



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Date Approved by Board of Governors:

Next Policy Review Date:

MISSION STATEMENT

St Kevin’s College will strive to promote the core values of respect, compassion, justice and community through a belief in the power and place of prayer and worship in the school community, a belief in the difference education can make and a commitment to excellence for all pupils and staff.

Rationale for SEN Policy

(Policy is based on the College Mission Statement, Current Special Educational Needs, Disability and Equality Legislation)

St Kevin’s College, through this policy document, seeks to ensure that the needs of all pupils with special educational needs and/or disability will be addressed and provision made available to them throughout or at any time during their school career. In addition, St Kevin’s acknowledges the rights of students with additional needs to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum in an inclusive, supportive, caring environment where all are valued, respected and encouraged to reach their full potential.

In implementing this policy, we believe we can help to remove barriers to learning and encourage young people to make progress academically, personally and socially.

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, pupils and external agencies working together with the support of the college’s Board of Governors.

Definitions

Special Educational Needs

‘Learning difficulty’ means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children his or her age, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities. ‘Special education provision’ means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of a comparable age.

(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph: 1.4)

Disability / SENDO

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO) amended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and created important new duties for schools. The aim of SENDO is to strengthen the rights of children with Special Educational Needs to be educated in mainstream education and to introduce disability discrimination legislation to schools. It is important to note that a child with special educational needs may or may not have a disability. A child may have a disability but not special educational needs.

SEN Provisions of SENDO

‘The law strengthens the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, unless it is against the wishes of parents or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others’.

SENDO (2005)

Newcomer Children

For children of ethnic minority groups (including those whose first language is not English) lack of competence in English does not conform to the definition of SEN. Students in this category will not be entered on the SEN Register unless there is evidence of a learning difficulty or disability separate from acquiring English language skills.

Gifted and Talented

‘The term Gifted and Talented is used to describe those students who are achieving or who have the potential to achieve a level substantially beyond the rest of their peer group. Gifted and Talented pupils may also present with a learning difficulty’.

(Guidelines for Teachers NCCA/CEA 2007)

Key Principles of Inclusion

The following areas will encompass all aspects of SEN /Disability as highlighted in the Code of Practice:

- **Learning difficulties**
- **Specific learning difficulties**
- **Emotional and behavioural difficulties**
- **Physical disabilities**
- **Sensory impairments**
- **Speech and language difficulties**
- **Medical conditions**

‘Inclusion is about the quality of children’s experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate in the life of the school’.

(Removing Barriers to Achievement, 2004)

St Kevin’s College seeks to develop its ethos, culture, policies and practices to include all pupils irrespective of disability and/or special educational need where they can reach their potential alongside their peers. St Kevin’s has

adopted a whole-school approach to the development of the SEN Policy and Practice. In order to embed an inclusive ethos within our school, the SEN Policy links closely with all other policies in supporting all pupils, including those with Additional / Special Needs.

This policy will be amended if/when the *Code of Practice: SENDO NI (2016)* is implemented.

Aims of SEN/Inclusion Policy

- **To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and if appropriate, differentiated curriculum for children with learning difficulties or disabilities which impact on learning.**
- **To identify children with SEN/Disability as early as possible through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.**
- **To develop a support system based on the “Code of Practice” for SEN.**
- **To promote a positive learning environment to offer the maximum opportunity for all children to reach their full potential.**
- **To offer experiences and opportunities which allow pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills which ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence.**
- **To encourage the use of a range of teaching strategies which incorporate different learning styles and ensure effective learning for all.**
- **To develop a system for recording continued assessment so that each pupil’s performance can be monitored.**
- **To ensure that all children with SEN/Disability feel valued and have a positive self-image.**
- **To promote the inclusion of all pupils with SEN/Disability into the life and work of the school.**
- **To create a supportive environment where pupils are encouraged to contribute to the planning of strategies which help to meet their individual learning needs.**
- **To provide guidance for Staff with regard to the “Code of Practice”, implications of the “SENDO” legislation and their role in providing an inclusive environment for all pupils.**

- **To encourage all Staff to avail of INSET Training in order to raise awareness.**
- **To encourage parental involvement regarding the provisions and/or adjustments made to ensure their child has access to all aspects of a Curriculum suited to his/her needs.**
- **To liaise and co-operate with external agencies to ensure the best possible provision for children in our care while having regard to the availability of resources.**

OBJECTIVES

- **To match SEN provision to need through the five-stage model of Identification and Assessment by ensuring that students with special educational needs are identified and assessed as early as possible.**
- **To ensure teachers, classroom assistants and others as appropriate, are made fully aware of the College’s procedure for making provision for students with special educational needs.**
- **To promote subject specific planning and good practice to address the learning needs of students with additional needs – including the use of a range of strategies and resources suited to different learning styles and the use of ICT to support learning.**
- **To disseminate relevant SEN data and information to teachers to enable them to shape planning and teaching and to monitor and evaluate progress of students identified with additional needs.**
- **To fully involve parents and students in the identification, assessment and delivery of interventions.**
- **To ensure close co-operation between all agencies concerned through a multi-disciplinary approach.**
- **To encourage positive relationships between staff and pupils and to make every effort to ensure the self-esteem and self-confidence of each student with additional needs is safe-guarded.**
- **To ensure the progress of students with additional needs is carefully monitored and that record keeping is clear and systematic to enable effective evaluation of student progress.**

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

“It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development’.
(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph. 2.14)

In St Kevin’s College the following will be used to identify pupils’ needs:

- **Whole school assessment (CATS)**
- **Standardised screening or diagnostic tests**
- **Information from transferring school**
- **Parental information**
- **Teacher observation/Teacher Referral**
- **School Assessments – Assessment Points**
- **Educational Psychology Assessments**
- **Statements of Special Educational Needs**
- **Medical / Care Plans**
- **Outside agencies**

New referrals may occur at any time in a pupil’s school career and from any age or ability. Staff are requested to use the ‘Record of Concern’ proforma when referring pupils to the Additional Needs Department. This can be found in the Learning Support Folder in RM Staff.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision

Roles and Responsibilities

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and the Principal. However, in order to facilitate the practical day to day running of the provision responsibility for this has been delegated to the SENCO and the SLT.

Board of Governors should:

- **Ensure that all pupils’ special educational needs are addressed**
- **Have regard for current legislation and Code of Practice**
- **Ensure an SEN Policy is in place and kept under review**
- **Ensure that appropriate funds and resources are delegated to SEN**

Principal

The Principal should:

- **Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues**
- **Ensure the SENCO and SLT are actively involved in the management of SEN throughout the school**
- **Ensure consistency of practice and the SLT contribution to the SDP**
- **Where necessary liaise with parents and external agencies**
- **Delegate and monitor the SEN budget**
- **Allocate time for Staff CPD in the area of SEN**

SENCO

The SENCO should:

- **Co-ordinate the day to day provision of the school’s SEN Policy**
- **Liase with and advise colleagues – Teachers / Classroom Assistants**
- **Co-ordinate provision for children with special educational needs**
- **Administer Screening / Diagnostic Tests**
- **Make referrals and complete all necessary forms**
- **Maintain the SEN Register / IEPs / Records of all pupils with SEN**
- **Organise Annual / Transition reviews**
- **Put Exam Access Arrangements in place**
- **Liase with Parents and Outside agencies**
- **Be aware of current legislation**
- **Contribute to the in-service training of Staff**
- **Meet with SEN Staff on a regular basis**

It is vital that all staff work together for the benefit of pupils. Pastoral and Curriculum Co-ordinators also have key roles.

Other Key Roles:

- **Year Head**
- **Head of Department**
- **Subject Teachers**
- **Classroom Assistants**
- **Pupils / Parents**

Year Heads should:

- **Be aware of current legislation**
- **Keep up to date with the SEN Register**
- **Liase with Form Teachers regarding pupils on the SEN register who are experiencing difficulty**
- **Work closely with the SENCO**
- **Update records as appropriate**

Heads of Department should:

- **Keep up to date with the SEN Register and ensure new members of the department are familiar with the SEN Policy**
- **Ensure that practice and procedures within the department promote learning and teaching which is relevant and accessible to all pupils**
- **Support subject teachers to enable them to provide an appropriate and differentiated curriculum**
- **Ensure appropriate resources are available**
- **Discuss issues and successful strategies with subject teachers through departmental meetings and forward appropriate minutes to the SENCO**

Subject Teachers / Form Teachers should:

- **Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register**
- **Gather information through observation and assessment**
- **Develop an inclusive classroom**
- **Work closely with other staff to plan for teaching and learning**

- **Contribute to, manage and review IEPs in consultation with the SENCO**
- **Contribute to the Annual / Transition Review process**
- **Work closely with and involve Classroom Assistants as part of the learning team**
- **Liase with Head of Department / Head of Year**

Classroom Assistants should:

- **Work under the direction of the class teacher**
- **Be involved in the planning of work for students in their class**
- **Look for positives by talking to the pupil about his / her strengths**
- **Listen to the child / speak to the staff on the child’s behalf**
- **Explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly**
- **Keep records and attend meetings including Annual/Transition Reviews**
- **Provide practical support**
- **Assist with examinations**
- **Share good practice**

Pupil

‘The child should where possible according to maturity and capability, participate in all decision making processes which occur in education’.

(Supplement to the Code of Practice - paragraph 1.19)

Pupils should:

- **Contribute to the assessment of their needs**
- **Contribute to education plans by identifying particular areas of concern**
- **Work towards achieving agreed targets**
- **Contribute to IEP reviews and the Annual / Transition review process**

Parent / Carer

‘The relationship between the parents of a child with SEN and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and effectiveness of any school based intervention. Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds on parental involvement and provides reassurance that account is taken of what parents say and that their views and anxieties are treated as intrinsically important’.

(Code of Practice paragraph 2.21)

- **It is therefore essential that parents inform the school of any specific identified needs as early as possible on entry to the school.**
- **It is the school’s responsibility to inform parents when considering placing the child’s name on the SEN register and invite parents / carers to attend meetings to discuss their child’s needs.**
- **Parents / Carers should attend Annual Review meetings, inform the school of changes in circumstances which may impact on the child’s progress.**
- **Parents / Carers should support the child in achieving targets on IEPs.**

The Structure of SEN in St Kevin’s College

In St Kevin’s College we follow the five stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice.

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of Special Educational Needs and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with SEN lie at Stages 1, 2 or 3. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies.

Initial Assessment

- **All incoming pupils are screened during June / September in the year of entry using standardised tests for reading, spelling and numeracy. CATs are also administered.**
- **The SENCO uses all available data to ascertain a profile of incoming pupils with Additional Needs.**
- **All relevant data is disseminated to subject teachers so that they are fully informed about the additional needs of all students.**

STAGE 1

When an initial concern is expressed following observation of classroom practice and on-going assessment:

Assess / Plan / Review

- **Subject teacher / HOD / Head of Year / Parent make referral to SENCO.**
- **Meeting to decide if child’s name should be recorded on SEN register.**
- **SENCO / subject teachers to monitor and evaluate child’s progress / behaviour.**
- **After one term child’s progress reviewed.**
- **SENCO will remove pupil’s name from register or move to Stage 2.**

Stage 2

- **The SENCO takes the lead in assessing the student’s learning difficulty.**
- **SENCO and relevant teachers work together using all available information to agree a way forward.**
- **The student’s subject and Form Teachers remain responsible for working with the pupil in the classroom.**
- **IEP put in place to be reviewed twice per year.**
- **The SENCO, relevant staff and parents will review progress and move the pupil back to Stage 1 or on to Stage 3.**

Stage 3

- **Stage 3 begins with a decision either at Stage 2 review or following discussion about initial concern between the SENCO, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intensive action with external support is immediately necessary**

Referrals at Stage 3 will be placed in order of priority in keeping with directive from the EA.

- **Stage 3 Referral Form is completed following consultation with parent, pupil and Educational Psychologist.**
- **Stage 3 assessment carried out and recommendations made.**
- **IEP drawn up, implemented and reviewed with all involved.**
- **Issues discussed with Principal.**
- **Following review, pupil remains at Stage 3 / reverts to Stage 2 / Principal requests Statutory assessment.**

Stage 4

If the school feels that the child’s needs remain so substantial that they cannot be effectively met within the resources normally available to the school, then an SA1 form will be submitted to the EA to request a determination if a Statutory Assessment may be undertaken.

The EA will consider:

- **The degree of the child’s difficulty**
- **The nature of the provision required**
- **Whether the child’s needs can be met by the resources currently available within the school or if there is a need for further resources and a statement to be implemented**

Stage 5

Once the Statement has been finalised: -

- **Provision and / or support will be arranged to meet the pupil’s needs**
- **A Stage 5 Education Plan will be drawn up and implemented**
- **The student’s IEP will be amended to reflect the advice outlined in the Statement**
- **The Annual Review and Transition process will take place**

All children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child are still being met.

Annual Review forms and Transition Plans (14+) must be completed and forwarded to the EA.

Learning and Teaching

This involves all staff in utilising a range of teaching strategies and classroom management styles designed to take account of the differing abilities, interests and experiences of pupils.

Special Arrangements for Examinations

- **Special Arrangements for Examinations are designed to provide access for pupils with specified learning difficulties**
- **Pupils will only be considered for access arrangements in accordance with the regulations outlined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)**

Continued Professional Development

It is essential that all staff keep up to date with current developments in order to best provide for pupils with Special Educational Needs.

All INSET will be organised in consultation with the Principal, SLT and the SENCO.

Annual Report

An Annual Report regarding the provision of SEN in St Kevin’s College will be presented to the Board of Governors by the SENCO.

Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with following St Kevin’s College complaints procedures.

