St. Columba's College

Special Educational Needs Policy

Updated December 2024, next due for review and ratification in December 2025

Person Responsible for updating policy: Head of SEN Department

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Introduction

St. Columba's College aims to provide a high-quality education for all of its boarding and day pupils. The purpose of this SEN policy is to provide information for teachers, parents and other interested parents about the provision of effective learning support to pupils with additional learning needs as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998.

Principles

This policy is based on the following principles:

- Every member of the college community has a valuable contribution to make.
- Individual pupils will have additional learning needs over and above the usual range of needs in a mainstream classroom.
- To provide a continuum of support requires a whole school approach.
- Parental involvement is important.
- Extra resources need to be directed towards those with learning difficulties.

- The Curriculum of Support framework will Intensive intervention may be needed for specific pupils.

Legislative Framework

This policy takes cognisance of the following legislation:
- The Education Act (1998),
- The Equal Status Act (2000),
- The Equality Act (2004),
- The Education Welfare Act (2000),
- The Data Protection Acts (2018),
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004), Circular No: 0008/2019 & 0014/2017: Special Education Teaching Allocation, Circular No: 0030/2020: Special Needs Assistant Allocation, Circular No: 0058/2019: Assessment instruments/tests for additional and SEN.

Aims

The Learning Support Programme aims to

- Accurately identify those with additional learning needs
- Optimise the teaching and learning process for each pupil with additional learning needs
- Help pupils to understand the nature of their abilities and difficulties
- Promote positive self-esteem
- Enable access to the curriculum at every level.
- Enable pupils to become independent learners and monitor their own progress
- Identify those who may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in Leaving and Junior Certificate exams, and make applications for them
- Enable students to make best use of reasonable accommodations where granted
- Identify and obtain appropriate assistive technology
- Identify and obtain appropriate Special Needs Assistance
- Provide supplementary teaching and resources in English and other subjects where necessary
- Enable the students to develop good study skills and an understanding of the learning process
- Promote collaboration among teaching staff
- Liaise with Matron and House staff to try to address learning issues that arise from medical conditions.

Role of the Warden

The Department's post-primary guidelines on inclusion outlines the role of the school principal in supporting students with special educational needs. It states that 'Under current legislation the

principal of the school has overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met. As a consequence, the principal has the general responsibility for establishing and promoting whole-school policies and procedures that are supportive of the learning of all students, including those with special educational needs' (*Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines*; DES, 2007, p 67).

The role of the Warden includes the following:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies and procedures relating to the inclusion of students with additional/special educational needs.
- Oversee a whole-school approach to assessment and screening to identify needs and to guide the allocation of appropriate supports.
- Ensure effective engagement with feeder primary schools to support the transition of students with special educational needs.
- In collaboration with the in-school management team, discharge a key function in the deployment of staff, allocation of resources, organisation of students and timetabling.
- Ensure that systems are in place for effective sharing of relevant information on students' needs with all subject teachers.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (subject teachers and special education teachers, guidance counsellors, special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, students and external professionals/agencies.

Role of the SENCO

The SENCO has responsibility for the daily running of the SEN Department. Duties of the SENCO include:

- Develop and implement a whole school SEN policy under the direction of the Principal.
- Lead the SEN Team and Subject Teachers in the provision of support for SEN students. Consult with external agencies to arrange for educational assessments and provision of support for SEN students.
- Lead the three step process of identification of need, intervention, monitoring and recording of outcomes.
- Collaborate with the Principal, Guidance Counsellor and the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) in the allocation resources such as additional teaching hours, SNA provision and ICT for SEN students.
- Arrange for the purchase of appropriate ICT for SEN students availing of the DES Grant for Assistive Technology.
- Organise the certification of exemption from Irish for SEN students where necessary. Collaborate with Curam and the Guidance Counsellor to meet the care needs of all students in the school, including SEN students and assist those students experiencing social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- Meet with parents of SEN students experiencing learning, social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

- Collaborate with the Guidance Counsellor in applications for Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE).
- Collaborate with Examinations Secretary and Deputy Principal to organise Reasonable Accommodations in House and State Examinations.
- Collaborate with Principal and Deputy Principal in allocation of support for SEN students on the school timetable.
- Collaborate with external agencies, parents and students in the creation of Student Support Files.
- Assist in the selection process of candidates for the position of SNA.
- Lead and supervise the provision of SNA support for SEN students.
- On-going communication of information concerning SEN students to Principal, Deputy Principal and all teachers as required.

The SEN Team

The SEN Team at St. Columba's College is familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to meet a variety of needs.

- Teaching approaches include team-teaching, small group and individual support. The SEN team will work collaboratively to create Student Support Files for SEN students.
- The SEN Team will offer advice to Subject Teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources in their subject teaching. The SEN Team will consult with parents of SEN students regarding their individual learning needs.
- Facilitate the smooth transition of SEN students from feeder primary schools and other post primary schools.
- The SEN Team will liaise with external agencies if requested to do so by the Principal or SENCO.

Parents

- Parents can make a huge contribution to their child's learning. St. Columba's College encourages open communication between parents and teachers throughout every student's education. Parents can prepare for and support the work of the school in the following ways:
- Providing all relevant information and documentation to the school in relation to their child's learning difficulties, learning needs, strengths, and any other concerns they may have. This information will enable the school to begin to plan for the inclusive education of their child. The provision of documentation to the school regarding their child's needs is critical to collaborative planning for their child.
- Parents play a critical role in the successful creation and implementation of their child's Student Support File.
- Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school if they are concerned about their child's education. This can be done through the House Staff or SENCO. Parents help **the** school by keeping teachers informed of their progress of their child, or any difficulties they encounter.
- Parents can support the work of the school by providing a home environment where there are opportunities for learning and participating with their child in the following activities:

1. Paired reading.
2. Helping them with their homework.
3. Using ICT where available to support learning in English and Mathematics.
4. Confidence building and providing reassurance.
5. Implementing suggested home-based activities outlined in their child's Student Support File and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.

- It is very important that parents talk positively about school and school work. Parents should keep the school informed of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. They should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home. If following diagnostic assessment, the child needs additional support, the parent should make contact with the SEN Team to discuss:

1. The results of the assessment.
2. Learning targets set for the student.
3. The way that these targets can be supported at home.

- If it is decided to discontinue learning support as the targets have been met, parents need to discuss with their child's teachers how the child's future learning needs can continue to be met at school and at home.

Students

Students receiving additional support should:
- Have a positive attitude towards participation in their learning.
- Become familiar with their learning targets and be involved in the setting of those targets.
- Contribute to the selection of material relevant to the attainment of these targets. Participate fully in all assessments.
- Develop "ownership" of the skills and strategies that are taught as part of the additional support they receive and learn to apply these to improve their own learning.
- Be willing to work independently and seek extra information if required from subject teachers.

The Special Needs Assistant (SNA)

St. Columba's College currently has an allocation of 2 SNAs. The role of the SNA is cited in Circular 0030/2014. The SNA is allocated to schools to provide care assistance to SEN students. The duties of the SNA are assigned by the Principal. Her work is supervised by the SENCO and includes:

- The SNA is recruited specifically to assist schools in providing the necessary non-teaching services to students with assessed educational needs.
- The SNA provides a valuable contribution to the capacity of the school to provide inclusive education for students with SEN.

- The SNA works closely with class teachers in providing assistance to students with SEN, for example in the areas of personal care, supporting mobility, health and safety.
- The SNA will provide assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene if required.
- The SNA may be required to provide special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties e.g. helping SEN students with note-taking or assistance on out of school trips.
- The SNA must treat all matters relating to school business and their work in the school as strictly confidential.
- The SNA may not act as a substitute teacher. In no circumstances may she be left in sole charge of a class or group of children.

Subject Teachers

(DES Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with SEN in Mainstream Schools, p.13, 14)

Subject Teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all students in their classes. Accordingly, Subject Teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom. All Subject Teachers should implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of SEN students.

These include:
- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms.
- Collaborative problem-solving activities.
- Differentiation.
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence.
- Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment.

Methods of Differentiation practised by teachers in St. Columba's College include:
- Variation in the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs.
- Adapting lessons for students' interests.
- Matching tasks and processes to students' abilities and needs.
- Adapting and utilising resources, including use of ICT.
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly.

Subject Teachers are encouraged to:
- Be aware of the School's policy and procedures (as outlined in this document) for including SEN students.
- Seek advice from the SEN Department regarding students with individual needs and learning differences in their classes and bring any concerns regarding students to the relevant personnel.
- Take account of the needs and learning styles of all their students and employ suitable teaching methods so that all students can access the curriculum at the appropriate level.
- Take responsibility for their own continuous professional development, particularly with regard to common difficulties e.g. Dyslexia & Specific Language difficulties. Develop an attitude of

ownership to the education of students in their classes with individual needs and learning differences.
- Where a student has an SNA, the subject teacher should plan how to utilise the SNA most effectively, in consultation with the SENCO and other learning support teachers.

Differentiation

Differentiated instruction is a means by which teachers can create an inclusive and supported learning environment for all students. It acknowledges that students learn at different rates and in different ways. The following general approaches are recommended:

- Setting learning objectives for students with SEN at an appropriate level.
- Provide learning activities and resources that are suitably challenging and are also likely to result in success and progress.
- Modify presentation, questioning techniques, style of questioning etc in order to maximise the involvement of students with SEN.
- Relate the topic to life experiences or concrete examples.
- Allow alternative formats for answering questions i.e. orally, typing etc.
- Provide learning activities which will ensure success for these students, as fostering self-esteem and confidence is critical for these students.

A Continuum of Support

SEN occur on a continuum and therefore the needs of SEN students in St. Columba's College will be supported on the basis of a continuum as follows:

Classroom Support: Classroom support will be the most common response to emerging needs – the subject teacher, the student and the parents will discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. Actions may include: Specific classroom strategies, Individualised teaching methodologies, Differentiation, Adapting the learning environment.

The Review Process: A review of Classroom Support actions may involve the subject teacher, parents and student and should focus on progress made by the student. The outcome may be that the student continues to have a Classroom Support Plan, no longer requires a Classroom Support Plan or School Support will be initiated.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Subject Teacher: Liaises with parents regarding initiation of the Classroom Support process.
Seeks advice from the SEN Team.
Keeps the Principal informed of the Classroom Support Plan.
Maintains a record of relevant information.

The SEN Team: Provide advice and resources to the subject teacher to assist him/her in the assessment process and development of a Classroom Support Plan for the student.

The Warden: Note that a Classroom Support process is being implemented.

Other Professionals: Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists etc may be indirectly involved, offering consultation or advice via the SEN Team.

School Support: Where Classroom Support is not enough to fully meet the student's needs the subject teacher will involve the SEN Team in the problem solving process.

Information will be gathered through formal and informal assessment and a School Support Plan will be created.

Information Gathering and Assessment:

Information gathering will inform the development of a new Support Plan and will be gathered from the following sources:

- Classroom Support Plan
- Formal Assessment
- Observation of learning style/behaviour
- Observations from teachers
- Parents
- Pupil
- External Professionals

Planning and Intervention:

- A School Support plan will be created which will set out the nature of the student's learning difficulties, define specific learning and behavioural targets and set a timescale for review.
- The plan will for the most part be implemented within the normal classroom setting and complemented by focused school-based intervention programs such as Team Teaching or Small Group Teaching.
- Home based actions in support of the plan will be encouraged.
- The School Support process is coordinated by the SEN Team.

The Review Process:

- The review process will focus on student progress and be informed by the views of the parents, the student, the teachers and the SEN Team.
- The outcome may be that the student continues to have a School Support Plan. intervention reverts to Classroom Support or School Support Plus will be initiated.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Subject Teacher: Consults with the SEN Team and remains responsible for working with the student in the classroom.

The SEN Team:
- Consult with teachers, the student and his/her parents in the creation of a School Support Plan.
- Seek advice from external professionals.
- Make School Support Plans available to all teachers on FireFly/Google Drive. Provide additional support for the student through Team Teaching and/or Small Group sessions.
- Coordinate the review of the School Support Plan.
- Maintain a record of relevant information.

The Principal: Records decision to implement School Support Plan.

Other Professionals: Provide advice to the SEN Team.

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS:
This process will be initiated if, in reviewing the School Support Plan it is agreed that the student is not making adequate progress. If a student's needs are severe and/or persistent the SEN Team will liaise with the student, the parents, the Subject Teachers and personnel outside the school in the assessment and intervention process. The information from Classroom Support and School Support will provide the starting point for problem solving at this level. A School Support Plus Plan will be drawn up based on the information gathered.

The Review Process: The SEN Team will carry out a review in collaboration with the parents, the student, teachers and external professionals to measure progress. The outcome will be the continuation or discontinuation of School Support Plus.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Subject Teacher: Contributes to assessment and planning and remains responsible for the student in the classroom. Provides classroom supports.

The SEN Team:

- Review the outcomes of interventions in the Classroom and School Support Plans. Coordinate the assessment of the student's learning, social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- Coordinate development of School Support Plus plan in collaboration with the student, parents, teachers, SEN Team and external professionals.
- Provide additional support for the student through Team Teaching, small groups and/or 1:1 withdrawal.
- Monitor and support interventions.

- Review School Support Plus plan in collaboration with the student, parents, teachers, SEN Team and external professionals.

The Warden:

- Record the initiation of the School Support Plus process.
- Ensure that a file is maintained containing records regarding consent of the involvement of external professionals, the assessment process, interventions, reviews and records of earlier school and classroom support processes.

Monitoring and Recording Outcomes

Students' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored through the Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus process outlined above. This will be done through formal and informal assessment and observation and reports from Subject Teachers, House Staff, Parents and Students.

IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

A combination of some or all of the following data will be used to identify those with additional academic, physical, social and emotional difficulties which are a barrier to learning.

REFERRAL

Pupils with diagnosed learning difficulties should be referred to the SEN department by their parents/guardians; the school expects that all assessments and areas of need will be disclosed by the parents or guardians at the time of application. St Columba's is an inclusive school and does not discriminate against pupils on the grounds of ability so there is no disadvantage to disclosing additional learning difficulties.

CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT

If a pupil is experiencing low achievement in routine assignments, classroom tests and/or subject exams they may be referred by their subject teacher.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Special Education teachers or Special Needs Assistants may observe pupils of concern in their classes.

CONSULTATION

With the pupils, parents, relevant external professionals and teachers to gain background information, strengths and weaknesses and priorities.

MEETING NEEDS

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS & GROUP EDUCATION PLANS

Based on the screening assessments, reports received, further informal and formal diagnostic assessments and in collaboration with the students and parents an individual education plan is drawn

up. This process will take several weeks. IEPs are not at this moment mandated by the Department of Education. However, we endeavour to ensure that one is provided for each pupil. It will be shared with parents/guardians by a member of the department through Google Docs when it is finalised. They will have targets and will be reviewed regularly. The needs of individual students will be communicated to subject teachers through a shared google document - Student Support Plan, staff meetings, occasional emails.

The following areas may be addressed depending on the student:

LITERACY & LANGUAGE SKILLS - a multi-sensory programme is drawn up focussed on the gaps in the student's literacy skills. Classes may be only once or twice a week and so repeated practice by the pupil in between classes is essential.

Woodcock Johnson IV will be the administered testing toolkit for literacy assessments.

NUMERACY SKILLS - an individual programme is drawn up based on the student's needs, the focus will be on JC or LC success

Woodcock Johnson IV will be the administered testing toolkit for numeracy assessments.

STUDY & ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS - A range of resources and practical help where possible is used to provide structure so that learning can take place. As exam year students will be provided with access to an academic tutor, they can be approached for advice.

EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS - A range of resources is used to develop emotional awareness and self-control. Collaboration with CURAM as well as following all established school procedures will apply when addressing emotional and behavioural needs/skills.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY - Practice in using technology to access the curriculum, with an emphasis on touch typing as well as use of Google Suite.

DASH assessments will be administered when accessing a pupils eligibility for access to assistive technology, in line with established criteria by the DES.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS in SCHOOL EXAMS - The Special Education teachers liaise with the Exams Coordinator to provide accommodations in school exams as far as possible. However, we can not mirror the accommodations that are provided at the State Examination Level. In-house accommodations will be provided if it is possible once the eligibility is determined or as a way to test the efficacy of a particular accommodation before applying for it. This is a labour intensive resource and not all exams can be covered for every student so priority is given to exam years and then from Fifth Form down. Please be aware of this.

THIRD LEVEL - DARE

It is vital that students and parents/guardians read all information that will be shared with them by a member of the SEN Department.

Section A - will be filled out by the students themselves as it has to be done through their CAO portal, which we do not have access to.

Section B - Educational Impact Statement will be filled out by a member of the department with the student present so that their responses can be recorded.

Section C - Evidence of Disability will have to be arranged by the parents/guardians and returned in a timely fashion. It is not up to the college or members of the SEN Department to arrange for Section C to be filled in by an appropriate professional.

TIMETABLING

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Classroom based support for all will be provided by the subject teacher through appropriate differentiation of content and activities. The Special Education teachers will aim to support this differentiation by providing information on the specific needs of students and providing resources where possible. All necessary and relevant information will be shared with staff as well as suggestions/worked examples of how to differentiate appropriately. Special Needs Assistants may be part of classroom based support. The Special Education teachers may liaise with students in the classroom and subject teachers and use end of term reports to monitor progress.

SUPPORT FOR SOME

- SUPPORT CLASSES

There are classes set against Irish for those who are exempt, usually two per week for Maths and two per week for literacy support. These will run all year long but the pupils may be moved in or out of the class depending on progress.

- SMALL GROUP TEACHING

Students may be withdrawn from the main timetable in small groups to work on skills or for curriculum support. Non-examination subjects or study periods are prioritised for withdrawal. Attendance at these classes will depend on progress.

- SUPPORT PLUS FOR A FEW

INDIVIDUAL TUITION

This will be appropriate and necessary for certain pupils or for certain skills programmes. It is usually organised on a withdrawal basis, non-examination or study periods are prioritised for withdrawal. Attendance at these classes will depend on progress.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING OUTCOMES

Standardised literacy assessments are repeated once per term for relevant pupils to monitor progress. They may indicate a need for an adjustment in the level of support. Their results are collated and circulated in google docs for the information of the class teachers concerned. Other skills, such as typing can be measured using the assessment built into the typing programme.

Pupils' end of term reports are kept on record and used to monitor progress.Other targets are reviewed as set out in the IEP, usually termly.

IEPS

Progress is recorded in the IEP and Student Support File. These will be shared with parents/guardians when it is possible. Please be aware that the primary purpose of an IEP is educationally based which records the support provided to pupils who have an IEP. Please be aware that IEPs are not mandated by the Department of Education, the SEN Department endeavour as best we can to draft one for pupils with SEN. When drafted, we shall share it with parents/guardians to open a channel of communication based around the educational support being provided to pupils with SEN.

A Student Support Plan is shared with all teaching staff which details what accommodations as well as learning supports are in place for each pupil with SEN. An SEN teaching and learning page is shared with all teaching staff on which teaching techniques are suggested as well as differentiated teaching techniques applicable to students with SEN.

ADJUSTMENT OF LEVELS AND NATURE OF SUPPORT

The Continuum of Support allows for flexibility and, subject to review of targets and achievement, the level of support may change. For example:

- A student may improve their literacy levels to average levels and so no longer require support.
- Assistive Technology may be able to compensate for the difficulties and enable the student to learn independently without the need for Special Education classes.
- A student may continue to have a specific difficulty (with spelling, for example) but otherwise be able to handle the demands of the curriculum and so continuing with Learning Support classes is unnecessary.

Identification of Need

A combination of some or all of the following data will be used to identify those with additional academic, physical, social and emotional difficulties which are a barrier to learning.

Referral

Pupils with diagnosed learning difficulties should be referred to the SEN department by their parents/guardians; the school expects that all assessments and areas of need will be disclosed by the parents or guardians at the time of application. St Columba's is an inclusive school and does not discriminate against pupils on the grounds of ability so there is no disadvantage to disclosing additional learning difficulties.

Standardised Assessments

Each new pupil sits three standardised literacy assessments of sight reading, reading comprehension and spelling. These take place in September or as soon as possible after arrival if a pupil joins the school mid-year. If a pupil has a significant literacy deficit in one or more assessment then we contact their parents or guardians to offer the possibility of extra classes. There is a focus on literacy because it is central to accessing the curriculum in all other subjects.

Standardised assessments recognised by the State Exams Commission along with reading and writing samples are used to determine need and eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations.

Curricular Assessment

If a pupil is experiencing low achievement in routine assignments, classroom tests and/or subject exams they may be referred by their subject teacher.

Classroom Observation

Special Education teachers or Special Needs Assistants may observe pupils of concern in their classes.

Consultation

With the pupils, parents, relevant external professionals and teachers to gain background information, strengths and weaknesses and priorities.

Meeting Needs

Individual Education Plans & Group Education Plans

Based on the screening assessments, reports received, further informal and formal diagnostic assessments and in collaboration with the students and parents an individual education plan is drawn up. This process will take several weeks.

They will have targets and will be reviewed regularly.

The needs of individual students will be communicated to subject teachers through a shared google document, staff meetings, occasional emails.

The following areas may be addressed depending on the student:

LITERACY & LANGUAGE SKILLS - a multi-sensory programme is drawn up focussed on the gaps in the student's literacy skills. Classes may be only once or twice a week and so repeated practice by the pupil in between classes is essential.

NUMERACY SKILLS - an individual programme is drawn up based on the student's needs, the focus will be on JC or LC success

STUDY & ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS - A range of resources and practical help where possible is used to provide structure so that learning can take place.

EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS - A range of resources is used to develop emotional awareness and self-control.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY - Practice in using technology to access the curriculum

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS in SCHOOL EXAMS - The Special Education teachers liaise with the Exams Coordinator to provide accommodations in school exams as far as possible. This may be provided once the eligibility is determined or as a way to test the efficacy of a particular accommodation before applying for it. This is a labour-intensive resource and not all exams can be covered for every student so priority is given to exam years and then from Fifth Form down.

THIRD LEVEL - advice and support with filling in the CAO application and the DARE process, specifically the Personal Statement.

TIMETABLING

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Classroom based support for all will be provided by the subject teacher through appropriate differentiation of content and activities.

The Special Education teachers will aim to support this differentiation by providing information on the specific needs of students and providing resources where possible.

Special Needs Assistants may be part of classroom based support.

The Special Education teachers will liaise with students in the classroom and subject teachers and use end of term reports to monitor progress.

SUPPORT CLASSES

There are classes set against Irish for those who are exempt, usually two per week for Maths and two per week for literacy support. These will run all year long but the pupils may be moved in or out of the class depending on progress.

SMALL GROUP TEACHING

Students may be withdrawn from the main timetable in small groups to work on skills or for curriculum support. Non-examination subjects or study periods are prioritised for withdrawal. Attendance at these classes will depend on progress.

SUPPORT PLUS FOR A FEW

INDIVIDUAL TUITION

This will be appropriate and necessary for certain pupils or for certain skills programmes. It is usually organised on a withdrawal basis, non-examination or study periods are prioritised for withdrawal. Attendance at these classes will depend on progress.

Monitoring & Review Outcomes

Standardised literacy assessments are repeated once per term for relevant pupils to monitor progress. They may indicate a need for an adjustment in the level of support. Their results are collated and circulated in google docs for the information of the class teachers concerned. Other skills, such as typing can be measured using the assessment built into the typing programme.

Pupils' end of term reports are kept on record and used to monitor progress.

Other targets are reviewed as set out in the IEP, usually termly. Progress is recorded in the IEP and Student Support File.

ADJUSTMENT OF LEVELS AND NATURE OF SUPPORT

The Continuum of Support allows for flexibility and, subject to review of targets and achievement, the level of support may change. For example:

- A student may improve their literacy levels to average levels and so no longer require support.
- Assistive Technology may be able to compensate for the difficulties and enable the student to learn independently without the need for Special Education classes.
- A student may continue to have a specific difficulty (with spelling, for example) but otherwise be able to handle the demands of the curriculum and so continuing with Learning Support classes is unnecessary.

Communication

Communication with parents

- St Columba's College in general has excellent communication with the parent body and with particular parents who need to discuss issues. There are three Parent-Teacher meetings per year and comprehensive written reports each term. The phone number and email for the Special Education department is available and/or appointments can be made through the school office.
- Special Education Teachers are available to meet with parents of prospective students to discuss areas of strength and need.
- If our initial assessments indicate a significant deficit in an area of literacy we contact parents or guardians by email to offer support and gather input for the IEP
- Parents/guardians receive a written report at the end of every term.
- When applying for RACE, DARE or NCSE resources the Special Education teacher will liaise with the parents.

Communication with teaching staff

- Following the literacy assessments of all new pupils in September, the results are circulated around staff by way of a Google Doc and email.
- A list of those with difficulties and a brief note is also circulated. The results of ongoing literacy assessments are also recorded and available to staff.

- Special Education teachers share information about their students and their progress at Convention (staff meetings). Subject teachers can email or approach the SET to discuss issues or vice versa at any time, a meeting may need to be arranged.
- Subject teachers bring up pupils of concern with the Special Education Teachers due to lack of progress or behavioural indicators that may have been missed by the assessments and enrolment process.

Communication with outside agencies

- State Examinations Commission - to complete the applications for Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Exams with results from and follow up with any queries related to those applications.
- National Educational Psychology Service - to seek advice on specific issues with students or applications.
- National Council for Special Education - to apply for appropriate supports such as Special Needs Assistants and Assistive Technology.
- Visiting Teacher Service - (for the visually impaired, for the hearing impaired) to coordinate visits with the student and teaching staff, applications for equipment.
- CAO and Disability Route to Education - to support the student in filling in the CAO form, and completing the Personal Statement. Completing the Educational Impact Statement and coordinating the inputs of teaching staff.
- Educational Psychologists - to follow up on assessments and to prepare for any assessments by completing background information forms etc.
- Occupational Therapists - to follow up on assessments and to prepare for any assessments by completing background information forms etc.
- Speech and Language Therapists - to follow up on assessments and to prepare for any assessments by completing background information forms etc.