



COLÁISTE ÉANNA C.B.S.

Catholic Boys Secondary School, Ballyroan, Dublin

Learning Support and Resource Teaching Policy.

December 2013

This Policy is rooted in the context of the five elements that are the basis of our ethos as an Edmund Rice school and our Mission Statement.

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel based values;
- Promoting partnership in the school community;
- Excelling in teaching and learning;
- Creating a caring community;
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

Coláiste Éanna recognises:

the uniqueness of each individual. It identifies the educational needs of each pupil and puts in place appropriate resources, curricula, programmes and methodologies to enable everyone to achieve his full potential. Gifted children and children with learning difficulties in a particular subject are supported, while pupils with special educational needs are welcomed and provided with special assistance as is practicable. There is a breadth and balance in the curriculum, while an extensive range of extra-curricular activities encourages participation and positive relationships, a healthy lifestyle and the holistic development of the person.

ERST Charter, p17

The Mission Statement of Coláiste Éanna states:

*Colaiste Eanna is a Catholic School in the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice.
As a community, we aim to nurture mutual respect among all members in a safe environment.
The personal, social, spiritual and academic development of all is promoted.
The school is committed to providing an ordered learning environment, which encourages the school community to realize its full potential.*

This Learning Support and Resource Teaching Policy adheres to its responsibilities acknowledges and is informed by the legislative requirements of:

The Education Act (1998)

The Education Welfare Act (2000)

The Equal Status Act (2000)

This Learning Support Policy is part of the Coláiste Éanna Whole School Development Planning and intersects, links and overlaps with elements of the Admissions, Pastoral Care, Anti-bullying, Code of Behaviour, Substance Abuse, Child Protection, and SPHE Policies.

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1. Roles within Learning Support.

The role of learning support is a collaborative responsibility shared by all - the Board of Management, Pupils, Parents, Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Learning Support Teacher, Resource Teacher, Subject Teachers and Guidance Counsellor.

Role of Board of Management

- To oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on learning support.

The Role of the pupil.

- Pupils in Coláiste Éanna are expected and encouraged to collaborate with their teachers and each other and to engage fully in their own learning as active participants.
- To assist in the development of their own IEP
- To provide feedback on an ongoing basis on how they perceive the intervention programme to be progressing

The Role of Parents

- To inform the school of their sons special needs prior to enrolment so that the school can make provision for them.
- To assist in the development of their son's Individual Education Plan
- To dialogue with their sons Learning Support teachers on an ongoing basis.
- To attend parent teacher meetings.

The Role of the Principal.

- To monitor the implementation of the school policy on learning support on an ongoing basis.
- To apply for learning support / resource hours for students.
- To assign the staff, that is the Learning Support, Resource Teachers and Special Needs Assistants to work with pupils who present with learning needs.
- To ensure that the school is accessible to students with special needs.
- To allocate time at staff meetings for learning support issues.
- To provide for the training of teachers in the area of learning support.
- To select, in consultation with the teacher concerned, from which classes a pupil shall be withdrawn for Learning Support and Resource Teaching (LSRT).

The Role of Deputy Principal.

- To allocate, in consultation with the Learning Support Co-ordinator, LSRT hours to students.
- To assign, in consultation with the Principal, teachers to work with students within either of the models of LSRT listed below.
- To assign, in consultation with the Principal duties to the Special needs Assistants (SNAs).
- To participate in regular evaluation and review of LSRT provision with the Learning Support Co-ordinator
- To apply to the State Examination Commission for reasonable accommodation, where appropriate, in the State Exams.
- To liaise with the school Examinations Secretary for reasonable accommodation, where appropriate and practicable, in house examinations.

The Role of the Learning Support and Resource Teaching Co-ordinator.

- To advise the Principal and Deputy Principal of pupils who require LSRT provision and to consult in the allocation of pupils as to those requirements.
- The lead colleagues in the LSRT Department in the provision of LSRT.
- To engage in regular evaluation with colleagues in the progress of pupils.
- To liaise with colleagues in determining what resources are required in the Learning Support Room and advising the Principal accordingly.
- Work with SNAs

The Role of the Classroom Teacher.

- All teachers in Coláiste Éanna are involved in supporting learning of their pupils.
- To acquaint themselves of the learning needs of all their pupils
- To provide learning experiences that best suits individuals in their class
- To provide assessment for learning that best suits all individuals in their classes.
- To advise the Learning Support/ Resource Teaching co-ordinator of pupils in their classes who need specific support or learning resources.
- To accommodate withdrawal of a pupil from their classes as appropriate.

2. Access to Learning support

The Learning Support / Resource Teaching Co-ordinator, following consultation with the school Principal, will be responsible for selecting students who will receive learning support. A combination of methods will be used to aid selection;

- Psychological Reports - All students with psychological reports will be offered learning support as allocated by the Special Education Needs Organiser of the National Council of Special Education . If any such student declines the offer of learning support then his parents must sign a form acknowledging the fact that the student was offered learning support but chose not to take up this offer.
- Formal and Informal Testing - Students undertake the Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) and the nFer Nelson Group Reading Test (GRT) as part of their entrance assessment to Coláiste Éanna.
- The learning support teacher / resource teacher will collate the results and look at students who scored below a certain point. If necessary, an individual education programme is designed for each student by the learning support / resource teacher. Results of in-house Christmas and summer exams are also monitored by the Principal, Year Heads, learning support teachers and resource teachers in a further effort to identify students in need of learning support.

Teacher Referral

Subject teachers may refer students to the Learning Support teacher if they notice that a student is experiencing difficulties in class. A referral form is available to subject teachers where he/she feels that further support on a special intervention is needed. On the basis of the information received on the referral form combined with previous standardised test results, the learning support / resource teacher will decide if learning support is required.

Parent / student requests Learning Support

Such requests should be made to the School Principal, Deputy Principal or year head who then discusses the request with the Learning Support and Resource Teacher Co-ordinator. All information is analysed before a decision is made on whether or not learning support is required.

The parents of students for whom learning support has been recommended will be notified by letter by the Learning Support and Resource Teacher Co-ordinator and invited to the school to discuss the proposed programme of intervention. The duration of the Learning support programme will be decided in consultation between the student, parents and special needs teacher.

Placement

Depending on student numbers, first year students are divided into 4/5 class groups on a mixed ability basis. Following analysis of NRIT scores and the nFer Nelson Group Reading Test scores, the Principal in consultation with the learning support / teachers resource teachers and year head chooses the students most in need of withdrawal from their mixed ability class groups.

3. Data Protection

The Coláiste Éanna Learning Support and Resource Policy adhere to the school's responsibility under The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003) and Freedom of Information Acts (1997 and 2003) as highlighted in the *Inclusion of Students with Special Needs: Post Primary Guidelines* DES, 2007, pp27-29.

The eight rules of data protection are set out in *A Guide for Data Controllers* (2004). The Principal and Learning Support/ Resource Teaching team will:

- (1) obtain and process information fairly,
- (2) keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes,
- (3) use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes,
- (4) keep it safe and secure,
- (5) keep it accurate, complete, and up to date,
- (6) ensure that it is adequate, relevant, and not excessive,
- (7) retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes, and
- (8) give a copy of their personal data to an individual on request.

The Team will inform colleagues of students with psycho-educational reports and recommendations and other special educational needs at regular staff briefings in keeping with item (3) above.

4. Integration and withdrawal from subject classes.

The assigned class grouping (for example in First Year; A1, A2, A3, A4) is most appropriate class setting for each pupil in Coláiste Éanna. Every effort is made to provide LS/RT during those classes from which a pupil has an exemption. Occasionally it may be necessary to withdraw a pupil from mainstream subjects. In such cases, the Principal or Deputy Principal, in consultation with the Learning Support and Resource Teacher Co-ordinator and the classroom teacher will arrange for a pupil to be withdrawn.

5. Models of Learning Support and Resource Teaching

There are several models of delivery of LS/RT in operation in Coláiste Éanna. The model chosen will depend on the needs of the pupil, the availability of teachers with particular skills set and Department of Education/ National Council for Special Education allocations.

- One teacher to one pupil,
- One teacher to a small group (2 or 3 pupils)
- One teacher to a larger group (up to 6 or 7 pupils) to be called a Tutorial Class.

The Learning Support/ Resource Teachers will create programmes of learning based on the needs of pupils but it is intended that the larger group model would be an additional class revising material already covered in the mainstream class but which may be presenting particular difficulty.

6. The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

The statutory framework for the education of children with special educational needs is set out in the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004). The EPSEN Act's purpose includes the aim that children with special educational needs should be educated, wherever possible, in an inclusive environment and that those with special educational needs should have the same rights to appropriate education as children without special educational needs.

7. Individual Education Plans

In relation to the content of education plans for children with special educational needs, Section 9 of the EPSEN Act stipulates that children with special needs should have an Individual Education Plan and the this plan should outline the following:

- the nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents;
- the nature and degree of the child's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development;
- the present level of educational performance of the student;
- the special educational needs of the student;
- the special education and related support services to be provided to the child to enable the child to benefit from education and to participate in the life of the school;
- where appropriate the special education and related services to be provided to the child to the enable the child to effectively make the transition from pre-school education to primary school education;
- where appropriate the special education and related services to be provided to the child to the enable the child to effectively make the transition from primary school

- education to post-primary school education, and
 - the goals which the child is to achieve over a period not exceeding twelve months.
- In the act the word “child” means a person of not more than eighteen years of age

8. Special accommodation at State Education Commission examinations.

The school, through the Deputy Principal, will apply for the appropriate level of Special Accommodation at SEC Examinations.

This Learning Support and Resource Teaching Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Coláiste Éanna on

Chairperson of the Board.....

Secretary to the Board.....

Appendix 1

From the Coláiste Éanna Admissions Policy (Section 3)

3. Special Educational Needs.

Coláiste Éanna welcomes boys with disabilities and special educational needs. It will use the resources (financial and personnel) provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable provision for such students. The school's ability to accommodate students with particular needs is dependent on the resources necessary for the needs of the individual students being made available by the Department of Education and Skills.

The Board of Management reserves the right to refuse an application for admission from a student who has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the Department of Education & Skills, the Board determines that the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the student with an appropriate education.

- 3.1 On applying to the school, parents/guardians will make the school aware that their son/ward has special educational needs and, where applicable, provide consent for the release to the school of any of the reports referred to below. Parents are also requested to outline the details of a child's special educational needs on the school's Application Form.
- 3.2 Parents/guardians will make the school aware if the boy has had access to any of the following:
 - Special Needs/Classroom Assistant or Special Class.
 - Help for Specific Needs from a Resource Teacher.
 - Help with Behavioural Modification.
 - Psychological Assessment.
 - Help for Visual/Hearing Impairment.
 - Help with General/Specific Learning Disability.
 - Help for Emotional Disturbance.
 - Any resource in relation to travel/mobility etc.
- 3.3 On becoming aware of a student having special needs, the school will access relevant records from the primary school concerned. These could include, for example, Individual Education Programme, Medical Report, Psychological Report. If an expert Report is provided, it should include a workable strategy for addressing the identified needs, taking the available resources into account.

It is incumbent on Parents/Guardians to make all necessary arrangements for the prompt transfer of such records to relevant personnel at Coláiste Éanna.
- 3.4 In the event that a Report is not available, the Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management, may request that the boy be assessed as soon as is practicable and that any

other information which would be deemed relevant to his educational development be provided. This is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his disability or special needs and to profile the support services necessary.

- 3.5 The Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met. Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled

The Principal may request a meeting with the parents of the boy to discuss the application and the student's needs.

The parents may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the boy's educational or other needs.

- 3.6 The Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management, may deem it necessary to delay the enrolment of a boy who has special needs, pending the provision of information, outlined above, or pending the allocation of resources from the Department of Education and Skills that would allow the school to cater for needs identified from such information.

N.B. It may take some time for the Department of Education & Skills to process such applications. Parents are strongly advised to inform the School as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making an application.

- 3.7 As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days after a parent/guardian has provided all the relevant information, the Principal, acting on behalf of the Board of Management, shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof [Education Welfare Act, Section 19 (3)].

Bibliography:

Department of Education and Skills (2004) *Inclusion of Students with Special Education Needs, Post Primary Guidelines.*

Government of Ireland (1998b) *Data Protection (amendment) Act*

Government of Ireland (1998a) *Education Act*

Government of Ireland (2000b) *Education Welfare Act*

Government of Ireland (2000a) *Equal Status Act*

Government of Ireland (2004b) *Education for persons with Special Education Needs Act.*