

Special Educational Needs Policy

At St. Cecilia's we believe that every child should have the best possible learning opportunities and we therefore promote inclusive practice. We recognise that some children may have particular needs or disabilities and we take specific action to support and encourage these children within a caring environment.

We enable all children to participate fully in a curriculum which responds to a wide range of individual talents. We work closely with parents and other agencies to monitor the child's progress carefully, and provide effective, additional support to meet the child's needs.

RATIONALE

St Cecilia's College seeks to address the educational and pastoral needs of all its pupils. It recognises that children with "Special Educational Needs" require particular support and attention to reach their full potential.

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order (1996) also recognises the particular support needed for these pupils and the subsequent "Code of Practice on the Identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs" (1998) sets out a modus operandi, whereby the needs of these pupils will be addressed.

This policy is designed to ensure that the needs of children with "Special Educational Needs" are addressed through the implementation of The Code of Practice (1998) and the "Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs" (2005).

We recognise that many pupils will have additional needs at some time during their school life. In implementing this policy, we believe pupils can be helped to overcome their difficulties

Whilst many factors contribute to the range of difficulties experienced by some children, we believe that much can be done to overcome them by parents, teachers and pupils working together.

AIMS

- To ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and Entitlement Framework at KS4 and Post-16. This will involve ability to access courses in the Foyle Learning Community.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- To ensure the identification of all pupils requiring SEN provision as early as possible in their school career.
- To ensure that pupils with SEN participate as fully as possible in all school curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- To ensure that parents of pupils with SEN are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To ensure that pupils with SEN are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future SEN provision.

- To ensure that pupils with SEN are provided with high quality careers advice with involvement of school professionals and CIEAG.
- To provide high quality SEN pastoral support.
- To provide appropriate learning resources and assessment to ensure SEN pupils live out the school motto of “Aspire, Endeavour and Achieve”.

INCLUSION

St Cecilia’s believes that a pupil with a disability and/or special/additional educational need(s) has the same entitlement to access the curriculum in order to develop their full potential, while being educated alongside their peers. This also includes pupils who are gifted or talented. Educational provision in this school addresses particular learning difficulties/differences/disabilities as well as facilitating the efficient education of other children with whom they are educated, whilst also ensuring efficient use of resources.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION

St Cecilia’s have adopted a whole-school approach to SEN Policy and Practice. Pupils identified as having SEN are as far as is practicable, fully included in mainstream classes. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the N. Ireland Revised Curriculum and are also included in all aspects of school life.

All teachers are responsible for identifying pupils with SEN and, in collaboration with the SENCO, will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. We recognise that Dyslexia is a common learning difficulty for a number of our pupils and we have a Dyslexia Policy in place (Appendix 1). Assessment is the process by which pupils with SEN can be identified. Whether or not a pupil is making progress, is seen as a significant factor in considering the need for SEN provision.

Early identification of pupils with SEN is a priority. The school will use appropriate screening and assessment tools, and ascertain pupil progress through:

- Evidence obtained by teacher observation / assessment.
- Standardised screening / diagnostic tests.
- Reports or observations.
- Records from feeder schools.
- Information from parents.
- Internal & External exam results etc.

In addition, pupils have the facility for self-referral by raising their concern with a member of staff. Pupils and their parents can talk to the SENCo directly, through a Subject Teacher, Classroom Assistant, Form Teacher, Year Head, Senior Teacher, Vice Principal or Principal.

Typical provision for SEN pupils will include:

- Access to a full curriculum with additional help and support by subject teachers through a differentiated curriculum.
- Periods of withdrawal to work with a Classroom Assistant.
- In-class support with adult assistance.
- Homework/After school support
- Help with daily planning and organization
- Lunch Club to help with social interaction and promote enjoyment of school based activities
- Use of Independent Learning Centre
- Target setting
- Maths Mentoring
- Guardian Angels

- Literacy Support
- Revision Sessions
- Purchase of ICT Hard and software

STAGES OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE

Stage 1

Class teacher has a concern and informs SENCo. Needs are identified and registered.

Stage 2

SENCO takes lead in providing additional/extra support e.g. in-class support, withdrawal etc.

Stage 3

Teachers and SENCO are supported by external specialists

Stage 4

Board considers the need for a statutory assessment *

Stage 5

Board issues a statement if appropriate.

*The school recognizes that a request for a Statutory Assessment does not inevitably lead to a Statement.

The school may request a Statutory Assessment from the Board when, despite an individualised programme of sustained intervention at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice, the child remains a significant cause for concern. The school will also have followed the guidance contained within the Provisional Criteria and Good Practice Guidelines documents. A parent may also make a request for Statutory Assessment.

RECORD-KEEPING

The school records the steps taken to meet pupils' individual needs. Teaching pupils with SEN is a whole school responsibility. The core of the teachers' work involves a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, and assessing, taking into account the differences in pupils' abilities, aptitudes, and interests. Some pupils may need increased levels of provision and support. The Code of Practice advocates a graduated response to meeting pupils' needs. Records are kept in the SENCo's Classroom.

EDUCATION PLANS

A pupil on the SEN Register at Stage 2 or above will have an Individual Education Plan and Pupil Passport which is regularly reviewed. The Individual Education Plan will record that which is different from or additional to the normal differentiated curriculum, and will concentrate on a number of targets that closely match the pupil's needs. The Education Plan will be discussed with the pupil and the parent. The Pupil Passport will inform of the needs of the SEN pupil in terms of the nature of their needs, their Learning Style, how they can be helped, how they will endeavour to help themselves, the additional support that they receive and their most recent standardized test results.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The aim of the Annual Review is to:

- Assess the pupil's progress in relation to the Education Plan targets.
- Consider the appropriateness of the existing Statement.

In Years 10, 12 and 14 the Transition Review is significant in preparing for the pupil's transition e.g. into Further Education, Higher Education, future employment, adult life etc. This usually involves the Careers Service in addition to outside Specialists where applicable.

USE OF SUPPORT STAFF

Our experienced support staff are aware of procedures and of their role and responsibilities in relation to supporting pupils in their learning and where necessary their medical/physical needs. They are trained in child protection and confidentiality.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff (teaching and support) are encouraged to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to work with pupils with SEN. Part of the SENCO's role in school-based INSET is to develop awareness of resources and practical teaching procedures / strategies for use with pupils with SEN and to disseminate relevant information. School development days are used for staff training in a range of SEN areas.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SENCO

The SENCO plays a crucial role in the school's SEN provision. This involves working with the Principal and Governors to determine the strategic development of the Policy, Other responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the Policy.
- Coordinating the provision for pupils with SEN.
- Liaising with and giving advice to fellow teachers.
- Managing Learning Support / Classroom Assistants
- Overseeing pupils' records.
- Liaising with the parents.
- Making a contribution to INSET.
- Liaising with external agencies.
- Liaising with other schools/FE Colleges as required for pupils involved in collaboration
- Sufficiency of ICT hard and software

The Subject Teacher

The Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the subject teacher, who needs to have access to information about pupils with SEN and whose responsibilities include:

- Being aware of the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of, and subsequent provision for pupils with SEN.
- Collaborate with the SENCO to decide the action required to assist the pupil to progress.
- Working with the SENCO to collect all available information on the pupil.
- In collaboration with the SENCO, develop Education Plans for pupils with SEN.
- Working with pupils with SEN to deliver the individual programme set out in the Education Plan.
- Develop constructive relationships with parents.
- Being involved in the development of the school's SEN Policy.

Principal

- The day-to-day management of all aspects of the school including SEN provision.
- Keeping the Governors well informed about SEN provision in the school.
- Working closely with the SENCO / SEN team etc.
- Liaising with ELB staff to ensure SEN is supported in the college.

Governors

The Governors' responsibilities to pupils with SEN include:

- Ensuring that provision of a high standard is made for pupils with SEN.
- Ensuring that pupils with SEN are included in all aspects of school life
- Having regard to the Code of Practice and SENDO when carrying out their responsibilities.
- Being fully involved in developing and subsequently reviewing SEN Policy.
- Reporting to parents on the school's SEN Policy including the allocation of resources from the school's delegated budget.

Parents/Carers

St Cecilia's firmly believes in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and that this will enable children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. The school recognizes that parents/carers have a unique overview of the child's needs and how best to support them, and that this gives them a key role in the partnership. Parents/carers will be informed if their child is being discussed at MAST meetings and of any subsequent actions. Where appropriate, pupils with SEN will also be encouraged to participate in the decision-making processes affecting them.

LINKS WITH EXTERNAL SPECIALIST SUPPORT SERVICES

The school recognizes the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide for pupils with SEN. SENCO will organize and set up MultiAgency Support Team (MAST) meetings on a regular basis. Colleagues from the following support services will be involved with pupils with SEN:

- Educational Psychologists
- Laurel Centre - outreach
- Speech Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Social Services
- Child and Family Team
- Community Pediatrician
- Hearing impairment / Visual impairment services etc.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Information relating to a pupil with SEN will remain confidential and records stored securely to be accessed only by appropriate staff. Information about a child's needs will only be given to those with direct responsibility for that child. Information relating to SEN may be shared as required with staff from other institutions (schools/ NWRC) if the pupil attends courses in that institution through collaboration and in fulfilling the Entitlement Framework. All procedures and guidance laid down through Service Level Agreement and Code of Practice of Foyle Learning Community will be followed.

POLICY REVIEW

The school considers the SEN Policy document to be important and, in conjunction with the Governing body, undertakes a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The outcomes of this review are used to inform the School Development Plan.

DEFINITIONS

'A child has "special educational needs" if she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for her" (The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996)

"Learning difficulty" means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of her age and / or has a disability which either prevents or hinders her from making use of educational facilities.... "Special educational provision" means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age. (Code of Practice...1998)

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his / her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. A pupil, who is, by the definition given in the DDA, a 'disabled person', is protected from discrimination on grounds of their disability by SENDO

The school will have due regard for The Code of Practice, SENDO and other relevant legislation and guidelines, when carrying out our duties towards all pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that parents are notified when SEN provision is being made for their child.

This policy was last reviewed by the SENCO: December 2014

Due to be Reviewed: December 2015

PUPILS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (DYSLEXIA)

Policy Statement

At St Cecilia's College we recognise that some pupils, despite often having average or above average intellectual ability and good oral skills, have unusual difficulty learning to read or to spell and write fluently. These pupils may be described as having specific learning difficulties or dyslexia.

We will therefore make the following arrangements to try to ensure that their needs are met.

- We will operate a screening and monitoring programme to try to identify all pupils who are experiencing difficulties with aspects of literacy as early as possible.
- We will assess and make provision for the pupil's difficulties within the framework of the Stages of the Code of Practice.
- We will prepare appropriate education plans, setting out the provision we propose to make for the pupil and the objectives for that provision.
- If we are unable to overcome the pupil's difficulties we may refer the pupil for assessment by the Psychology Service of the Education and Library Board. This assessment will address the need for specialist support provided by the Board.

Pupil Support

All teachers who teach the pupil will be made aware of her difficulties and the agreed strategies to help provide access to the curriculum; e.g use of computers, word processor, word banks, personal (illustrated) dictionaries, spell checkers and other spelling aids and ICT resources.

All staff will try to be as sensitive as possible to sources of anxiety and embarrassment, e.g. being asked to read aloud in class, being asked to copy large amounts of written material from the board.

Teachers will take account of the pupil's difficulties when marking work by, for example, concentrating on content rather than absolute spelling or grammatical accuracy. They will also be aware of the need to find alternative ways of assessing progress rather than always through written tests and examinations.

Teachers will take account of the pupil's difficulties when setting homework assignments. They will consult with parents and set homeworks which should be capable of completion within a reasonable period of time.

We will try to suggest ways in which parents can help us help their child. We believe that parents can contribute a great deal to an educational programme.

Where appropriate pupils will receive examination concessions such as extra time and readers in both internal and external examinations.