

**Junior Specific Speech & Language Disorder (SSLD) Class,  
St. Marnock's N.S., Portmarnock, Co. Dublin.**



**Information Leaflet for Parents & Teachers.**

This information leaflet is for parents of children **who are proceeding** with the referral process to the Junior SSLD Class, St. Marnock's NS

This leaflet will also provide information to the child's teacher(s) and current school.

**Opening date for application is 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

**The Closing Date for applications is Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024.**

**General Information**

St. Marnock's Language Class was set up in 1998. There are seven children in the class each year. The aim of the class is to provide children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) the opportunity to spend one or two years in a small class setting where they can receive intensive educational and speech & language therapy support. The class is staffed by a full time Teacher employed by the Department of Education (DE) and a part time Speech & Language Therapist employed by the HSE. The Language Class in St. Marnock's is called a Junior Language Class. Applications are accepted for children who are in Junior Infants; Senior Infants or 1<sup>st</sup> class on the 1<sup>st</sup> March of the year of referral. The child must live within specific areas of the HSE Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City & County (Dublin North Area & Coolock Network). If you have a query regarding the catchment area for your child please contact St. Marnock's NS or the local HSE Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) Department. Transport is provided by the Department of Education to successful applicants.

There is also a Senior Language Class in the catchment area also. This is based in Stapolin ETNS in Belmayne. As the Junior Language Class in St. Marnock's and the Senior Language Class in Stapolin accept referrals from the same catchment area, both schools work in close collaboration with each other with regard to their Admissions policies. In the event that your child is eligible for a place in the Junior Language Class in St. Marnock's but is not offered a place due to insufficient places available you can give your consent for your child to be considered for a place in Stapolin ETNS Senior Language Class. Your child's age and class level will also be taken into consideration and the School Principal would contact you to discuss this first.

### **Terminology:**

#### **Developmental Language Disorder**

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is the up to date term for 'Specific Speech & Language Disorder or Impairment' (SSLD/SLI).

In May 2017 the Irish Association of Speech & Language Therapists (IASLT) launched a Position Paper & Guidance Document called 'Supporting Children with Developmental Language Disorder in Ireland'.

The term Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is the current term now in use in Ireland to refer to a wider group of clients. This term replaces the terminology of Specific Speech & Language Impairment (SLI) or Specific Speech & Language Disorder (SSLD).

The current Department of Education (DE) criteria for referral to an SSLD Class have not changed. These classes continue to be referred to as an SSLD Class- Specific Speech & Language Disorder Class- by the DE. Children eligible for referral to the SSLD class under the current DE criteria are a specific sub-group of children with a diagnosis of DLD.

### **Criteria for admission:**

#### **Criteria A.**

Children referred for SSLD Class placement consideration must meet the following Department of Education (DE) criteria as described in the DE 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 and behavioural disorders or a physical disability are not considered to be primary causes.

**Criteria B:** Along with the DE criteria above, additional **local criteria** must be met by each applicant. The current local criteria for the SSLD Class, St. Marnock's NS for are:

(i) The applicant must live within the designated catchment area, as determined by the HSE, at the time of referral. At present this catchment area is HSE Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City & County (Dublin North Area & Coolock Network). A full list of the addresses covered by this catchment area is available from your local HSE Office.

(ii) The referral agent must be satisfied that the applicant's needs cannot be met by the current Speech & Language Therapy service provision.

(iii) Applications are accepted for children who are in Junior Infants; Senior Infants or 1<sup>st</sup> class on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February of the year of referral.

(iv) The applicant must have attended SLT sessions in the 9 months prior to the closing date for applications.

### **Referral Procedure**

- All referrals must be in writing and be accompanied by the reports listed below.
- Referrals are **only** accepted from **Speech & Language Therapists** or **Psychologists**.
- The referral and relevant reports and forms (**5 copies of each**) should be forwarded by the referral agent to the School Principal no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> March (or the subsequent calendar working day) of the year of application

### **Referrals should include the following:**

- A cover letter to the School Principal signed by the referral agent.

- A completed '**Referral and Consent Form for SSLD Class**'. 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** (dated within 2 years of the closing date for applications) which includes the results of a comprehensive assessment of intellectual ability, including non-verbal IQ score; index/factor scores and subtest results.
- A completed **School Report** form which provides information on the impact of the child's language disorder on his/her educational progress and social/emotional development. 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 school report form.
- An up to date **Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Report** (written within three months of the closing date) confirming a diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD). The SLT assessment must have been carried out not more than 6 months prior to the closing date for applications.
- Other reports where relevant should also be included such as Occupational Therapy Reports; Audiology Reports; Medical Reports etc.

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice (St. Marnock's N.S. Admissions Policy 2024/2025: Appendix B).

If your child does not get a place your child's Speech & Language Therapist and your child's School Principal will advise you on the local supports available for your child.

**The closing date for applications is Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024**

The referral agent for your child should send **5 copies** of completed applications directly to:

**Ms. Sinéad Trimble, Principal, St. Marnock's N.S., Strand Rd.,  
Portmarnock, Co. Dublin. Tel: 01 8462060**

This leaflet briefly describes the Language Class referral process. The complete 'St. Marnock's NS Admissions Policy'; 'Admissions Policy for the Specific Speech & Language Disorder Class' and 'Annual Admission Notice' are available to view on the school website:  
[www.stmarnocksns.ie](http://www.stmarnocksns.ie)