

# Learning Support and Special Educational Needs Policy

## Coláiste Íde

### **Introduction**

In 2010 it was decided to review the policy to ensure it is effective, fair and in compliance with appropriate current legislation.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to every girl in Coláiste Íde who qualifies for extra learning support for special educational needs.

### **School Ethos and Mission Statement**

There is a close link between the policy and the ethos of the school as stated by the trustees in the mission statement.

The main aim of the school is” the development of the whole person”, socially, spiritually, creatively, intellectually, physically and morally. It is our aim to prepare the girls to take their place in society as constructive citizens.

### **Rationale**

Our aim is for an effective working policy which will create a learning environment free from disruption, to ensure that an holistic education is provided for every girl.

### **Aims**

Our aims for Learning Support and Special Needs Education are as follows:

- To help girls with special educational needs to participate, at a suitable level, in each class.
- To help these girls to develop basic skills to enable them to participate in the whole curriculum.
- To help these girls to develop and maintain a positive attitude to school.
- To develop the self-esteem of these girls.
- To enable these girls to become independent learners.
- To provide extra supplementary teaching and resources for these girls especially in English and Mathematics.
- To encourage parents/guardians to support their girls through the implementation of an effective parent/guardian support programme.
- To establish an effective system to monitor the progress of these girls.
- To obtain the help and support of the teaching staff for the Special Educational Needs Policy.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Management is responsible for the ratification of this policy and the teaching staff is responsible for its implementation on a daily basis.
- The school recognises the role of the Board of Management in the development and implementation of this policy.
- It is with the authority of the Board of Management that all policies are developed and implemented.

## **Principal/Vice Principal**

The role of the Principal/Vice Principal in the implementation of this policy is as follows:

- To coordinate the plan and the timetabling for learning support.
- To liaise with external agencies and the psychologist as necessary.
- To monitor the selection process.
- To keep records of all girls entitled to learning support.
- To formulate Individual Educational Profiles for those entitled to special learning support.
- To manage and implement the diagnostic tests for first year girls.
- To discuss reports received in consultation with the teaching staff on a regular ongoing basis.
- To inform parents/guardians of the availability of learning support resources.

## **Role of Teachers**

The school recognises the role of teachers in the development and progress of all girls in their classes, including those with special educational needs. The role of the teacher is to plan to cater for the needs of each girl in the class. The subject teacher will make appropriate modifications to teaching strategies and expected learning outcomes so that these girls will progress according to their abilities.

### **The subject teacher will**

Bear in mind the learning difficulties of these girls when planning homework assignments.

Consult with the learning support teacher on an ongoing basis and use the Main Handbook.

- Use appropriate text books.
- Use recognised dictionaries of terms.
- Use recognised methods for teaching spelling.

- Use the support of technology to enhance spelling and mathematical skills.
- Use a wide range of teaching strategies in class.
- Promote activities which will help to improve spelling and mathematical skills.
- Provide a reading class, when needed and will use magazines and newspapers.
- Use motivational library facilities within and outside class time.
- Promote activities which will help improve these girls' self-esteem.
- Ensure that resources are kept up to date.

### **Learning Support Teacher**

The school recognises the role of the Learning Support Teacher who provides the appropriate support on an ongoing basis in line with the directions of the subject teacher and in accordance with recommendations from the diagnostic assessment in the cases of special needs.

### **Parents/Guardians**

The cooperation of parents/guardians will be encouraged through communication with the Principal and Learning Support Teachers through meetings and by letter.

The yearly parent/teacher meeting affords an opportunity to discuss the progress of these girls.

### **Participation**

The school will endeavour to ensure that every girl is involved in all school activities, as much as is possible.

### **Planning and Implementation**

As part of the implementation of this plan

- Recognition will be given to each girl identified as needing learning support.
- A working plan will be implemented in consultation with the teachers involved.
- Cooperation will be promoted between subject teachers and Learning Support Teachers.
- Extra learning support will be provided, especially in English and Mathematics and in other subjects depending on the needs of these girls.

### **Recognition/Diagnostic Assessment Process**

Girls, who are in need of learning support, are recognised as follows

1. Consultation with Primary School and parents/guardians of the girl.(Appendix 3).
2. Any diagnostic learning assessments already carried out are made available to the school.

3. Standardised Screening tests are done at the beginning of First Year(Appendix 4).NRIT. Reading. Spelling. Mathematics.
4. Through consultation with subject teachers and the progress of the girls in class and in house examinations.

## **Working Plan**

### **A) Learning Support**

Girls will be chosen based on the results of the standardised tests.

Other girls will be chosen after consultation with teachers on an ongoing basis.

It is required that parents/guardians be consulted after the selection process (Appendix 2).

Preference is given to girls according to their needs, depending on the resources available.

### **B) Special Educational Needs**

Arrangements will be put in place for girls entitled to special needs hours based on the recommendations from the assessment, following consultation with the SENO/Department of Education and Skills.

### **Process for External Assessment**

- Following consultation with teaching staff and parents/guardians regarding the needs of the girl the psychologist will be contacted.
- Following the collection of the relevant information from teachers, parents/guardians and from the girl herself the appropriate form will be completed.
- The appropriate form will then be forwarded to the psychologist.

### **Individual Educational Profile**

An Individual Educational Profile will be available for each girl entitled to Special Learning Support.

Included in this will be:

- Name of girl.
- Address.
- Date of birth.
- Results of special educational needs assessment.
- Account of the assessment.
- Strengths, difficulties and goals.
- Important information from parents/guardians, the psychologist and the girl.

The profile will be completed in consultation with teachers, parents/guardians and the girl at the beginning of the school year.

### **Arrangement of Classes**

Girls will be withdrawn from Religion, O.S.P.S. and English Speech and Drama classes. Classes will also be available at 8.30 – 9.00am and 1.30 – 2.00pm.

### **Record Keeping**

Records will be kept of the following:

- List of girls.
- Timetables.
- The Individual Educational Profiles.
- An ongoing account of the educational special needs will be kept securely in the main Handbook in the Teachers Staff Room.

### **Confidentiality**

- The Individual Educational Profile, results and all information are confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.
- Details of special educational support are available to parents/guardians on request.

### **Future Aims**

- The policy will be reviewed every two years.
- Resources will be increased and developed.
- An Individual Educational Profile will be provided for girls entitled to special educational learning support.
- The provision of a motivational classroom for special educational learning support classes (2012)