

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND INCLUSION POLICY 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

Talbot Senior School is a 22 teacher, co-educational school which opened in 1977. The staff includes the Principal, 13 mainstream teachers, a Support team of 8 teachers, one of whom is Behaviour Support Teacher and one who is shared Support Teacher with Nano Nagle Junior School and a Home School Community Liaison Coordinator. We have a team 9 Special Needs Assistants, one of whom has half day hours.

Definition of *Special Educational Needs (SEN)

“Special educational needs, means, in relation to a person, 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.”

(EPSEN 2004)

*Special Educational Needs (SEN) is often referred to as Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. As far as possible therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum

1. **Setting suitable learning challenges:** We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.
2. **Responding to children’s diverse learning needs:** We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn and we plan our approaches to teaching and learning accordingly.
3. **Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual groups of children:** We recognise that a minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements.

3. RATIONALE

The Rationale for this policy is to ensure compliance with the Education Act (1998),

Equal Status Act (2000), Education Welfare Act (2000), E.P.S.E.N (2004) and the Disability Act (2005). In making provision for children with special educational needs we want to have clear objectives and ensure our staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

4.RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL ETHOS

Our school aims to provide a happy secure learning environment where children, parents/guardians, teachers, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership, where each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In making provision for children with SEN our policy objectives are

- To enable children with SEN to join in normal activities of the school along with children who do not have SEN.
- To ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have equal opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs.
- To identify and assess children with possible SEN as soon as possible
- To use our resources as efficiently and equitably as possible when assessing and meeting the needs of SEN children.
- To adopt the Continuum of Support Approach in order to match the educational provision to children's needs
- To develop a partnership with parents /guardians in order that their knowledge, views and experience can assist us in providing for the needs of their children
- To take into account the ascertainable wishes of the children concerned and whenever possible directly involve them in the development of the IEP/ Support Plan
- To ensure collaboration with the DES, NCSE, NEPS, AON, Primary Care, CAMHs, Disability Teams and other agencies, in order to take effective action on behalf of children with special needs
- To ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities towards children with SEN and are able to exercise those responsibilities
- To monitor our effectiveness in achieving the above objectives

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Management

The BOM will fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be aware about the schools SEN's provision.

PRINCIPAL

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. She will work closely with the SEN Coordinator and will keep the BOM informed about the working of this policy. She will encourage members of staff to participate in training to help them meet the objectives of this policy. In consultation with the SEN Coordinator, she will liaise with the SENO with regard to resource hours and is responsible for personnel appointments.

SPECIAL NEEDS COORDINATOR

The special Needs Coordinator will be responsible for

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Liaising with and advising colleagues and contributing to training of staff at staff meetings
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with SEN
- Overseeing the implementation of the Continuum of Support Model in all classes
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Facilitating planning meetings for class teachers and support teachers
- Managing the records of all children with SEN
- Liaising with external agencies including NEPs, CAMHS, private psychologists and therapists.
- Liaising with the HSE and social services
- Liaising with the Home School Community Coordinator
- Supporting transition from Junior school to Senior school and from Senior school to Post Primary school

SUPPORT TEAM

The support team will

- Identify pupils with special/additional educational needs
- Assess children to assess priority needs
- Organise early intervention and prevention programmes
- Develop IEPs/ Support Plans for children in collaboration with teachers and parents, SNAs and pupil with clear targets for each pupil
- Teach each pupil
- Track, record and review progress
- Liaise closely with class teachers on a regular basis
- Meet regularly with support team to monitor and evaluate progress

MAINSTREAM TEACHERS

- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his or her class, (Guidelines for Primary Schools Supporting Pupils with Special Needs)
- The class teacher will liaise closely with the support teacher in developing targets for the IEP and to support planning and implementation of activities designed to attain those targets
- The class teacher will liaise closely with the SEN Coordinator with regard to the Continuum of Support and provide a classroom support plan for children with SEN and children for whom they have concerns

Special Needs Assistants

The SNAs will

- In liaison with class teacher, support teacher and SEN coordinator develop the Pupil Personal Plan (PPP) addressing the care needs of the children who have access to their support
- Attend to the needs of their assigned children
- Liaise regularly with Principal and SEN Coordinator
- Liaise with parents regarding pupil with SEN

Parents

Will be invited to be actively involved in the education of their children by

- Attending parental consultation meetings to share insights into their child's development and learning difficulties
- To participate in the development of the IEP/ Support Plan
- To liaise with SEN Coordinator, Support teacher, SNA and class teacher to discuss any concerns

7. Admissions and Participation Policy

Enrolment of children with special needs:

Whether physical, psychological, educational, behavioural, emotional, social medical or other The Board of Management welcomes applications from children with special needs. "Talbot Senior NS will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on the grounds that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs. As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'disability ground', 'shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.'"

8. DIFFERENTIATION

(NUMERACY AND LITERACY SUPPORT)

Literacy

In our school each class has access to a support teacher for 20-45 mins during literacy time

The child with SEN will have access to a differentiated literacy programme within the classroom setting when possible. All classes adopt the graded reading programme in which children read at their own level.

Numeracy

In our school classes have access to a support teacher during numeracy times. Support is provided at this time through in class support or withdrawal for children with very specific needs. SET aim for children to move along the continuum of support according to progress. Depending on progress and classroom support pupils with SEN return to mainstream classroom following x weeks of targeted intervention.

9. Continuum of Support

Classroom support involves the class teacher identifying and addressing the needs of individual pupils who require approaches to learning or behaviour within the classroom which are additional to or different to those required by other pupils. The class teacher is responsible for intervention at this level. They liaise with parents and pupils, seek advice from the class support teacher/s or SEN coordinator and develop a classroom support plan to meet the needs of the pupil. The plan should include targets to be achieved and a review date. Please see enclosed plans.

School Support involves a more detailed approach to meeting the needs of the pupils. The support teacher, building on the information and interventions applied in the Classroom Support Plan develops an Individual Education Plan (IEP)/ Support Plan and coordinates assessment and further intervention in consultation with pupils, parents and staff. The class teacher retains overall responsibility for the pupils learning.

The **School Support Plus** process will generally involve external professional and support services. It applies to those pupils whose needs are enduring and /or severe and complex and/or whose progress is considered inadequate despite carefully planned and reviewed intervention. This group may include pupils with High Incidence and Low incidence Disabilities as defined by Department of Education and Science in Special Education Circular 09/04

10. Screening

Screening Measures Employed by Talbot Senior

Test	Instrument
-------------	-------------------

Cognitive Ability	NRIT
Reading	Drumcondra Reading
Maths	Sigma T
Spelling	Drumcondra Primary Spelling

In October of each year, the NRIT is delivered to third class children. Assessment and screening occur in May/June each year for all classes using the SIGMA T test for Numeracy and Drumcondra Reading test for reading.

11. Diagnostic Tests

Literacy and Language

PM Benchmark Test,
Jackson Phonics, RAIN Sentence Reading Test, Aston Index, ACE (Assessment of Comprehension and language), Daniels and Diack Reading Test, DRA (Diagnostic Reading Assessment)
Teacher Designed Tests

Numeracy

Individual Maths Recovery Tests,
Basic Number Test (Bill Gillham)
Maths Assessment Test (Fallon)

12. NEPs Psychological Supports and Assessments

NEPs psychologists work in partnership with teachers, parents and children in identifying educational needs. They offer a range of services aimed at meeting these needs, for example supporting individual students (through consultation and assessment), special projects and research.

Students for assessment are prioritised on the basis of need. Priority is given to those cases involving placement (i.e., querying whether student would benefit from placement in a special setting) and then priority is given to cases of severe challenging behaviour, suspected dyslexia or general learning disability and when needed, review assessments for 6th class students who have diagnosed needs and who are transitioning to post-primary.

NEPs provide training on effective interventions for children with SEN. As a school we are keen to use evidenced based programmes. Here is a link to "Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers".

<https://talbotsns.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/TalbotWholeSchool/EmfgKc7UZ8NllvjotYBSsiwBW5ncBErMDgZxvZdH5LWkDA?e=lrD7MN>

13. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN / SUPPORT PLAN

The support teacher develops the IEP/ Support Plan in consultation with pupils, parents and staff. The plan includes

- The nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills and the degree of the

child's special needs

- The present level of performance
- Targets to be achieved over 4 months
- Strategies
- Transition plans for post primary

The management of the IEP/ Support Plan will be the responsibility of the Support teacher in consultation with the class teacher.

14. REVIEW OF IEP's/ SUPPORT PLANS

- Review of IEPs/ Support plans in November/December by Principal and Support Teacher
- Review of IEP/ Support plan in February
 - Progress and concerns discussed at Support team meeting
 - Consultation with class teacher
- Parents and pupils will be consulted re: any recommendations or changes to the plan
- When progress is satisfactory and/or classroom support is available the pupil returns to classroom setting

15. INCLUSION AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE/ SEN FRIENDLY SCHOOL

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy, as set out in this document will enable pupils with SEN to be an integral part of our school community. We are committed to the ideals of universal design for learning. Through the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach to teaching, we aim to meet the needs of every student in the classroom. In our school children with SEN are always at the forefront of our planning and adaptations made to teaching in order to include SEN, enhances teaching for all students through multiple means of engagement, representation and expression.

16. TRANSITION

In January of each Year the SEN coordinator will meet with Principal and relevant staff of the Junior School to discuss transition plans for any child with SEN who will be enrolling in our school in September of that year.

In January /February the SEN coordinator meets with relevant staff from Post primary schools to discuss transition plans for any child with SEN.

17. Code of Behaviour

While every effort will be made to accommodate pupils with special educational needs through behaviour management programmes, support plans and interventions, every child is subject to the school code of behaviour to ensure the health and safety of all pupils and staff. This is in line with our Code of Behaviour

Policy and Health and Safety statement

18. SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Review and evaluation of IEPs/ Support plans
- Positive inclusion practices
- Happy pupils
- Positive parental feedback
- Teacher observation
- Testing

19. Allocation of Support Teacher Positions

In selection of positions

- Priority will be given to teachers with experience
- SEN teachers will be required after 1 year in the post to apply for Post Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs
- Applicants for job sharing will not be considered for appointment. This is in line with our Job-Sharing Policy

20. RATIFICATION + COMMUNICATION

The policy is to be circulated to

- All staff (Staff meeting Oct 2021)
- Parents Association (Oct 2021)
- Board of Management
- Disseminated to all parents via school website

21. Outside Agency Involvement

- In Line with the EPSEN 2004 the school will liaise closely with the National Council for Special Education and its employees
- The Specials Needs co coordinator will liaise with NEPS, CAMHS, HSE and other private psychologists and therapists

22. POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed in June 2023

Signed _____

Date _____

Mick Lordan, Chairperson Board of Management

22. POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed in June 2023

Signed Mick Lordan

Date 1/12/2021

Mick Lordan, Chairperson Board of Management