

**Preschool Lachtaín Naofa,  
Achadh Úr,  
Co. Chill Chainnigh.**

**Scoil Lachtaín Naofa**

**St. Lachtain's National School,  
Freshford,  
Co. Kilkenny.**

**Guthan/Fax: 056 8832400**

**Email:  
stlachtainns@gmail.com**



**Uimh. Rolla: 00796U**

**Príomhoide:  
Breandán Ó Teimhneáin.**

## **Achadh Úr**

**Preschool Lachtaín  
Early Intervention ASD Unit  
Admissions Policy**

### About Preschool Lachtaín

We in Preschool Lachtaín want to give the highest quality of preschool education to our children. We want the individual to grow to his/her true potential. Our aim is that this education will prepare each child for continued and appropriate schooling to the best of his/her ability. We recognise and value the role of parents as the primary educator of their children: together we can provide the skills for a loving approach to learning. We take an eclectic approach to teaching our pupils. We don't subscribe exclusively to any one approach to the education of children with Autism. However, we employ an ethos that is based upon the TEACCH method.

Preschool Lachtaín is managed by the board of management of St. Lachtain's N.S. However, Preschool Lachtaín and St. Lachtain's N.S. are considered separate entities for the purpose of enrolment/ admission.

### Aim of Preschool Lachtaín

The aim of the preschool is to provide a caring, learning environment which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's full educational potential. The achievement of this aim informs all of the planning processes and activities which occur in our school. The Principal, Teachers, Support Staff and Parents are partners in their children's education, with co-operation and communication between home and school being vital ingredients in the educational process. We share the same purpose - the care and well being of the children in our care. Each child's placement in the unit will be reviewed after one year following input from the multi-disciplinary team. If the child's cognitive profile changes, the Early Intervention Class may not be the most appropriate placement and may be reviewed with advice and input from the Autism Team and other therapeutic services. There will be ongoing reviews with parents and in the final year the SENO will meet with parents to discuss options for future education of the child. Preschool Lachtaín endorses the principle that a child be in a setting appropriate to his/her needs.

### Mission Statement

Established in 2013 under the auspices of the NCSE and following consultation with our Special Educational Needs Organiser, Preschool Lachtaín offers specialist educational service to children who have been fully diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

We aim to create a supportive and caring environment for each pupil.

With a team of dedicated teachers and special needs assistants, the school provides individual attention in small classes catering for the uniqueness of each pupil's personality.

Families of students are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's learning.

The aim is to provide quality preschool education to the children so they are enabled to attain their educational potential when they leave Preschool Lachtaín.

### Admission to Preschool Lachtaín

The Board of Management of Preschool Lachtaín and St. Lachtaín's N.S. have set out this policy in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998, the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Equal Status Act 2000, and Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004.

The Preschool Lachtaín ASD Unit was established in 2013, funded and resourced by the Department of Education and Science. This school policy has regard to the funding, resources, services and space available.

The Board of management reserves the right of admission within the terms of this policy. The Board of management will not, however, refuse a child on the basis of:

1. Ethnicity
2. Disability (Severity of Diagnosis)
3. Traveller status
4. Political beliefs
5. Family or social circumstances.

All the children must fulfill the enrolment criteria.

### Enrolment procedure

The process of enrolment begins with:

1. A referral from the Autism team or a telephone call or visit in person from the parents.
2. A Preschool Lachtaín application form and relevant NCSE forms are then completed. This application must be accompanied by an up to date educational psychological assessment and diagnostic report which confirms diagnosis of ASD in line with current Department of Education criteria.
3. Fully completed applications are then recorded in the applications file.
4. Entry into this file secures a place on the list of pre-admissions applicants.
5. Each fully completed application will be dated, placed in an A4 envelope and placed in the Preschool Lachtaín admissions file.

Please note all the above information will be forwarded to the Special Educational Needs Organiser as part of the admissions process.

### Criteria for enrolment/ admission

- Each child attending Preschool Lachtaín must have a definite diagnosis of Autism; the diagnosis must be made using a professionally recognised clinical and psychological procedure.
- The child must be between the age of three and five years upon enrolment/ admission. A child who turns six during the academic school year should not be in a preschool setting and therefore will not be considered for enrolment/admission in Preschool Lachtaín.

- Following this period they should advance to their local mainstream school or to an Autism unit attached to a mainstream school.

We consider Preschool Lachtaín to be a feeder school to autism units attached to mainstream schools or children's local mainstream schools where appropriate.

Enrolment/Admission to Preschool Lachtaín does not ensure automatic admission to St. Lachtaín's NS mainstream school. Whilst both Preschool Lachtaín and St. Lachtaín's N.S. are run by the Board of Management of St. Lachtaín's N.S. they have separate enrolment/admissions procedures and criteria.

### Multi-disciplinary Panel

All applications to Preschool Lachtaín will be assessed before admission by a multi-disciplinary team which may consist of the following members:

- School Principal of St. Lachtaín's N.S. and Preschool Lachtaín
- NEPS representative
- Resource Teacher/Learning Support Teacher/ Preschool Lachtaín Teachers
- HSE Representative- Early Intervention Team

### The remit of the Multi-disciplinary panel will be:

1. To ascertain the number of places available in Preschool Lachtaín based on discharge of pupils.
2. To review all applications for a place in Preschool Lachtaín based on relevant reports received and seeking further information if required.
3. To verify Preschool Lachtaín's suitability in meeting the student's needs.
4. To make recommendations on these findings to the Board of Management of St. Lachtaín's NS.

Should there be excess demand for places available the Multi-disciplinary panel recommendations to the Board of Management will follow the following criteria:

- Should demand exceed places available, offers will be made on the basis of a 'first come, first served principle' i.e. based on the date of placement in the pre-admissions file within the school. Should there be only one place available to two children who applied on the same day, chronological age will be taken into account and the place will be offered to the older child.
- Applicants who do not receive a place due to over subscription will be given priority for a place for the following school year. Offers will be made on the basis of a 'first come, first served principle' i.e. based on the date of placement in the pre-admissions file within the school. Should there be only one place available to two children who applied on the same day, chronological age will be taken into account and the place will be offered to the older child.

### Role of the SENO

The Special Educational Needs Organiser has a very important role within the operation of Preschool Lachtaín. She/He can act as liaison person between HSE and Preschool Lachtaín. Whilst not directly being a member of the multidisciplinary team, she/he may attend to provide advice, clarity in relation to NCSE guidelines or background information pertinent to each case.

All applications for supports for children attending Preschool Lachtaín will be processed by the SENO in line with Department of Education and NCSE guidelines.

Please note that the fulfilling of the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment if:

1. Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available.
2. Sufficient preschool places are not available.

The Board of management of Preschool Lachtaín and St. Lachtain's N.S. respects the rights of the existing school community and the children already enrolled. This consideration is paramount when assessing entry to Preschool Lachtaín.

All admissions/ enrolments for September of any academic school year should be completed by the end of the month of February of that same calendar year. Parents of successful applicants will be contacted by phone and post and must return a form accepting a place in Preschool Lachtaín. This must take place within two weeks of the receipt of this form, otherwise the place will be offered to another child. Deferral of enrolment is not facilitated. Should parents decide not to accept a place in Preschool Lachtaín that place will be offered to another child.

A pupil teacher ratio of no greater than six to one will be strictly adhered to in Preschool Lachtaín. There are two classes in Preschool Lachtaín with a maximum of six pupils in each class. Therefore the maximum number of places available is twelve. Should the number of classes increase the number of places will increase in line with the six pupils to one teacher ratio.

#### Discharge of Pupils from Preschool Lachtaín

The number of places available in Preschool Lachtaín will be ascertained following the annual multi-disciplinary team meeting. At this meeting a review of all children attending the preschool will take place and will result in one of the following:

- Onward progression to an autistic unit attached to a mainstream primary school.
- Onward progression to the child's local mainstream primary school
- Retention in Preschool Lachtaín for a further academic school year. This will not be possible if the child was turning six years old in the academic school year following the Multi-disciplinary team meeting i.e. a child should not turn six in preschool.

This policy is subject to ongoing review.

Policy ratified by the Board of Management of St. Lachtain's N.S. on Oct. 19th 2020.

Signed: Angela Durnan

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 19/10/2020

Signed: Brendan Tynan

(Principal)

Date: 19/10/2020