

The Leavy Centre



Sacred Heart School

Admissions Policy – for students with autism

1. Procedures for Admission

Every student must apply for admission to the school in the normal manner as outlined in the school's admission policy. The student will be subject to the terms and conditions of the school's Admission Policy. They will also have to complete a separate pre-enrolment form for admission to the Leavy Centre. This form is available from p.moore@shstullamore.ie. This form is available from September 27th 2023 and the closing date for receipt of this form by the school is December 18th 2023.

2. Criteria for Admission to the Facility

Applications will only be considered in the year of entry of the candidate to Sacred Heart School.

All applications must be accompanied by an assessment carried out by an Educational /Clinical Psychologist or Psychiatrist approved by the Department of Education and Skills, recommending the candidate as suitable for consideration for entry to an Autism Spectrum Unit.

The Leavy Centre will only cater for children who are 12 years of age or more and less than 18 years of age on the 1st of September of the school year in question unless there is specific approval from the Department of Education and Skills for a particular student who is outside this upper age limit.

Following receipt of a completed application, supported with **all** documentation, applications will be considered by the Admissions Panel in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Organiser for the area. ***Applications that are only partially completed or are not accompanied by the required documentation will not be considered as valid applications and will not be considered. They will be returned to the applicant.***

The following documentation is required:

- A. A completed application form which is available in the school.
- B. An Educational /Clinical Psychologist or Psychiatrists Report that clearly specifies a diagnosis of A.S.D. (without significant intellectual disability). Diagnosis must be determined by the DSM 1V or DSM V, ICD 10 criteria, or other recognised diagnostic tool acceptable to the admissions panel, recommending the candidate is suitable for placement in an Autism Spectrum Disorder Unit. The Leavy Centre in Sacred Heart School will cater for girls with mild general learning difficulties or moderate learning difficulties.
- C. Reports from **all** previous school attended.
- D. Completed Transition Reports from both school and parents /guardians. (blank copies available with the application form) Where a child has been home schooled, the appointed teacher should complete the Transition Report.
- E. Signed consent from parents /guardians granting the school permission to access any relevant reports from previous schools attended, and any support agencies involved in the welfare and /or support of the child.
- F. Signed Code of Behaviour.

Parents/guardians will agree to share the contents of any further reports with the school, e.g. Psychological, Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language reports).

Enrolment Procedure

The process of enrolment begins with

- A. A referral from an external agency or a telephone call or visit in person from the parents.
- B. Both School and Leavy Centre application forms are completed and submitted with all documentation outlined above.
- C. Fully completed applications are then recorded in the applications file. The deadline for applications is November 30th preceding the school year in question.
- D. Entry into this file secures a place on the list of applicants. Only applications that meet the criteria for enrolment will be considered.

3. The following criteria will apply in allocating places in the ASD Unit:

- A. That there is available space. The Leavy Centre will provide a maximum of 18 placements at any one time.
- B. The needs of the student, as identified, can be met within the unit.
- C. The recommendation of the Special Education Needs Organiser for the area based on the needs of the applicants.
- D. All recommendations will then be considered by the Board of Management of the school who will make the final decision on all applications.

3(a) In the event of the number of suitable applicants exceeding the number of available places preference will be given as follows:

- A. Applicants already in a Special Class in Primary School
- B. Applicants with parents on the SHS staff.
- C. Applicants with siblings already enrolled in SHS.

The placement of each child will be subject to regular, at least annual, review by school staff and, where relevant, professionals external to the school. At this point a decision will be made as to whether the pupil will:

- A. Continue in the Centre.
- B. Integrate fully into the mainstream school.
- C. Seek an alternative placement.

4. Admissions Panel

All applications to the facility will be reviewed by an Admissions Panel which may consist of the following members:

School Principal and Deputy Principal

Leavy Centre Co-ordinator (and any relevant Special Education personnel deemed appropriate by the above.)

The function of the Admissions Panel will be as follows:

- A. To review all applications and all documentation relevant to a student applying for a place in the facility.
- B. To verify the facility's suitability in meeting the needs of the applicant.
- C. To make recommendations based on these findings to the school Board of Management.

5. Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management reserves the right to appoint other members to the Admissions Panel as necessary and to seek the advice of external experts if required. The Board of Management reserve the right to seek an assessment form an appropriate independent professional in relation to any application.

The final decision on any individual enrolment matters will be made by the Board.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for enrolment.

6. Refusal to Admit

The Board may refuse the admission of a pupil if the class is oversubscribed.

- A. The parents have refused to accept and support school policy.
- B. The pupil does not have a diagnosis of autism by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist with a recommendation of enrolment in a unit for children with autism.
- C. Admission of the candidate would make impossible, or have detrimental effect on, the provision by an educational establishment of its services to others.
- D. The student has special needs that, even with additional resources available form DES, the school cannot meet such needs and /or provide the student with an appropriate education.

- E. The Board of Management forms the opinion that the child is a danger to himself /herself and others.
- F. The Board of Management reserves the right to take other factors into account which they deem to be relevant.

7. Cooperation with School Policy

Students enrolled in The Leavy Centre are, in so far as appropriate to their level of autism, required to cooperate with and support the School's Code of Conduct as well as the SHS Anti- Bullying Policy, as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The Board of Management places responsibility on parents /guardians for ensuring that their child /children cooperate with all school policies.

In accordance with the DES Rules for Voluntary Secondary Schools and the Sacred Heart School Code of Conduct, a child may be suspended /expelled.

8. Right to Appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, parents /guardians, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal any decision to refuse enrolment by the Board of Management. All appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

In the event that such an appeal is unsuccessful a parent/guardian, or in the case of a student who has reached 18 years of age, the student, may appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.