



# **ADMISSIONS POLICY of GOOD SHEPHERD N.S**

**Whitehall Road, Churchtown, Dublin 14**

**Rolla: 19939v**

**School Patron: The Archdiocese of Dublin**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This Admission Policy (referred to as the “Admission Policy” or “Policy” throughout) complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. Prior to submitting this Policy for approval by the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, the Board of Management of Good Shepherd National School has consulted with school staff, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, parents and guardians of children attending the school. The Chairperson of the Board of Management, Mr. Brian Swan, and the School Principal, Ms. Órlaith Veale, are happy to clarify any matters arising from this Policy.
- 1.2. This Policy was approved by the school patron on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025. A copy of this policy is available from the school office and is also available on the school’s website [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie). The Board of Management has communicated with the school community through the following channels: newsletter, letters and emails and Parish newsletter to increase awareness of the school’s Admission Policy and the process for applications.
- 1.3. The school’s Admission Policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Management. This revised Policy governs enrolment for the school year 2026/27 and subsequent years thereafter unless further updated. The Policy will be changed as soon as is reasonably possible should any change in legislation require changes to this Policy, after the new legislation comes into effect.
- 1.4. The relevant dates and timelines for the Good Shepherd National School Admission process are set out in the school’s Annual Admission Notice. This notice 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.

1.5. This Admission Policy aims to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to make an accurate and appropriate assessment of its capacity to cater for the needs of existing students and applicants in the light of the resources available to it. The policy also endeavours to make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with policy as approved by the Board Management, with the ethos of the school and with legislative requirements.

## **2. CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL**

2.1 The Good Shepherd National School is a co-educational primary school with a Catholic Ethos under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

2.2 The Good Shepherd National School caters for children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. In addition to mainstream, the Good Shepherd National School also has four special education classes: an Early Intervention Class for children with Autism, 2 Language Classes for children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) Specific Speech Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin and a class for children with Mild General Learning Difficulties (MGLD)

2.3 The Good Shepherd National School has a "Catholic Ethos" i.e. the school's ethos reflects the characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church. The school aims to promote:

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

2.4 The development of the curriculum for religious education remains the responsibility of the Church authorities.

2.5 The Board of Management reserves their right to promote and uphold a Catholic ethos under Section 7(3) of the Equal Status Act while also recognising, respecting and welcoming the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions and ways of life in society.

2.6 In accordance with section 15(2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Good Shepherd 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 Good Shepherd National School.

2.7 The Good Shepherd National School supports the principles of:

(a) Parental choice in relation to enrolment.

(b) Equality of access and participation in the school for all its pupils.

(c) Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to the enrolment of children with a disability or other special educational needs.

(d) Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions and languages in society and within its own school community.

2.8 The Good Shepherd National School aims to facilitate both the personal and academic development of all the school's pupils. The Board of Management, staff, parents and school community, work in partnership to develop both the spiritual and moral values of pupils while also meeting their social and academic needs.

2.9 Pupils of the Good Shepherd National School learn to appreciate, explore and express their own individuality and those of others. The Good Shepherd National



School aims to help all of our pupils grow and cultivate their talents and interests while helping them to mature as balanced, hard-working members of a just society.

- 2.10 Good Shepherd National School operates under the Rules for National Schools and Departmental Circulars and is subject to the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004, the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 and all relevant equality legislation.
- 2.11 The School is funded by grants and teachers' remuneration provided by the Department of Education and Skills. The Board of Management of Good Shepherd National School or any persons acting on its behalf will not seek payment 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.
- 2.12 The catchment area of the school is the Catholic Parish of the Good Shepherd Church, Churchtown Dublin 14 (referred to in this document as 'the Parish').
- 2.13 Good Shepherd National School follows the curricular programmes laid down by the Department of Education and Skills. The school also follows the Religious programme prescribed by the Education Secretariat of the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin.
- 2.14 Good Shepherd National School is subject to funding and resources available within the context and parameters of the DES regulations and programmes and the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act.
- 2.15 Children with special educational needs are welcome in the school and every effort is made to provide them with an appropriate education as well as to include them in every aspect of school life. Prior to school entry, the school strongly recommends that parents/ guardians arrange to meet school personnel if their child either has a Special Educational Needs diagnosis or if the parent has a concern of same. The suitability of a placement in Good Shepherd National School will be discussed. If required, a full



case conference may be called including all professionals working with the child and the school's Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) if appropriate.

- 2.16 The Board of Management will endeavour, when supports are available, to have all resources and support in place before the child is admitted to the school. These resources may include, for example, access to a resource teacher, access to a Special Needs Assistant, installation of specialised equipment or furniture. If additional supports are deemed necessary the Principal, on behalf of the Board of Management, will appeal to the SENO/ NCSE for access/ resourcing of same.
- 2.17 In accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management requires, as a condition of registering a student in the school, the parents/ guardians of that child to confirm in writing that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them. Parents/ guardians will also confirm that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by the student.
- 2.18 Children enrolled in Good Shepherd National School are required to co-operate with and support the school/Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as other school policies on curriculum, organisation and management. The Board of Management regards parents/guardians as responsible for ensuring that their children co-operate with school policies in an appropriate way.
- 2.19 The Board of Management reserves the right to operate a policy of suspension or expulsion in accordance with NEWB guidelines.

### **3 ADMISSION STATEMENT**

- 3.1 As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998 and Section 3 of the Equal Status Act , 2000, Good Shepherd National School will not discriminate in its admission of a student concerned to the school on any of the following grounds:
- (a) The gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
  - (b) The civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
  - (c) The family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
  - (d) The sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
  - (e) The religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student



- (f) The disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
- (g) The ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student
- (h) The Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student or
- (i) The ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

3.2 Good Shepherd National School will cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs act 2004 relating to the provision of education to children with special education needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of special or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

3.3 Good Shepherd 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.

3.4 Good Shepherd National School is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic religious values. The school does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

3.5 The school will admit each pupil seeking admission except where:

- a) The school is oversubscribed
- b) A parent of a student fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him/ her and that he/ she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student, or in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- c) The school may refuse admission to one of the school's special education classes where the student concerned:
  - Does not have the specified category of special educational needs provided for in this class and therefore does not meet the specified DES and local criteria



- The class is already fully subscribed (according to guidelines set by the DES i.e. maximum of 6 pupils in ASD Early intervention class; maximum of 7 children in each DLD/SSD Language class; a maximum of 11 children in the MGLD class).

## **4 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CLASSES**

4.1 Good Shepherd National School, with the approval of the Minister for Education and Skills, has established four Special Education Classes. These classes are:

- 1 x Early Intervention Class for children with Autism
- 1 x class for children with Mild and General learning Difficulties (MGLD Class)
- 2 x DLD/SSD Language Classes

4.2 These classes provide an education exclusively for students with categories of special educational needs specified by the Minister and meet the criteria as set down by the Department of Education. The school may refuse to admit to the class a student who does not have the category of needs specified. Please see relevant Admissions Policies for each.

### **4.3 ADMISSIONS POLICY: EARLY INTERVENTION CLASS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM**

#### **4.3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Good Shepherd N.S. Early Intervention class for children with Autism (EI Autism Class) caters for the needs of children diagnosed with Autism. Children who attend our Early Intervention Class may also have developmental delays in the mild range. The class does not have the resources or specialised equipment to support students whose primary challenges involve moderate, severe, or profound intellectual and/or physical/sensory disabilities. These students generally require and are better served by alternative educational environments.

Referrals for EI Autism Class placement are made by a parent. The EI Autism Class's application form (Appendix A) must be completed with a copy of all necessary reports and eligibility confirmation before mid-January of the year prior to entry (see admission notice



on [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie) to check for the specific date for the year in question).

#### **4.3.2 CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

Entry to the EI Autism Class must comply with Department of Education policy. Therefore, children

- Children who attend an EI Autism Class must be at least 3 years of age on entry.
- Children who attend an EI Autism Class must be under 6 years of age / cannot turn 6 years of age during the final placement academic year.
- A psychological report must be provided on the child which confirms a diagnosis of Autism as per DSM-1V, DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria.
- This report should confirm that the child's needs would be best met in an Early Intervention Autism Class placement.

#### **4.3.3 APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

##### **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION (NCSE) CRITERIA:**

To apply for our EI Autism Class, parents must first complete the NCSE "Parents Notify" procedure and receive a letter confirming their eligibility for the class from the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO). This mandatory step, which must be completed in the Autumn of the year prior to proposed admission, is a prerequisite for our school's application process. Specific deadlines can be found on the NCSE website ([www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)). The school's application process can only begin after a child's eligibility for the class has been confirmed in writing by the SENO.

##### **GOOD SHEPHERD NATIONAL SCHOOL (GSNS) CRITERIA:**

Upon receiving the eligibility letter for admission to our EI Autism Class from the SENO, parents can begin the application process by completing the application form below and also available in the Admissions Section of [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie) . A copy of the child's psychological reports and any other relevant reports must be submitted with this completed application form.

- Application opening and closing dates are set out annually in the Admission Notice on the school's website [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie)
- Completed application forms must be accompanied by, at a minimum, an Autism diagnosis and a psychological report with a written recommendation for an EI





Autism Class placement. The report must confirm a diagnosis of Autism as per the DSM-1V, DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria.

If the above criteria for EI Autism class placement are met, the application then goes forward for discussion, ranking and selection at the annual EI Autism Class Admissions Meeting. Members of the Admissions/Management Committee advise the Board of Management to allocate places available in the class based on the following agreed criteria:

- Age and readiness of the child
- The degree to which the Autism diagnosis impacts on child's academic performance and social skills
- Suitability of class placement for the child at that time.

Please note\*\* Referral does not guarantee that a child will secure a place. There is a maximum limit of 6 places in our EI Autism class at any time, and each child referred is usually one of many to be considered. As children may avail of 1 / 2-year placements the number of places available annually can vary.

Parents are reminded that:

- GSNS is a school with a Catholic ethos where we strive to develop a spiritual and good moral foundation.
- No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, language, gender, asylum seeker or refugee status or religious or political beliefs, family or social circumstances or being a member of the traveller community.
- While recognising the right of parents to seek to enrol their child with an autism diagnosis in GSNS, the Board of Management has a duty of care to the existing school community. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. The BOM reserves the right not to admit a child unless it believes it can meet the needs of the child seeking enrolment.
- If GSNS cannot meet a child's medical needs safely, the child cannot be enrolled.



- The school prioritises the health and safety of its pupils and staff. Therefore, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any child whose history of violent or out-of-control behaviours presents an unacceptable safety risk.

This class is specifically designed to support children with Autism and is not resourced or an appropriate placement for children with EBD/SEBD.

#### **4.3.4 SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

Notification of a successful application will be sent to parents as per the date specified set out annually in the Admission Notice on the school's website ([www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie)). Parents will also be invited to attend a Welcome Afternoon in the school in late Term 3 of the year immediately prior to enrolment. The school handbook and any other relevant information will be given to parents during this meeting, to help parents assist their child's transition into the EI Autism Class.

#### **4.3.5 RIGHT TO APPEAL**

The BOM of the Good Shepherd National School recognises and upholds a parent's right to appeal a refusal to enrol through the Appeal Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Upon receiving the BOM's decision parents/guardians will be informed by the BOM of the procedure and timeframe involved for an appeal.

The procedures under Section 29 cannot be invoked until all procedures at local level have been exhausted.

This Admissions Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025. It will be reviewed in October 2026.



## **4.4 ADMISSION POLICY for DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER (DLD) / SPEECH SOUND DISORDER (SSD) CLASSES**

### **4.4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Good Shepherd DLD/SSD Classes are two classes in a mainstream primary school, which cater for the educational and speech and language needs of children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and/or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) *of unknown origin*. DLD/SSD Classes are jointly run by the Departments of Education and Health. The classes are staffed by a full-time primary teacher, and the children receive direct therapy and indirect support (through working with teacher and parents) from a part-time HSE Speech/Language Therapist (SLT).

There is a maximum of seven children in a DLD/SSD Class in any one year as per Department of Education guidelines (DE Circular 24/2025). DLD/SSD Classes follow the regular primary school curriculum apart from Irish. Children attending a DLD/SSD Class may integrate with their peers from mainstream classes for some subjects, during break times and for school activities such as concerts/ school tours.

### **4.4.2 WHAT IS DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER (DLD)?**

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) occurs when a child experiences severe difficulty developing their communication skills (understanding and/or using spoken language) and does not improve with regular speech and language therapy. DLD is a language disorder with no known associated differentiating condition (e.g. Autism, Down Syndrome or General Learning Difficulties), that is pervasive and enduring. Pupils with DLD have exceptional problems in learning and generalising certain language skills, which have a functional impact on educational progress, everyday social interactions, and other aspects of everyday life.

### **4.4.3 WHAT IS SPEECH SOUND DISORDER (SSD) OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN?**

'Speech Sound Disorder' is an umbrella term to describe a range of speech delays and disorders including phonological speech disorders (consistent and inconsistent), articulation disorder, Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) and dysarthria. Some children may present with persistent and severe speech sound disorders in isolation and others where there are co-occurring language difficulties including DLD. For a small but



significant group of children, their persistent and severe speech sound disorders can impact on literacy, learning, social participation, school and well-being. Speech Sound Disorder of unknown origin is diagnosed by a SLT where there is no known origin or the speech sound disorder is not associated with any known medical condition such as Cleft Lip and/or Palate, Cerebral Palsy, Downs Syndrome.

#### **4.4.4 CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION**

***DLD is a language disorder with no known associated differentiating condition that is pervasive and enduring (NCSE Criteria for Enrolment in Special Classes for children with DLD/SSD 2025).***

Children referred for DLD/SSD Class placement consideration should meet the following criteria as outlined in the DES Circular 24/2025:

The child has a conclusive diagnosis by a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) of:

1. (a) Developmental Language Disorder where:

i.) there is evidence of significant and pervasive needs evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools, observation in both clinical and social environments and assessment for risk factors and clinical markers and monitoring of responsiveness to intervention

**and**

ii.) language scores are at or below a standard score of 78 (-1.5 SD from the mean)

**and/or**

(b) Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin diagnosed by a SLT where there is evidence of significant and pervasive impact of the SSD of unknown origin on learning, literacy and social relationships evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.

**AND**

2. The child has complex or severe educational needs as a result of their DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin that are pervasive in nature and require the integrated and targeted educational and therapeutic supports of a special class for children with DLD/SSD. Supporting evidence should include:



- a) Evidence that despite targeted and intensive therapeutic and educational supports, the child's DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin continues to impact on their learning, participation, socialisation and well-being in their current educational setting.
- b) Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation over time through Speech and Language Therapist review.
- c) Education documentation from schools or early learning and care settings including Student Support Plans and/or Access and Inclusion Profiles detailing:
  - Regular reviews of needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment and review with parents and educational staff
  - Target-setting
  - Evidence-informed intervention and review at key points.

The SLT initiating or involved in the referral should be satisfied that:

- They have followed the [Decision Making Guidelines for Admissions Committees Development Language Disorder/Speech Sound Disorder classes](#) (see Appendix A)
- There is evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation within the previous 9-12 months prior to the application deadline. This should include a SLT review of the child's response to intervention in terms of impairment, functioning and participation.
- There is evidence of ongoing educational needs arising from the child's DLD/SSD of unknown origin following intervention.
- The child must be at least 4 years of age on/before 1st April in the enrolment year.
- The child must live within the following designated HSE catchment areas:
  - Dublin Southeast
  - Dublin South
  - Parts of Dublin Southwest that are within the M50
  - Parts of Dublin South City and West that are south of the River Liffey and within the M50



Children living outside the catchment area who meet all other above criteria will only be reviewed by the committee if places remain following the primary admissions round.

Please note:

- Parents are reminded that GSNS is a school with a Catholic ethos where we strive to develop a spiritual and good moral foundation.
- No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, language, gender, asylum seeker or refugee status or religious or political beliefs, family or social circumstances or being a member of the traveller community.
- While recognising the right of parents to seek to enrol their child with DLD/ SSD of unknown origin, in GSNS, the Board of Management has a duty of care to the existing school community. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. The BOM reserves the right not to admit a child unless it believes it can meet the needs of a child seeking enrolment.
- Please note GSNS is a primary school, it is not resourced to meet an individual's medical needs. If GSNS cannot meet a child's medical needs safely, a child cannot be enrolled.
- The school prioritises the health and safety of its pupils and staff. Therefore, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any child whose history of violent or out-of-control behaviours presents an unacceptable safety risk.

#### **4.4.5 APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Referrals for DLD/SSD Class placement are made by the SLT working with the child and their family. The SLT initiates the application process, which involves:

1. Completing the GSNS DLD/SSD Class's application forms (Appendix B).
2. Compiling all other necessary documentation, as detailed in the DLD/SSD Language Referral Pack available in the Admissions Section of [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie).  
(Appendix B)



Applications must be sent to the school principal before the annual deadline as advertised on the annual admission notice on the school website. A covering letter and three copies of all referral documentation must be included.

If a referral meets the criteria for DLD/SSD Class placement, the application then goes forward for discussion, ranking and selection at the annual DLD/SSD Class Admissions Meeting. Members of the Admissions/Management Committee allocate places available in the DLD/SSD Class based on agreed criteria: These include:

- Severity of the DLD/SSD
- Age and readiness of the child
- The degree to which the disorder impacts on child's academic performance and social skills
- Suitability of DLD/SSD Class placement for the child at that time.

Please note\*\* **Referral does not guarantee that a child will secure a DLD/SSD Class place.** There is a maximum limit of 7 places in each of our two DLD/SSD Classes at any time, and each child referred is usually one of many to be considered. As children may avail of 1–2-year placements the number of places available annually can vary.

#### **DLD/SSD CLASS REFERRALS MUST INCLUDE:**

1. Completed 'Referral to DLD/SSD Class's form
2. Parent Consent Form
3. Speech & Language Therapy Report (written within 3 months of referral date) confirming a diagnosis of DLD or SSD (of unknown origin) (see further guidance below)
4. School/Preschool report to include School Support Plans/Access and Inclusion Profile (see guidance below)
5. A copy of the child's most recent school report
6. Completed Parent Social, Emotional and Behaviour (SEB) Rating Form
7. Completed School/Pre-school SEB Rating Form
8. All other reports relating to the child. These may include AON, psychology reports, audiology reports, OT reports, paediatric reports, CAMHS report etc.



#### 4.4.6 GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETION OF APPLICATION SPEECH AND LANGUAGE REPORT

The SLT report should include

- Case History summary including any family history of speech, language or learning difficulties, any other developmental difficulties e.g. hearing, motor coordination or other risk factors/clinical markers for DLD. Please ensure reviews are up-to-date and that any onward referrals needed are made prior to DLD/SSD Class referral e.g. ENT, OT.
- Specific information in the case of children who are bi/multilingual (e.g. languages used, for how long, in what contexts). Where relevant, clinical judgment should be described as to differential diagnosis between second language learning and a DLD/SSD of unknown origin. (Please see the relevant IASLT Guidelines 2016)
- A summary of the child's educational history and the impact of the language/communication difficulties on his/her ability to access or progress with the curriculum effectively. Please also detail any support needs including any support provision already in place (e.g. support teacher/ SNA).
- Summary of speech and language therapy input and interventions including dates, target areas and outcomes in relation to supporting the diagnosis.
- Longitudinal speech and language assessments and/or intervention identifying need over time. Assessment over time should include formal assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.
- The child's current profile including most recent \*standardised assessment results of receptive and expressive language development and of speech if relevant. (\*assessed within 6 months of application deadline). Subtest scores, index scores, percentile ranks, and the confidence interval used, should be included. In the case of pragmatic/social language skills, use a checklist if possible and briefly describe key areas.
- Description of the significant functional impact of the child's DLD/SSD of unknown origin on their learning, literacy, communication, social and emotional development, regulation and behaviour and overall well-being across contexts (i.e. home, school, peers).





- Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation within the previous 9-12 months prior to the application deadline.
- Where relevant, indicate the severity of the child's speech challenges i.e. current level of intelligibility, phonological system, oral-motor functioning as relevant. A short transcription can also be very helpful.
- Diagnosis and Recommendations: The child's current diagnosis should be clearly stated along with recommendations as to the need for placement in DLD/SSD Class based on severity and impact.
- Include information regarding any co-occurring disorders/needs (see IASLT Position Paper on DLD (2017)) and the impact of these on the child's participation and engagement in learning and socialisation in the current educational context.
- Confirmation that the recommendation for referral to special class for DLD/SSD of unknown origin has been discussed with school and parents and, as appropriate, with the child

#### **4.4.7 GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETION OF APPLICATION SCHOOL/PRESCHOOL REPORT**

School/Preschool Teacher's Report should include

- The impact of the child's DLD/SSD on his/her educational progress and social and emotional development. It should also include any educational supports, approaches, strategies and/or interventions that have been implemented for the child in their classroom or across the school day specifically within the last 9-12 months. This should include collaboration with professionals e.g. psychology, SLT, OT etc. as well as additional educational support such as access to SNA support or assistive technology.
- The aim, content, timeframe and review of this evidence informed educational supports, approaches, strategies and/or interventions to date.
- Outline of regular review of the child's educational needs as part of an ongoing cycle of support and review with parents, educational staff and the child within the last 9-12 months.
- Description of the functional impact of the child's DLD/SSD of unknown origin on their learning, literacy, communication, social and emotional development,



regulation and behaviour and overall well-being across educational contexts (i.e. yard, classroom, peer relationships).

#### **4.4.8 SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

Notification of a successful application will be sent to parents as per the date specified set out annually in the Admission Notice on the school's website ([www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie)). Parents will also be invited to attend a Welcome Afternoon in the school in late Term 3 of the year immediately prior to enrolment. The school handbook and any other relevant information will be given to parents during this meeting, to help parents assist their child's transition into the DLD/ SSD Class.

#### **4.4.9 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are encouraged to be involved with setting their child's learning and speech/ language goals. They are expected to attend various meetings during the school year. These include meetings between the teacher, therapist and parent; between the parent and speech/language therapist; between the teacher and parent.

Home support is a necessary requirement of sustaining a DLD/SSD Class place. This support ensures that agreed approaches/ strategies and homework are introduced and completed.

#### **4.4.10 LENGTH OF PLACEMENT:**

Eligible pupils may spend up to two years in a DLD/SSD Class (DES Circular 0024/2025).

Placement in the DLD/SSD Class is reviewed annually. Parents are usually advised of their child's progress in November parent teacher meetings and will be informed about the second-year placement early in Term 2. At the end of the placement, the children return to either their mainstream school or to a school of their parents'/guardians' choosing. It is the responsibility of the parents/ guardians to ensure their child has a place secured in another school.

If there is spare capacity in a DLD/SSD Class because of insufficient eligible applications the Board of Management may offer a third year to a maximum of two pupils on a



concessionary basis. Such placement must be supported by the recommendation of a speech & language therapist and sanctioned by the Admissions Advisory Committee.

#### **4.4.11 RIGHT TO APPEAL**

The BOM of the Good Shepherd National School recognises and upholds a parent's right to appeal a refusal to enrol through the Appeal Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Upon receiving the BOM's decision parents/guardians will be informed by the BOM of the procedure and timeframe involved for an appeal.

The procedures under Section 29 cannot be invoked until all procedures at local level have been exhausted.

This Admissions Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025. It will be reviewed in October 2026.



## **4.5 ADMISSION POLICY FOR CHILDREN TO THE MILD ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR CHILDREN TO THE MILD GENERAL LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (MGLS) CLASS**

### **4.5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Good Shepherd National School MGLD class caters for the needs of children with a mild general learning difficulty. Children seeking enrolment must have an up-to-date psychological assessment (within two years) stating that the child's IQ is within the mild range (i.e. IQ 50 -70), and also meet the conditions laid out in Circular 38/2010. As our class currently accommodates children from 3rd to 6th class, we recommend that all applicants have successfully completed up to a minimum of 1<sup>st</sup> class education in a mainstream setting.

To apply for a place in this class, a child's primary educational difficulty must be MGLD. This must be clearly stated in the child's psychological report. The class is not equipped to support children whose primary educational challenges are due to Emotional, Behavioural, and Social Difficulties (EBD/SEBD) or Autism (ASD).

### **4.5.2 APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

#### **NCSE:**

To apply for our MGLD class, parents must first contact the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and complete the Parent's Notification Form. This mandatory step, which must be completed in the Autumn of the year prior to proposed admission, is a prerequisite for our school's application process. Specific deadlines can be found on the NCSE website ([www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)). The school's application process can only begin after a child's eligibility for the class has been confirmed and approved by the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO).

#### **GSNS:**

Upon receiving the eligibility letter for admission to our MGLD class from the SENO, parents can begin the application process by completing the form found below. A copy of psychological reports, current school placement reports and any/all relevant evidence must be submitted with this completed application form.

On receipt of relevant documentation school personnel will contact parents and the existing school placement to gain a better understanding of the child's needs. Parents may be asked to make an appointment to see the principal to discuss their child's needs and how best



GSNS can meet them within available resources. GSNS personnel will arrange to visit the child and observe them in their current educational setting.

Please note

- Parents are reminded that GSNS is a school with a Catholic ethos where we strive to develop a spiritual and good moral foundation.
- No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, language, gender, asylum seeker or refugee status or religious or political beliefs, family or social circumstances or being a member of the traveller community.
- While recognising the right of parents to enrol their child with a mild learning disability in GSNS, the Board of Management has a duty of care to the existing school community. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. The BOM reserves the right not to admit a child unless it believes it can meet the needs of a child seeking enrolment.
- GSNS is a primary school, it is not resourced to meet an individual's medical needs. If GSNS cannot meet a child's medical needs safely, a child cannot be enrolled.
- The school prioritises the health and safety of its pupils and staff. Therefore, the Board of Management reserves the right to refuse enrolment to any child whose history of violent or out-of-control behaviours presents an unacceptable safety risk.

This class is specifically designed to support children with MGLD and is not resourced or an appropriate placement for children with EBD/SEBD.

- Prior to enrolment GSNS will seek a written report from the pupil's present school.

If the above criteria for MGLD class placement are met, the application then goes forward for discussion, ranking and selection at the annual MGLD Class Admissions Meeting.

Members of the Admissions/Management Committee advise the Board of Management to allocate places available in the class based on the following agreed criteria:

- Age and readiness of the child
- The degree to which MGLD impacts on child's academic performance and social skills



- Suitability of class placement for the child at that time.

Please note\*\* Referral does not secure a child's placement. There is a maximum limit of 11 places in our MLD class at any time, and each child referred is usually one of many to be considered. As children may be enrolled in the class for several years the number of places available annually can fluctuate.

#### **4.5.3 SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

Notification of a successful application will be sent to parents as per the date specified set out annually in the Admission Notice on the school's website ([www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie)). Parents will also be invited to attend a Welcome Afternoon in the school in late Term 3 of the year immediately prior to enrolment. The school handbook and any other relevant information will be given to parents during this meeting, to help parents assist their child's transition into the MGLD Class.

#### **4.5.4 RIGHT TO APPEAL**

The BOM of the Good Shepherd National School recognises and upholds a parent's right to appeal a refusal to enrol through the Appeal Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Upon receiving the BOM's decision parents/guardians will be informed by the BOM of the procedure and timeframe involved for an appeal.

The procedures under Section 29 cannot be invoked until all procedures at local level have been exhausted.

This Admissions Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025. It will be reviewed in October 2026.



## **5 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS (JUNIOR INFANT APPLICATION PROCESS)**

5.1 The opening date for Admissions will be advertised on the school's website annually. Parents/ Guardians who wish to apply to enrol a child in Junior Infants in Good Shepherd National School for the following year must the application form and submit the required information by the closing date for enrolment.

5.2 The closing date for enrolment in Junior Infants in any year (referred to in this Policy as the Closing Date) is 2pm on the date that is twenty-two calendar days after the Opening Date. All applications for enrolment are considered provided all the required information has been received on/ before the Closing Date. No application is considered unless all of the required information has been received by the Closing Date.

5.3 Those who wish to enrol their child in Good Shepherd National School are required to return the following:

- A fully completed Application Form (available on the school's website [www.goodshepherd.ie](http://www.goodshepherd.ie) (Appendix D), or in hard copy from the school)
- A copy of the birth or adoption certificate of the child for whom a place is being sought
- One fixed utility invoice (i.e. for electricity, gas, fixed broadband or cable/satellite TV), dated within 3 months before the Closing Date, evidencing the address of the residence of the child for whom a place is being sought.

5.4 Applications may be hand delivered, by post or by email to [school@goodshepherd.ie](mailto:school@goodshepherd.ie). All applications will be acknowledged of receipt by email which will be kept on file.

5.5 Parents/guardians are required to provide the school with all relevant information and to inform the school of any change of address, contact details or other information relevant to their application.

5.6 Applications for admission received after the Closing Date as per the Annual Admission Notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with the School's Admission Policy, the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018 and any regulations made under



that Act. Such applications will be considered if a place is available and no names appear or remain on the waiting list for places

5.7 Parents are kindly requested to enclose any/all relevant reports about their child to the school with their application form to facilitate school planning/ timely application for additional supports if necessary (See Section 2.15). Examples of these include, but are not limited to: SLT reports, Occupational Therapy reports, Psychological reports and reports/feedback from the child's pre-school setting. GSNS staff may also request a meeting with parents to discuss their child's individual needs. GSNS staff may contact all relevant parties in relation to these reports.

5.8 By returning a completed application form parents of all prospective pupils consent to allow Good Shepherd staff to contact and perhaps visit and observe their child in their preschool setting.

## **6 CRITERIA FOR MAINSTREAM/OVERSUBSCRIPTION**

6.1 In the event that the number of applicants for places in Junior Infants exceeds the number, determined by the Board of Management, of places available, places are allocated in the order in which those categories appear below, until places are fully allocated.

6.2 Within each of the following categories, the order of priority is determined by the date of birth of each child, with priority to the oldest.

- A. Children must be aged 4 by the 1<sup>st</sup> of April of year of enrolment in accordance with criteria as outlined in points 2-7 below.
- B. Brothers and sisters of current children in the mainstream school (including step-siblings and foster children resident at the same home address) and children living within Good Shepherd Parish. (Priority will be given to the oldest). Proof of residence may be requested upon application.
- C. Children of current staff employed by the school. (Priority to the oldest).
- D. Children living outside the parish boundaries of Churchtown. (Priority to the oldest)





- E. Finally, if there are vacancies after groups from A-D have been allocated places children born after 1<sup>st</sup> April but on/before 31<sup>st</sup> August of year of enrolment may be offered a place only under exceptional circumstances (priority will be given to the oldest first).
- F. Please note: Siblings of children in the special classes do not get priority-but follow the criteria C-E outlined above.

6.3 In the event that there are 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.

6.4 The Board of Management reserves the right to withdraw a place that has been allocated based on residence in the Parish at any time prior to the applicant starting in the Junior Infant class in the school if the Board is not satisfied that:

- (i) all relevant information provided to the school in connection with the applicant's application is true and accurate.
- (ii) no relevant information has been withheld from the school.

6.5 The name of each applicant who has completed enrolment and who is not allocated a place is placed on a waiting list in the order determined by the policy set out above, and any additional places that become available during the remainder of the school year prior to the commencement of the Junior Infant class (e.g. where an offer of a place is not taken up) are allocated from that waiting list in the order in which the applicants appear on the waiting list. This waiting list also serves as the waiting list for any place that may become available in the year following the commencement of the Junior Infant class.

## **7 ENROLMENT DECISION CRITERIA – WHAT WILL BE CONSIDERED OR TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

7.1 The Board of Management recognises the right of parents to enrol their child in the school of their choice. However, the Board must respect the rights of the existing school community, and in particular, the children already enrolled when deciding on the number



of places to be made available in Junior Infants. This balanced decision is guided by the principles of natural justice and taken in the best interest of all the children in the school.

7.2 The BOM reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind the following:

- Size of / available space in classrooms
- Educational needs of children of a particular age
- Presence of children currently enrolled with significant special education/behavioural needs
- Safety and educational needs of existing pupils within the class
- Department of Education maximum pupil/teacher ratio directives.

7.3 The application process remains open for twenty-two days as per the school's Admission Notice.

7.4 All decisions on admission applications to Good Shepherd National School are based on:

- The School's Admission Policy
- The School's Annual Admission Notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official Application Form received during the period specified in the Annual Admission Notice

7.5 In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, the Board of Management of Good Shepherd National School will not consider any of the following factors 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 aptitudes of a student's parents,



- (e) A requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meetings 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, subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the School's Annual Admission Notice for the school year concerned.

## **8 DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS**

8.1 All decisions on applications for admission to Good Shepherd N.S 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 decide on an application for a place in our school.

## **9 NOTIFYING APPLICANTS OF DECISIONS**

9.1 Applicants informed in writing as to the decision of the school within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice.

9.2 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).

9.3 In order to secure a place in Junior Infants, an offer of a place must be accepted in writing on or before the date specified in the Annual Admission Notice. If the offer is not accepted in writing on or before that date the offer will be deemed to have been withdrawn, and the place will be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.

9.4 In accepting an offer of admission from Good Shepherd National School parents/guardians must indicate whether they:

(a) Have accepted an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, they must also provide details of the other school or schools concerned

(b) Have applied for and are 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.

Applicants should be aware that Section 66(6) of the Education Act 1998, as inserted by the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act 2018, allows for the sharing of information between schools to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

9.5 Parents/guardians who do not wish to take up the offer of a place are asked to inform the Good Shepherd National School in writing of this decision as soon as possible to facilitate other applicants.

9.6 If a student is not offered a place in the 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 may request the



Board of Management to review a decision to refuse admission. Applicants will be informed of the right of appeal of the school's decision (See Section 18 below).

9.7 Parents will also be invited to attend a Welcome Evening in the school in Term 3 of the year of enrolment. The school handbook and any other relevant information will be given to parents during this evening, to assist parents as they guide their child into the national primary education system.

## **10 ACCEPTANCE OF AN OFFER OF A PLACE BY AN APPLICANT**

10.1 In accepting an offer of admission from Good Shepherd N.S, parents 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, you 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.

10.2 In order to secure a place, an offer of a place must be accepted in writing on or before the date specified in the Annual Admission Notice. If the offer is not accepted in writing within that timeframe the offer will be deemed to have been withdrawn and the place will be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.

10.3 Parents/ guardians must confirm in writing, in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him/ her and that he/ she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student

10.4 Parents/guardians who do not wish to take up the offer of a place are asked to inform the Good Shepherd National School in writing of this decision as soon as possible to facilitate other applicants.



## **11 REFUSALS OF APPLICATIONS & WITHDRAWALS OF OFFERS**

11.1 An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Good Shepherd NS 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.

## **12 SHARING OF DATA WITH OTHER SCHOOLS**

12.1 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) 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**

- 13.1 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 Good Shepherd NS 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.
- 13.2 Placement on the waiting list of Good Shepherd NS 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.
- 13.3 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.
- 13.4 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**

- 14.1 All applications for admission received for any class 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.
- 14.2 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 AND DURING THE SCHOOL**

- 15.1 Occasionally the Board of Management makes places available in the school other than at the start of Junior Infants. Such places can arise when a pupil leaves an existing class. However, the Board of Management reserves the right to decline to make available a place when any pupil leaves the school. In deciding whether to make a place available other than at the start of Junior Infants the Board of Management considers all relevant factors, including those referred to in Section 7.2 of this Admission Policy.
- 15.2 An applicant wishing to join any class other than Junior Infants (Pupil Transfer), at any stage of an academic year, must apply to the school using a completed Pupil Transfer Form (See Appendix E) which is available on the school's website. They are also required to furnish an original Birth/Adoption Certificate (Baptism Certificate, if applicable, to help with planning of Sacramental preparation). To facilitate school planning, completed application forms should be returned to the school with a copy of their last school report. To facilitate the allocation of such places the school operates a waiting list for each class.
- 15.3 All waiting lists cease to operate at the end of each academic year. Accordingly, a fresh application is needed each year, for any applicant who wishes to remain on the waiting list to join a year group as it progresses through the school.
- 15.4 Applications may be hand delivered, by post or by email to [school@goodshepherd.ie](mailto:school@goodshepherd.ie). Receipt of all applications will receive an acknowledgement by email which will be kept on file.
- 15.5 Parents are kindly requested to enclose any/all relevant reports about their child to the school with their application form to facilitate school planning/ timely application for additional supports if necessary (See Section 2.15). Examples of these include, but are not limited to: SLT reports, Occupational Therapy reports, Psychological reports and reports/feedback from the child's pre-school setting. GSNS staff may also request a





meeting with parents to discuss their child's individual needs. GSNS staff may contact all relevant parties in relation to these reports.

- 15.6 By returning a completed application form parents of all prospective pupils consent to allow Good Shepherd staff to contact their child's current educational setting and arrange an observation if deemed necessary.
- 15.7 Where a valid application is received for a place in a class, the name of the applicant is placed on the waiting list, provided the applicant's age is, in the view of the Board of Management, appropriate for the year group in question. If the Board of Management decides to make a place available in a class, the names that are on the waiting list for that class at the time of the Board's decision are placed in order using the same order of priority as is set out above in Section 6.2
- 15.8 If an applicant declines the offer of a place the applicant is removed from the waiting list, and the place is offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.
- 15.9 In the event that there are no names on a waiting list, the Board may offer a place to an applicant whose otherwise valid application was received outside the application period. If the number of such applications exceeds one, the same order of priority is used as applies to applications received within the relevant application period.
- 15.10 Parents/guardians are asked to inform the school in writing if they are no longer interested in a place for a child whose name is on the waiting list for a class.

## **16 DECLARATION IN RELATION TO THE NON-CHARGING OF FEES**

The Board of Good Shepherd NS 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.



## **17 ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING RELIGIOUS**

### **INSTRUCTION**

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 maybe, to discuss how the request maybe accommodated by the school.

## **18 RIGHT OF APPEAL**

18.1 Where an applicant has been refused admission an appeal may be made under Section 29(1) c) of the Education Act 1998.

18.2 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.

18.3 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.

18.4 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.

18.5 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 the Education Act 1998, which are published on the website of the Department of Education.

18.6 The procedures under Section 29 cannot be invoked until all procedures at local level have been exhausted.



This Admissions Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025. It will be reviewed in October 2026.

Signed: Brian Swan  
Brian Swan  
Chairperson

Signed: Órlaith Veale  
Órlaith Veale  
Principal & Secretary BOM



## ADMISSION POLICY APPENDICES

### **Appendix 1: Appendices for the for Early Intervention Class for children with Autism**

**Appendix A** link to NCSE website Parents Notify procedure

<https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school>

**Appendix B** Link to GSNS Application Form FOR CHILDREN TO THE EI CLASS

[https://www.goodshepherd.ie/web/application\\_forms/649857](https://www.goodshepherd.ie/web/application_forms/649857)

### **Appendix 2: Appendices for the for Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)/ Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) Class**

**Appendix C** link to Department of Education DLD/ SSD of unknown origin Language Class matrix

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/special-classes-for-children-with-developmental-language-disorder-dld-or-speech-sound-disorder-ssd/>

**Appendix D** Link to GSNS Referral Pack documents for SLTs (including rating scales etc.)

[https://www.goodshepherd.ie/web/application\\_forms/649857](https://www.goodshepherd.ie/web/application_forms/649857)

### **Appendix 3: Appendices for the Mild General Learning Class (MGLD)**

**See Appendix A (above)** link to NCSE website Parents Notify procedure

<https://ncse.ie/notify-ncse-special-class-special-school>

**Appendix E** Link to GSNS Application Form FOR CHILDREN TO THE MGLD CLASS



## Appendix B

### EI Autism Class Application Form

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed forms to be returned to the school office  
(accompanied by a copy of the NCSE letter confirming eligibility  
for the class, the child's Birth Certificate, and all relevant  
psychological and professional assessment reports)**

#### SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Child's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

PPS. No: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Language spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work No: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work No: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable please give name of previous Early Years setting:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **SECTION B: SCHOOL INFORMATION**

Number of children in family: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of child: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have other children attending this school, please state:

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION C: LEARNING NEEDS**

1. Which of the following agencies/services has your child attended?

Please mark **X** in the box.

Assessment of need	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupational therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lucena Clinic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychiatrist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Primary Care	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outline briefly any therapies your child has received to date:

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2. Is your child toilet trained?      Yes  No

3. Does your child use a Communications Device?      Yes  No



## **SECTION D: SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

Will your child require school transport to/from school? Yes  No

Parents offered a place for their child will be asked to complete the necessary **NCSE** special class enrolment forms (and transport forms if required).

I confirm that all details given above are correct.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

[Date \_\_\_\_\_]

**All information given will be treated confidentially**



## Appendix D

# REFERRAL for DLD/SSD CLASS PLACEMENT (2026/27)

### **APPLICATION CLOSING DATE**

**26<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 12pm**

Dear Colleague/s,

The closing date for referrals to our DLD/SSD Classes is fast approaching. We are therefore making contact and include our key guidelines and points of information which we hope you find helpful.

Referrals to the DLD/SSD Classes are accepted from Speech & Language Therapists. We do not accept referrals from parents.

3 copies of each referral application should be directed with a covering letter in writing, to:-

**Ms. Órlaith Veale,  
Principal,  
Good Shepherd National School,  
Whitehall Road,  
Dublin 14.**

Referral reports will be promptly circulated to members of the Admissions Advisory Committee (AAC).

Successful applicants will be informed prior to 20th March 2026.





## CRITERIA for ADMISSION

***DLD is a language disorder with no known associated differentiating condition that is pervasive and enduring (NCSE Criteria for Enrolment in Special Classes for children with DLD/SSD 2025).***

Children referred for DLD/SSD Class placement consideration should meet the following criteria as described in the DES Circular 24/2025:

The child has a conclusive diagnosis by a Speech and Language Therapist of:

1. (a) Developmental Language Disorder where:

i.) there is evidence of significant and pervasive needs evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools, observation in both clinical and social environments and assessment for risk factors and clinical markers and monitoring of responsiveness to intervention

**and**

ii.) language scores at or below a standard score of 78 (-1.5 SD from the mean)

**and/or**

(b) Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist where there is evidence of significant and pervasive impact of the SSD of unknown origin on learning, literacy and social relationships evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.

**AND**

2. The child has complex or severe educational needs as a result of their DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin that are pervasive in nature and require the integrated and targeted educational and therapeutic supports of a special class for children with DLD/SSD. Supporting evidence should include:

a) Evidence that despite targeted and intensive therapeutic and educational supports, the child's DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin continues to impact on their learning, participation, socialisation and well-being in their current educational setting.



- b) Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation over time through Speech and Language Therapist review.
- c) Education documentation from schools or early learning and care settings including Student Support Plans and/or Access and Inclusion Profiles detailing: Regular reviews of needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment and review with parents and educational staff target-setting, evidence-informed intervention and review at key points.

### **REFERRALS MUST INCLUDE:**

#### **DLD/SSD CLASS REFERRALS MUST INCLUDE:**

1. Completed 'Referral to DLD/SSD Class's form
2. Parent Consent Form
3. Speech & Language Therapy Report (written within 3 months of referral date) confirming a diagnosis of DLD/ SSD of unknown origin
4. School/Preschool report to include School Support Plans/Access and Inclusion Profile
5. A copy of the child's most recent school report
6. Completed Parent Social, Emotional and Behaviour (SEB) Rating Form
7. Completed School/Pre-school SEB Rating Form
8. All other reports relating to the child. This may include AON, psychology report, audiology report, OT report, paediatric report, CAMHS report etc.

#### **Speech and Language Therapy Report**

Speech and Language Therapist's Report should include

- Case History summary including any family history of speech, language or learning difficulties, any other developmental difficulties e.g. hearing, motor coordination or other risk factors/clinical markers for DLD. Please ensure reviews are up-to-date and that any onward referrals needed are made prior to DLD/SSD Class referral e.g. ENT, OT.
- Specific information in the case of children who are bi/multilingual (e.g. languages used, for how long, in what contexts). If relevant, clinical judgment should be described as to differential diagnosis between second language learning and a DLD/SSD of unknown origin. (Please see the relevant IASLT Guidelines 2016)



- Brief summary of the child's educational history and the impact of the language/communication difficulties on his/her ability to access or progress with the curriculum effectively. Please also detail any support needs including any support provision already in place (e.g. support teacher/ SNA).
- Summary of speech and language therapy input and interventions including dates, target areas and outcomes in relation to supporting the diagnosis.
- Longitudinal speech and language assessments and/or intervention identifying need over time. Assessment over time should include formal assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.
- The child's current profile including most recent\*standardised assessment results of receptive and expressive language development and of speech if relevant. (\*assessed within 6 months of application deadline). Subtest scores, index scores, percentile ranks, and the confidence interval used, should be included. In the case of pragmatic/social language skills, use a checklist if possible and briefly describe key areas.
- Description of the significant functional impact of the child's DLD/SSD of unknown origin on their learning, literacy, communication, social and emotional development, regulation and behaviour and overall well-being across contexts (i.e. home, school, peers).
- Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation within the previous 9-12 months prior to the application deadline.
- Where relevant, indicate the severity of the child's speech challenges i.e. current level of intelligibility, phonological system, oral-motor functioning as relevant. A short transcription can also be very helpful.
- Diagnosis and Recommendations: The child's current diagnosis should be clearly stated along with recommendations as to the need for placement in DLD/SSD Class based on severity and impact.
- include information regarding any co-occurring disorders/needs (see IASLT Position Paper on DLD (2017)) and the impact of these on the child's participation and engagement in learning and socialisation in the current educational context.



- Confirmation that the recommendation for referral to special class for DLD/SSD of unknown origin has been discussed with school and parents and, as appropriate, with the child

### **School/Preschool Report**

School/Preschool Teacher's Report should include

- The impact of the child's DLD/SSD on his/her educational progress and social and emotional development. It should also include any educational supports, approaches, strategies and/or interventions that have been implemented for the child in their classroom or across the school day specifically within the last 9-12 months. This should include collaboration with professionals e.g. psychology, SLT, OT etc. as well as additional educational support such as access to SNA support or assistive technology.
- The aim, content, timeframe and review of this evidence informed educational supports, approaches, strategies and/or interventions to date.
- Outline of regular review of the child's educational needs as part of an ongoing cycle of support and review with parents, educational staff and the child within the last 9-12 months.
- Description of the functional impact of the child's DLD/SSD of unknown origin on their learning, literacy, communication, social and emotional development, regulation and behaviour and overall well-being across educational contexts (i.e. yard, classroom, peer relationships).

There is no guarantee that a child referred to our school will secure a DLD/SSD place as places available annually are limited. to be considered. Should you have any queries, please Ms. Veale through the office [school@goodshepherd.ie](mailto:school@goodshepherd.ie)



# Parental Consent for Child's Referral to DLD/SSD Class

## Please tick

I understand that my child has a Developmental Language Disorder and/or Speech Sound Disorder of unknown origin.	
I give permission to members of the *Admissions Advisory Committee* to read my child's referral reports and to contact other professionals involved either by telephone or in writing.	
I understand what a DLD/SSD Class is and that I will have an important role to play should my child be offered a place in DLD/SSD Class.	
I consent to my child being referred to DLD/SSD Class in Good Shepherd NS, Churchtown, Dublin 14.	

The \*Admissions Advisory Committee\* is made up of the School Principal, the local Speech and Language Therapy Manager, SEN co-ordinator, DLD/SSD Class Teacher/s and DLD/SSD Class Speech and Language Therapists. The school's educational psychologist (NEPS) and/or SENO may attend the Admissions Committee meeting in an advisory capacity.

It is the responsibility of this Committee to consider, discuss, prioritise and decide upon which children are selected for placement in the DLD/SSD Classes.

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Referring SLTs signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Referral to DLD/SSD Class Form

This form must be submitted along with all other required supporting documents.

### A. Child's Information

Child's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

PPS No. \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) spoken at home \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Current Educational Details

Current School/Pre-school \_\_\_\_\_

Current Class /Year Level \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Parent/Carer Contact Information

	Parent/Carer 1	Parent/Carer 2
Full Name(s)	_____	_____

Email	_____	_____
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Telephone Number	_____	_____
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### D. Referral Information

Referred By (Name/Organisation) \_\_\_\_\_

Referral Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

### E. Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) History



<b>Currently attending SLT at:</b>	
<b>Name of SLT (Speech &amp; Language Therapist):</b>	
<b>Initial Assessment Date:</b>	
<b>Has he/she attended for therapy?</b>	Yes / No
<b>Number Sessions to Date (One-to-one):</b>	
<b>Number Sessions to Date (Group):</b>	
<b>Number Sessions to Date (Other Consultations):</b>	
<b>Description of Other Consultations:</b>	

He/She has significant difficulty with: (Please tick ✓ all areas that apply ):

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Receptive Language (Understanding)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Expressive Language (Speaking)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Speech (Articulation/Pronunciation)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Pragmatic Language / Social Communication</b>

#### F. Current Educational Placement

Name of current teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Tel. number of current school/pre-school: \_\_\_\_\_

#### G. Other Professionals Involved



Please list all other professionals currently involved (e.g., Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, ENT Consultant, Audiologist, CAMHS).

Professional (Name, Title, Organisation)	Contact Details (Tel/Email)

#### H. Required Documentation Checklist

Please confirm the following documents are included (3 copies of each):

Please Tick (✓)	Document Name
	NCSE Letter of Eligibility
	Completed referral form
	Completed Parent Consent form
	Completed Parent SEB Rating form
	Completed School or Preschool Teacher's SEB Rating form
	Completed Parent Consent form for school/pre-school
	A copy of the child's most recent school report
	Current SLT (Speech and Language Therapy) Report
	Any other relevant report/s about this child (please specify below):





## Social, Emotional and Behavioural Rating Scale

(\*To be completed by Parent/Guardian and Speech & Language therapist together)

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Read each statement below. Circle the response which best captures your child:

Generally the case

Sometimes the case

or Rarely the case.

**\*\*Circle one response only per statement\*\***

### Social

**1. The child is included by peers in interactions, e.g. games, invited to parties etc.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**2. The child initiates appropriate verbal interactions with familiar listeners**

*e.g. conversations, telling news, recounting stories.*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**3. The child is able to join in and play with peers to an age-appropriate level.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**4. The child communicates well with peers.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

### Emotional

**1. The child presents as confident in familiar settings.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**2. The child can resolve conflicts & negotiate with peers at age appropriate level.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**3. The child's initial reaction when set a task is to try their best**

*e.g. does not say "it's too hard for me"*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

**4. The child remains calm and contented even when they cannot get his/her message across.**

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely



## **Behavioural**

### **1. The child uses strategies to get his/her message across**

*e.g. gestures, uses actions, shows you or tries to "say it another way".*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

### **2. When the child can't fully understand what is being said, s/he can let you know**

*e.g. by asking you to repeat, or to explain; or by saying, for example, "huh/what?"*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

### **3. The child demonstrates age appropriate interactive/pragmatic language skills**

*e.g. appropriate degree of vocal volume, turn taking, eye contact;*

*e.g. using a communication manner, tone, form of language appropriate to the situation & people involved.*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

### **4. The child appears unphased when s/he has difficulty understanding what is being said/ or has difficulty expressing what s/he wants to say:**

*e.g. does not become embarrassed or withdrawn, act out, behave aggressively, have tantrums.*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

### **5. The child is at ease in speaking out**

*e.g. does not blanch/blush, throat clear, muscles tense, tearfulness*

Generally

Sometimes

Rarely

Please add any additional comment/s you feel are appropriate:

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**Thank you for completing this form.**



**School/Preschool Form**  
**Referral to DLD/SSD Class**

*Teaching staff/Preschool staff currently working with the child are requested to fill out the following report Social Emotional Behavioural Rating Scale as accurately as possible. Thank you.*

**Parent Consent to Teacher's Completion of School/Preschool Report**

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent / Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this report is being completed to support my child's application for DLD/SSD Class place.

From discussion with my child's Speech & Language Therapist and class teacher I understand why DLD/SSD Class placement would benefit my child.

I / We , \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give my / our consent to have this form completed for my / our child by his/her class teacher.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## SCHOOL/PRESCHOOL INFORMATION FOR DLD/SSD CLASS REFERRAL

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School/Preschool: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Preschool Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known this child? \_\_\_\_\_

How many children are currently in his/her class? \_\_\_\_\_

Age Range of Class: \_\_\_\_\_

For Primary School applicants: Has this child repeated a class?: YES / NO (Circle) If 'Yes', which class? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Additional Support**

Does the child receive support teaching? YES / NO (Circle)

No. of days s/he receives support teaching: \_\_\_\_ Total support teaching hours/week: \_\_\_\_

If applicable please specify type of support (in-class support; withdrawal (individual/ group))

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Assessment Results**

Give results of any standardised tests administered by the class/ support teacher (e.g. reading, maths, spelling etc. within last year)

Date of test	Name of test	Results

This confirms the school's support for a DLD/SSD class application for \_\_\_\_\_. The school has included the following completed documents to support the application.

School report from last academic year is included (Previous year's report).	
Class Teacher Report (Current teacher's report supporting the application).	
SEB Rating Scale (Completed Social, Emotional, and Behavioural scale).	

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/ Pre-school director

**SEB Rating Form: School/Preschool's views p1**



## Social, Emotional and Behavioural Rating Scale

(To be completed by the Class & support teacher/ Pre-School staff working with the child)

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Read each statement below. Circle the response which best captures your child:

Generally the case                      Sometimes the case                      or Rarely the case.

**\*\*Circle one response only per statement\*\***

### Social

**1. The child is included by peers in interactions, e.g. games, invited to parties etc.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**2. The child initiates appropriate verbal interactions with familiar listeners**

*e.g. conversations, telling news, recounting stories.*

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**3. The child is able to join in and play with peers to an age-appropriate level.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**4. The child communicates well with peers.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

### Emotional

**1. The child presents as confident in familiar settings.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**2. The child can resolve conflicts & negotiate with peers at age-appropriate level.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**3. The child's initial reaction when set a task is to try their best**

*e.g. does not say "it's too hard for me"*

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**4. The child remains calm and contented even when they cannot get his/her message across.**

Generally                      Sometimes                      Rarely

**SEB Rating Form-School/Pre-school's views p2**

### Behavioural





## Appendix E

### MGLD Application Form

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed forms to be returned to the school office (accompanied by a copy of the NCSE Eligibility form, Birth Certificate, and all relevant psychological and professional assessment reports)**

#### SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Child's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address:

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

PPS. No: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work No: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work No: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please give name and class of previous school:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_



## **SECTION B: SCHOOL INFORMATION**

Number of children in family: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of child: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have other children attending this school, please state:

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION C: LEARNING NEEDS**

4. Briefly outline your child's special educational needs:

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5. Which of the following agencies/services has your child attended?  
Please mark **X** in the box.

Assessment of need	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupational therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lucena Clinic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychiatrist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Outline briefly the reasons for referral/attendance and if the treatment/therapy your child received

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## **SECTION D: SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

Will your child require school transport to/from school? Yes  No

Parents offered a place for their child will be asked to complete the necessary **NCSE** special class enrolment and transport forms.

I confirm that all details given above are correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

**All information given will be treated confidentially**