

Killina Presentation Secondary School Special Educational Needs Policy for Mainstream Students

Killina Presentation Secondary School is committed to providing an education for its students in a caring and supportive environment. In order to achieve this goal, some of our students may require supplementary teaching, additional resources, classroom support and/or the provision of specialist equipment. In all cases, it is the school's aim to integrate all students socially and academically.

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of students who have special educational needs. The policy applies to students with learning difficulties, students with disabilities and students who are at risk (personal, emotional, social or educational), in short, students who may need additional help or support to enable them to derive the maximum benefit from school.

The policy is informed by the school's mission statement:

Killina Presentation School is an inclusive Christian Community aimed at the holistic development of each individual.

This commitment is understood within the terms of the CEIST charter which states that:
"The educational needs of the students are identified and suitable programmes and curricula are provided to meet the breadth of needs identified so that all students can participate with dignity and confidence." (CEIST Charter p.14)

Legal Framework

The policy is informed by
The Education Act 1998
The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
The Disability Act 2005
The Equal Status Acts 2000-2004
Department of Education & Skills Circular Letters
National Council for Special Education Circular Letters
Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs, Post Primary Guidelines, 2007
Guidelines on the Individual Education Planning Process, 2006, NCSE

Aims:

- a) To seek to identify students with special educational needs through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.

- b) To develop pupils self-esteem, confidence and feelings of achievement and fulfilment in accordance with the school's Mission Statement and related policies.
- c) To improve the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils so that they can achieve their potential.
- d) To assist the teaching staff with the educational management of pupils with special educational needs.
- e) To develop a system of assessment, planning and review to cater for students with special educational needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management:

The BOM oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on SEN. They also ensure that adequate classroom accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided.

Principal:

The principal has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school. The new allocation model states the principal's leadership role is central and includes the following;

The school principal should

- Implement and monitor the school's Additional Needs Policy on an on-going basis.
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education teaching roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
- assign responsibility for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher (i.e. SENCO)
- communicate with the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser)
- allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents
- inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SET
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress

SEN Co-Ordinator:

SEN Co-Ordinator (SENCO) will:

- communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis

- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the SET team and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments (NEPS)
- co-ordinate regular SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for students with additional needs
- collaborate with the SET team in creating timetables for additional support
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their son/daughter, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate the whole-school standardised testing of each year with the help of the SET team
- co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- select students for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted
- maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support

SET Team (Special Educational Teacher)

The SET team will work closely with the SENCO in relation to:

- regularly meet with class teachers to discuss the needs of the pupils in their class
- maintain a record of these meetings and decisions made
- advise the class teacher, where needed, of possible interventions to meet the needs of their pupils
- advise class teacher on procedures for availing of external special needs services
- when Student Support File is created and targets set by the SET Team, support the class teacher in utilising them in their teaching
- communicate with the SENCO and the SET team regarding any concerns raised by class teachers at SET team planning meetings
- update and maintain class SEN records and test results
- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of need
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop Individual Profile and Learning Programmes (IPLP) for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and who require an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop an Individual Education Plan for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review IEPs
- meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review IEP
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis
- support whole-school procedures for screening

- administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received

Class Teacher:

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class, including those who have additional needs.

They will:

- implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties
- create a positive learning environment within the classroom
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SET Team, to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- meet regularly with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff and parents to review IEP
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned

Special Needs Assistants:

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 10/76).

The SNA will:

- support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum
- contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils
- support learning and teaching in the classroom
- attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM
- attend IEP meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil
- accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate

Parents/Guardians:

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children have much to contribute to their child's learning.

Parent/Guardian should:

- share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage
- support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning
- attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage

Pupils:

Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should, as appropriate:

- be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets
- become familiar with the targets that have been set for them
- develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning
- contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

Students entitled to and availing of Learning Support:

The model of delivery is through:

- Team Teaching (In-Class Support)
- Small Groups for Mathematics, English and also Irish Exemptions
- One on One Support – Usually given to students that needs individualised help or on a reduced time-table

Model of organisation/provision:

Learning Support provision is seen in the context of a whole school approach where differentiation should take place in all classrooms. In light of this, the special educational needs team, under the direction of the co-ordinator, takes primary responsibility for learning support provision. The special needs team will endeavour to provide appropriate levels of support for students as part of the whole school approach.

If a student has an Irish exemption, the learning support is provided during these periods for each year. If not, a student with SEN may be withdrawn from a modern language in first year in consultation with parents/guardians. Those who have an Irish exemption will be in a position to avail of learning support throughout their time in the school. Those who are not in

receipt of an Irish exemption, but nevertheless need learning support may in consultation with relevant parties, avail of a modified timetable.

The SET co-ordinator and SET Team will liaise with subject teachers to advise on particular learning difficulties and suggest strategies for the classroom. Gifted students are taught in mainstream classes and are challenged by the use of differentiation by the teacher and also by being assigned additional work

Enrolment and Transition from Primary School:

Application for entry to the school is made on a standard application form. Acceptance of a student into the school is guided by the school's admission policy. Parents are required to indicate if the student has any special needs and if he/she availed of learning support or resource teaching in primary school. Parents are also asked to supply the school with any psychological reports, medical reports, OT or SLT reports, or any other report relating to the student's difficulties.

The SET Team first meet with incoming students and their parent/guardians on Open Night. This gives a great opportunity to chat with parents and plan. On completion of enrolment, students sit the CAT4 assessment test at the end of January and the SET team meet with 6th Class Teachers from the feeder primary schools in May. This gives great insight for planning and making sure all students needs will be met for the transition in August.

Information Gathering and Assessment

Assessment is part of what a class teacher does on a daily basis for all students. Some methods include self-assessment, questioning, teacher observation, portfolios of work and teacher-designed tasks and tests. The information gathered enables the teacher to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum.

In order to identify pupils who may require supplementary teaching, screening; including standardised testing, is carried out in all classes annually and further diagnostic testing may need to take place. The information gathered from these formal assessments is then used to inform decisions for support and pupil's support plans (CSP, IPLP/GPLP and IEP)

All incoming first years complete the CAT4 Assessment which gives us great insight to our student's requirements along with the transition meeting in May. Each student fills out an Educational Passport in Primary and attached is their individual 6th class report, which gives their Sten Scores in Literacy and Numeracy.

All 1st Years complete a Group Reading Test (GRT) in September, to give further insight into their skill in this area and a reading age. Students undertake The Drumcondra Post-Primary DRT assessment in November/December. It assesses Verbal Reasoning, Numeric Ability, and overall reasoning skills. Verbal Reasoning assesses the ability to understand, think and reason in and with words. In the SET Department, we will review these scores along with their completed Christmas Test Scores in January.

At the end of 2nd year all students sit the Drumcondra Post-Primary Maths and English assessment. These tests high-light any difficulties before the students enter their final year of Junior Cert. (See trythetest.erc.ie)

In 3rd Year any student receiving Learning Support will complete the WRAT 4/WIAT 3 for Teachers, which is the Assessment recommended when applying for R.A.C.E.

The support students receive at Junior Cert Level will follow through to Leaving Cert unless unnecessary.

Set Criteria in order to receive Learning Support

- Students will have an up to date Report on file (Psychological or Behavioural).
- Clinical Assessment completed-support put in place where necessary.
- Students who have access to an Irish Exemption who have a Learning Disability.
- Students who fall below a Standardised Score of 85 (In Line with Department Recommendations for RACE) in Assessment Tests-CAT 4 Entrance Exam.
- Teacher Referral (Referral form on Shared Drive) - Summative and Formative Assessment in class. Further Testing will be completed by SET Team.
- Parent Concerns will be looked into with further investigation and assessed where required.

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management at a meeting o 15th October 2019