



St. Patrick's School, Drumcondra, Dublin 9

Powerstown ETNS, Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15



Referral of children to the Language Classes
in St Patrick's NS and Powerstown ETNS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS Monday 1st March 2021

Applications and/or supporting documentation received after the deadline of Monday 1st March 2021 will not be considered as part of the process of allocating places for the 2021/2022 school year. Applications must be fully complete when they are submitted; no new information can be admitted after the closing date. Applications will be accepted from Monday 4th January 2021.

Referral Protocol

- Referrals to the Language Classes are accepted from Speech & Language Therapists and Psychologists **only**. We require 6 copies of each referral to be sent to:
**Language Classes Applications Office for St. Patrick's BNS and Powerstown ETNS,
c/o St. Patrick's Boys National School,
Drumcondra, Dublin 9.**

Covid-19 Considerations

- **Specific adaptations** have been made to the **additional local criteria** to facilitate referrals for the 2021/2022 academic year due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local Primary Care Speech & Language Therapy, Psychology and the National Educational Psychology Services.
- The **Department of Education and Skills (DES) criteria** for admission **remains the same** as previous referral years as per the DES Circular 38/07.

Criteria for Admission

Department of Education & Skills

Children referred for Language Class placement consideration must meet the following **Department of Education and Skills (DES) criteria** as described in the DES Circular 38/07:

- Assessment by a psychologist on a standardised test of intelligence, which places non-verbal, or performance ability within the average range or above. (i.e. non-verbal IQ of 90, or above).
- Assessment on a standardised test of speech/language development by a speech and language therapist which places performance in one or more of the main areas of speech and language development at two standard deviations or more below the mean or at a generally equivalent level.
- The pupils' difficulties are not attributable to hearing impairment; the hearing threshold for the speech related frequencies should be 40dB.
- Emotional or behavioural disorders or a physical disability are not considered to be primary causes.

Local Criteria for Admission

Along with the DES criteria **additional local criteria must be met** by each applicant. The local criteria are:

- The child must live within the designated catchment area at the time of referral. This includes the areas of Dublin North Central & North West Dublin (now part of Dublin North City & County Community Healthcare Organisation).
- At the time of application a child must be currently enrolled in Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th class (or equivalent). Pre-school children can no longer be referred.
- A child must have attended a minimum of four sessions of individual speech and language therapy within nine months of the referral date (i.e. 1st March 2021). These therapy sessions can be online, clinic based or a combination of both.

Referral Documentation

Referrals must include the following:

- A completed '**Referral and consent form for Language Classes**'. This includes a parental consent section and a Social, Emotional and Behavioural Rating Scale to be completed by the child's parents with the assistance of the SLT.
- An up to date **psychology report** (within 3 years of the closing date of 1st March 2021) which includes the results of a comprehensive assessment of intellectual ability, including non-verbal index/factor scores, and all subtest results.
- A **school report** which provides information on the impact of the child's language disorder on his/her educational progress and social/emotional development. A specific report form for primary school children is provided and should be used. Please refer to the instructions on the top of the form prior to completion. A Social, Emotional and Behavioural Rating scale for teachers to complete is included in the primary school report form.
- An up to date **speech and language therapy report** (written within three months of the closing date of 1st March 2021 confirming a diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD). The Speech and Language Therapy report must specifically recommend referral to/placement in the Language Class for the child being referred as per the NCSE and HSE Guidance Document for Health Professional Reports with Recommendations on School Placement and Special Education Needs (2019)

Speech and Language Report

The Speech & Language Therapists report should include the following:

Developmental, Educational and Linguistic Information

- A **summary of case history information**: please include any related family history of speech, language, reading, writing or learning difficulties. If there is a history of hearing or other difficulties please ensure reviews are up to date and enclose copies of any relevant audiology/medical reports (with parental consent). Please outline any involvement or onward referral to other services. Referring SLT should make onward referrals if possible prior to Language class referral if this is required (e.g. ENT, OT, Audiology, Primary Care Psychology).
- Further specific information in the case of **children who are bi/multilingual** is required (e.g. languages used, for how long, in what contexts). Clinical judgment should be described if appropriate as to differential diagnosis between second language learning

and a DLD. Please see the IASLT (2016) Guidelines for SLTs Working with Linguistically Diverse Service Users.

- A brief summary of the child's **educational history** as the school report should elaborate on this section. Where the child has access to additional support teaching in school this should be stated and summarise collaboration between SLT, school & home (e.g. school visits, attendance at IEP meetings, school programmes provided). If the child has access to SNA support or additional support teaching please state the reason why this support was granted. If a child does not have SNA support but requires it, this should be clearly stated in the report.

Speech and Language Assessment & Intervention

- **Most Recent Speech & Language Assessment:** This must have been carried out within the last 9 months of the referral deadline (i.e. SLTs may use assessments administered from June 2020 onwards). A minimum of **one standardised** assessment index score (i.e. from CELF-P^{2UK} or CELF-4^{UK} assessments) or an equivalent overall speech or language index score (i.e. from DEAP, ACE, Rynell or PLS-4 assessments) is required for the 2021 applications year. Include the standard deviation (SD), percentile rank and state the severity when reporting the standard score. This assessment can be completed face-to-face or via online Telehealth platforms. **SLTs are required to supplement this result with previous assessment results/findings and clinical observations, up to and including the past two years, to demonstrate the clinical markers for DLD present in the child's profile and therefore support the clinical diagnosis of DLD.** For bi/multilingual children please refer to IASLT guidelines mentioned above. For speech assessments include a description of the child's phonological and/or motor speech systems where relevant and if applicable. Referral to ENT in the case of children who are constant mouth breathers/have rhinitis should have been already considered. For pragmatic/social language skills include a description of the areas of difficulty and use a checklist where possible.
- **Previous Speech & Language Assessments and Intervention:** This can be a short paragraph summarising the details of the key information outlined here. Include the total language or index standard scores of previous assessments completed with the child **prior to the past two years** if/where applicable; however it is not necessary to elaborate on individual subtest score results. Provide evidence of monitoring the child's progress with language development over time, particularly for younger children. State the number of intervention sessions offered, number attended and provide a brief synopsis of therapy goals and outcomes. Provide information about the amount of

progress made relative to the level of therapy provided, including parental commitment and home carryover.

- **Recent Speech & Language Therapy Intervention:** This can be a brief paragraph summarising the key information outlined here. Briefly describe recent general targets and outcomes. Include information on the child and family levels of co-operation/motivation (e.g. attendance at recent sessions, completion of home activities, mitigating family circumstances where applicable). It may be helpful to include any information from any observations made of the child in more natural settings (e.g. waiting room); however given the impact of Covid-19 on normal services this may not be applicable/possible.

The Functional Impact of Developmental Language Disorder

- A brief description of the **impact of the DLD on functional communication, emotional, social and behavioural development** should be provided. Give clear objective examples of the impact of the disorder on the child's ability to carry out effective verbal interaction with family, peers (e.g. can the child make his/her needs and wants known to others etc.). Describe briefly if the child has developed other skills or strategies to aid communication. If the DLD is not impacting significantly on these areas of development you should state if the child has developed coping strategies or if support systems are in place at present (e.g. small class numbers with high staff-pupil ratio).

Diagnosis and Recommendations

- Provide clear recommendations as to the **need for placement in Language Class based on severity and impact**. HSE Clinicians are asked to recommend a placement type (i.e. "Language Class placement") rather than naming a class in a specific school in their reports as per the NCSE and HSE Guidance Document for Health Professional Reports with Recommendations on School Placement and Special Education Needs (2019). The child's **current diagnosis** should be clearly stated and linked to a summary of the overall areas speech, language and communication affected. Include information on any **co-occurring disorders/needs** a child may present with. Please refer to IASLT's Position Paper (2017) *Supporting Children with Developmental Language Disorder in Ireland* for terminology to use.

