

# Admission Policy of St Mary's Special School

Johnstown, Navan, Co Meath.

Roll number:19560T

School Patron: Bishop Tom Deenihan

## 1. Introduction

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.

The policy was approved by the school patron on 02/11/2020 . It 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 St Mary's Special School 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. Preamble

St Mary's Special School has been in temporary accommodation for the last 20 years.

The school is waiting for a new school building which is due to be completed by the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2022. The new building has capacity to host only 12 classes including two classes from the Special Care Unit which are currently off site.

St Mary's has at present a total of 14 classes, 12 classes at the main site and 2 classes in the Special Care Unit (off site).

In 2015 St Mary's opened two extra classes to help the NCSE and the DES to accommodate 12 additional pupils. The Board of Management agreed to accommodate these pupils on a temporary basis until St Mary's new school building was completed.

The Board of Management met with NCSE representatives as the new school has not been

designed to accommodate the 12 extra pupils which would leave 12 families and pupils with no school place in the new building.

(Please note that in 2015 the NCSE and the DES informed St Mary's that these 2 temporary classes were to be hosted for only 2 years only)

A solution was agreed by the DES and the NCSE on March 24<sup>th</sup> 2020 whereby St Mary's enrolment would be to a maximum of 12 classes including the two classes in the SCU.

In order to facilitate the agreed solution, St. Mary's will monitor enrolment to keep enrolment in line with the agreed capacity of 12 classes (including 2 SCU classes). St Mary's is not in a position to take any additional students as from the 21/22 school year; enrolment will close if the demand is great in order to keep their correct quota of pupils and classrooms.

### 3. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school

St Mary's Special School is a Catholic, co-educational school under the patronage of the Bishop Tom Deenihan.

St Mary's is located in 2 sites:

The main campus caters for children with Moderate, Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with an additional diagnosis of Moderate or Severe/ Profound General Learning Disability.

The second site is located 2 kms. away and is known as the Special Care Unit (SCU) which hosts 2 classes for children with Severe and Profound Learning Disabilities with complex medical needs that require nursing care determined and provided by the HSE.

The school welcomes any referrals for enrolment for any student aged between 4 and 18 years of age who resides in County Meath.

"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 St Mary's Special 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.

The General objectives of the school are:

1. Aim to create a happy, safe and caring atmosphere where each individual/child is empowered to achieve their potential.

2. To provide a safe, secure and happy environment where all children will be considered as individuals to develop each child's full potential in partnership with all those involved in their everyday lives.

3. To enable our pupils to reach their potential in a safe, happy and stimulating environment.

4. To have a happy, welcoming environment with respect and tolerance for every individual where the children have the opportunity to reach their full potential in a supportive and enlightening environment.

5. Provide a caring, stimulating atmosphere which leads into a positive, safe learning environment that encourages independence and equality for each Student.

6. To fully realise the potential of each child in terms of social, personal, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development and therefore, improve the quality of the child's life.

7. To promote learning as an enjoyable process which encourages the pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered throughout their school life which will equip them for adulthood.

Within the context and parameters of the DES regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act 1998 and the funding and resources available, St. Mary's Special school supports the principles of:

1. Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to enrolment of children irrespective of faith or race.
2. Equality of access and participation in the school
3. Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society

#### **4. Admission Statement**

St Mary's Special 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.

St Mary's Special School is a school which, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students with the following categories of special educational needs who reside within County Meath:

**Main Campus:**

- 1. Pupils with Moderate, Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities
- 2. Pupils with ASD with a Learning Disability within the Moderate, Severe and/or Profound General Disabilities.

**Special Care Unit (SCU):**

- 1. Pupils with Severe and Profound Learning Disabilities with complex medical needs that require nursing care determined and provided by the HSE.

The school does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

Please note that the fulfilling of the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

- Sufficient classroom places are not available as per SERC Report (1993) ❖ Ratio for classes for children with Moderate General Learning Disability: 8:1 ❖ Ratio for classes for children with Severe/Profound General Learning Disability: 6:1 ❖ Ratio for classes for children with ASD: 6:1

**Documentation Required for Enrolment**

The following documentation must be provided with all requests to enrol a child in St. Mary's Special School:

**Main Campus:**

Pupils with Moderate, Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities: • A recent psychological report (within the last 2 years) from an educational/clinical psychologist outlining the child's cognitive ability. It should also identify the special educational needs of the child along with the resources (including Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support) that are required to meet these needs. The report should also include a recommendation stating that a special school is an appropriate educational placement for the child

- Proof of address in County Meath.

Pupils with ASD with a Learning Disability with a Moderate, Severe and/or Profound General Disabilities:

- Initial Diagnosis of Autism
- A recent psychological report (within the last 2 years) from an educational/clinical psychologist outlining the child's cognitive ability. It should also identify the special educational needs of the child along with the resources (including Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support) that are required to meet these needs. The report should also include a recommendation stating that a special school is an appropriate educational placement for the child.
- Proof of address in County Meath.

#### **Special Care Unit:**

- A recent psychological report (within the last 2 years) from an educational/clinical psychologist outlining the child's cognitive ability. It should also identify the special educational needs of the child along with the resources (including Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support) that are required to meet these needs. The report should also include a recommendation stating that a special school is an appropriate educational placement for the child
- Report from a medical consultant stating that the child has medical needs which require **nursing support throughout the day**;
- Assessment report by nursing staff in the SCU to establish that the child will have needs which require nursing support, e.g. Oxygen dependence, need for frequent suctioning; severe epilepsy; tracheotomy care and/or other nursing needs which may be assessed at the time. **Appendix II**
- Proof of address in County Meath.

Where available the following reports should also be provided for all admissions:

- A report from an Occupational Therapist
- A report from a Speech and Language Therapist
- An educational report from the educational setting where the child is currently enrolled
- Other reports that might be deemed necessary in individual cases, e.g. behavioural, psychiatric, medical, audiological, etc.

The application form is completely filled out and deemed valid.

## **5. Categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school/special class**

St Mary's Special School with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, provides an education exclusively for students from County Meath with:

#### **Main Campus:**

- Moderate General Learning disability

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- Severe & Profound General Learning Disability
- Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with an additional diagnosis of Moderate, Severe and Profound General Learning Disability.

**Special Care Unit:**

- Severe & Profound General Learning Disability with complex medical needs which require nursing support during the day.

## 6. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where – a) the school is oversubscribed (please see [section 7](#) 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

St Mary's Special school provides education exclusively for students from County Meath with:

**Main Campus:**

- Moderate General Learning disability
- Severe & Profound General Learning Disability
- Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with an additional diagnosis of Moderate, Severe and Profound General Learning Disability.
- Reside in County Meath – Proof of address.

**Special Care Unit:**

- Severe & Profound General Learning Disability with complex medical needs which require nursing support during the day.
- Reside in County Meath – Proof of address.

and may refuse admission to a student, where the student does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for by this school and those who don't reside in County Meath. St. Mary's does not discriminate in relation to the admission of a student who does not have the category of needs specified.

## Application Procedure

Before an application is made, parents/guardians should ensure that:

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- The child will be 4 years old on or before 1<sup>st</sup> September of the year in which it is proposed to enrol the child.
- Applications for enrolment will only be accepted from 1<sup>st</sup> October in the year preceding the closing date.
- Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to complete an application from St. Mary's Special School.
- Applicants will be notified of the school's decision to offer a student a place in line with our Admissions Notice.

The following process will be followed after initial contact has been made with the school.

- (a) Full consideration of any request for enrolment can only be made after receipt of the psychological assessment report and any other report(s) deemed essential to adequately evaluate the appropriateness of St. Mary's Special School to the educational needs of the child. As well as, proof of residing in County Meath.
- (b) Parents/guardians who wish to accept an offer of a place for their child in the school must do so in line with the school's Admissions Notice. The child's name along with his/her psychological assessment report will be forwarded to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) for the attention of the NCSE. This may be accompanied by applications for transport to the school and a request for SNA support. Where the Board considers it necessary to have additional supports or resources to meet the educational needs of the child, an application will also be made to the SENO for the attention of the DES.
- (c) Prior to commencement the child is also invited to visit the school for a period of time (transition). This process may be repeated until such time as the child feels comfortable and content about transitioning to St. Mary's Special School on a permanent basis.
- (d) Parents/guardians will be requested to complete the "Enrolment Form" **Appendix I** and provide a copy of the child's birth certificate, baptismal certificate (where applicable) as well as medical and other information relevant to the care needs of the child. Parents/guardians will also be provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour, Medication Policy, Intimate Care Policy and the Anti - Bullying policy and must sign a statement agreeing that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with these policies.

Children will be prioritised and enrolled based on the following criteria:

1. The placement must be age appropriate as Special School caters from 4 to 18. (Primary & Post-Primary)
2. Brothers and sisters of existing pupils that fit within the categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school.

3. The pupil teacher ratio will be appropriate to the needs of the child as per SERC Report (1993).

4. Children from within the geographical catchment area of the school – County Meath (proof of address needed).

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There will be no deferral, any places declined will be offered to the next eligible student and parents/guardians declining the offer will have to apply again the following year in the normal fashion.

## 7. Oversubscription

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:

As per SERC Report (1993) the maximum class size for children with Moderate General Learning Disabilities is 8 pupils, 6 in a class with Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities and Autism. If the number of children on the Expression of Interest listing to enrol exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will apply in priority order, beginning with:

### **Selection Criteria if oversubscribed in the Special Care Unit in order of priority:**

1. If a child who is already enrolled in a non-nursing class in St Mary's Special School requires a place in the Special Care Unit they will have first priority.
2. The placement must be age appropriate, e.g. placement in the Primary or Post Primary Section of the school.
3. Brothers and sisters of existing pupils that fit within the categories of Special Educational Needs catered for in the school.
4. Following referral from the principal of St. Mary's S.S, nursing assessment will determine eligibility for the SCU:  
Step 1 – Assessment of the nursing needs of the child.  
Step 2 Step 2- Assessment of the equipment required by the child in light of available space in the SCU.
5. Children from within the geographical catchment area of the school – County Meath (proof of address needed).

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:

- Priority will be given to the applicant who is not enrolled in any school.
- The prospective pupil resides the closest distance from school (verified by mapping service e.g. Google MAPS)

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

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the 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.
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;  
(other than in relation to:  
- admission to (a) a special school
- (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)
- (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.

## 9. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to St Mary's Special School will be based on the following:

- Our school's admission policy
- The school's annual admission notice (where applicable)
- 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 15](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 16](#) 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.

## **10. 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.

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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 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 (see [section 18](#) below for further details).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from St Mary's Special School, you must indicate—

(i) whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and

(ii) whether or not you have applied for and awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

## **12. 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 St Mary's Special 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 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.

## **13. 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.

## **14.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 St Mary's Special 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.

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Placement on the waiting list of St Mary's Special 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.

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.

## **15.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 School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

## **16.Procedures for admission of students to other years and 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 are as follows:

If applications for enrolment occur during the course of the school year, the waiting list that is established at the start of the year will continue to be in effect, if the waiting list has been exhausted pupils will be admitted following the appropriate Selection Criteria delineated in Section 6 of this policy.

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

This rule applies to all schools.

The board of St Mary's Special School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) 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.

**Note:** Exceptions apply only in relation to fee charging post primary schools, the boarding element in Boarding Schools and admission to post leaving cert or further education courses run by post-primary schools.

## 18. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

This section must be completed by schools that provide religious instruction to students.

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The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, who 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:

A written request should be made to the Principal of the school. A meeting will then be arranged with the parent(s) or the student, as the case may be, to discuss how the request may be accommodated by the school. Definite arrangements will be set out during this meeting to accommodate the student during religious instruction.

## 19. Reviews/appeals

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

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, 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)

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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.

**Appendix I**

**School Enrolment Form**

Name of Child (in full, as on Birth Certificate):

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Address at which child resides: \_\_\_\_\_

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Eircode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone

No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of

Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ Country of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

If not born in Ireland, date on which child arrived in Ireland? \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Nationality: Father's Nationality:

**\*If you change your mobile number during the school year please inform us immediately as it is vital to keep records up to date in case of an emergency.**

Father's Name:

Work telephone No: Mobile No:

Mother's Name:

Work telephone No: Mobile No:

Guardian's Name:

Work telephone No: Mobile No:

Is the child living with both parents?

Position of child in family (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Number of children in the family:

Did your child attend preschool? \_\_\_\_\_ For how long?:

\_\_\_\_\_

Where?

\_\_\_\_\_ Is your

child currently attending a school? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Has your child ever had a psychological assessment?

Yes  No

Has your child ever received a speech and language report?

Yes  No

Name of brother/sister in this school: \_\_\_\_\_

Please give names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people who have permission to collect your child from school. If there is any change in this routine, **please inform the school in writing.**

**Person who usually collects child (ren)**

Name: Phone:

Name: Phone:

Name: Phone:

Name: Phone:

Parents and legal guardians are entitled to be consulted and informed about their child's education and are entitled to access to their child during school hours. If there is any change in this regard or if there is any other information which you think may be relevant, it **is very important that the school is informed immediately.**

**Other relevant information:**

## **School Emergencies/Sickness/Unexpected Closures, etc.**

The following information will be used by the school in the event of:

- Your child feeling sick
- An emergency occurring while the school is in operation, making it necessary to close the school. In such an emergency, it is advisable to ensure the safe return home of pupils
- An unexpected closure of the school.

**If my child gets sick, or the school has to close unexpectedly, etc.** and there is no one at home/the school is unable to contact me, please provide the name, telephone number and address of two other people you nominate for us to contact. We will ask this person to come and collect your child/children.

### **Person the school will contact:**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

Tel/mobile: Tel/mobile:

2 \_\_\_\_\_

Tel/mobile: Tel/mobile:

### **Medical Emergency/Accident- Main School building**

That in the event of an emergency or accident, a member of staff will use his/her discretion and bring your child to a Doctor/Hospital. Every effort will be made to contact you.

I authorise that at their discretion a member of staff may bring my child/children to a Doctor/Hospital if an emergency arises.

**Signed (Parent/Guardian)** \_\_\_\_\_

Name of pupil/s:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### **Special Care Unit- Medical Emergency**

If a child becomes unwell during the day in the Special Care Unit it may be necessary that they return home for their comfort and also to reduce the risk to other children within the service at this time. A staff nurse will assess the child's condition and will contact Parents/Guardians if it is deemed necessary that you come and collect your child to bring them home or to their GP for further advice.

I have read the above and I agree with the procedure

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Family Doctor (Only if you wish)**

Doctor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Do/es your child/children have any specific medical condition (e.g. asthma, eyesight, hearing etc.) or emotional problems which may affect your child at school?

### **Medication requirements (Please refer to Medication Policy):**

**It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify the school of any food allergies.** Do your child/children have an allergic reaction to medication or food?

Is there any other relevant information about your child/children which we should know?

I consent to my child's participation in the RSE Programme

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ |

consent to my child's participation in the **Stay Safe Programme**

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

During your child's time in St Mary's School, it may be necessary from time-to-time for teachers to carry out assessments with your child on an individual basis in order to help them in their educational development. I give permission for any necessary assessments to be carried out with my child.

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to allow my child's photograph/image to be included in school related activities, competitions etc.

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to allow my family details (name, address, date of birth, etc.) to be given to agencies such as HSE (school nurse, doctor, dentist), etc.

**Parents' signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to enrol my child \_\_\_\_\_

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I declare the above information to be correct and understand that it will be treated as confidential.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Please ensure that you have included a Birth Certificate with this form. These documents will be photocopied and returned to you.**

**Principal's signature:**

**Date:**

Birth Certificate received: Yes  No

**Appendix II**

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**Appendix II.**



St. Mary's Special School, Navan

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**Special Care Unit Bailis**

*(SCU supported by H.S.E. Meath Area Disability Services)*

**CHILDRENS' NURSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

**TOOL** *Compiled by the Nursing Staff in the SCU. H.S.E. & Enable Ireland Childrens' Nursing Staff and the office of the Directors of Nursing H.S.E. Louth/Meath 2018 Version 1*



*This tool was adapted from the Bradford Continuing Care tool with kind permission. This project has benefited from the time, skills and expertise of a large number of people from the UK working party for children with intellectual disabilities and thus nursing needs including long-term-ventilated children with disabilities.*

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**Child Details (All sections must be completed)**

Female **1Name:** Relationship &

Surname: **Address:**

Forename: Contact No:

DOB: **Medical Card No:**

**Parent/Guardian 2** **Siblings**  Yes  No  
If yes, please give names and DOB:

**Longterm Illness Card No:** 1.

**Name:** Relationship & 2.

**PPSN:** 3.

Contact No: 4.

**Relevant Details**

**Parent/Guardian**

Sex:  Male

**G.P. Name:**

Name & Address of Consultant:

G.P. Address: G.P. Contact No:

**Known allergies** Any additional Information/ Comments regarding  
Nursing/Clinical Needs or other rel  
info:

(attach note if required)

Other Services Involved;

SLT  Physio  SLT  Home Nursing Hours

Liaison Nurse Disability Services

OT  Psychology

Social Worker  Home Support Worker  TUSLA

Relevant Medical/Surgical/Psychiatric history, treatment received (In addition, please state if child receives regular medication (**do not list medication here**))

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**Diagnosis: Please list**

Date:

(Incl all medical/nursing reports as attachments) Has parent/guardian consented to service & sharing of information with other professionals to ensure best service delivery?

Yes  No

**Infection Control Status**, MRSA, C Diff, VRE, Other?

Signed: (Parent/Guardian)

**Special Care Unit Bailis** (SCU supported by H.S.E. Meath Area Disability Services)

# CHILDRENS' NURSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

## Important Note

In addition to the 12 identified Health Care Needs scored above the following four areas from the twelve will also be considered and scored independently for assessing and documenting individual child nursing needs for possible access to attend St Mary's Special School in the SCU.

Each child must score a minimum combined score of 10 in the 4 sections below in order to qualify for consideration of attendance at school in the Special Care Unit with nursing support.

1. Breathing
2. Feeding
3. Seizures
4. Elimination

All children irrespective of outcomes of this assessment tool for nursing need must first be enrolled in St Mary's Special School as a pupil pre attendance in the SCU.

**All applications for enrolment are the sole responsibility of parents/guardians directly to the Principal in St Mary's Special School, Navan.**

## HEALTH CARE NEEDS

### 1. BREATHING

- No breathing problems 0

22

- \*Occasional suction, PRN or regular inhalers/nebulisers 2
- \*Regular oxygen therapy 4 • \*Regular suction 4 • Apnoea's / compromising airway abnormalities 4 • Artificial Airway 10
- Nocturnal Ventilation – life enhancing 15 • Nocturnal Ventilation – life supporting 20 • Day and Night Ventilation - life enhancing 25 • Day and Night Ventilation – life supporting 30 • Total Ventilator Dependence 35

TOTAL

## 2. ELIMINATION

- Usual age appropriate supervision/hygiene 0 • Requires increased level of supervision in relation to age 1
  - Incontinent/totally dependent older child requiring one carer for hygiene/toileting needs 2
    - Stoma and/or catheter, requiring support for needs 3
  - Incontinent/totally dependent older child requiring two carers for hygiene/toileting needs 3
- TOTAL

## 3. FEEDING

- Age appropriate feeding 0
- \*Requires additional supervision or assistance to feed relative to age 1
  - \*Requires gastrostomy/jejunostomy feeds 1
- \*Takes in excess of an hour to feed with assistance or frequent Enteral feeds 3
  - \*Has recurrent vomiting with risk of aspiration 2 • \*Requires naso-gastric feeds 3
- \*Complex feeding regimes including TPN or overnight nasogastric feeds

## 4. MOBILITY

## TOTAL

- Mobilises safely in accordance with developmental age 0 • Mobilise but requires increased supervision to maintain safety 1 • Needs one person to transfer with or without equipment 2
- Requires one person to change position and provide pressure area care on bed/chair 3
- Requires two people to change position / transfer and mobilise 4 TOTAL

## 5. COMMUNICATION

- Able to communicate effectively in a social environment relative to age 0 • Requires additional verbal/non verbal prompts to communicate effectively relative to age 1 • Needs one to one to facilitate communication relative to age 1
- Carer has difficulty understanding verbal /non –verbal communication relative to age 2 • Has specific sensory impairment which affects ability to function relative to age (score separately for each impairment) 5 TOTAL

## 6. PERSONAL CARE

- Usual childhood supervision 0
- Requires additional supervision for dressing/hygiene/safety 24
- relative to age 1 • \*Requires regular change of clothes due to health need 1
- Totally dependant on one person for washing and dressing 3
- Totally dependant on two people for washing and dressing Needs 4

TOTAL

## 7. SLEEP AND REST

- Sleeps appropriately for age with no additional safety issues during sleep 0 •
- \*Difficulty in establishing bed-time routine/sleep pattern relative to age 1 •
- \*Irritability affecting sleep pattern 3
- \*Safety issues during sleep 3
- \*How many times carer disturbed during the night for health care needs (can score maximum 6 ) please enter number in box 4 Nasogastric feeds, medications, re-positioning

TOTAL

## 8. MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- Child has age appropriate safety awareness 0
- Supervision required PRN dependent on environment 1
- Covert constant supervision required to maintain safety 2
- Close contact constant supervision 3

TOTAL

## 9. SEIZURES

- Does not have seizures/has not had seizure in last 2 years 0
- Has partial seizures/absences or infantile spasms requiring minimal supervision 1 • Seizures require close supervision, environmental interventions and/or chronic management 3 • Seizures require acute medical interventions 4

TOTAL

## 10. PLAY AND DEVELOPMENT

- Achieving normal developmental mile stones 0
- Requires more structured play/ environment 1
- Requires specialised play equipment to meet individual need 2
- Requires one to one input from play therapist/nursery nurse to access play/leisure activities 3
- Has sensory impairment with or without global developmental delay and is unable to access usual childhood activities 4

TOTAL

## 11. MENTAL HEALTH

- No risk factors identified 0
- and some resilience factors present •  $\geq 4$  risk factors identified 1
- and / or  $< 20$  resilience factors present •  $\geq 8$  risk factors identified 2
- and / or  $< 16$  resilience factors present •  $\geq 16$  risk factors identified 3
- and / or  $< 8$  resilience factors present •  $\geq 20$  risk factors identified 4
- and / or  $< 4$  resilience factors present

TOTAL

## 12. OTHER INTERVENTIONS

- $\leq$  1 hour per 24 hours 0
- $\leq$  2 hours per 24 hours 1
- 2-4 hours per 24 hours 3
- $\geq$  4 hours per 24 hours 4

TOTAL

## PART II Assessment

### PARENTAL CAPACITY AND FAMILY

#### 1. HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Well supported parents/guardian able to fully meet the needs of the child 0
  - \*Lone parent 2
- \*Parents having difficulty accepting child's condition/ newly diagnosed 2 •  
\*Ongoing family issues impacting on child's care 2
- \*Parent's having difficulty meeting child's physical health care needs/ child protection issues 3 • \*Parent's with learning disabilities/  
significant health problems 4 TOTAL

#### 2. SIBLINGS

- No Siblings 0
- Older siblings/ siblings needing less parental attention 1
  - Siblings needing attention due to age/ behaviour/ health 2
- Siblings with chronic disability/ illness or other problem 3

TOTAL

**3. SPIRITUAL / CULTURAL ASPECTS**

• Family / child able to meet cultural needs 0 • Family/ child’s cultural needs are occasionally impacted upon 1

• Family/ child’s cultural needs regularly impacted on causing moderate levels of stress 2

• Family/ child distressed as unable to meet cultural needs and may have issues 3

TOTAL

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

**1. SUPPORT NETWORKS**

Child goes to school / nursery and / or receives respite from Services or extended family for a combination of:

≤ 5 hours per week 0 ≤ 10 hours per week 1 ≤ 15 hours per week 2 ≤ 20 hours per

week 3 ≤ 25 hours per week 4 ≥ 30 hours per week 5

TOTAL

(score to be subtracted from the final score as indicated on overall dependency score page)

**FACTORS**

Term Time

School Holidays

**2. ENVIRONMENTAL**

- 28
- Housing and employment/income meet the needs of the child 0
- Housing and employment/ income creates occasional difficulty meeting
  - 1
  - the child's needs
  - Housing and employment/income regularly impacts on child's needs 2
- Housing and employment/income is detrimental to the child's needs

**PARENTAL CAPACITY AND FAMILY**

CRISIS 5-15

**ENVIRONMENT FACTORS**

CRISIS 0-10

3

TOTAL

**OVERALL DEPENDENCY SCORE**

**HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

CRISIS 15-30

SUB - TOTAL

Support Networks (insert score into  
boxes) 0

## **CONTINUING CARE HOURS**

### SCORE HOURS PER WEEK

**0 – 10 NO CARE**

**11 – 20 2 – 4** N.B. child must score at least 10 healthcare  
needs assessment to qualify for care

**21 – 25 4 – 8**

**26 – 30 8 –16**

**31 –35 16 – 32**

**36 – 40 32 – 48**

**41 –45 48 –60**

**46 – 50 60 –80**

**51 –55 80 –100**

**56 –60 100 –130**

**60 plus 130 -160**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK =**

**HOURS DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS = =**

## GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT TOOL

### IMPLEMENTATION HEALTH CARE NEEDS

#### BREATHING

- Life enhancing ventilation refers to ventilation for symptom relief and to support initiated breaths
- Life supporting ventilation refers to the ability to self ventilate but dependant on mechanical ventilation to maintain adequate respiratory status.
- Total ventilator dependence refers to the inability to self-ventilate unaided.
- Two categories may be added together as indicated

#### ELIMINATION

- An **increased level of supervision** is defined for a child over the age of 3 years still requiring nappies or a child over the age of 6 years who cannot self-toilet.

#### FEEDING

- **No more than 2** prioritised categories can be added together as indicated. • Overnight feeds are included in the Gastrostomy / jejunostomy category as there is minimal aspiration risk.
- **Complex feeds** can include children on fluid restrictions.
- **'Frequent'** enteral feeds are defined as a child requiring feed 3 hourly or greater frequencies.

#### MOBILITY

- Child may require **increased supervision** whilst mobilising to ensure safety e.g. child not self mobilising yet, blind or unsteady
- **One** person is required **to use a hoist** if it is a ceiling track hoist. **Two** people are required to use a freestanding hoist

## COMMUNICATION

- **Verbal / non verbal prompts** refer to a child who uses aids such as a typewriter to communicate or needs increased time and understanding to successfully communicate verbally.
- A child that requires one to one communication, for example uses pointing boards / cards and for sign (Makaton, Sign along, BSL)
- A carer may have difficulty understanding the communication from a child, for example who signs/uses pointing boards but is very uncoordinated.
- Score 2 for each additional sensory impairment, maximum of 3 impairments – deaf / blind and non verbal.

## PERSONAL CARE

- Category can be added as indicated. Mouth care to be included in all four levels of higher dependency.

## SLEEP AND REST

- Difficulty in establishing **bed time routine** / sleep pattern impacting on family need.
- **Safety issues** during sleep can include:
  - risk of apnoea
  - night time seizures requiring intervention more than 3 times per week
  - aspiration – requiring suction for more than once a night on a regular basis
- Categories can be added as indicated.
- Score 1 for each different disturbance on an average night: Example: to toilet, to turn or to attend to child's irritability. Can score maximum of 6

## MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- Supervision as required (PRN) refers to children that need increased supervision in certain environments such as outside or in the multi-sensory room or a child who suffers from drop attacks, for example.

## SEIZURES

- 'Chronic management' of seizures is defined as a child who has no acute management but medication may be given or altered after a period of time.
- 'Acute medical intervention' is defined as the use of oxygen, airway protection or drugs such as rectal Diazepam.

## PLAY AND DEVELOPMENT

- **Requires more structured play/environment** describes a child for whom

regular/age appropriate toys would not be suitable for safety or developmental stage reasons.

- **One to one input** is required when only close contact and very structured play/environment evokes a successful response, and example being a child that has severe global developmental delay but no sensory impairment. This also applies to a child who needs one to one to access play/leisure activities.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Risk and Resilience Factors (The Mental Health Foundation, 2000)

In the Child In the Family In the Community

	<u>- difficult temperament</u>	<u>community</u>
	<u>Risk factors in the family</u>	
<u>Risk factors in the child</u>		- socioeconomic disadvantage - homelessness
- genetic influences - low I.Q. and learning disability	- over parental conflict - family parental conflict - family breakdown - inconsistent or unclear discipline	- disaster
- specific development delay	<u>Risk factors in the</u>	- discrimination
		- other significant life events

- physical illness especially if chronic and/or neurological
- academic failure
- low self esteem

- humour, religious faith - capacity to reflect

- at least one good parent -child relationship

#### OTHER INTERVENTIONS

- hostile and reflecting relationships
- failure to adapt to a child's changing needs - physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse
- parental criminality, alcoholism or

- supervision, authoritative discipline - support for education - supportive marriage / absence of severe discord
- Resilience factors in the community

#### Resilience factors in the child

- being female
- higher intelligence
- easy temperament when an infant
- secure attachment
- positive attitude, problem solving approach
- good communication skills

- personality disorder - death and loss, including loss of friendship

- wider supportive network - good housing
- high standards of living
- high morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying
- schools with strong academic and non-academic opportunities - range of positive sport / leisure activities

#### Resilience factors in the family

To include any health related interventions that have not been previously scored. For example, physiotherapy, nebulisers, drug administration, intravenous line management

### **PARENTAL CAPACITY AND FAMILY**

#### HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- **'Parents having difficulty accepting child's condition / newly diagnosed'** refers to when the parents may need extra support where there is a new diagnosis, and to understand the condition and care for the child. There may be periods of time where parents need additional support due to the impact that the child's condition is having on them, and their ability to care for the child.

#### SIBLINGS

- Siblings needing attention due to 'health' refers to a child with eczema, for example who requires additional care. If the sibling has a significant chronic disability / illness then they should be assessed individually as appropriate.

#### SPIRITUAL ASPECTS

- The child and/or family may be 'distressed' with 'spiritual issues' surrounding disability, medical /nursing interventions or bereavement

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

### ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- To include suitability of location of housing, access to the house, layout of the house, any adaptations or equipment in situ and condition of the house (e.g. damp) in relation to the child's health care needs.
- Temporary or refuge accommodation would be given a high dependency scoring. • Limited finance may be problematic, for example, with regular transportation costs of hospital appointments or nursery fees for siblings.

## **CRISIS**

- For each of the three sections 'crisis' points may be used at the discretion of the assessor to reflect the severity of the situation and the increased appropriate level of care. Crisis examples may be that the child is now in terminal stage of their illness, sudden parental relationship breakdown or acute illness of a sibling. Support needed during school time should be obtained from health care need crisis until educational support is available from other agencies.

## **REVIEW**

- A review date to be arranged for 12months intervals or as appropriate.

Assessment completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Nursing Staff (Note Role)

&

Assessment completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Nursing Staff (Note Role)

## **AUDIT FOR CONTINUING CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL**

\* Please circle the most appropriate statement

\* If you have circled numbers 2 – 4 please comment in the space provided

### Gaps and Overlaps

35

1. All the needs are identified within the tool
2. Most of the needs are identified within the tool
3. Some of the needs are identified within the tool
4. None of the needs are identified within the tool

Comments:

### Ease of Use

1. Tool is understandable/clear/concise
2. Tool is mostly understandable/clear/concise
3. Tool is sometimes understandable/clear/concise 4.
- Tool is not understandable/clear/concise

Comments:

### Flexibility and Responsiveness

Is care being evaluated as agreed? YES/NO

Comments:

Have there been episodes where crisis points have been used? YES/NO

Comments:

If 'Yes' did the tool respond appropriately? YES/NO

Comments:

Did the tool change longstanding packages of care? YES/NO

Comments:

36

### Interagency working

Did the tool identify other agencies involved with the child/family? YES/NO

Comments:

### Correlation with assessment document

1. Tool correlates with assessment document thus ensuring no duplication and additional questions for the family.
2. Tool mostly correlates with assessment document and rarely results in duplication of questions for the family.
3. Tool sometimes correlates with assessment document but occasionally there are duplications of questions for the family.
4. Tool does not correlate with assessment document and there is frequently duplication of questions for the family.

Comments:

### Respite meeting health care needs

1. Only attended routine appointments at hospital/clinic.
2. Occasional acute admissions to hospital.
3. Frequent acute admissions to hospital.
4. Episodes of admissions for respite.

Comments:

37  
38