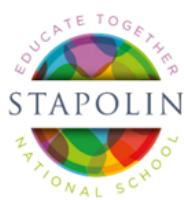


*Stapolin Educate Together N.S.
Myrtle Rd,
The Coast,
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*St. Marnock's N.S.,
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20519G Email: info@stapolinetns.ie

Information Leaflet for Parents & Teachers.

This information leaflet is for parents of children **who are proceeding** with the referral process to the DLD/SSD Classes in Stapolin ETNS or St Marnocks NS.

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

The Opening Date for applications is Monday February 2nd 2026.

The Closing Date for applications is Monday March 2nd 2026.

General Information

The DLD/SSD classes are located in St. Marnock's National School and Stapolin Educate Together National School. There are seven children in the class each year. The aim of the class is to provide children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and/or Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin 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 classes are staffed by a full time Teacher employed by the Department of Education (DE) and a part time Speech & Language Therapist employed by the HSE. Applications are accepted for children who are in Junior Infants to 5th class at the time of referral. The Child's age and class level will be taken into consideration when allocating places in each class. The child must live within specific areas of the HSE Integrated Area Dublin North County which includes the Primary Care Networks; Balbriggan, Swords, Coastal, Coolock and Kilbarrack.

If you have a query regarding the catchment area for your child please contact either St. Marnock's NS, Stapolin ETNS or the local HSE Speech & Language Therapy Department. Transport is provided by the Department of Education to successful applicants.

Terminology:

Developmental Language Disorder

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) are the up to date terms for 'Specific Speech & Language Disorder or Impairment' (SSLD/SSLI). Developmental Language Disorder is when a child (over 5) or adult has difficulties talking and/or understanding language. These difficulties impact on education and social interactions. The difficulties exist without another biomedical condition such as autism or intellectual disability.

Speech Sound Disorder

Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) is an umbrella term for a group of communication disorders that involve persistent difficulties producing speech sounds correctly. This includes difficulties with articulation (forming individual sounds), Phonology (patterns of sound errors) or the Motor Planning and Co-ordination needed for speech.

Criteria for admission:

The Department of Education (DE) criteria for referral to the DLD/SSD classes changed in 2025 and are outlined below. Please see DE Circular 0024/0025 for more information

Criteria A

The child has a conclusive diagnosis by a Speech and Language Therapist of Developmental Language Disorder where there is evidence of significant and pervasive needs evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools, observation in both clinical and social environments and assessment for risk factors and clinical markers and monitoring of responsiveness to intervention and language scores at or below a standard score of 78 (-1.5 SD from the mean)

and/or

Speech Sound Disorder (SSD) of unknown origin diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist where there is evidence of significant and pervasive impact of the SSD of unknown origin on learning, literacy and social relationships evidenced by response to intervention and assessment over time including, use of speech and language assessment tools and observation in both clinical and social environments.

AND

The child has complex or severe educational needs as a result of their DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin that are pervasive in nature and require the integrated and targeted educational and therapeutic supports of a special class for children with DLD/SSD. Supporting evidence should include:

- a) Evidence that despite targeted and intensive therapeutic and educational supports, the child's DLD and/or SSD of unknown origin continues to impact on their learning, participation, socialisation and well-being in their current educational setting.
- b) Evidence of engagement with therapy input including response to and impact of intervention across impairment, functioning and participation over time through Speech and Language Therapist review.
- c) Education documentation from schools or early learning and care settings including Student Support Plans and/or Access and Inclusion Profiles.

Criteria B:

Along with the DE criteria above, additional **local criteria** must be met by each applicant. The current local criteria for the DLD/SSD Classes in St. Marnock's NS and Stapolin ETNS 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 Integrated Area Dublin North County which includes the Primary Care Networks; Balbriggan, Swords, Coastal, Coolock and Kilbarrack. 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 to 5th Class at the time of referral.
- (iv) The applicant must have attended SLT sessions in the 9 months prior to the closing date for applications.

Referral Procedure

- Information leaflets for referral agents and parents are available on the school websites
- Referrals are **only** accepted from **Speech & Language Therapists**.
- Referrals are only accepted using the following forms available on either school website
 - Form A: Referral and Consent Form DLD/SSD Class 2026
 - Form B School Report form DLD/SSD Class 2026
- All referrals should be made via the Jotform platform on either school website.
- The referral and relevant reports and forms should be received by the closing date (March 2nd 2026)

Referrals should include the following:

- A cover letter to the School Principal signed by the referral agent.
- A completed '**Form A: Referral and Consent Form DLD/SSD Class 2026**'. 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.
- A completed **Form B:School Report form DLD/SSD Class 2026** which provides information on the impact of the child's DLD/SSD 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)/Speech Sound Disorder (SSD). 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 Psychology, Occupational Therapy; Audiology; ENT etc.

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the schools, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admissions Notice (St. Marnock's N.S. Admissions Policy 2026/2027: Stapolin ETNS Admissions Policy 2026/2027 available on school websites).

The closing date for applications is Monday March 2nd 2026

The referral agent for your child should upload the required referral documents to the Jotform under the Admissions tab on St. Marnock's NS website www.stmarnocksns.ie or Stapolin ETNS website www.stapolinetns.ie

For further information please contact

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

Or

Ms Clodagh Farrell, Principal, Stapolin Educate Together NS, Myrtle Rd, The Coast, Dublin 13.

