



Special Educational Needs Policy

SCOPE

Whole School Community.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL'S MISSION/VISION/AIMS AND OTHER POLICIES

In the spirit of the mission statement the policy seeks to respect the unique potential of every student and encourage each to maximise it. This policy is linked to our Code of Behaviour, Pastoral Care, Child Protection and Guidance policies.

RATIONALE

The policy is necessary to ensure equal recognition of and to cater for all abilities and talents in an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

- To promote that culture of inclusion throughout the school environment.
- To enable each student to achieve his/her full potential.
- To provide conditions which ensure that all students learn successfully.
- To promote self-confidence through experiencing success.
- To involve parents and students as partners.

POLICY CONTENT

- Overall pastoral approach.
- Identification of students with special educational needs.
- Awareness of students' background.
- Assessment, diagnosis and recording.
- Monitoring students' progress.
- Liaise where necessary with teachers, parents and outside agencies.
- Continuous professional development for staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Board of Management to approve the policy; to provide resources for Special Educational Needs within their means.
- Principal will liaise regularly with the special educational needs team and class teachers thus ensuring that provision is made for the effective inclusion of all students with Special Educational Needs.
- Staff will identify and provide for all children with special educational needs and will praise and encourage these children in order to foster self-worth.
- Special Educational Needs Team – see Appendix 1.
- Parents will be consulted with regularly via open lines of communication relating to their child's progress, difficulties encountered, strategies, and overall support available.
- The name of the Special Educational Needs Team members will be circulated to staff, students and parents.
- The Special Educational Needs Team will conduct CAT (Cognitive Ability Testing), WRAT (Wide Range Ability Test), Reading & Maths Competency tests with students at various stages of their schooling.
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will process applications for Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will liaise with appropriate bodies in relation to the needs of students with SEN. Following this and through consultation with parents/guardians, applications may be made to outside agencies.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

The performance of this policy can be judged by the use of the following criteria:

- Regularly brief staff about the progress of students with special educational needs.
- Circulation of minutes of Special Educational Needs meetings to all teachers.
- Feedback from students, teachers, parents.
- Overall improvement in behaviour, attitude, formal tests, attendance, self-esteem.
- Social interaction is seen to improve.
- Greater disposition for self-directed learning.
- Improved differentiation

MONITORING PROCEDURES

The Principal, Deputy Principal and Special Educational Needs Team will ensure that:

- the culture of inclusion is fostered.
- teachers make referrals to the:
 - Special Educational Needs Team
 - Year Heads
 - Guidance Counsellor
 - Pastoral Care Team.
- the policy is uniformly implemented (Appendix 2).

REVIEW AND RATIFICATION

This Policy was reviewed by staff, students and parents in May 2014 and ratified by the Board of Management on 19th June 2014.

Signed by Chairperson of the Board:



APPENDIX 1

THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) TEAM

The specific role of the SEN Team includes:

- The day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Assessment of in-coming students in basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Co-ordinating the provision for students with SEN.
- Planning Individual Education Programmes (IEP) and/or Group Programmes.
- Direct teaching of students with SEN.
- Monitoring progress and record keeping for students with SEN.
- Maintaining the school's SEN register and overseeing the records of students with SEN.
- Linking with outside agencies.
- Communicating with staff, parents and students.

APPENDIX 2

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

The role of the Special Educational Needs Department is to provide a proficient and responsive learning support service which keeps up-to-date with changes in the curriculum, syllabi, teaching and support methods. Within an appropriate framework of support, the Special Educational Needs Team assists students to function as independent autonomous learners.

How the Special Educational Needs Department Operates

The department functions on a withdrawal basis. This means that the students attend support sessions on a one-to-one or in a small group situation.

Review on Progress

From information gathered from initial assessments, an individualised programme or a group programme is put in place for students. Regular reviews of student's progress are made and parents are informed.

Duration of SEN Provision

The duration of support will be determined by the student's progress.

Assessment

- Parents (upon enrolment) and Primary schools are requested to complete a Pupil Details Form and to forward information on special educational needs including reports from a psychologist where this is available. Where in-coming students are identified as having SEN, a meeting takes place between the Special Educational Needs Team, parents and students to build a picture of the individual, their particular strengths and their specific learning difficulties.
- All students entering first year are screened in basic skills in literacy and numeracy competency. This normally occurs in September and is repeated in March/April.
- Where necessary, a meeting may take place between the resource/learning support teacher in the primary school setting with the Special Educational Needs Team regarding the on-going support for in-coming students.
- Students with SEN will be further assessed by the Special Educational Needs Team and by outside agencies, as considered appropriate, to identify on-going specific needs and to develop appropriate strategies to remediate difficulties.
- This process is continued to Junior Certificate where exam provision, e.g. reasonable accommodation in consultation with students/parents/teachers. This process can also be continued in some cases up to Leaving Certificate. The Special Educational Needs Department submits these applications for reasonable accommodations to the Department of Education and Science.
- The NEPS (National Educational Psychology Service) psychologist must also be contacted about availability of assessments for each school year.
- A Pupils Details Form will also be completed for students entering the school in a year other than 1st year. Reports concerning special educational needs will also be requested of parents/guardians in this case.