



Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin

Special Educational Needs Policy

1. Mission Statement

Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí leighin is an inclusive all-Irish Secondary School under the patronage of Cork ETB. The school's three core principles of respect, fairness and integrity, as well as the promotion of the Irish language are central to daily life in the Gaelcholáiste community.

It is the aim of Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí leighin to be an exemplary school, where we embrace the newest technologies to support learning. Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin has high expectations of its pupils, and each pupil is encouraged and supported in all aspects of school life to grow and fulfil their potential.

2. Context

This policy is primarily based on the guidelines from the following documents;

- a) Circular 0014/17
- b) Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools "Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools" 2017.
- c) The NEPS Continuum of Support.
- d) NEPS Resource Pack.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Admission Policy, the Code of Behaviour, the Wellbeing Policy, the Pastoral Care Policy and the Spoken Irish Policy, as well as the documents mentioned above.

3. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to;

- a) Nurture student's self-confidence;
- b) Ensure participation from every student;
- c) Put services and supports in place that will encourage participation;
- d) Provide each child with an equal chance of accessing a curriculum suitable to their needs;
- e) Put a suitable curriculum and effective strategies in place for those students with Special Educational Needs at Post-Primary Level;
- f) Develop teacher's knowledge and skills and to encourage training in this area;
- g) Encourage co-operation and regular communication with Parents/Guardians to support the child's progress;
- h) Link this policy to the Whole-School Plan;
- i) Comply with the various Acts that have been enacted (e.g. EPSEN Act 2004, etc.);
- j) Clarify the role of each staff member in the area of Special Educational Needs.

4. Circular 0014/2017

There are three levels in the new Learning Support Model

Level 1: Whole-School and Classroom Support (Support for all)

Level 2: School Support (for some)

Level 3: School Support Plus (for a few)

5. Level 1: Support for All

- a) All school staff must create a positive and safe learning environment in the school.
- b) An effective Behaviour System will be in place in the school.
- c) Behavioural/Social/Mental Health/Learning difficulties shall be recognised early at regular meetings of the Learning Support and Pastoral Care teams. Any teacher can bring a student with any of these difficulties to the Learning Support Team's attention, and information will be compiled using appropriate NEPS checklists about any student that comes to their attention.
- d) Appropriate training from the NCSE shall be made available to teachers.
- e) Where level 1 interventions fail, the Learning Support Team will redirect students to Level 2 supports.
- f) Primary Feeder Schools are requested to pass any information regarding student's educational needs to the Principal in the form of Educational Passports.
- g) Information regarding students with Educational Needs is shared with staff at the beginning of each school year with Parent's/Guardian's permission. It is highlighted that this information is private and confidential, and any Psychological/Educational Assessment Reports are discussed, as well as any recommendations from these reports.
- h) Standardised Tests and Diagnostic Tests such as CAT 4 and WRAT 5 are used to support the school. CAT 4 Tests are completed in early First-Year, whilst WRAT 5 Tests are completed as required in Second and Fifth Year.

6. Level 2: Support for Some

- a) Students may be redirected to Level 2 supports if this need is recognised in Psychological Reports, verbal reports, or based on any other evidence.
- b) Extra supports shall be put in place for some students with behavioural/mental-health/learning/social difficulties (with support from class tutors or other staff as appropriate). These can take the form of Individual Learning Support classes, teaching in smaller groups, e.g. a group that works at a lower level or at an exceptional level or support in the classes through Co-Teaching and Team Teaching.

- c) Applications for RACE Accommodations will be made for those in this category.
- d) The Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator or another member of the Learning Support Team shall meet with the Principal and members of the Learning Support Team in the Primary Schools of any school from which a student with a recognised Special Educational Need shall be enrolling from the following year.
- e) A meeting with Parent's/Guardian's shall also take place, if necessary, to collect any further information on the child. Regular communications with Parent's/Guardian's to discuss pupil progress shall take place during the school-year.
- f) The SEN team discuss all students that receive SEN Supports at regular meetings, in conjunction with teachers with these SEN students in their classes. Further assessments using checklists, etc. shall be organised as appropriate.
- g) Parental permission and input are sought for each Level 2/3 intervention.
- h) Psychological Assessments are taken in to account when designing an Individual Learning Plan for these students.
- i) This level of support is not meant to be treated as a grind class for those looking to achieve higher grades, especially at higher level.

7. Level 3: Support for the Few

- a) Should it be evident that Level 2 supports are not effectively addressing the difficulties of the child, the SEN Support Team should direct the child to Level 3 supports. This entails a more vigorous and direct approach to the individual student. Contact shall be made with external agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS and other therapists, as necessary.
- b) Any psychological report shall be considered when compiling an Individual Educational Plan for this student.
- c) The school shall discuss the Individual Educational Plan with the student, parents/guardians, teachers and any other relevant external agency.
- d) Interviews, observation, record keeping, and checklists shall all be used regularly to recognise and evaluate student's strengths and needs.
- e) Targets are made using realistic strategies for the student.

- f) A multi-strategy approach shall be developed for those with high levels of behavioural issues.
- g) Students will be redirected as early as possible to external agencies such as CAMHS and/or NEPS if necessary.

8. Staff Member’s Roles

	Subject Teachers	Specialist Teachers(Learning Support/Resource/ Language (EAL)/Guidance Counsellors/HSLC/Tutors/Year Heads	School Management
Support for All	<p>Differentiate teaching and learning activities.</p> <p>Create positive classroom environment, including use of positive and constructive feedback.</p>	<p>Collection and analysis of school-wide screening data, including intake screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records.</p> <p>Collaboration with subject teachers.</p>	<p>Leadership in developing relevant whole-school policies; enrolment/ assessment/ inclusion.</p> <p>Strategic management of implementation of policies and practices.</p> <p>Strategic support for</p>

	<p>Assess and monitor progress.</p> <p>Create opportunities for success.</p> <p>Communicate concerns to colleagues.</p> <p>Collaborate with specialist teachers.</p>		evidence based interventions.
<p>School Support (For Some)</p>	<p>As above, plus</p> <p>Contribute to group or individual planning and review.</p> <p>Implement agreed strategies.</p>	<p>As above, plus</p> <p>Diagnostic testing.</p> <p>Liaising with parents.</p> <p>Gathering information from subject teachers/other staff</p> <p>Plan, implement and review individual and/or group intervention</p>	<p>As above, plus</p> <p>Assign roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Keep records of those receiving this level of support</p>

	Communicate progress and concerns to co-ordinating teacher.	Seek external professional advice, as needed Undertake tasks of co-ordinating teacher, as needed	
School Support Plus (for a Few)	As above, plus Prepare information for IEP planning meetings. Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies. Direct the work of SNA's in the classroom.	As above, plus Plan, implement, monitor and review specialist and individualised responses. Direct the work of SNAs in the school	As above, plus Compliance with statutory requirements of EPSEN.

9. Support Plan

This is a document designed to lay out targets for an individual student for the school year. The profile is completed with help from subject teachers, parents and the student at the beginning of the school year. It describes the learning strategies, resources and supports necessary for this process. Some minor changes can be made to the student's learning programme, and these are laid out in this document. This is a live document and may be amended regularly.

- a) Layout of the document;
- b) Student details;
- c) Interests and strengths of the pupil;
- d) Main concerns;
- e) Possible reasons for the concerns;
- f) Student's Targets;
- g) Strategies to help the student achieve its targets;
- h) Team involved and the necessary resources.

Student Targets:

Describing targets is very important for student learning and teaching. The targets should describe the skills and understanding to be achieved by the pupil within an agreed timeframe. The targets are based on the pupil's strengths. The SMART Targets method is used. This entails Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed targets being made for the pupil.

10. Confidentiality:

- a) Individual Profiles, results and all accounts are kept in a secure, locked filing cabinet in accordance with GDPR regulations 2018.
- b) Parents/Guardians can access learning support documents and details on request.

11. Differentiation

Differentiation is a teaching methodology that creates a comprehensive learning support environment in the classroom for all pupils. By using this methodology, every effort is made to challenge each pupil in the class to maximise their learning based on their level of ability, pupils with Special Educational Needs as well as pupils of very high ability levels.

Differentiation is used by;

- a) The way the subject matter is taught and learned;

- b) Directions given in class – how often and when?
- c) The tasks prescribed to the pupils – different tasks based on the ability level of the pupil.
- d) Organising groups – Making appropriate choices when making groups for group-work, where each child will be given the opportunity to develop their learning.
- e) Teacher Questioning: Mixing closed (lower cognitive level) questions with open (higher cognitive thinking) questions for the benefit of each pupil's learning.
- f) Resources used by the teacher: Use a wide range of resources to satisfy each pupil's learning style.
- g) Teaching Methods and Classroom Management: Decide on the methodologies most suitable to the needs of each pupil in the class.
- h) Speed – Teaching and the speed at which pupil learning is occurring.
- i) The Result – The way learning is shown. Give every opportunity to each pupil to show their learning in different ways.
- j) Amount – Be realistic as to what we are expecting from each pupil in any given task, depending on their level of ability.

12. Students with SEN Enrolling in the School

Results are gathered after the CAT4 Assessment. If any results stand-out, the pupil is invited to visit the school to familiarise themselves with the surroundings, the building and the teachers. This visit can be arranged through the Primary School, the SEN team and parents/guardians of the pupil.

If a pupil transfers from another Post-Primary school, parents/guardians should make any documents relating to SEN available to the school.

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/3-NCSE-2016-Changing-Schools-final-web-27.01.16.pdf>

13. Reasonable Accommodations for State Exams

- a) Assessment and monitoring of those that may be entitled to Reasonable Accommodations for State Exams begin at the end of 2nd and 5th year.
- b) Advice is sought from class teachers and year heads.
- c) Advice and direction is sought from external agencies relevant to the pupil.
- d) Communicate with the State Examinations Commission to arrange the Reasonable Accommodations.

14. External Agencies

The following agencies support the school and our pupils;

- a) The National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- b) The State Examinations Commission (SEC)
- c) The Child and Family Agency (TUSLA)
- d) The National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)
- e) Other external agencies such as Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists.

This is not an exhaustive list, and Gaelcholaiste Charraig Uí Leighin shall develop further links with external agencies as pupil's needs demand.

15. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Technology plays a central role in pupil's education in Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin. We recognise its importance in this technological age and it's potential in supporting the learning of pupils with SEN. The following are some of the steps taken by the school;

- a) Each teacher has an iPad;
- b) Each pupil has an iPad. The iPads have resources such as guided access, readers, iBooks, Padlet and other apps to help those with SEN.
- c) Each classroom has an Apple TV;
- d) Each pupil has ebooks;
- e) Internet is available to all pupils throughout the school;

- f) Google Drive and Google Classrooms are used to share information between teachers and pupils.

16. Wellbeing

Teachers and the SEN team make every effort to include the wellbeing indicators in every class, learning support classes included. The new learning support model is used to achieve this.

- a) Level 1: Support for All: This is a whole-school approach at this level. Policies and methodologies are applied to all members of the school community. Their aim is to achieve a safe environment that encourages student wellbeing, and an understanding of, and commitment to, wellbeing. They also aim to recognise the need for early interventions where necessary.
- b) Level 2: Support for Some: This level of support is aimed at recognised groups of students that are at risk of following negative patterns associated with their learning. These structures highlight the importance of wellbeing for these groups. The SEN team and School Management support the students at this level.
- c) Level 3: Support for the few; Emphasis is placed here on those with more complex needs. The Support Plan helps to highlight wellbeing for these pupils.

This policy was adopted by the Board of management on October 15th, 2019.

It was reviewed on March 19th 2024.