



Patrician High School

The very spring and root of honesty
and virtue live in good education

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (S.E.N.) POLICY

Rationale

The Patrician High School is committed to the provision of a broad & balanced curriculum, which will offer equal access for all students. As a school we recognise that the needs of pupils who have special educational needs / learning difficulties during their time at the Patrician High School must be addressed in a supportive manner. We will make every possible arrangement, within the constraints of the resources available, to provide for their individual needs while attending The Patrician High School.

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) department encompasses the work of both the learning support teachers & the resource teachers in the school.

The teaching support allocation is subject to change throughout the academic year based on the needs of the students.

1. AIMS

- To provide a broad & balanced relevant & differentiated curriculum as a right for all.
- To identify students with special educational needs as early as possible through a variety of strategies & in consultation with appropriate personnel.
- To develop positive self esteem & positive attitudes about school & learning in pupils
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning & become independent learners
- To provide supplementary teaching & additional support in numeracy & literacy where extra support is required

- To encourage parental involvement & co-operation between various professionals in the diagnosis & treatment of special needs students.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies on SEN for pupils
- To provide experiences & opportunities, which allow pupils to develop knowledge understanding & skills, which will ensure progress, promote success & develop self-confidence.
- To create a caring and supportive environment in which students can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their learning needs.
- To develop and utilise available resources in support of students with special needs.
- To prevent early school leaving
- To treat all students regardless of ability with respect at all times.

2. SYSTEM OF ORGANISATION

- In first year a mixed ability policy is in place. In second year classes are banded for Irish & maths with banding in English taking place in third year.

Currently, we have a mixed model of SEN Support in operation.

- Individual Withdrawal
- Small Group Withdrawal
- Reduced Timetable
- The number of pupils receiving S.E.N Support, in any one year may vary according to perceived pupil need & school resources. All efforts will be made to keep teaching groups as small as possible, two being the optimal number of pupils per class & a maximum of four.
- Where possible, pupils will be withdrawn primarily, though not exclusively, from French & Irish class periods.

- SNA support allows the student & teacher to concentrate on curricular support programmes while the SNA offers correlating social & organisational support.
- One period of Learning Support (L.S.) per week will be devoted to administration of S.E.N. within the school community.
- Withdrawals:
- The SEN Department may withdraw students from subjects in consultation with the respective teachers & with parents. In some cases, students with S.E.N. may be on reduced timetables to facilitate their particular needs.
- Irish Exemptions will only be granted when the criteria outlined in Circular M 10/94 are met.
- Information:

In first term teachers are made aware of all pupils with S.E.N. The Pupil Profile will:

- Name of pupil
- Category of difficulty
- Details of support being provided
- Potential areas of difficulty
- Potential provision at State Exams.

If a psychological assessment is available, a summary of the needs and recommendations is forwarded to all relevant staff. This information is only given with the permission of the parents.

3. INVOLVEMENT OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The role of SEN support is a collaborative responsibility shared by all: The Board of Management, Principal, Deputy Principal, mainstream Teachers, Special Educational Needs department, SNA, Parents & Children. It is important that everyone contributes in the planning & implementation of SEN support Provision.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Board of Management should:

- Oversee the development, implementation & review of the SEN policy.
- Ensure that all pupils' special educational needs are addressed.
- Have regard for Department of Education Policy on special needs provision.
- Ensure that adequate classroom accommodation & teaching resources are provided for special needs students.

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal should:

- Keep the Board of Management informed about Special Educational Needs issues.
- Work closely on partnership with the SENO
- Where necessary liaise with parents and external support agencies
- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on Learning Support and special needs in cooperation with the SEN department.
- Monitor the implementation of the school SEN policy on an ongoing basis.
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need.
- Keep Teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
- Help Teachers increase their knowledge and skills in the area of SEN.
- Liaise regularly with the SEN department
- Assume direct responsibility for co-ordinating SEN services.
- This specifically includes allocation of teaching support hours to individual teachers based on the allocation specified by the N.C.S.E.

ROLE OF SUBJECT TEACHER

- Has primary responsibility for the progress of all students in his / her class.
- Collaborates with the Resource / Learning Support teacher in identifying pupils who may have general or specific learning difficulties by filling in the referral form.
- Attempts, as far as possible, to differentiate the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils. e.g. setting objectives at appropriate levels, modifying presentations, questioning appropriately etc.
- Provide learning activities & materials that will ensure success.

ROLE OF SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT (SNA)

- 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 & are outlined in Circular SNA 12/05.
- An SNA is expected to treat all matters relating to school business & their work in school as strictly confidential.

ROLE OF SEN DEPARTMENT

Currently the S.E.N. Department comprises of one L.S. teacher & one Resource teacher, working in co-operation

The activities of the SEN Co-Coordinator should include both teaching & non-teaching duties.

The SEN Co-Coordinator's activities Include:

- Assisting in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance early learning & to prevent learning difficulties.
- Co- ordinate the day-to-day provision of the school's SEN Policy.

- Co-ordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, giving due consideration to:
 - The selection criteria specified in this Learning Resource Policy
 - Teachers' professional observations
 - Input from parents
 - Contributing to the development of policy on Learning Resource at the whole school level
 - Providing advice to the Class Teacher (if requested) about pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties.
- Contributing at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books & materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the Learning Support rooms.
- Liaising with external agencies such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists etc. to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Collaborate with school management
- Meetings with SEN team as required
- The SEN department will assist with the organisation of Reasonable Accommodations in all State Examinations.
- Decisions regarding pupil withdrawal may be made following consultation with some or all of the following:
 - Principal & / or Deputy-Principal
 - First Year Head / Guidance Counsellor
 - L.S. teacher & / or Resource teacher(s)
 - Subject teachers

SEN Support for a particular student may cease following consultation with some / all of the above. For the purpose of organisation, all general correspondence relating to S.E.N. support shall be directed to the L.S. teacher.

ROLE & SUPPORT OF THE PARENTS

Parental permission will be sought before a child will be given SEN support contact time.

Contact with parents can be made by phone, letter or in person. Normally the relevant L.S. /

Resource teacher will make the initial contact. Letters will be jointly signed by the L.S. / Resource teacher & the Principal.

ROLE OF STUDENTS

No pupil felt to be in need of S.E.S. will be compelled to attend S.E.S. against his will.

As far as practicable the personal interests / aptitudes of each pupil, as well as his areas of learning difficulty, will inform class content.

They are encouraged to contribute to the learning targets as set out in the IEP

The L.S. teacher will have an 'open-door' policy as regards pupils feeling free to request help.

4. ASSESSMENT & ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Students are selected for additional support based on:

- Results of incoming first year assessment tests, including:
 - NFER-Nelson GRT II
 - NRIT
 - Vernon Spelling test
 - Drumcondra reasoning test
- Psychological assessment results/reports
- Information supplied by parents/pupils/primary school
- Resource hours granted by the Department of Education and Skills
- Recommendations from subject teachers using the referral form system and school exam results.

Following this profiling stage, decisions are made as to the appropriate support warranted. It may be decided that:

- There is no need for further action.
- There is a need for monitoring & support in a mainstream setting.
- Purposeful withdrawal is desirable.
- Further investigation is required & parents will be advised in relation to further assessments.

The L.S. teacher will bring to the attention of other staff members any pupils who may need extra assistance.

Test records will be stored in the L.S. room & under Student Information on school server

5. MEASURES TO ENSURE S.E.N. PUPILS RECEIVE RELEVANT HELP

- The S.E.N. Co-Ordinator / L.S. teacher will contact at the earliest opportunity feeder primary schools in order to ascertain the identity of vulnerable pupils who may benefit from S.E.N.
- This information may also be sought directly from the parents / pupils.
- The L.S. teacher will have an 'open-door' policy as regards pupils feeling free to request help.

6. TARGET AGE GROUPS & OBJECTIVES

- The main target group for SEN support will be first year to third years
- At present there is no facility available on the T.Y. timetable to meet the needs of students with SEN. This is reviewed on an annual basis.
- At Senior Cycle, SEN support decreases but is still available

The objective of S.E.N. in this school is that all pupils here will complete the Junior Certificate Exams, & that the vast majority will complete the Leaving Certificate Exams.

7. DURATION OF SEN SUPPORT.

The duration of SEN support for any child will be determined by some / all of the staff members specified earlier in this document.

The period of intervention recommended to each student is dependent on the nature and extent of their individual need. The duration of provision is generally reviewed at the end of every term. There may be cases where support is needed on a short-term basis, after which the student could be in a position to recommence with the regular curriculum.

Attempts will be made to ensure that all pupils attending SEN support receive at least three periods per week.

8. MATERIALS

The S.E.N. Department has, & will continue to have, a yearly budget, sufficient to maintain & upgrade its resources.

It has, & should maintain, access to its own computers & relevant software. It is envisaged that all S.E.N. teachers will eventually have access to private computers for the storage of confidential information.

9. DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

The school has an open door admissions policy & will continue to work at developing an inclusive school policy.

10. LINKS WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

The S.E.N. Department will liaise, as required, subject to legal restrictions, with various statutory and non-statutory bodies, which may or may not include the following:

- N.E.P.S.
- N.C.S.E. / S.E.N.O.s
- Agents of the Health Service Executives (H.S.E.s)

- Speech & language therapists

This list is not exhaustive.

11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This school will endeavour to provide all teaching staff in general, & S.E.S. staff in particular, with opportunities for professional development in the area of S.E.N.

12. Provision for English as a Second Language

The SEN Department is currently providing support for students for whom English is not a first language.

- If English is not the first language, the child may qualify for exemption from the study of Irish,
- The SEN Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Principal, will determine the level of support available to potential ESL students, informed by the following considerations:
 - The amount of support allocated to any child will depend on the current command of the language age. In general, older pupils will be offered more support time, as there will be more pressure on them to attain mastery.
 - Support will be offered on a one to one basis, or in a small group setting, depending on the needs of the child. This time may also be offered on a withdrawal basis, or by the SEN teacher working with the child in his/her classroom. This will be determined by the SEN teacher in consultation with the child's other teachers, based on the needs of the child.
 - Supplementary support will be phased out after two years at the latest.
 - The SEN teachers will avail of in-service training in the provision of support to ESL pupils.

13. The Exceptionally Able Student:

We recognise that some students may benefit from opportunities for enrichment and extension that go beyond those provided for the general cohort of students and we are currently investigating how best to support these pupils within our limited resources.

Signed

Principal

Chair Person

Date reviewed
