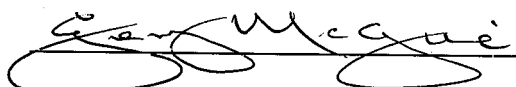


WHOLE SCHOOL INCLUSION POLICY 2022

Ardgillan College

Date for review: November 2023



Gerry McGuire

Chairperson

Board of Management

24th May 2022

Date ratified by the Board of Management

INTRODUCTION

Ardgillan College delivers a six-year cycle from first year to sixth year. The College promotes a happy and caring school climate where students are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. The emphasis is placed on quality teaching and learning, positive behaviour and the pursuit of standards of excellence in all areas of the school activities.

The College is committed to providing a person-centred holistic education in which it fosters the personal, social and spiritual development of its pupils in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The emphasis is placed on quality teaching and learning, positive behaviour and the recognition and honouring of achievement. Every student is supported to develop and fulfil their own unique potential and equipped with the confidence and self-esteem to meet the demands of society.

This policy document aims to outline the form that additional educational support for students with special educational needs/additional educational needs (SEN/AEN) takes in the school and the philosophy which underpins it. It is written in the context of The Education Act (1998) and takes cognisance of The Equal Status Act (2000), The Equality Act (2004), The Education Welfare Act (2000), The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003) and The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004), Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs-Post Primary Guidelines (2007), Exceptionally Able Students-Draft Guidelines for Teachers (2007), The SNA scheme to support teachers in meeting the care needs of some children with SEN arising from a disability (2014), Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2015), Special Education Teaching Allocation (2017) and Exemption from the Study of Irish (2019).

RATIONALE

Our Learning Support Programme is a tangible sign of our commitment to be an inclusive learning community.

DEFINITIONS

Students with special educational needs are those who are restricted from participating in and benefiting 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. (EPSEN Act 2004).

Exceptionally able students are those understood to require opportunities for enrichment and extension that go beyond those provided for in the general cohort of students.

ACCESS TO LEARNING SUPPORT

The following are the main selection criteria for Learning Support at Ardgillan College:

- A student who has a Specific Learning Difficulty or a General Learning Difficulty.
- A student with English as an Additional Language entitlements
- A student identified during the Entrance Assessments.
- A student identified by their teachers as having difficulty with one or more of their subjects.
- Consideration is given to students with emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- A student with physical difficulties.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of a Whole School Inclusion Policy
- Ensure that the rights of parents as prescribed in legislation are upheld in the school.

PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

- Has overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met.
- Liaises with the Primary schools and gathers information about the learning needs of students.
- Ensures that mainstream teachers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the education of students with special needs.
- Organises that SEN is a regular item on staff council meeting agendas.
- Monitors implementation of learning support programme and selection of students for learning support.
- Provides for in-service for staff.

SEN COORDINATOR

- Has overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met.
- Develops student support files (SSFs) for each of the students with SEN in consultation with students, parents, primary schools, the SEN team and outside bodies and agencies.
- Co-ordinate the gathering of information for SSFs for students with special educational needs from assessment reports by outside professionals and in-school assessment.
- Works with the Board, Principal, Deputy Principal, Staff and Parents/ Guardians in the development of a whole school plan for Learning Support and Special Needs.
- Liaises with the Primary schools and gathers information about the learning needs of students.
- Ensures that mainstream teachers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the education of students with special needs.
- Communicates to staff at staff council meetings who our SEN students are and advises how best to cater for them.
- Provides advice to mainstream teachers as required.
- Monitors implementation of learning support programme and selection of students for learning support.

- Consults and liaises with outside bodies and agencies.
- Promotes the involvement of parents of students with special educational needs.
- Meets and advises parents as required
- Organises Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations
- Organises special centres and any necessary accommodations for SEN students during in house examinations.

ASD COORDINATOR

- Has overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) students are met.
- Works with the Board, Staff and Parents/Guardians in the development of a whole school plan for supporting students with ASD.
- Liaises with the Primary schools and gathers information about the learning needs of students with ASD.
- Ensures that mainstream teachers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the education of students with ASD.
- Works collaboratively with teachers, SNAs, Principal, Deputy Principal and parents to ensure whole school inclusion for students with ASD.
- Provides advice to mainstream teachers and SNAs as required.
- Consults and liaises with outside bodies and agencies.
- Provides for in-service for Special Needs Assistants.
- Promotes the involvement of parents of students with ASD.
- Meets and advises parents as required.
- Monitors and supports the implementation of Junior Cert Level 2.
- Manages the development of and the day-to-day running of Suaimhneas, our ASD unit.

RESOURCE TEACHERS

- Works with the Principal, Deputy Principals, SEN Coordinator and ASD Coordinator and mainstream teachers.
- Withdraws assigned students for support classes or provide in class support.
- Provides specific, individualised support using a variety of methodologies for students with special educational needs.

- Liaises with relevant staff members in relation to the needs of the student and how best their needs can be addressed during support classes.
- Develops a scheme of work/learning programme for each learning support group or individual student.
- Keeps concise records of planning and of monitoring student progress.
- Involved in the construction, implementation and review of student support files (SSFs)
- Provides feedback to parents and class teachers as required.

SUBJECT TEACHER

- Has primary responsibility for the progress of all students in his/her class.
- Supports the Whole School Inclusion Policy.
- Familiarises themselves with any students with additional needs within their class groups and incorporates these needs into lesson planning.
- Consults with the SEN coordinator and ASD coordinator as required.
- Attempts, as far as possible, to differentiate the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all students e.g. setting objectives at appropriate levels, modifying presentations, questioning appropriately etc.
- Provides learning activities and materials that will ensure success.
- Provides a variety of teaching methodologies and materials

SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT

- Special Needs Assistants make a valuable contribution to the capacity of the school to provide inclusive education for students with special educational needs. The duties of the Special Needs Assistant are assigned by the Principal acting on behalf of the Board of Management and are outlined in Circular SNA 12/05 and 71/11.
- When the SNA is engaged in assisting a student or a group of students in relation to a particular learning task, this should always take place in accordance with the directions of the teacher who has assigned the task.
- The SNA keeps a record of the progress of the student(s) in his/her care.
- An SNA is expected to treat all matters relating to school business and their work in school as strictly confidential.

PARENTS

- Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the education of their children.
- Parents are consulted about the programme of education available to their children.
- Parents are encouraged to actively communicate with the school if they observe any learning or related difficulties at home.
- In cases where screening, assessment and profiling are conducted, parents are consulted, and their permission sought.
- When a student support file is being developed, parents are consulted and have access to this file on vsware

STUDENTS

- Students with special needs are valued at Ardgillan College and are encouraged to participate fully in their education plans and in school activities.
- Students with special needs are required to follow college policies.
- Students are expected to contribute to their learning targets and to maintain efforts to realise their potential.

PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING A STUDENT WITH SEN

- Parents may indicate on the student information form on enrolling in the school of special needs that were identified in Primary school. The SEN coordinator meets parents prior to entry to review psychological reports and to complete applications for additional supports where appropriate.
- Standardised tests are administered to all incoming First Years in February and the results of these tests may indicate a need for additional support.
- The Principal consults with Primary teachers when visiting feeder Primary schools.
- A class teacher or tutor can refer any student they are concerned about to the SEN Team.
- When a parent notifies the Principal that a student is not benefiting from the regular education programme provided by the school, the Principal initiates a process of formal and informal assessment which may involve observations from

teachers, meeting with student, review of entrance tests, review of examinations and reports, consultation with appropriate agencies.

- Following these assessments decisions are made as to the appropriate support warranted. It may be decided that there is no need for further action, further monitoring and support in a mainstream setting is necessary, purposeful withdrawal is desirable or there is a need for further investigation and assessments.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED WITH SEN

- A Student Support File (SSF) is drawn up in consultation with parents, staff and the student.
- Priority learning needs are identified and a time frame for the attainment of targets is included.
- A scheme of work is developed and a review of progress with the student takes place every 6-8 weeks
- A special file is created and all records pertaining to the student are retained on this file

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED WITH ASD

- A Student Support File (SSF) and is drawn up in consultation with parents, staff, the student and outside agencies.
- Priority learning needs are identified and a time frame for the attainment of targets is included.
- A scheme of work is developed and a review of progress with the student takes place every 6-8 weeks
- A special file is created and all records pertaining to the student are retained on this file

ORGANISATION OF LEARNING SUPPORT

The following models of learning support are used:

- Individual Withdrawal
- Small Group Withdrawal
- Group Withdrawal
- Reduced Timetable

- Team Teaching

WITHDRAWALS

- Students are withdrawn from subjects in consultation with the respective teachers and with parents. In some cases, students with SEN or ASD may be on reduced timetables to facilitate their needs.

IRISH EXEMPTIONS

- Irish exemptions will be granted in line with Circular 53/19. Resources will be allocated to students on a needs basis and may vary from year to year.

INFORMATION

- The list of SEN students and how to provide for the needs is communicated to staff in the first staff council meeting each year.
- If a psychological assessment is available, a summary of the needs and recommendations is communicated to all relevant staff. This information is only given with the permission of the parents and is given on a need-to-know basis.
- SEN and ASD students and their teachers are provided with their timetable of SEN classes.
- Parents are notified of the provisions being made.
- Staff council and SEN meetings are used to evaluate and review SEN and ASD procedures.

EXAMINATIONS

- Applications for reasonable accommodations (RACE) are made to the State Exam Commission by the SEN team. Consent is sought from parents prior to any application.
- Every effort is made to provide accommodations to SEN students during in house examinations, where possible.

The BT Young Scientist
Trinity Walton Club
SciFest
Northern Ireland Sentinus Young Innovators
Maths and Science Olympics
DCU Centre for Talented Youth (CTYI)
IBM Quantum Computing Course
Pearse Debates
Thomas Meagher Programme
UCD & DCU Enrichment

Students can also participate in clubs such as the Science club, Chess Club, Book Club, Debating and Public Speaking, Drama and musical clubs.

IDENTIFICATION

Ardgillan identifies Gifted and Talented students using a variety of methods such as information passed from their primary schools, entrance exams, DOTs, school assessments, analysis of students in practical subjects such as Art, Music, PE along with teacher's professional judgements. Ardgillan also recognises that parents/ guardians are paramount to student success and positive alliance with parents will maximise students' social, emotional and academic potential.