



# Coláiste Iognáid S.J.

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## **Special Education Needs (SEN) Policy**

### **LINK TO MISSION STATEMENT**

Coláiste Iognáid is committed to developing a dynamic school community, which fosters the educational, spiritual and personal development of all our students. As a Jesuit school, the ethos seeks to develop each student's religious, moral, social, intellectual and cultural sensibilities. Our Ignatian Vision guides procedures and processes within the school. Cura personalis is one of the defining features of the ethos of the college where each student is cared for and encouraged to express their own individuality. The unique character of each person is acknowledged and valued. One of the central aspirations of the college is that we should be "people for others". All our policies are informed and guided by these Ignatian values.

LINK to [Vision Document](#)

### **INTRODUCTION BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

The Board of Management recognises the importance of Special Education Needs and is fully committed to following best practice in implementing this policy.

In developing this policy, we aspired to create a document which promotes a child-centred approach to the delivery of SEN support in Coláiste Iognáid.

This policy applies to all students with SEN, including students with exceptional ability, who attend Coláiste Iognáid. It is also intended to serve the school community including the B.O.M, the Principal, the teaching and ancillary staff and parents/guardians.

### **RATIONALE**

The purpose of this policy is

- To outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to supporting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all children in our school
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching and learning in relation to pupils with additional needs; fostering inclusion (see definition) of pupils with additional needs in our school

For the purposes of this document, the following [definition by the NCSE](#), has been adopted.

*Inclusion is defined as a process of:*

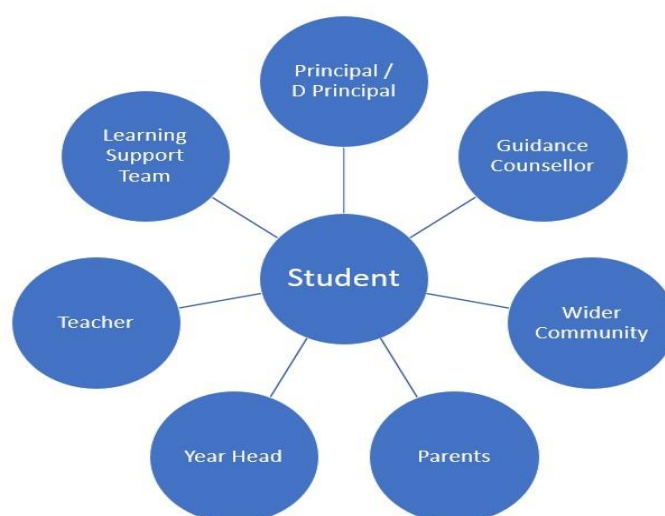
- *addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities.*
- *removing barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements, to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/ her attendance at school.*

- To comply with legislation, circulars and guidelines; Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000, Department of Education and Skills (DES) Special Education Circular 0013/17, A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools (DES), Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools 2017(DES), New Special Education Teacher (SET) Allocation Model (NCSE) 2017.

### **AIMS OF THE POLICY**

- To enable the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all students through their presence, engagement and achievement in our school.
- To provide supplementary teaching and support where necessary and within the limits of available provision from the Department of Education and Skills.
- Develop resilience and affirmation of the children's abilities and strengths.
- Stimulate in all pupils' feelings of empowerment by ensuring that they have the opportunity to communicate their needs through open discussion in a learning community that respects, encourages and celebrates all learners' contributions and achievements.
- Divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs.

Coláiste Iognáid take a whole school approach to the Education and Welfare of our students. The student is central to all policies and teaching.



## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

The Board of Management oversees the development, implementation and review of the school policy on supporting children with additional needs.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is encouraged by the Board of Management and the Principal. The Board of Management will be informed by the principal about the working of this policy.

### **THE PRINCIPAL**

The Principal has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and the implementation and revising of the SEN policy and procedures.

- The principal ensures that staff are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities and ensures an effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies.
- Liaise with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision.
- Liaise with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs.
- Allocate time within the school timetable for the SET to plan and consult with teachers and parents

### **SEN CO-ORDINATOR**

The role of the special needs co-ordinator:

- To co-ordinate/ devise a school SEN Plan.
- To create and maintain a school register of students with SEN
- Collaborate and communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an ongoing basis.
- Oversee the implementation of the school's SEN policy and procedures.
- Oversee documentation and creation of programmes with regard to SEN. For example; assessments, reports, Student Support Files, IEPs, PPPs.
- Coordinating of timetabling of all SET sessions in collaboration with the Deputy Principal.
- Assisting Deputy Principal with timetabling and duties of SNAs.
- Liaise with parents in order to plan and review additional supports that are put in place in order to meet their child's needs.
- To process applications for Reasonable Accommodations at State Examinations (RACE)
- Providing support and advice to SNAs.

- Liaise with outside agencies in relation to SEN and assessments.
- To ensure SSP's are in place for students with SEN.
- Attending professional development courses in relation to SEN and relaying information back to staff.
- To advise teachers of the recommendations made in professional assessments relating to individual students.
- To ensure systems are in place for the referral of students by teachers, parents or outside agencies.
- Liaise with previous and future education/service providers in order to provide a continuity of support to pupils with SEN.
- Overseeing standardised tests, organising test booklets and collection and proper filing/storage of results.
- To facilitate a weekly meeting of the SEN team.

## **THE CLASS TEACHER**

The class teacher has the primary responsibility for the education of all children in their classes, including children who struggle in their education or are selected for additional support. In addition, classroom teachers need:

- To be aware of the School's policy and procedures (as outlined in this policy) for dealing with students with SEN, and ensure all students' needs are met.
- To seek advice from the SEN Department regarding students with SEN.
- To participate in CPD in the area of SEN.
- To devise a plan, in consultation with the resource teacher or SEN Coordinate, on the most effective use of an SNA for a student in the class.
- To support/ encourage independence in the student.
- To differentiate teaching and learning activities for students, including exceptionally able/gifted students
- To create a positive classroom environment for all students.
- To create opportunities for success
- To use assessment for learning and comment-only marking.
- To establish and teach behavioural and learning expectations.
- To assess/ monitor progress.
- To consider the needs of students with SEN in all aspects of classroom planning.
- To identify students who may be at risk (considering general progress, application, communication, behaviour, or interaction with other students).
- To complete referral forms, transfer of information forms, etc as required by the SEN team
- Contribute to group or individual planning and review

- Implement agreed strategies
- Prepare information for IEP planning meetings
- Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies
- Liaise with and support the work of the SNAs in the classroom
- Inform parents of the progress of students through the parent-teacher meeting and school reports.
- Contribute to the school development planning for their subject area whilst always having concern for students with SEN.
- Build a bank of differentiated resources pertaining to their subject area, which are shared collegially

## **YEAR HEAD**

To support the creation of an inclusive climate within the school and contribute significantly to the work of the special educational needs support team.

- To facilitate the inclusion of an individual student with special educational needs by monitoring the student's progress within the year group.
- To encourage an awareness of special educational needs from the students, including a respect for students with SEN.

## **THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER (SET)**

- Providing diagnostic and informal assessments for students at regular intervals in order to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention
- Collaborating with subject teachers by giving advice on teaching methodologies best suited to a student.
- Providing direct teaching to a student with SEN either to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom or to improve upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully access the second level curriculum.
- To provide team teaching/ cooperative teaching when withdrawal from the classroom may not be the most appropriate means of supporting the student.
- Contributing at meetings involving parents and/or outside agencies when appropriate.
- To communicate updates on progress to parents/guardians through meetings, school reports, phone calls, emails etc.
- Collecting and analysing school-wide screening data, including in-take screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records. Gathering information from subject teachers/ other staff
- Planning, implementing and reviewing individual and/or group interventions
- Seeking external professional advice, as needed

- To advise SNA's around the care needs of relevant students.

## **THE SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT (SNA)**

SNA support is provided specifically to assist the schools to cater for the care needs of pupils with disabilities in an educational context, where the nature of these care needs have been outlined in professional reports as being so significant that a pupil will require adult assistance in order to be able to attend school and to participate in education.

The special needs assistant is allocated to provide support for the care and/or behavioural needs of pupils with a diagnosed disability. Personalised Pupil Plans are used to record the care needs of pupils and the pathways towards independence. Details of personalised pupil plans (PPPs) are recorded and securely filed in the pupils' files in the school office. When a system has been set up for it, PPP's will be recorded with Student Support Files (SSFs).

The SNA's work will be supervised either by the principal or the class teacher. Support and advice is also provided by SET co-ordinator.

The SNA duties involve tasks of a non-teaching nature such as:

- 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 and outside of the classroom, encouraging independence and participation in class activities or recreational activities during break times
- assistance with out-of-school visits, walks and similar activities
- attend IEP meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil

## **PARENTS / GUARDIANS**

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements in our school and SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children have much to contribute to their child's learning. The use of the Student Support File provides valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and our daily cooperation with the child.

**In order to assist the school in its efforts to prepare for and support the educational and physical needs of the child relevant to his/her ability or special needs, and to profile the support services required, the school requests that the parent/guardian of the child:**

- Informs the school of any special needs, any information pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development as early as possible in the pre-enrolment /enrolment process.
- Ensures that copies of the child's medical and/or psychological report(s) are provided to Coláiste Iognáid as soon as they are available. This information will be treated as confidential.
- The Principal may meet with the parents/guardians of the child to discuss the child's needs and the school's suitability or capability in meeting those needs.

#### **Coláiste Iognáid requests that parents/guardians:**

- support the work of the school and keep the school informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning
- attend meetings arranged by the principal, deputy principal or special education needs coordinator.
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- avail of opportunities to work collaboratively with the school through various activities and initiatives throughout the school year.

The SEN department fully involve students in assessments and discussions around their learning needs.

- Students have input into their learning targets
- Students at School Support Plus are involved in the planning of their IEP and are invited to attend the IEP meeting.
- Students on behaviour reports/timesheets are encouraged to self-monitor.

We believe that achievements are maximised when students take ownership of their learning.

**Identification, Monitoring and Support: Coláiste Iognáid endeavours to meet the needs of all students. The processes followed are outlined in appendix 1.**

#### **POLICY PUBLICATION**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on dd/mm/yyyy

#### **REVIEW**

This policy has been made available to school personnel. The policy is published on the school website and is available to parents and pupils on hardcopy upon request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## **RATIFICATION**

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and will otherwise be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed:



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Principal

Signed:



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Chairperson of Board of Management

Date:

17 June 2022



## **PROVISION AND THE CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT**

### **Continuum of Support**

The model of assessment and intervention, as practised in Coláiste Iognáid, is underpinned by recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum, from mild to severe and from transient to long term. Our response to the needs of students is organised according to NEPS's Continuum of Support.

### **Student Support Plans (SSP)**

A Student Support Plan is devised for students with Special Education needs. All students involved in SEN support will have a tailored learning plan, with students with resource teaching hours or more complex needs having a more detailed Student Support Plan.

The Student Support Plan involves:

- Gathering Information: Personal/ Background details.
- Educational details (primary school details/assessment and learning support details)
- Categorisation of need (assessment reports/ information attained from parents)
  - General profile based on formal/informal assessment.
- SEN provision
- Priority Need
- Setting targets for each priority learning need:
- Identifying the strategies and resources required:
- Relevant documentation
- Setting the date for review: A review occurs each academic year. However it may occur more often dependent on student progress and circumstances

These SSP's aim to include the most relevant information in a clear and concise manner so that it functions practically as a working document.

## **PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH KNOWN AND DOCUMENTED NEEDS**

### **Transfer from Primary School**

The transfer of information from primary level to post-primary level is vital to the successful support of students with SEN. At the Open Night for prospective parents the importance of completing the transfer of information documents are outlined. Following acceptance of a place in the school and transfer of information from parents and their primary school, parents of incoming first years are contacted individually, practical supports are outlined, structure of

learning support and resource teaching hours is explained, pastoral care structures and information regarding Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Exams (RACE) procedures are discussed.

The Special Needs Coordinator also will:

- Visit or contact the feeder Primary Schools to collect up-to-date information. □ Liaise with primary school and parents of students with very specific needs who would benefit from more than one visit to the school
- Meet with the parent/ guardian of students with SEN.
- Establish communication with the primary school resource/ learning support teacher.  
□ Apply for Resource Teaching Hours/SNA support/Assistive Technology for students for relevant students.

Once accepted to Coláiste Iognáid:

- All incoming first year students take a Cognitive Ability Test; CAT 4. These tests can also be used to identify strengths and needs of incoming students with SEN. This data is used to help identify students who may need additional support, including exceptionally able students.
- The SEN team will create learning targets for each student with SEN. These targets are monitored and evaluated at regular intervals. Once achieved, new targets are set. □ At the beginning of each academic year all students on the SEN Register are reviewed individually in terms of level of support needed and curriculum load.

### **Students transferring into other Year Groups**

When a student is accepted into a year group other than First Year, information is sought from their previous school (Educational Psychological report, School reports, attendance, etc) This is the responsibility of the Principal/ Deputy Principal. Any relevant information is then passed to the Year Head and the Special Needs Co-ordinator.

### **PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH EMERGING NEEDS**

For students with emerging needs, including the exceptionally able, the concern may have been identified through the whole school screening and monitoring systems (CAT4, in class assessment, informal observation, parental concern). Teachers are asked to complete a referral form for students who they have a concern about that focuses on the student's behaviour, academic performance, homework etc. Some students will need further individual or diagnostic testing to identify the nature of their needs (both learning and behavioural). Parental consent is obtained before diagnostic tests are administered on an individual basis. Teachers are also encouraged to refer to students' CAT 4 results to determine the student's areas of strength and their needs and link with at least two other subject teachers before completing a referral form.

### **Models of SEN provision**

In assessing and deciding which students need to be in receipt of supplementary teaching and which students may benefit from support within the mainstream context the following options are considered: • Curricular differentiation

- Team Teaching/Co-operative Teaching
- In-class support/Differentiation
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- Organisation and Life Skills lessons
- Curricular reduction (reduced load) - A student with SEN who experiences difficulty in coping with the breadth of the current curriculum is permitted to 'drop' a subject. This occurs only after all avenues have been exhausted. A consultation between the parents/ guardian and guidance teacher is also necessary. Parents must sign a consent form giving permission for a reduced subject load.

The period of intervention recommended for each student is dependent on the nature and extent of their individual need. The duration of provision is varied and is reviewed throughout the intervention. There are cases where support is needed on a short-term basis, after which the student is in a position to recommence with the regular curriculum. All decisions in this regard are discussed with parents/guardians, class teachers, the student, principal and guidance counsellor.

### **Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE)**

Applications are made by the SEN Co-ordinator for RACE provision for students with SEN who are taking a Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate Examination.

State exam accommodations are granted by The State Examinations Commission. These accommodations are in place as part of a continuum of support for students whose special educational needs are known to the school, and where additional supports have been put in place in order to meet those needs. The school will make an application for relevant accommodations for students who fulfil the criteria as directed by the SEC at Junior Cycle. These accommodations can be reactivated for Leaving Cert, where the school accepts that there is a continued need for the accommodation and where additional supports remain in place for students.

### **Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)**

Applications are processed with the support of the Guidance Department.

### **Irish Exemption**

Applications for Irish exemptions are made through the Principal of the school including the 0053/2019 Irish exemption application.

### **Modern Foreign Language Exemption**

The study of a modern foreign language is timetabled for all students. Exemptions from studying a modern foreign language are granted by the principal once the following criteria are met:

- Educational psychological recommendations are reviewed,
  - in school assessments and progress in the language is analysed,
  - recommendations of the MFL department and the SEN department are considered.
- The implications of not studying an MFL are communicated to parents and students. Exemptions will be granted once these steps have been taken and the principal is satisfied that the discontinuation of the study of MFL is in the student's best interest.