



St. Patrick's National School, Drumcondra, Dublin 9

Powerstown ETNS, Tyrrelstown, Dublin 15



Referral of children to the Special Classes for Children with DLD/SSD
in St Patrick's NS and Powerstown ETNS

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED FROM:

Monday 5th January 2026

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:

Friday 27th February 2026 at 3pm

*Applications and/or supporting documentation received after the deadline of **Friday 27th February 2026 at 3pm** will not be considered as part of the process of allocating places for the 2026/2027 school year. Applications must be fully complete when they are submitted; no new information can be admitted after the closing date.*

Referral Protocol

Referrals to the **DLD/SSD Classes** are accepted from Speech & Language Therapists **only**. We require 3 copies of each referral to be sent to:

Language Classes Applications Office for St. Patrick's NS and Powerstown ETNS, c/o St. Patrick's National School, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.

Criteria for Admission

Eligibility

- The child must live within the designated catchment area at the time of referral. This is defined as HSE Integrated Health Area, Dublin North City & West

Department of Education & Skills Criteria

Children referred for Language Class placement consideration must meet the following **Department of Education and Skills (DES) criteria** as described in the DES Circular 0024/2025:

- A Speech and Language Therapist has confirmed a **conclusive diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and/or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD)** of unknown origin.
- Assessment has included **scores on a standardised assessment of 78** (-1.5 standard deviations from the mean) or below.*
- There is evidence of **significant and pervasive needs over time**, demonstrated by assessment over time, response to intervention, observation in clinical and social environments and assessment for risk factors and clinical markers.
- Intensive **therapeutic and educational supports have been put in place** for this child and their DLD/SSD **continues to impact** on their learning, participation, socialisation and wellbeing.
- The pervasive complex or severe educational needs of this child **require the integrated and targeted educational and therapeutic supports of a class** for children with DLD / SSD.

**Formal assessments may not be appropriate to use with multilingual populations and therefore the use of standardised tests (where appropriate) in conjunction with non-standardised tests must be given detailed consideration in the diagnosis of DLD/SSD for multilingual children by the assessing Speech and Language Therapist.*

Oversubscription Criteria for Admission

If our class is oversubscribed the following **oversubscription criteria will apply:**

- Referrals to the Language Classes are accepted from Speech & Language Therapists only.
- 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 cannot be referred.
- Standardised speech and/or language assessments must have been carried out within six months of the application deadline (i.e. assessments administered on/since the **27th August 2025** can be used for applications).
- The SLT report must have been completed within 3 months of the application deadline i.e. on/since **27th November 2025**.
- A child must have attended a minimum of eight individual therapy sessions within nine months of the application deadline (i.e. since **27th May 2025**).

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 parent(s)/guardian(s) with the assistance of the SLT.
- 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 is provided and should be completed by their current teacher(s). Please refer to the instructions on the top of the form prior to completion. A Social, Emotional and Behavioural Rating scale for teacher(s) to complete is included in the primary school report form
- Any **additional documentation from school** required to demonstrate the educational supports mentioned in the DES criteria e.g. Student Support Plan, IEP reviews etc. and the child's responsiveness to same.
- An up-to-date **speech and language therapy report** (written within three months of the closing date **i.e. since 27th November 2025**) specifically

recommending 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, analysis of speech processes across languages in case of SSD). 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 6 months of the referral deadline (i.e. SLTs may use

assessments administered **from 27th August 2025 onwards**). **Standardised assessments** should be used and **all subtest and core/index scores** (e.g. from CELF-P^{2UK} or CELF-4^{UK} assessments) or an equivalent overall speech or language core/index score (e.g. from CASL, DEAP, ACE, Rynell or PLS-4 assessments) are required for the 2026/2027 applications year. Include the standard deviation, percentile rank and state the severity when reporting each standard score. ***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 standardised speech assessments include a description of the child's phonological and/or motor speech systems where relevant and if applicable as well as measures of intelligibility. 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 speech and 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, approach(es) to intervention 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. school observation/observations outside of clinic room setting).

The Functional Impact of Developmental Language Disorder

- It is important to include a description of the **impact of the DLD/SSD on functional communication, emotional, social and behavioural development**. 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/SSD 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. use of AAC, small class numbers with high staff-pupil ratio).

Diagnosis and Recommendations

- Provide clear recommendations as to the **requirement for placement in DLD/SSD 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. This is an educational placement so greater consideration will be given to children with DLD/SSD who will benefit from the full Language Class package (e.g. smaller class, differentiated curriculum) and not just additional therapy sessions.