

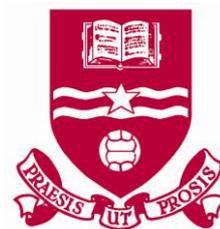
# **Special Educational Needs Policy**

**De La Salle College  
Waterford**

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# *Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy*



## **Mission Statement of De La Salle College Waterford**

De La Salle College Waterford is a Catholic school. It is a learning community where all students are valued and educated in preparation for a meaningful life.

## **College Profile**

De La Salle College Waterford is an all boys Catholic School under the trusteeship of Le Chéile. The college is managed by a Board of Management, is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and operates within the regulations and guidelines set down from time to time by that Department. The College follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act 1998. Within the context and parameters of Department of Education and Skills regulations and resources, as well as the La Sallian ethos, De La Salle College Waterford supports the principles of inclusiveness. Also, it supports equality of access and participation, parental choice in respect of enrolment and a respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life.

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Ethos**

De La Salle College Waterford was founded in 1891 by the De La Salle Brothers and serves as a Catholic school for boys. De La Salle College Waterford seeks to promote an atmosphere of friendliness, discipline and co-operation where everyone can experience respect, encouragement and support. While every school is a community in which adults and young people live and work together, the La Sallian school is inspired by the vision of St. John Baptist De La Salle that Gospel values must permeate the life of a Catholic school in such a way that students internalise those values and reflect them in their behaviour.

All who work in the College constantly strive to make De La Salle College Waterford a welcoming institution. Our behaviour management strategies and pastoral care structures are built on the principles of justice and fairness. We endeavour to fulfil our mission in partnership with the De La Salle Brothers, parents/guardians, teachers and all staff, students, trustees and the local community.

## **1.2 Inclusion**

De La Salle College Waterford welcomes students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and in line with the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004 recognises the need – ‘to provide that the education of people with such needs shall wherever possible take place in an inclusive environment’. It will endeavour to ensure that these students are free to participate in school life in so far as is reasonably practicable. The school accepts that no student should be bullied or singled out for unfair treatment as a consequence of their disability. Pro-active steps are taken to ensure that the school provides an inclusive environment that is non-judgemental and supportive.

*\* Please see Admissions Policy (Appendix 1) & Anti-Bullying Policy (Draft) (Appendix 2)*

## **1.3 Special Education Needs (SEN) Mission Statement**

It is our hope that our school is a place where we promote and facilitate a whole school approach to special needs education and so create a community of learning. In our policy and practice, we aim to nurture the values of hope, compassion and understanding in all of our students. We recognise each student as a unique individual with different talents and needs. We endeavour to foster an atmosphere of learning that is holistic in approach which nurtures each individual student’s personal growth and development.

## **1.4 Rationale**

This policy document aims to outline the form that additional educational support for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) takes in the school and the philosophy which underpins it. It is written in the context of the Education Act 1998, and takes account of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) (2004). This policy should be viewed as a working document and be reviewed on an annual basis. This policy bases its rationale on the principles laid out in the EPSEN Act (2004).

## **2 Categories of Special Educational Needs**

To date, the school has provided for the following categories of students with Special Educational Needs:

- Borderline / Mild General Learning Difficulties
- Moderate General Learning Difficulties
- Emotional Disturbance and/or Behavioural Difficulties — ADD/ADHD
- Specific Learning Disability — Dyslexia
- Physical Disabilities — Dyspraxia, Cerebral Palsy, Chromosome 8 Deletion, Vater Syndrome, Spina Bifida
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Sensory Impairments - Hearing and Visual Impairments
- ESOL students (English for Students with Other Languages)
- Assessed Syndrome - Down Syndrome
- Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder

In addition to these categories the following category of SEN exists:

- Severe/Profound General Learning Difficulty

### **3 Special Educational Needs Team**

#### **3.1 Roles within SEN Department**

##### ***Special Needs Facilitator***

The Special Needs Facilitator's duties include the following:

- Identify and read all the available assessment reports of all incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students
- Make the relevant applications to the DES on behalf of students requesting resource hours, SNA support and/or assistive technology
- Liaise with the SENO and parents of students who have particular needs.
- Mark up-to-date reports to support the applications
- Contact the parents to sign the applications which is also signed by the Principal when all relevant paperwork is completed
- Similar applications are made for students in other years as the need arises
- Contact is made with Year Heads, Career Guidance Counsellors and Special Education Needs Co-ordinator(s) to ascertain relevant information for application purposes
- Assist with the paper work for Irish Exemptions. Student psychological reports are read and relevant form is completed to support a recommendation for an exemption from Irish. Primary School Principals are contacted if students are unsure of their eligibility. The Principal is informed of same.

## ***Deputy Principal***

The Deputy Principal liaises with the SEN co-ordinator(s) (SENCO) in the implementation of the SEN Policy.

## ***Co-ordinator(s) of Special Educational Needs (SENCO)***

The role of the SEN Co-ordinator(s) involves:

- Liaising with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO)
  - Distributing new resource hours that have been allocated by the SENCO
  - Co-ordinating SNA timetables as allocated by the SENCO
  - Organising SNA review when requested
  - Completing the following forms:
    - School Care Needs Profile Form
    - School SNA Profile Form
    - Confirmation of Leavers Form
  
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
  - Providing training for the SEN team with regard to the drawing up of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) - see IEP Template (*Appendix 3*).
  - IEPs are collected by the co-ordinator(s); one copy is kept on file, one copy is given to the Deputy Principal, and one copy is sent to parents/guardians, who are invited to contact the school to discuss the IEPs and following this discussion amendments are made as necessary.
  
- Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)
  - Drawing up SNA timetables at the beginning of the school year.
  - Amending SNA timetables every ten weeks as resource and learning support times change.
  - On a daily basis, the SEN Co-ordinator(s) meet SNAs and reallocate them to another student(s) / year group in the event of their own student(s) being absent from school.
  - Arrange cover if SNAs are absent.

- Completing WRAT4 assessments
  - As part of our Student Referral System - *see Student Referral Form (Appendix 4)*
  - Required for RACE applications
  
- NEPS
  - Completion of the following forms:
    - Request for ‘Involvement of Psychologist Form’
    - SRS Profile Sheet Form
    - Round Robin Forms
  - Co-ordinating meetings between NEPS representative, parents/guardians and relevant staff members, and completion of relevant documentation in preparation for meetings.
  
- Managing ‘Student Referral System’ - *see Student Referral Form*
  
- Liaising with:
  - Year Heads
  - Class Teachers
  - SENO
  - NEPS Representatives
  - EWO
  - Visiting Teacher Services
  - Occupational Therapists
  - Speech & Language Therapists
  - External agencies based on the needs of the students

## **Resource Teacher**

The role of the Resource Teacher is to provide support for children with special educational needs. The Resource Teacher has responsibility for drawing up IEPs for students in his/her care, assessing and recording students needs and progress, and setting specific goals and targets and strategies to meet these goals and targets. The Resource Teacher can have

responsibility for dealing with students with SEN on a one-to-one basis, in a small group setting, and/or team-teaching.

### **Learning Support Teacher**

The role of the Learning Support Teacher is to provide additional support for the literacy and numeracy needs of students. The Learning Support Teacher has responsibility for drawing up IEPs for students in his/her care, assessing and recording students needs and progress, and setting specific goals and targets and strategies to meet these goals and targets. The Learning Support Teacher can have responsibility for dealing with students on a one-to-one basis, in a small group setting, and/or team-teaching.

## **3.2 Role of Partners in the SEN Team**

### **Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians, as the primary educators of their children, have much to contribute to their child's IEP. Parents/guardians are encouraged to actively communicate with the school with regard to their son's development. Parents/guardians are consulted in cases where screening, assessment and profiling is being conducted. The SEN department advocates a partnership of collaboration and co-operation with parents/guardians of students with SEN.

### **Students**

The involvement of students in the development, implementation and review of their own IEP is an important principle that underpins effective SEN provision.

### **Class Teacher**

In accordance with circular 0030/2014 (*Appendix 5*):

*Section 22 (1) of the Education Act 1998 states the primacy of the teacher in the education and personal development of students in schools. The classroom teacher is responsible for educating all pupils in his/her class, including any pupil with a special educational need.*

*It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure that each pupil is taught in a stimulating environment and supportive classroom environment where all pupils feel equal and valued. The teacher will have access to all information that is likely to be relevant to teaching or supervising a pupil with Special Educational Needs\*. The classroom teacher also has a central role in indentifying and responding to pupils with additional needs.*

The class teacher also plays an important role in the early identification of pupils with SEN and they have the opportunity to use the Student Referral Form when required. In order to best support the education of the student, a differentiated scheme of work is essential and should be included by all class teachers in their schemes of work. Class teachers are an invaluable resource and can contribute to the goals and targets set out in the SEN students Individual Education Plan. In recognition of this, class teachers are encouraged and facilitated by the Senior Management Team to partake in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in relation to SEN, e.g. Post Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs training, intervention training Toe-by-Toe and training to devise Individual Education Plans.

**\* The Data Protection Act, 1988, and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003 safeguard the privacy rights of individuals with regards to personal data. Accordingly, student files can be viewed only, but not removed by the class teacher from the student SEN files in the main office. Information should be treated with the strictest of confidence.**

## **Guidance Counsellors**

The Guidance Counsellors role within the SEN team consists largely of the following functions:

- Co-ordinating entrance assessments
- Counselling in personal, educational and career development
- Working as a member of the Pastoral Care Team
- Working as a member of the Student Support Team
- Managing Career Information

- Consulting with parents/guardians and staff, when required
- Consulting with relevant outside agencies
- Making referrals to professional agencies, when required
- Providing vocational preparation
- Evaluating the guidance and counselling needs and services

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting and monitoring school policy on Special Education Needs provision. The BOM oversees the development, implementation, review and ratification of school policy on SEN. They also ensure adequate accommodation and teaching resources and a secure facility for the storage of records in respect of SEN students is provided.

### **Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)**

The SNA has responsibility for the care and well being of the student in a manner that values, respects and supports the student as well as promoting independence. This is achieved by supporting each student in the manner which responds to his needs, in collaboration with the classroom teacher. The SNA is privy to confidential information pertaining to SEN students, as such confidentiality is of paramount importance. The SNA is required to read the psychological report and/or other professional reports associated with the student(s) who are in their care and work in accordance with the 'Recommendations' section as outlined in these reports. The SNA may not be asked to act as a substitute for an absent teacher or be left in sole charge of a class. The role of the SNA is pivotal and important in the school. We recognise the enormous contribution our SNAs make to the school.

As laid out in circular 0030/2014, 'The type of significant care needs that pupils may have can be varied, depending on the nature or level of the disability or sensory impairment that a child may have. Given the variety of medical conditions that children may suffer from, it is not possible to list all of the care needs that may arise here. However, examples of the primary care needs which would be considered significant – and which might require SNA support are:

- **Assistance with feeding:** where a child with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.
- **Administration of medicine:** where a child requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.
- **Assistance with toileting and general hygiene:** (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so.
- **Assistance with mobility and orientation:** on an ongoing basis including assisting a child or children to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a child to access school transport), or helping a child to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.)
- **Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds:** at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.
- **Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions:** such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.

- **Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential:** This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a child may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.
- **Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.**
- **Assistance with severe communication difficulties:** including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.

The tasks noted above are the primary care support tasks for which access to SNA support will normally be provided. The following tasks are the type of secondary care associated tasks which SNAs will often perform. The indicative list of secondary associated tasks listed below is not definitive and is reflective of the tasks detailed in Circular 71/2011 (*Appendix 6*).

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a child who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another.
- Assist teachers and/or Principal in maintaining a journal or care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with class teachers and other teachers such as the resource teacher and school principal, attending meetings with parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of class teacher/principal.

- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel , including class teachers or support teachers.
- Assistance with out of school activities: walks, or visits.

## **4 SEN Model Of Organisation**

### **4.1 Whole school context**

De La Salle College Waterford organises its classes in a mixed ability setting. Each first year group has a mixed range of abilities. In second year, classes are banded for Irish and Mathematics and this continues in third year. We also have a Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP) class which is overseen by the Programme Co-ordinator and this class is organised in accordance with the JCSP guidelines in first, second and third year.

### **4.2 School based Identification Process**

The initial screening processes that take place in De La Salle College are:

- a) Recommendations by parents/guardians on the School Open Night
- b) Entrance Assessment
- c) Information from Primary Schools - Education Passport
- d) Student Application Form which may include psychological reports, professional reports and assessment reports.

The purpose of the entrance assessment is to identify learning needs and to facilitate the organising of mixed ability classes in first year and the formation of a JCSP class. As a follow on from the initial screening process, Guidance Counsellors and relevant staff meet with parents/guardians, where appropriate, to discuss the specific learning needs of their sons.

A subject teacher can refer any student they are concerned about to the relevant Year Head using the Student Referral Form, which is available at the back of the staffroom in a black wallmounted form holder.

### **4.3 Referral Process**

When a parent or subject teacher notifies the relevant Year Head that a student is having a difficulty, the Year Head, with the parents/guardians approval, will investigate the parents/guardians / teachers concerns. This process can include referral to the SEN Co-ordinator(s) using the Student Referral Form and the Round Robin Form (*Appendix 7*), which is also located in the staffroom in a black wallmounted form holder. Additional testing may take place as a result of the above referral. As a result Learning Support may be provided for the student. Following the ongoing monitoring of the Learning Support for the student, a referral may be made to the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) for further assessment. This process which is the recommended best practice for SEN referral informs SEN practice in De La Salle College. Students work is stored by the Resource/Learning Support Teacher from one lesson to the next. This material may form part of a Student Support Plan/Student Support Plus Plan, which is compiled by the SEN Co-ordinator(s) in collaboration with the Principal / Deputy Principals / Year Heads / Programme Co-ordinator and relevant teachers.

### **4.4 Model of SEN Provision**

To support SEN Provision for students in De La Salle College, the following are considered:

- Small group withdrawal
- Team Teaching
- Access to SNA provision
- Individual withdrawal
- Curricular reduction

The period of intervention recommended for each student is dependent on the nature and extent of their individual need. Provision is monitored and reviewed every 10 weeks. There are cases where support is needed on a short-term basis. All decisions in this regard are discussed with parents/guardians, relevant subject teachers and students.

## **4.5 Programme Planning**

The objectives of the assessments conducted by the SEN Co-ordinator(s) are to identify the pupil's learning needs. The information generated by this assessment process is essential for the completion of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

## **4.6 Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

An IEP is a process of consultation and collaboration. It identifies a student's current strengths and needs. It sets goals and targets that are specific to the student and outlines strategies to achieve these goals. A student's progress is reviewed at regular intervals. The original document is a working document and can be modified as needed. One copy of this document is given to parents/guardians, a second copy is kept on file by the SEN Co-ordinator and a third copy is given to the Deputy Principal.

Our IEP includes:

- Personal Details
- Access to SNA Details
- Subject Details
- Abilities / Skills / Talents
- Nature of SEN
- SEN Provision
- Priority Goals
- Targets to meet Priority Goals
- Strategies to achieve these goals
- IEP Review Date

## **4.7 Review/Evaluation**

The progress of each student is reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the academic year. A review date forms part of each IEP. The primary purpose of this review is to determine

whether or not the agreed goals and targets have been achieved and to decide the level and type of support, if any, that is required in the next IEP.

#### **4.8 Time-tabling of Resource Provision**

##### **Withdrawals**

The SEN Department may withdraw students from different subject areas in consultation with the respective subject teacher and with parents/guardians' permission. The subject from which the student is withdrawn from may change every ten weeks. In some cases students with SEN may be on reduced timetables to facilitate their Educational Need.

#### **5 SEN Information**

##### **5.1 SEN Pupils Information Dissemination**

At the beginning of the new school year, the SEN Co-ordinator will inform each Year Head of all students with SEN. The Year Head in turn will inform the class teacher. Information can be accessed by the class teacher from the student SEN files in the main office but these files are not to be removed. Information should be treated with the strictest of confidence.

##### **5.2 SEN Forms and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

In the staffroom, teachers have full access to Student Referral Forms which are held in a black wallmounted file holder at the back of the staffroom. Articles of interest and information relating to courses of interest are posted on the Principal's notice board.

##### **5.3 Record Keeping**

- A minutes' folder is kept recording SEN Department meetings.
- The SEN department maintains an up to date record of all student referrals

- All relevant documentation is recorded in the students file.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Fergus Dunne**  
**Chairperson BOM**

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Margaret Betts**  
**Principal**

# **Supporting Documentation to SEN Policy**

## **(Separate Document)**

1. Admissions Policy
2. Anti-Bullying Policy
3. Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template
4. Student Referral Form
5. Circular 0030/2014
6. Circular 71/2011
7. Round Robin Form
8. Acronyms
9. The National Council for Special Education Needs (NCSE)
10. Special Education Support Services (SESS)
11. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
12. Down Syndroms Ireland (DSI)
13. Dyslexia Association of Ireland (DAI)