years of the proposed enrolment date) must be provided that indicate a placement in a special class for children with Autism in a mainstream school is warranted. (*Enrolment date is the date on which the child first enters the class, i.e.: 01 September 2024*)
4. The child is at least 8 years of age on or before 1<sup>st</sup> July prior to enrolment date.
5. The child must have the potential for meaningful integration in a mainstream class with his/her age-based cohort.
6. The parents/guardians of the child must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour and the terms of this policy.

The Board of Management will consider applications for the special class for children with ASD for children moving from another school or special needs setting taking into account proximity to school, age etc. However, priority will be given to children not already placed in special classes for children with autism.

Please note that fulfilling the assessment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if sufficient places are not available and/or sufficient space is not available.

### **Enrolment Criteria**

Enrolment to this class will only be available to children with ASD who are 8 to 12 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> July on the year of entry who will have the capacity to integrate into a mainstream class.

The maximum enrolment in the ASD class is six pupils. The Board of Management reserves the right to enrol less than this if it is deemed in the best interest of the class, the pupils or the school. If the number of children on the list of applicants to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order, beginning with category one- subject to meeting all the criteria and completing all the procedures outlined in this policy.

**In the event of two or more students being tied for a place, then a lottery will apply with an independent party present.**

Children will be selected for the ASD class according to the following priorities:

**Category 1:** Children that are currently enrolled in Saint Attracta's SNS and fulfil the assessment criteria.

**Category 2:** Children in second class in Saint Attracta's JNS and fulfil the assessment criteria.

**Category 3:** Children living within the geographical parish boundaries of Meadowbrook (See Appendix 1: List of Meadowbrook Parish Roads). Brothers and sisters (including stepsiblings, resident at the same address) of children who attend / attended St. Attracta's Schools.

**Category 4:** Children of staff working in St. Attracta's Schools.

### **Category 5: Children residing outside the parish**

### **Category 6: Lottery**

#### **Procedure for Enrolment**

Parents/Guardians can apply for the ASD Class during the admissions window as outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice. This usually takes place in January/February. For the opening year of the ASD Class, the admissions window will be during March/April 2024.

The application form for the Special Class will be available on our school website [www.sasns.ie](http://www.sasns.ie)

Receipt of acknowledgement of application by the school does not constitute an offer of a place nor does it guarantee a place in the school. Decisions in relation to the applications for the enrolment are made by the Board of Management in accordance with our Admissions Policy.

#### **The Admissions Team**

The Admissions Team will:

- Ascertain how many places are to be filled in the ASD Class. The maximum number of pupils in the class will be six but the SENO may deem the class full at a lower number depending on space and resources available.
- Review all applications and all documentation relevant to a child applying for a place in the ASD Class.
- Verify that there is a recommendation from a psychologist or psychiatrist for placement in a special class within a mainstream school.
- Verify the suitability of the child for potential, meaningful integration in a mainstream class with his/her age-based cohort.
- Identify qualifying applicants with reference to these criteria.
- Prioritise each qualifying applicant with reference to selection criteria.
- Make a recommendation based on these findings to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management is responsible for and must respect the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. The Board of Management has the right to endorse or overrule any decision made by the Admissions Team. In particular, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment if they believe the school cannot meet the needs of a particular child. All unsuccessful qualifying applicants will be placed on a Waiting List, in accordance with the above criteria for places that become available. The Waiting List is valid for vacancies which occur in the current school year only.

#### **Confirmation of a Placement**



A letter of confirmation of a place in the ASD Class will be emailed as per the dates in the Annual Admissions Notice.

### **Review**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and was approved by the patron on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

This policy is subject to annual review by the Board of Management.

Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.



**Alice O' Flynn, Chairperson**

Date: 12 March 2024



**Shane Maguire, Príomhoide**

Date: 12 March 2024

## **APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ROADS IN MEADOWBROOK**

- Ashlawn
- Acorn Road
- Acorn Drive
- Ballinteer Road (ONLY the 7 houses between Ludford Road & Ashlawn)
- Beech Drive
- Beech Lawn & Beech Lawn Avenue
- Broadford Crescent
- Broadford Drive
- Broadford Hill
- Broadford Walk
- Chestnut Grove
- Dargle View
- Hawthorn Drive
- Hillview Estate
- Hillview Grove
- Ludford Drive
- Ludford Grove
- Ludford Park
- Ludford Road
- Meadow Close
- Meadow Grove
- Meadowmount
- Pine Copse Road
- Stonemason's Green (3 Houses)
- Sycamore Drive
- Sycamore Road
- The Grove, Meadowmount
- Willow Gate
- Willow Road
- Wyckham Park Road

## **APPENDIX 2: PRIMARY ONLINE DATABASE (POD)**

The Department of Education & Skills [DES] has developed an electronic database of primary school pupils called the Primary Online Database (POD) which involves schools maintaining and returning data on pupils to the Department at individual pupil level on a live system. The database allows the Department to evaluate progress and outcomes of pupils at primary level, to validate school enrolment returns for grant payment and teacher allocation purposes, to follow up on pupils who do not make the transfer from primary to post primary level and for statistical reporting.

The database holds data on all primary school pupils including their PPSN, First Name, Surname, Name as per Birth Certificate, Mother's Maiden Name, Address, Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, whether one of the pupil's first language is English or Irish, whether the pupil is in receipt of an Exemption from Irish and if so, the reason for same, whether the pupil is in receipt of Learning Support and if so the type of learning support, whether the pupils is in a Mainstream or Special Class. The database records the class grouping and the class the pupil is enrolled in. The database also contains, on an optional basis, information on the pupil's religion and on their ethnic or cultural background.

The Department has consulted with the Data Protection Commissioner in relation to the collection of individual pupil information for the Primary Online Database. Both religion and ethnic and cultural background are considered sensitive personal data categories under Data Protection legislation. Therefore, it is necessary for each pupil's parent / guardian to identify their child's religion and ethnic background and to consent for this information to be transferred to the Department of Education and Skills. All other information held on POD was deemed by the Data Protection Commissioner as non-sensitive personal data.

### **APPENDIX 3: ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

- The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's psychological and/or medical report or a copy of any assessment carried out by relevant professionals, e.g. Educational/ Clinical Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist etc. or where such a report is not available, request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required.
- Parents will be requested to attach details of any school-based intervention received to date by the child, e.g. access to (a) Special Education Teacher (date of commencement and frequency and duration should be indicated).
- The school will meet with the parents/guardians of the child and with the Special Education Needs Organiser to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs. Where necessary, a full case conference involving all parties will be held, which may include parents/guardians, principal, class teacher, Special Education Teacher (SET) the Special Educational Needs Organiser or psychologist, as appropriate.
- Following this, the Board will assess how/if the school can meet the needs specified in the reports.
- Where the parents/guardians and school deem that support resources are required, they will, prior to enrolment, submit the necessary reports and application forms to Special Educational Needs Organiser (National Council for Special Education see Circular 01/05) in order to support their application for the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the psychological, medical or other reports received. These resources may include access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: visiting teacher service, resource teacher for special needs, special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other.
- Children with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education & Skills to the Board of Management. However, prior to enrolment, parents must disclose to the school the existence and nature of the child's educational, physical or emotional need, in order for the school to provide adequate support. If this information is not disclosed, the school cannot guarantee support for that child.