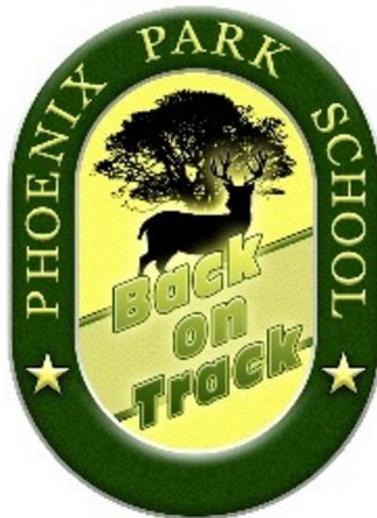


# Phoenix Park Specialist School Admissions Policy May 2021



## Table of Contents

Section 1	Introduction	
Section 2	Characteristic Spirit and Objectives of the School	
Section 3	Admissions Statement	
Section 4	Categories of SEN catered for in the school	
Section 5	Admission of Students and Admissions Procedure	
Section 6	How applications will be dealt with in cases of oversubscription	
Section 7	What will not be considered or taken into account	
Section 8	Decisions on applications	
Section 9	Notifying Applicants of Decisions	
Section 10	Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant	
Section 11	Circumstance in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn	
Section 12	Sharing of data with other schools	
Section 13	Waiting list	
Section 14	Late Applications	
Section 15	Procedures for admission of student other years and during the school year.	
Section 16	Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees	
Section 17	Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instructions	
Section 18	Reviews/Appeals	

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This Admissions 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.
- 1.2. The policy was approved by the school patron on 25/06/2021. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.
- 1.3. The relevant dates and timelines for the Phoenix Park Specialist 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. It should be noted that the school does not operate an admissions window and accepts applications on a rolling basis throughout the year. The school also does not operate an "intake class" and students are assigned classes based on their needs, age and cognitive ability. PPSS does not accept applications in respect of children with Autism, and such applications will be refused.
- 1.4. This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual Admission Notice for the school year in question.
- 1.5. 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.
- 1.6. Decisions in relation to admissions will be taken by the Principal. Disappointed applicants can request a review of these decisions by the Board of Management and/or appeal same under Section 29 of the Education Act in accordance with section 18 of this Policy.

## **2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the school**

- 2.1. The Phoenix Park Specialist School provides a specialised service for primary school aged children, who have a diagnosis of severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. The Board of Management of the Phoenix Park Specialist School hereby sets out its Admissions Policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998. Phoenix Park Specialist School (PPSS) works to assist pupils with certain classes of special needs in transitioning to mainstream schools. As required by Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act, 1998 this policy also sets out the school's policy on participation and continued enrolment in the school.
- 2.2. The Phoenix Park Specialist School does not take pupils for all their school going years but takes pupils only for limited periods to provide them with the appropriate supports and developmental assistance to allow them transition into mainstream schools. One of the main objectives of the Education of Persons with Special Education Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004 was to ensure that pupils with special education needs are educated in an inclusive, mainstream environment.
- 2.3. Our primary goal as a placement school is take pupils who are not currently capable of learning in a mainstream school and work with them to the point where they are capable of moving back to a mainstream school and thriving there. As the characteristic spirit of the school involves a particular focus on returning a child to their original mainstream setting, admission will be conditional upon the child's original school and the child's parents/guardian signing an agreement confirming that they understand that their child's enrolment is temporary and has the objective of working with the child to facilitate them in being able to attend and benefit from a mainstream school.
- 2.4. The Phoenix Park Specialist School is under the patronage of the HSE and is non-denominational.

### **Mission Statement and School's Characteristic Spirit**

*The Phoenix Park Specialist School provides for children with severe emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (Severe EBD) who have the potential to return to mainstream school.*

*The school aims to provide a quality learning environment that maximises educational opportunities for children. We aspire to develop high standards of behaviour in a caring, nurturing and safe environment where all pupils are provided with experiences that make them feel valued and respected. We believe in nurturing emotional literacy in our school community and in helping children to recognise, understand, cope with and appropriately express emotions.*

*To maximise the potential for progress, the school expects the child's primary carers and external agencies to work together with us in a collaborative and co-operative manner and to actively participate in supporting the child during their time in the school.*

#### **2.5. Rationale**

2.5.1. This policy sets out the criteria for entry and process of enrolment at the Phoenix Park Specialist School. The policy will also ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to:

- Make decisions on all applications in an open and transparent manner consistent with the Mission Statement of the school and legislative requirements.
- Make an accurate and appropriate assessment of the capacity of the school to cater for the needs of applicants in light of the resources available to it

#### **2.6. General Information**

2.6.1. The school is co-educational with a maximum enrolment of 18 pupils. Children are divided into three groups of six. There is a class teacher and one special needs assistant (SNA) assigned to each class. Some children have access to additional support from an SNA. We have two social care workers who run a formal Nurture Group in the school throughout the school day.

2.6.2. The school caters for children with a diagnosis of severe emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) who also have a full scale IQ of 70 or more who are in the low average or above range of intellectual ability. The definition of Emotional Behavioural Difficulty (EBD) for the purposes of this policy is that adopted by the NCSE in its "Information Booklet for Parents of Children with Special Education Needs"<sup>1</sup> :

*Students are being treated by a psychiatrist or psychologist for such conditions as neurosis, childhood psychosis, hyperactivity disorder, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and conduct disorders that significantly impair their*

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Web-Ready-03178-NCSE-Children-SEN-InfoBook-Parents2-Proof17-VISUAL-ONLY.pdf>

*socialisation and/or learning in school. (This category is not intended to include students whose conduct or behavioural difficulties can be dealt with in accordance with agreed procedures on discipline).*

2.6.3. We do not cater for nor accept applications from pupils with a diagnosis of Autism.

2.6.4. Applications may be reviewed by a clinical psychologist from CAMHS to determine whether or not the applicant has a diagnosis of severe emotional and behavioural difficulties, which would mean that PPSS could provide an appropriate educational environment for the applicant child.

2.6.5. We are a placement school and only provide for children who have the potential to return to mainstream education. Typically, we aim for a placement period of up to two years but the needs of the child are central to any decision made about the length of time the child spends at the school.

## 2.7. Curriculum

2.7.1. Pupils benefit from small class sizes, excellent teaching and quality resources. Pupils have access to the full range of national curriculum subjects. Work is carefully differentiated and adapted to enable all pupils to learn.

2.7.2. In addition to curriculum subject learning, we also offer enrichment opportunities for pupils including gardening, cookery, school trips and sport. These activities are to encourage pupil's social development and to support their ability to manage less structured and competitive activity.

2.7.3. There is a strong emphasis on nurturing emotional literacy in our students. There is a formal *Nurture Group* in our school that acts as a bridge between home and school for those students who are having difficulties settling in their classrooms. The Nurture Group provides a place for children to explore the emotions they experience in school, build collaborative relationships with peers and build relationships with key adults that they can talk to about conflict or distress.

2.7.4. The school follows the guidelines set down by the NCSE in relation to developing Individual Education Plans for children with Special Educational Needs. Each child that attends the school will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed within their first term in the school. Their IEP will be specific to them and will set out the child's strengths, needs and targets for the academic year ahead. The IEP will be reviewed and updated regularly.

## **3. Admission Statement**

3.1. Each child is considered as an individual. The Board of Management strives to ensure that every child accepted into the Phoenix Park Specialist School can benefit from the services on offer. The decision as to who will benefit involves the consideration of a wide range of issues. These issues will include the parents'/guardians' views on the proposed educational placement of their child, existing resources available, additional learning and medical needs, social needs, emotional and behavioural needs. While recognising the right of parents'/guardians to enrol their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management is also responsible for respecting the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. As a placement school, we must also ensure that our scarce places and resources are best utilised to maximum effect by admitting those who most benefit from a temporary placement here and return to full time education in their original school. As noted above and

elsewhere herein, we take children for a maximum of 2 years before they are discharged and return to their original school.

- 3.2. In the admissions process, consideration will be given to ensure that a healthy and safe environment for all students and staff prevails and applications for children who might threaten the safety of the children already enrolled, many of whom are vulnerable by nature of their disability are likely to be refused.
- 3.3. In accordance with Section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act 1998, this policy sets out the Phoenix Park Specialist School's policy on the admission of students and their participation in the school.
- 3.4. In accordance with Section 61 of the Education Act 1998 the school confirms that the school shall not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on
  - (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.
  - (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs
- 3.5. Phoenix Park Specialist School is a school which, with the approval of the Minister and Department of Education and Skills provides an education exclusively to students with a certain category of special educational needs, that being students who have SEBD (as defined at paragraph 2.6.2 above) and who have a full scale IQ of 70 or more. The school will therefore refuse to admit students whose educational needs do not fall within this category and a refusal to admit a child who does not have these educational needs will not constitute discrimination.
- 3.6. This policy aims to uphold the moral, spiritual, physical and psychological welfare and constitutional rights of all persons concerned. The school will strive to ensure that the principle of "reasonable accommodation" is enacted for all students.
- 3.7. Where places are oversubscribed, places in the school are allotted to applicants who meet the Threshold Criteria in order of priority to those applicants on the Waiting List and then who are rated highest on the criteria set out in section 5.3 below.

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

- 4.1. Phoenix Park Specialist School is a school which with the approval of the Minister and Department of Education and Skills provides an education exclusively to students with a diagnosis of SEBD (as defined at paragraph 2.6.2 above) and who have a full scale IQ of 70 or more.

## 5. Admission of Students and Admissions Process

### 5.1. General Principles

- 5.1.1. The Phoenix Park Specialist School operates a rolling admission window. Referrals are accepted throughout the school year and places are filled as they become available.
- 5.1.2. Children aged 4-12 who have an IQ of 70 or above, and are receiving treatment from a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) are eligible to attend the Phoenix Park Specialist School. Our full criteria for admission are set out below in Section 5.3 and Section 6.
- 5.1.3. Children aged between 4 and 7 are not eligible for CAMHS services. Applications for children falling into this age bracket may be considered where the child is in receipt of treatment/services from HSE primary care **and** where the child satisfies all the other criteria in this policy.
- 5.1.4. Children should be referred by their keyworker at CAMHS, their primary contact at HSE Psychological Services, their Social Worker, Principal, or their Education Welfare Officer on the parent's behalf.
- 5.1.5. Applications will not be accepted directly from parents unless CAMHS, the child's Social Worker or the child's Education Welfare Officer is also referring the applicant child.
- 5.1.6. Applications are considered by the Principal and places will be offered or refused by the Principal. Appeals in relation to any decision by the Principal to refuse a place must be taken in accordance with Section 18 of this Policy.
- 5.1.7. In accordance with the mission statement and characteristic spirit of the school, applications will only be considered from pupils who already have a place in another school, where there is an appropriate certificate from an appropriately qualified professional that the pupil is not currently suitable for a mainstream school environment, and where the current school confirms in writing that they will take back the pupil when Phoenix Park Specialist School determines that the child is ready to return to the current school. Our full criteria for admission are set out below in Section 5.3
- 5.1.8. The following information should be included in the referral letter:
  - The letter must state that the child has a diagnosis of SEBD and or is experiencing persistent symptoms of SEBD (as defined above at para 2.6.2 which are beyond the current resources of their mainstream school.
  - The child's diagnosis
  - A brief social history
  - Details of the treatment plan for the child
  - Details of the child's current school and the level of support they are in receipt of (SNA/NEPS etc.)
  - Details of other agencies involved with the child
- 5.1.9. *The referral letter must also include a specific recommendation from a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist for a place in an SEBD school such as Phoenix Park Specialist School and for SNA support, if appropriate. The school must submit this information to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in order to access supports for the child and the application cannot be processed without it.*
- 5.1.10. Applications are treated as applications for particular classes. At an early stage of the application process, a child is assigned to a particular destination class based on the child's age, cognitive and adaptive abilities

and any other special educational needs of relevance. Class groupings vary from year to year as students leave the school or move to other schools.

## **5.2. The Admissions Process**

5.2.1. The Principal will make contact with the referral agency and request supporting documentation if the initial referral is accepted and a place becomes available.

5.2.2. If the child is to be considered for a place, the following supporting documentation will be required. Applications which are not accompanied by the following documents will not be considered:

### *From CAMHS*

- CAMHS multi-disciplinary reports
- Details of the child's individual treatment plan
- Other reports where relevant (Social Work etc.)

### *From School*

- Details of the schools efforts to support the child under NEPS Continuum of Support
- NEPS Educational Psychology Report, less than two years old
- Completed School Referral Form/Return to School Form
- School report and IEP
- A written commitment to facilitate a reintegration programme for the child should they be able to return to mainstream education

Applications will be considered taking into account:

- The school's ability to provide a suitable programme to meet the child's needs
- The educational and health & safety needs of the other children in the class and school
- Risks a child's behaviour may pose to the health & safety of staff in the school
- Appropriate support and resources available from the DES and NCSE
- A commitment from the child's primary carers and the agencies involved with the child to work collaboratively with the school for the duration of the child's enrolment
- Agreement from the child's CAMHS team that they will provide or access support for the child's identified needs while they are enrolled in the school

5.2.3. As noted above, applications will be considered by the Principal on the basis of the Threshold Criteria set out below in para 5.3 and the Assessment Criteria in Section 6.

## **5.3. Threshold Criteria for consideration of applications**

5.3.1. Applications will only be accepted in respect of prospective students who fulfil all the following criteria (which must be confirmed by a psychological report dated within the last 12 months accompanying the application):

- (i) The child has a diagnosis of severe emotional and behavioural difficulties (see para 2.6.2 above)
- (ii) The child has a full-scale IQ of 70 or more
- (iii) The child is not autistic and does not have a diagnosis of any ASD disorder.
- (iv) The child is currently enrolled in a mainstream school or a special school catering for students with mild or borderline mild special needs.
- (v) The child's parents/guardians and their current school have signed the Memorandum of Agreement at Appendix 1 of this policy.
- (vi) The child is in receipt of services from CAHMS

5.3.2. It should be noted that the above criteria are threshold criteria for the consideration of applications only. A place can only be offered to applicants who both fulfil these threshold criteria and in respect of whom there is an appropriate place in an appropriate class. Even if there is space in a class which would otherwise be appropriate for an applicant, the School will not admit them if they do not fulfil all of the five threshold criteria referred to above.

5.3.3. Where there is more than one candidate for a place in a destination class, the place(s) will be offered to qualifying applicant(s) i.e. those who fulfil the Threshold Criteria, on the basis of the assessment criteria below in Section 6. Parents and guardians should note that although a place may be available in a particular class, there may also be a waiting list for that class and if there is, their child may be placed on that waiting list rather than being offered a place.

5.3.4. Any Admission will be conditional upon the pupil's parent/guardian and the pupil's current school signing the Memorandum of Agreement contained in Appendix 1 of this Policy. Where the current school or parents/guardians refuse to sign this Memorandum, the child's offer will be withdrawn and the place offered to that child may be offered to another child.

5.3.5. The Principal will inform the primary carer and referring agency of the decision to accept or refuse admission to the school. Unsuccessful applications (or offers which are rescinded due to the failure on any party to sign the Memorandum of Agreement in Appendix 1) may be appealed in accordance with the review provisions set out in section 18 below. Parents whose child has not been offered a place will be informed of their right to appeal in writing.

5.3.6. Should a place be accepted, the Principal will:

- Make arrangements for the primary carer and child to visit the school and meet with staff
- Convene a meeting to discuss admission to the school and to develop a plan for the child while they are in the school

#### **5.4. After Enrolment**

5.4.1. Each child will have a school review at least once a year. The child's primary carer and keyworker from CAMHS will be expected to attend. Other professionals involved with the child will also be invited, as

appropriate. The child's IEP will be discussed and reviewed at this meeting.

#### **5.5. Discharge Procedure**

5.5.1. At the Phoenix Park Specialist School, we expect children to make sufficient progress during their time with us that will facilitate a return to mainstream education. The decision to discharge a child will be made by Phoenix Park Specialist School in consultation with the child, their parents/guardians, the referring agency and the school team involved with the child. The ultimate decision in relation to discharge will be that of the Board of Management and by making or supporting an application for enrolment, the parents, referring agency and current school all agree that the final decision for readiness and date of discharge of any pupil will be that of the Board of Management.

5.5.2. The school expects parents and the referring agency to play an active part in supporting the child's return to mainstream education. We also expect the school the child originally came from to facilitate a re-integration programme when the child is ready to return to them, if deemed appropriate.

### **6. Oversubscription**

#### **6.1. *Priority of Applications***

Where the destination class is oversubscribed, places will be offered as they come available to qualifying applicants (i.e. those who meet all the Threshold Criteria) based on a marking of their application on the following Assessment Criteria. Parents/Guardians should note that PPSS operates a waiting list for each destination class and there may be several other applicants waiting for a place already in a particular class.

The school has a limited number of places and must prioritise its available places for those students who would most benefit from them. Where the documentation provided is not adequate or is not in accordance with the requirements of this policy, this may result in an applicant receiving a nil score in a particular category. The Principal will rate each application and will make a decision in respect of each such application.

#### *Assessment Criteria:*

1. The extent to which the child would benefit from a place in the school, given the child's primary needs, age and education (rated out of 20)
2. The availability of expertise within the school to deal with child's needs (rated out of 10).
3. The school's ability to provide a suitable programme to meet the child's needs. (rated out of 10).
4. The educational and health & safety needs of the other children in the class and school. (rated out of 10).
5. Risks a child's behaviour may pose to the health & safety of staff in the school. (rated out of 10).
6. The pupil/teacher ratio will be appropriate to the needs of the child; (rated out of 10)
7. The child will be able to tolerate a classroom environment containing other children. (rated out of 10)
8. The composition, special needs and ages of the pupils currently enrolled in the class into which the child would be admitted (rated out of 10)

9. There is sufficient physical space in the relevant classroom and the appropriate class for that child has not reached full capacity. (rated out of 10)
  10. Appropriate support and resources available from the DES and NCSE. (rated out of 10)
  11. A commitment from the child's primary carers and the agencies involved with the child to work collaboratively with the school for the duration of the child's enrolment. (rated out of 10)
  12. Agreement from the child's CAMHS team that they will provide or access support for the child's identified needs while they are enrolled in the school. (rated out of 10)
- 6.2. It may occasionally occur that a child requires such additional physical space, resources or staffing support that that child effectively requires the equivalent of two or more places in that class. This may correspondingly reduce the number of other places available or may mean that even where the Board has identified a class grouping as having two available places, that class would now be full in light of that child's needs. Such a circumstance is likely to be rare but it is within the discretion of the Board to limit class size where required for safety or educational reasons.
- 6.3. If there is no place available for the child in the destination class, then the application will be refused. If there is a place available in a particular destination class and there are a number of qualifying applicants for the same place, then the Principal will rank each such application in accordance with their marks from the Assessment Criteria above and applicants will be offered any available places based on their marking on these criteria. Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on the Waiting List for the destination class in the order of their marking on the basis of the Assessment Criteria above.
- 6.4. In the event of two or more children who are candidates for the same place having the same marks, the Principal will first review the marking again for each such child. If the respective marks remain the same after this review, the children's names will be picked at random by an independent person (who is not on the Board or connected with any person applying for a place in the school) and the first such name picked will be offered the place. Unsuccessful applicants whose applications are ranked with the same marks will be placed on the Waiting List for the destination class in the order that they are picked at random by the independent person referred to above.

## **7. 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, including naíonraí,
- (b) the payment of fees or contributions (howsoever described) to the school;
- (c) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude other than to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special educational needs catered for by Phoenix Park Specialist 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;
- (g) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school,

## **8. Decisions on applications**

8.1. The decision in relation to each application will be taken by the Principal on the basis of the criteria set out above. Appeals in relation to same must be taken in accordance with Section 18 of this Policy.

8.2. All decisions on applications for admission to Phoenix Park Specialist 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 (together the documentation submitted therewith) received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

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

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

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

9.1. Applicants will be 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 marking against the Assessment Criteria and details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned.

9.3. 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).

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

In accepting an offer of admission from Phoenix Park Specialist 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.

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

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by the Principal or Board of Management of Phoenix Park Specialist School where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading (including through the omission of any medical or psychological report, or the submission of out of date or inaccurate reports).
- (ii) Where an applicant and their Sending School have not filled in and signed the Agreement contained at Appendix 1
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) 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
- (v) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in section 10 of this policy above.
- (vi) The school has been designated by the National Council for Special Education or the Child and Family Agency under S.67 of the Education Act, 1998 (when commenced) to admit a particular child and the only way to comply with the designation is to withdraw an offer of a place to another child.

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

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another Board of Management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

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

The list may include any or all of the following:

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

### **13. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription**

#### **13.1. *Waiting List***

- 13.1.1. Where a place is not available for a particular child who otherwise meets the Threshold Criteria listed above in Section 5.3 and the Principal/Board of Management is refusing to enrol the child in a particular class due to the class being full, the parents will be asked if they wish their child be placed on the Waiting List.
- 13.1.2. The Waiting List will operate for one school year. It will run until the end of the Academic Year for which the offers were made in that Applications Process. **On the last of day in June of each year, the Waiting list will cease to operate.**
- 13.1.3. If a child is entered on the Waiting List for a particular academic year, this will not give them any priority for entry in the academic year commencing the following September. A new application for the child will be required for the following academic year even if they are placed on the Waiting List and his/her application will be processed again under the Admissions and Participation Policy.
- 13.1.4. The child will be listed on the Waiting List only in respect of the class for which his/her application was considered (the destination class) and each child will be listed on the Waiting List in the order of their marking according to the Assessment Criteria (or where applicable in order they were drawn by lottery). If a place becomes available during the Academic Year in the destination class, the place will be offered to applicants on the Waiting List in the order that they are listed on that list.
- 13.1.5. Parents/guardians should note that a child's place on the waiting list will vary depending on other applications received. Applications are marked on the Assessment Criteria and where later applications are given a higher mark, the later application may be placed higher on the Waiting List than the earlier application.
- 13.1.6. If the child's parents/guardians wish to reapply for entry the following Academic year, they may do so. Their child will continue to be listed on the Waiting List in the interim until the end of the Academic Year.
- 13.1.7. Parents should note that if during the Academic Year in question, the child ceases for any reason to meet all the Threshold Criteria, the child will be removed from the Waiting List and will be formally refused a place in the school.

### **14. Late Applications**

- 14.1. As noted above, we do not operate an admissions window because our students are only enrolled for short periods (less than two years) so there is a frequent turnover of spaces. Applications can be made all year round. Where a place is available in the appropriate destination class for a qualifying applicant (i.e. one who fulfils the Admissions Criteria above), regardless of what time of year the application is received, the applicant will be offered a place. If there is not a place is available in the appropriate destination class for a qualifying applicant, regardless of what time of year the application is received, the application will be formally refused and the applicant will be offered a place on the waiting list for that destination class based on their marking on the Assessment Criteria referred to above.
- 14.2. All applications for admission received will be considered in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

14.3. Applications which do not meet the Assessment Criteria above will be refused and the parents/guardians informed of their rights of appeal/review set out below in Section 18.

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

15.1. Phoenix Park Specialist School is a special school, and as noted above such it does not have a particular intake group as many mainstream schools do. In our school, we accept applications in respect of primary school aged from children aged between 4 and 18 each year. Applications are treated as applications for particular classes. At an early stage of the application process, a child is assigned to a particular destination class based on the child's age, cognitive and adaptive abilities and any other special educational needs of relevance. Class groupings vary from year to year as students leave the school or move to other schools.

15.2. . Applications can be made all year round. Where a place is available in the appropriate destination class for a qualifying applicant, regardless of what time of year the application is received, the applicant will be offered a place. If there is not a place is available in the appropriate destination class for a qualifying applicant, regardless of what time of year the application is received, the application will be formally refused and the applicant will be offered a place on the waiting list for that destination class.

15.3. All applications for admission received will be considered in accordance with our school's admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

15.4. Applications which do not meet the Threshold Criteria above will be refused and the parents/guardians informed of their rights of appeal/review set out below in Section 18.

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

The Board of Management of Phoenix Park Specialist School or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of-

1. an application for admission of a student to the school, or
2. the admission or continued admission of a student in the school.

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

PPSS does not provide formal religious instruction on a day to day basis. Traditionally, on a case by case basis, the school has facilitated the practical preparations for First Communion and Confirmation for students who are of a Roman Catholic denomination. The students are based in various classes throughout the school. Alternate arrangements are put in place for those students who are not participating in these Programmes and there is no reduction in their school day. .

## 18. Reviews/appeals –

### 18.1. Timeline for reviews/appeals

- 18.1.1. Parents should note the strict timelines in relation to requesting a review by the Board of Management. Any request for a review of a decision of the Principal to refuse admission must be made within 21 days of the date of the decision to refuse admission.
- 18.1.2. Parents should consult the prevailing Department of Education and Skills Procedures for further information about the time periods allowed for reviews or appeals.

### 18.2. Review of decisions by the Board of Management

- 18.2.1. 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 of the Principal to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.
- 18.2.2. 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.
- 18.2.3. 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.
- 18.2.4. **Note:** Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** by the Board of Management of that decision prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- 18.2.5. Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** by the Board of Management of that decision prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### 18.3. Right of appeal

- 18.3.1. 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.
- 18.3.2. 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.
- 18.3.3. 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.
- 18.3.4. Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** by the Board of Management of that decision **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)
- 18.3.5. Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** by the Board of Management of that decision prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

18.3.6. 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.

18.3.7. 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.

**Policy Review Procedures**

The policy will be reviewed regularly. The policy will be reviewed every two years. The next review will take place in 2023

---

<b>Date Created</b>	<b>May 2021</b>
<b>Date Ratified</b>	<b>June 2021</b>
<b>Date for Review</b>	<b>January 2023</b>



**Chairperson's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

This Memorandum of Agreement is between:

- A. XXX National School (the “Sending School”),
- B. The Phoenix Park Specialist School (“PPSS”), and
- C. Mr. AAA & Mrs. BBB CCCCC (the “Parents”) being the parents/guardians of ZZZZ CCCCC (the “Pupil”).

**This Agreement is pursuant to the Admissions Policy of PPSS and confirms that the Parents and Sending School understand and accept the characteristic spirit and objectives of PPSS. Enrolment will be conditional upon all parties signing this Agreement. This Agreement may be relied upon by PPSS in any dispute or Section 29 Appeal against the decision of the Board of Management of PPSS to discharge a child back to the Sending School.**

**It is hereby agreed between the parties:**

1. The Parents confirm that they have read the Phoenix Park Specialist School’s Admissions Policy. They acknowledge that the Phoenix Park Specialist School is a specialist placement primary school providing a placement for children on a time-limited basis, to assist them in transitioning back into their mainstream school. The Parents acknowledge that the ultimate decision in relation to the discharge of their child will be made by the Board of Management of the Phoenix Park Specialist School. Parents will also support the reintegration of their child into the Sending School when their child is discharged from PPSS. The Parents furthermore confirm that they understand that if the Board of Management of PPSS decides to discharge the Pupil and the Parents fail to support this, the Board of Management may move to formally expel the Pupil.
2. The Sending School hereby acknowledges that they understand and agree that when the Pupil is discharged from PPSS, the time of which, discharge will be at the discretion of the Board of Management of PPSS, that the Sending School will accept the Pupil back and will automatically enrol the Pupil again. The Sending School acknowledges that PPSS does not offer permanent placements to children and that the placements in the school are time-limited and are for the purpose of facilitating the pupil’s transition back to their mainstream school.
3. PPSS accepts the above named pupil for a limited period in accordance with the Admissions Policy of PPSS and confirms that when the Board of Management decides it would be appropriate to do so, the pupil will be discharged back to the Sending School. PPSS confirms that it is not in a position to enrol the pupil on any other basis and that the pupil’s admission and continued participation in the school is conditional on the Parents and Sending School agreeing that the Pupil will automatically reenrol in the Sending School after discharge from Phoenix Park Specialist School.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
XX YY For and behalf of XXX National School (the Sending School)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. AAA BBB (the Parent / Guardian of the pupil)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. AAA BBB (the Parent / Guardian of the pupil)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
XX YY For and on behalf of Phoenix Park Specialist School