



**St. Brogan's College.**  
Coláiste Bhrógáin Naofa.

# Policy

on

# Special Educational Needs

## **SCOPE:**

This policy refers to students in Saint Brogans College and involves parents/guardians, staff, school management and the Board of Management. Special Educational Needs as defined by the EPSEN Act (2004) as a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition. It also includes students requiring support with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and students who are exceptionally able and gifted.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOLS MISSION/VISION/AIMS:**

- Saint Brogan's is a vibrant, dynamic and caring school committed to the academic, personal and spiritual development of all its pupils. It has a christian ethos within which other traditions are welcomed and respected.
- Saint Brogans College is committed to creating a learning environment which is inclusive and supportive of all students in line with this mission statement. We strive to ensure that all, whatever difficulties they may have, are enabled to achieve their potential within the school community.
- We encourage excellence by fostering a love of learning and by promoting a rich and diverse range of educational opportunities.
- We believe in empowering and equipping our pupils to become well qualified and rounded individuals who can thrive in and contribute to an ever changing world

In order to realise the aim of a caring and inclusive school it is important to outline our policy and commitment to students with Special Educational Needs.

## **RATIONALE:**

- Saint Brogan's caters for a wide range of abilities, interests and aptitudes. This involves careful assessment, planning and teaching of all students needs. It is our policy to address all types of learning difficulties.

We also are complying with the following legislation;

- The Education Welfare Act 2000,
- Equal Status Act 2000
- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN)
- The Disabilities Act (2005)

## **GOALS/OBJECTIVES:**

- To ensure that all students including those with special needs are supported to realise their full potential.
- To provide an environment in which pupils with special educational needs feel welcome and included and become fully integrated into the school.
- To adopt a whole school approach towards the educational and personal development of students with special educational needs.
- That all staff would show a willingness to adapt and differentiate the curriculum where necessary.
- That students with Special Needs would participate in the whole school experience.
- Greater retention of SEN students.
- That training would be provided for teachers and SNA's.
- To provide an inclusive education in mainstream school with appropriate network of support
- To comply with legislation
- A commitment to equality and a respect for diversity
- To involve parents in supporting their childrens learning
- To develop positive self esteem and positive attitudes towards school and the learning environment for all students.
- To set targets to improve the academic achievement of all students

## **POLICY CONTENT:**

- The school will liaise and communicate with the Parents/Guardians, primary schools, SENO, NEPS and other relevant agencies to assist and support the student prior to coming to the school and during the students years in the school.
- Identifying, assessing and testing pupils will be ongoing so that the necessary supports are applied for and put in place for the pupils.
- Resources and learning support hours will be directed towards pupils through special classes, one to one, small groups and team teaching.
- The school will endeavour to provide appropriate programmes and levels to all pupils.
- Teachers will use a variety of methodologies to enhance the learning of special educational needs students.

- Teachers and the SEN Co-ordinator will monitor and keep records of work, assessments and other relevant materials on students. Appropriate security and confidentiality will be maintained in relation to all student records.
- A record of work undertaken in special classes, one to one, small groups and team teaching will be provided by the teacher.
- Special Needs Assistants, if necessary, and approved by the SENO will be provided.
- Homework, classwork and assessments where possible will be differentiated to accommodate the needs of pupils.
- Reasonable Accommodation in both in house and for State Examinations will be available. In the case of in house exams the numbers catered for will be subject to availability of rooms and personnel. Students granted accommodations will have access to scribes, readers and the use of audio visual equipment.
- The active involvement of parents as partners in the process and the provision of supports to parents will be established.
- Communication between parents, teachers, students, SNA's and outside personnel and agencies is vital if special needs are to be successfully integrated into our school.
- A team of teachers will form the SEN core team in the school. The SEN core team will help to co-ordinate, plan, implement and review special education provision in the school.
- Policies and systems for learning support will be reviewed on a regular basis. Change will be implemented as the need arises.
- Special Educational needs students are catered for through the existing pastoral care supports in the school.
- The training and continued professional development for all staff is a priority.
- The use of ICT through the provision of software/hardware for pupils with special needs is supported and encouraged in the school.
- Students requiring English as an Additional support may be withdrawn from classes and given additional english language teaching where resources are available.

### **HOW ARE SEN STUDENTS IDENTIFIED?**

Students with special needs can be identified by the following sources:

#### **First Year:**

- ✓ Professional reports
- ✓ CAT
- ✓ Reading & Maths age tests
- ✓ Information received from Parents/Guardians

- ✓ Information received from Primary schools
- ✓ Primary school end of year reports with standardised test results.
- ✓ SENO
- ✓ NEPS Psychologists
- ✓ Contact received from outside agencies  
e.g HSE, Enable Ireland, DCD Unit, Occupational Therapists  
Speech & Language Therapists, National Council for the Blind, Visiting Teacher for the Deaf
- ✓ Liaising with primary schools
- ✓ Subject Teacher referral
- ✓ Year Head/Tutor referral
- ✓ SEN Mentors referral/observations
- **Progress of special needs students can be assessed by the following means:**
  - ✓ House exams
  - ✓ Consultation with subject teachers, Year Head & Class tutor
  - ✓ Consultation with parents
  - ✓ Discussion with students.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all:- The Board of Management, Principal, SEN co-ordinator, Subject teachers, Mentors, Resource & Learning-Support Teacher, SNA's Parents and Children

### **Board of Management:**

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated from time to time.
- To approve the policy
- To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy

### **The Principal:**

- Assumes overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on learning-support and special needs in co-operation with the SEN Co-ordinator
- Liaise with teachers and parents & students in the development of the school plan on learning support and special needs.
- Monitor the implementation of the school plan on learning support and resource and special needs on an on-going basis.
- Keep teachers informed about the external services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
- Helps teachers increase their knowledge and skills in the area of learning-support.
- Liaises regularly with the Learning-Support Teacher/mentor.
- Ensures compliance with current legislation
- Supporting the implementation of a tracking system at whole-school level to monitor the progress of all students including SEN students
- Consult & liaise as required with relevant external bodies and agencies such as the Department of Education & Science, NEPS, NCSE, HSE and local agencies.

### **SEN Co-ordinator**

The SEN Co-ordinator will be assisted by the SEN core team in all aspects of co-ordinating, planning, implementing and reviewing special needs provision in the school.

#### **The SEN co-ordinator duties are:**

- To inform and advise SEN team of resources, materials and levels of support required.
- To maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and/or special educational services.
- Co-ordinate information gathering for incoming students.
- Advise the Principal, SEN core team, Resource & Learning Support teachers on issues that may arise in the day to day implementation of the Learning Support programme in the school.
- Make applications to SENO.
- Timetable the Resource & Learning Support hours
- Maintain records e.g. IEP's, Priority targets etc
- Timetable Reasonable Accommodations for In house examinations
- Maintaining a list of students who are receiving learning support and / or special educational services.

- Set the agenda for weekly meetings.
- Chair the weekly meetings
- Advise parents on learning support services
- Liaising with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for students with special needs
- Arrange for classroom accommodation and resources, as appropriate.

**The role of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) is**

- To submit all relevant documentation for accessing support i.e. any psychological reports, OT reports, Speech & Language Reports.
- To sign Parental Permission form for accessing resources such as additional teaching support, assistive Technology, SNA as required.
- To encourage and support the child with SEN to maximise the benefit of the support for the student.
- To maintain contact with the HSCL, Year Head or Mentor.
- To familiarise themselves with the arrangements in school that exists to support their child with SEN
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may access professional assessment of student privately where such an assessment cannot be organised by the school.

Parents can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supporting the work of the school by participating with their child in such activities as:
  - Using Information and Communications Technology (ICTs), where available, to support learning in English and / or Mathematics
  - Book sharing / reading stories
  - Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
  - Discussions about school and other activities to build vocabulary and thinking skills
  - Where their child is in receipt of learning support, implementing suggested home-based activities outlined in their child's Individual Profile and Learning Programme and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Talking positively about school and school work;
- Where their child is in receipt of learning support, implementing suggested home-based activities outlined in their child's Individual Profile and Learning Programme and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Parents should keep the subject teacher informed of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. They should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home.

**Role of the student:**

- To complete homework set
- To participate in all appropriate assessment activities
- To participate actively and willingly in all Learning Support & Resource classes

**The Role of the Mentor is:****The mentor is assigned a Year group.**

- To attend weekly meetings
- First Year Mentor to visit Primary schools before students begin First Year to gather information on each SEN student.
- To devise and regularly review an IEP.
- To read & interpret professional reports and advise accordingly.
- To research the student's learning needs to become au fait with their learning difficulty
- To maintain records on the students in their year group.
- To upskill
- To liaise with outside agencies & Parents/Guardians, where necessary.
- To devise a set of targets for pupils to be implemented in Resource.
- To recommend students that need diagnostic testing.
- To provide advice to the subject teacher (if requested) about students.
- To advise on recommendations for Reasonable Accommodations for in house & state examinations.
- To recommend students that may need an assessment & to carry out appropriate tests required.
- To provide Resource/Learning support for students.
- To process Irish exemptions.

**Learning Support Teacher/Resource Teacher:**

- To assess and record child's needs and progress.
- Maintain a record of work completed.
- Liaise with subject teacher where necessary



- Direct teaching of the children.
- To seek out relevant information on each child's needs.
- Plan a course of instruction to assist student with their needs
- Implement targets set out by mentors.
- Maintain a record of work covered
- Liaise with SEN mentor where necessary.
- Advising class teachers in regard to adapting the curriculum, teaching strategies, suitable textbooks, use of information technology and suitable software.
- Meeting and advising parents, when necessary, accompanied by the class teacher as necessary.
- Short meetings with other professionals e.g. psychologists, speech and language therapists, visiting teachers of the deaf and teachers of the visually impaired etc.

### **Subject Teachers**

- Mainstream teachers have a key role in bringing about the successful inclusion of students with special educational needs.
- Subject teachers have access to information that is relevant to teaching or supervising a student with special educational needs
- The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class, including those selected for supplementary teaching strategies.
- A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to where possible create a classroom environment in which learning difficulties can be alleviated. This is best done by adapting learning materials for students with special educational needs.
- Inform Management, SEN Co-ordinator & Mentor of any observations made.

### **The Special Needs Assistant**

- Work closely with the teacher and the SEN Co-ordinator to support and assist Special Educational Needs pupils in the day-to-day life of the school.
- Are fully aware of the needs of their student(s) and work with the student in the classroom.
- Help the student to complete tasks assigned by the teacher.

- Supervise and support Special Educational Needs students at break times, before and after school.
- Provide feedback on the progress of the Special Educational Needs students to the relevant subject teachers, mentors and the SEN Co-ordinator.
- Will assist special needs pupils in examinations.
- Are flexible and may be assigned work(as per circular letter) in addition to or instead of their normal duties as determined by the Principal.
- SNA's address the relevant care needs of the pupils in their care as follows
  1. Helping to mix with peers.
  2. Incapacity to relate to others which needs protecting
  3. Supervision when taking medication. e.g Diabetes
  4. Administration of medicine
  5. Assisting with clothing & feeding, personal care.
  6. Assisting with mobility needs.
  7. Preparation with classroom or work area
  8. Assistance with Transport
  9. Assistance with out of school visits/ outdoor activities.
  10. Assisting with social & communication difficulties
  11. Assisting with students physical or sensory needs. e.g. need help swimming
  12. Supporting IEP development
  13. Physically disabled
  14. Assistance with Assistive Technology
  15. Assistance where student is a danger to himself or others.
  16. Assisting at assembly, dispersal times or breaks
  17. Withdrawn from class for safety or medical reasons.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE:**

Following consultation with all the parties this policy will be implemented.

#### **SUCCESS CRITERIA:**

That special needs students access and benefit from the supports provided by making real improvements in their academic performance and key areas such as literacy, numeracy, oral language, social and behavioural skills.

That pupils with special educational needs make measurable progress in each academic year.

That pupils with special educational needs play a full and active part in all aspects of the school.

That SEN students will have high levels of school attendance.

**MONITORING PROCEDURES:**

The Principal will monitor the implementation of the policy.

**REVIEW PROCEDURES:**

This policy will be reviewed by the Special Educational Needs team every January.