



## PATRICIAN ACADEMY

### SEN POLICY

As a School we wish to equip our pupils with the skills and confidence to enable them to reach their full potential.

As a School we wish to empower all our pupils with the skills to be confident and independent young adults enabling them to reach their full potential. We are committed to the continuing development of an inclusive environment where all pupils feel welcomed, valued and engaged in School life. We are dedicated to developing the unique atmosphere for which our School is known and to the promotion of young adults into being active, responsible, resilient, connected, respected and aware members of our school community. We have created this policy as advocates for pupils with special educational needs.

Our definition of “special educational needs” incorporates: “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.”

(E.P.S.E.N. Act, Government of Ireland, 2004, section 1)

#### Aims of the Policy:

- To continue to develop our School as an inclusive learning environment where all students feel welcomed, valued and are engaged in the life of the School.
- To support the student to function as independently as possible in society through the provision of such educational supports as are necessary to realise that potential.
- To enable the student to continue lifelong learning/in adult life.
- To support students with learning needs through a collaborative team approach, involving students, teachers, parents/guardians and outside agencies.
- To support the pupils by engagement with relevant external professionals.
- To establish and maintain a communications network with relevant stakeholders.
- To develop awareness of, and to facilitate collaboration around, the special needs of students within the Patrician Academy.
- To identify and meet SEN pupil needs by planning, implementing, evaluating and reviewing through the framework of the NCSE Continuum of Support
- To recommend educational programmes such as LCA and L1LP/L2LP relevant to student capacity.
- To provide professional support re SEN to colleagues through CPD days.

The S.E.N. Policy is informed by the following:

- The Patrician Academy Mission Statement: we wish to empower our pupils with the skills to be confident and independent young adults enabling them to reach their full potential.
- Our System of Care.

- Admission Policy: “The Patrician Academy endeavours to provide an appropriate education for pupils with special educational needs in an inclusive setting other than where that would be inconsistent with the best interest of the child or the provision of education to other children”.
- Guidance Plan: The Whole School Guidance Plan is a structured document that describes the comprehensive range of student-support services in place in the Patrician Academy. The SEN Policy are integral parts of The Whole School Guidance Plan.
- GDPR Guidelines
- Record Retention Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement.
- NCSE continuum of Support.
- Department of Education Indicators of Wellbeing
- Relevant Acts, Circulars and Publications can be found in Appendix 2.

We use the following guidelines in implementing the Special Education Teaching (S.E.T.) model in the Patrician Academy to create a whole-school approach in providing support for students with S.E.N:

- Students with the greatest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and where possible, those students will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.
- The School has a core team of teachers who coordinate the identification, meeting, monitoring and review needs of pupils with SEN.
- We also have established core Literacy, Numeracy and IT teams that support pupils in these areas.
- The remainder of our staff are also involved in differentiating subject specific content in mainstream settings while also providing one-to one support for individual pupils.
- Supports provided to SEN students will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with teachers, parents and students & outside agencies) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in the classroom, including students with SEN as indicated in the 2017 Circular.

How we support pupils with SEN through Special Education Teaching (SET):

- When an Irish/French exemption is granted or where the student is following a reduced curriculum, students are withdrawn in small groups (in consultation with parents) and receive Literacy, Numeracy, Behavioural/Emotional, IT and subject support.
- Where possible, pupils are encouraged to sample all subjects in First Year.
- Students are supported within a mainstream classroom setting through differentiated teaching and learning and Co-teaching.
- Students presenting with complex needs receive individual specialist support through the provision of special programmes for students with Mild, Moderate learning needs and students on the ASD spectrum. Teachers are deployed to supporting pupils with SEN based on their areas of specialism e.g. subject specific, literacy, numeracy, IT.

- The level of support provided is reviewed in consultation with parents, students and teachers.
- Students with emerging needs or where the identified need intensifies during the school year may receive individual or small group support.

Currently we support students presenting with needs in the following areas:

- Borderline/ Mild and Moderate General Learning Disability
- Social/Emotional / Behavioural Difficulties
- ADD/ADHD
- Specific Learning Difficulty including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dysgraphia, literacy and numerical difficulties
- Physical Disabilities: Spina Bifida, Dyspraxia, Cerebral Palsy
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Special educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome(s)
- Sensory Issues including hearing & visual impairments
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Multiple disabilities
- Exceptionally able students
- Other needs in conjunction with parents and available school capacity to meet these needs.

The School provides an appropriate education for pupils with special educational need in an inclusive setting. However, there may be specific situations where this would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child or the provision of education to other children.

Consultation with parents and with relevant external professional will inform this decision.

The School also has a designated temporary (until new SNU) Sensory Room for students with additional sensory needs. Extra-Curricular Activities (ECAs) and lunch time social activities are also part of our School culture.

Transition: The school recognises that moving from primary to secondary school can be challenging for all students and may pose even greater challenges for children with

SEN. We support this move in the following ways:

- Students attend Open Night and registration evening.
- School personnel visiting primary schools.
- Observation of student in Primary setting by a member of SEN team for students presenting with complex needs.
- Students attend transition assessment (where appropriate)
- Students are provided with an opportunity to visit the Patrician Academy prior to commencing in August.
- Transitional work book provided to students, where applicable.
- Students meet with Year Head and mentors in September.

- Students enrolled in the Mild, Moderate and ASD programmes are provided with extra opportunities to sample school life.
- Special Education Needs Co-ordinator meets parents/guardians to discuss student profile and draw up a plan.
- Applications to NCSE for additional supports are made prior to transition to the SENO.

Before a pupil with SEN comes to the Patrician Academy, we:

- Hold an open night where pupils with special educational needs and their parents are encouraged to meet with members of our SEN Team in order to initiate the collaborative procedures outlined in this policy
- Consult with student and parents/guardian on enrolment evening
- Conduct an entrance assessment, where applicable. (Differentiation where necessary, in consultation with parents/guardians)
- Consult with the Primary School in relation to student achievements, areas of interest, learning strengths and learning needs.
- Consult with external agencies where appropriate.
- Gather an Educational Passport form the Primary schools.
- Access, collate and analyse all assessment data to identify and respond to the needs of pupils in line with the Continuum of Support. This provision will be routinely monitored.

Assessment: In house School assessment and screening is integral to supporting students within the COS (Continuum of Support). The purpose of assessment is to:

- Inform teaching and learning needs.
- Identify students with an learning/educational need.
- Create a profile of a student with SEN.
- Identify students who are not reaching their learning potential.
- Meet these pupils' needs.
- Inform pupil and parents about student performance.
- Ensure teachers are fully informed re: attainment and development of students.
- Monitor and review student outcomes
- Inform decisions about the use of SEN Resources.
- Assess effectiveness of interventions.

While a pupil with SEN is with us in the School, we:

- Carry out on- going teacher observation- both formal and informal.
- Administer class tests and tasks.
- Conduct informal interviews with student.
- Carry out in house assessment.
- Drawing up, implementation and evaluation of Student Support Files.
- Processing R.A.C.E. applications annually.
- Support students through State Examinations – liaise with Exams Coordinator.
- Organise in house RACE accommodation, if granted where possible.

- Where teachers have concerns about progress, referral for further support is made to the SEN Coordinator or Learning Support Coordinator via a referral form.
- Administer diagnostic testing
- Referral to outside agencies

Special Education Programmes: The School offers three specific programmes for students with special educational needs. The educational programmes offered are be informed by:

- Professional Reports
- Information from parents
- Transitional Assessments carried out by the Patrician Academy (CAT 4)

Mild General Learning Disability Programme: This is a programme that caters for students presenting with a Mild General Learning Disability. The maximum number of pupils in this class is 12. Students in this class currently follow a Level 2 Learning Programme. Students access level three curricula where relevant, in consultation with parents and the SEN Core team.

Moderate General Learning Disability Programme: This is a programme that caters for students presenting with a Moderate General Learning Disability. The maximum number of pupils in this class is 8. Students in this class currently follow a Level 2 Learning Programme. Students access level three curricula where relevant, in consultation with parents and the SEN Core team.

Autism Spectrum Disorders Programme: This is a programme catering for pupils with a diagnosis of Autism. We have two classes with capacity for 12 pupils in total. The educational curriculum to be followed by pupils in the ASD programme can vary based on the transitional assessment carried out by our team.

A review of pupil's progress, in conjunction with parents, will be carried out during third year. This will inform the most appropriate path of progression to Senior Cycle based on the pupil's individual needs.

We allocate places in each of these programmes as follows:

- Where a pupil has a current (within 2 years of application date) psychological report recommending access to one of the above programmes.
- Where there is availability of space in the recommended programme
- As per our Admissions Policy
- The Board of Management has the final decision on approving applications to the School and reserve the right to grant admission in exceptional circumstances.

After Secondary School Support: In consultation with parents and relevant professionals we support a post secondary school plan by:

- Facilitating students transfer to Third level Schools through the Disability

Access Route to Education (DARE) Scheme.

- Attending open-days at post leaving cert Schools to raise students' awareness of relevant courses.
- Liaising with service providers such as Co-Action, COPE and the National Learning Network where appropriate.

Record Keeping Procedures: Records of pupils needs, interventions, monitoring, and reviews are kept on pupils files with SEN in line with current GDPR requirements. These records are created, collated and updated by the link teachers in conjunction with the SEN team and are accessible to relevant staff. Details of pupils' identified area of need and focus of support is communicating to relevant staff via VShare in compliance with GDPR.

Special Educational Needs Team:

- Board of Management
- Principal
- S.E.N. Coordinator
- Learning Support Coordinator
- S.E.N. Core Team
- Special Education Teachers
- Guidance Counsellor
- Mainstream / Subject Teachers (as set out in Appendix 1)
- Year Heads/ Tutors
- SNAs

All of the above roles are defined by the E.P.S.E.N. Act (2004) and Inclusion of Students with S.E.N. – Post Primary Guidelines.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Principal**

- Oversees implementation of the policy.
- Ensures that adequate resources are available to students with special educational needs to enable them to participate fully in the education process.
- Consults with staff.
- Liaises with parents.
- Liaises with relevant outside professionals and agencies.
- Ensures that relevant data is forwarded to the Department of Education and Skills and to the National Council for Special Education through the local Special Educational Needs Organiser.
- Ensures that the professional development needs of staff are met.

### **Deputy Principal**

- Oversees implementation of policy with Principal and Coordinators of Special Educational Needs and Learning Support.
- Consults staff.
- Liaises with parents.

### **Coordinator of Special Educational Needs**

- Liaises with parents.
- Liaises with Primary Schools.
- Liaises with the local Special Educational Needs Organiser.
- Liaises with Subject Teachers.
- Identifies, with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Resource Teacher, Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support Coordinator, students who have special educational needs, based on information supplied by parents on a student's application to attend the school and on the assessment of students prior to entry to the school.
- Provides data to support requests to the National Council for Special Education for additional resources to meet the needs of students.
- Provides data to support requests to the Department of Education and Skills for reasonable accommodations in the State examinations for students with special educational needs.
- Coordinates with Management & the Learning Support Coordinator resource teaching in the school.
- Identifies students with special educational needs.
- Arranges for assessment of students with special educational needs as required.
- Advises on Individual Education Programmes/Student Support Files.
- Coordinates Special Needs Assistants.

### **Learning Support Coordinator**

- Identifies students requiring learning support.
- Develops a plan for those identified as requiring Learning Support.
- Coordinates supplementary teaching on an individual or small group basis.
- Reports to the Principal and Deputy Principal.
- Maintains a database of students identified as requiring Learning Support.
- Liaises with parents, guardians and teachers.
- Monitors the progress of students on a regular basis.
- Provides data to support requests to the D.E.S. for Reasonable Accommodations in the State examinations

### **Behaviour for Learning Teacher**

- Offers support to students who present with a variety of challenging behaviours, including social skills deficits, low self-esteem, difficult relationships with adults/peers;literacy and numeracy issues;poor concentration and attention difficulties in most subjects.

- Works with identified students on Behaviour for learning programmes that are designed to meet their social, emotional, positive health and wellbeing and behavioural and academic needs, so they can achieve and succeed in school.
- Liaises with parents, guardians and teachers.
- Reports to the Principal and Deputy Principal.

### **Resource Teacher**

- Meets students on an individual or small group basis as appropriate.
- Addresses the needs of students as outlined in the Individual Education Plan/Student Support File.
- Monitors and assesses the progress of students on a regular basis.
- Liaises with the Principal, Deputy Principal and Coordinators of Special Educational Needs and Learning Support.
- Liaises with Subject Teachers.
- Liaises with the Special Needs Assistants.

### **Subject Teachers**

- Liaises with Coordinators of Special Educational Needs and Learning Support to ensure that the student makes the optimum progress in their subject area.
- Adapts teaching methodology to facilitate students with special educational needs and follows guidelines set out by the DES and NCCA for their subject area.
- Ensures that classroom interactions are inclusive of students with special educational needs.
- Monitors and assesses the progress of students on a regular basis.

### **Guidance Counsellor**

- Arranges for the assessment of students on entry to the school.
- Advises on Individual Education Plans.
- Liaises with parents.
- Is available to provide guidance to students.
- Provides relevant and guidance to Special Educational Needs students in relation to C.A.O. /U.C.A.S. Applications and H.E.A.R/D.A.R.E. Applications.

### **Year Head**

- Liaises with Coordinators of Special Educational Needs and Learning Support.
- Provides advice and support to individual students when necessary.
- Monitors students' progress on a regular basis.

### **Coordinator of Special Classes**

- Liaises with parents.
- Liaises with relevant external professionals and agencies.



- Develops Individual Education Programmes in consultation with Principal, Deputy Principal, Psychologist, relevant mainstream teachers, parents and student.
- Provides data to support requests to the Department of Education and Skills for reasonable accommodations in the State examinations for students with special educational needs.
- Liaises with and reports to the Principal.

### **Special Needs Assistants**

- Attend to the care needs of students.
- Liaise with Subject Teachers.
- Monitor and report on pupil activities.
- Provide information and are consulted regarding student education plans.
- Assist in preparing briefing profile on students.
- Prepare materials and equipment for students.
- Help in the supervision of children with special needs during assembly, recreational time, dispersal periods and on out of school activities.
- Provide general assistance, of a non-teaching nature, in the mainstream classroom.
- Ensure awareness of health and safety, enabling students to access practical subjects.
- Assistance with feeding.
- Administration of medicine.
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene.
- Assistance with mobility and orientation, including access to school transport.

**Special Educational Needs Core Team:** This team facilitates the organisation and provision of education for students with SEN. The members of the team work collaboratively to identify and meet the needs of the students and to monitor and review the outcomes of interventions. This team is part of a whole school approach to the review of policies and practices on learning behaviour and wellbeing. We engage in CPD to enhance our skills in supporting students with SEN. Work with outside agencies e.g. CAMHS, HSE, NCSE etc

Parents are an integral part of their child's education and the Patrician Academy values and supports partnership with parents as a means of supporting students learning and wellbeing.

- Parents are initially informed about the nature of special educational needs provision in the school through the curriculum section of our website.
- Open night- SEN Coordinator is available to speak to parents outlining the range of supports in place to meet the needs of students.
- SEN core team meet with parents on Open night and Registration evening.
- Parents are asked to provide all relevant information and documentation to the school in relation to their child's learning strengths, needs and any other concerns they may have. Permission will be sought by the School from parents/guardians to access relevant information from primary schools. This information will enable the school to identify, meet, monitor and review the pupil's outcomes.
- We facilitate communication through an interpreter where English is a barrier to effective communication.

- Following the Transition assessment and collation of information gathered members of the SEN core team meet with parents to discuss students' strengths and needs. A Student Support file is created to meet those needs.
- Communication channels with parents include Student journals, phone calls, VSware, emails, parent teacher meetings and meetings with the SEN Co-ordinator and Year Heads.
- Information regarding other support agencies and services is provided to parents.

Students receiving additional support are asked to:

- Have a positive attitude towards additional supports.
- Be involved in their learning outcomes, where possible.
- Give us feedback to support their educational outcomes.

**Special Needs Assistants** provide a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education for students with SEN. They students participate fully in the life of the school and assist children who have intermittent care needs. SNAs play a vital role in supporting the student to develop independence and gain appropriate access to education alongside other students.

The SNA team are deployed annually taking the following into consideration:

- Continuity of provision in the Special Education programmes
- Specialised experience /training in specific areas of SEN e.g. ASD, MGLD, etc.

SEE CIRCULAR 0030/2020 and 0030/2014

## **Appendix 1: Continuum of Support for Students with Special Educational Needs**

### Step 1: Identification of need

1. Use the Continuum of Support problem-solving process to identify and respond to academic, social and emotional needs
2. Gather and analyse data, interview, curriculum based assessment, screening and diagnostic assessment, as well as from professional reports, as appropriate
3. Consult with parents and students, and with relevant external professionals, as appropriate
4. Use the Student Support File to record identification and assessment of needs, intervention supports and review of progress

### Step 2: Meeting need

1. Plan, implement and review early-intervention approaches to promote academic, social and emotional skills
2. Subject teacher, special education teacher, parents and students collaborate to set specific time-bound targets
3. Carefully match interventions to identified need
4. Continue to promote effective teaching approaches, including differentiation of content and activities to ensure that all students are engaged purposefully in meaningful learning activities

### Step 3: Monitoring and reviewing outcomes

1. Using baseline information, review and record progress and plan for next steps in students' learning
2. Maintain support plans that are clear, useful and easy to interpret and share
3. Review outcomes at individual, group, class and whole-school level

## Appendix 2

- The Constitution (Article 42)
- The Education Act (1998)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Equality Act (2004)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004)
- Circular 008/2019 Appendix A Special Education Teacher Model
- Circular 035/2017 Appendix B Assessment Instruments (including tests and web-based resources) approved for use for guidance and/or learning support in post-primary schools from May 2017
- Circular 014/2107 Appendix C 0014/2017 Special Education Teaching Allocation - Post Primary.
- Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines (DES, 2007)
- Looking At Our School, A quality Framework for Post- Primary schools. (2016)
- Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (DES, 2017)
- Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers Implementation of the Revised Special Education Teaching Model (2017)
- (DES Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with SEN in Mainstream Schools)