

Special Educational Needs Policy

Description of School

The Royal School Cavan is one of the Ulster Royal Schools which were founded during the reign of James 1ST at the time of the Ulster Plantation. The first Headmaster was John Robinson who was appointed on the fifth of October 1611. The school has an unbroken educational tradition in County Cavan since then, becoming the country's second co-educational boarding school in 1924. It is under Protestant management and is managed by the Protestant (Local) Board of Education. This is a board set up under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act of 1885 consisting of not less than nine members. The Board has appointed the Headmaster who acts as principal and manager of the school.

School Mission

The mission is to bring the curriculum of the school and the facilities offered entirely into line with the demanding and changing educational requirements of the new millennium and thereby provide quality education for our pupils in the Christian Ethos.

Special Educational Needs Policy

The aim of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy is to enable pupils who require support for their learning to enjoy equal access to the curriculum as far as is practically possible. The promotion of self-esteem is an integral part of the students learning experience.

Students with Special Educational Needs:

Students whose educational needs are provided for by the SEN Department:

- Students assessed by a psychologist and identified as having a learning difficulty requiring the services of a Resource Teacher.
- Students who have learning difficulties identified by subject teachers/SEN Department as being unable to cope adequately with the demands of the curriculum.
- Students for whom English is an additional language and qualify under Department of Education and Science (DES) guidelines for English Language Teaching.

- Students with physical /sensory impairments that prevent them from engaging in the learning process without the assistance of some special intervention.

Enrolment of Children with Special Educational Needs

While recognising parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the schools ability to accept students with SEN is dependent on the resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the DES. It is the policy of this school to cater for the SENs of pupils, with the Departments resources, in mainstream classes where possible and in smaller groups by withdrawal from classes where necessary.

This policy is subject to Health and Safety at Work Act 1989 (and subsequent legislation) which imposes a statutory duty of care on employers in relation to their employees and others who may be affected by workplace activities. In The Royal School Cavan, a duty of care to students remains an overriding duty for all staff.

The Headmaster (Principal/ Manager) must be made aware of any special educational needs as soon as possible.

The following information is required:

Has the student had access to any of the following?

- 1.Special needs/classroom assistant.
- 2.Special class.
- 3.Resource teaching.
- 4.Learning support.
- 5.Psychological assessment. (The report to be provided)
- 6.Any additional resources to help with special needs.
- 7.Any resources in relation to travel or mobility arising from the physical disability.

- The Headmaster may request a copy of the pupil's relevant medical/psychological report and may require a professional assessment. The purpose is to assist the school in establishing educational and training needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or special needs and to profile the support services required
- The Headmaster assesses how needs can be met.
- If further resources are required the DES will be requested to provide the resources
- The Headmaster will meet the parents to discuss the child's needs and the school's capacity to meet these needs.
- The headmaster may have to defer enrolment until receipt of assessment /provision of appropriate resources by the DES
- The Headmaster may refuse enrolment if it cannot meet the educational needs of an applicant or it does not obtain the necessary resources from the DES.
- It is imperative that any child with known special educational needs, seeking to enrol in the school must do so before the end of the previous school year. This is to ensure that the appropriate resources sanctioned by the DES can be put in place before the start of their school year.

Collaborative Approach

Internal liaison:

- The SEN co-ordinator will acquaint the staff annually with the policies and procedures of the SEN department.
- The SEN department will maintain a list of students who have SEN. This information will be forwarded to staff at the beginning of each school year, and at staff meetings .
- Subject teachers should familiarise themselves with the details of any SEN student they teach by liaising with the SEN department.
- Subject teachers should inform the SEN co-ordinator by way of a student profile sheet if they have concerns regarding the academic progress of a student.

Liaison with Parents:

- The SEN co-ordinator is available, by appointment, to meet parents who wish to discuss the progress of their son or daughter.
- Parents should provide copies of all available information relating to their child's SEN prior to entering the school.
- Parents are welcome to discuss the progress of their child at the scheduled parent teacher meetings with the Learning Support/ Resource Teacher.

Assessment:

- All incoming First Year students will be assessed on the First Year Assessment Day. These assessments help to identify students with learning difficulties.
- All test results are confidential. Parents wishing to receive assessment scores should make an appointment with the SEN coordinator who will explain the significance and limitations of particular test results.
- Where assessment results or observations of subject teachers indicate a possible cause for concern, parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the SEN coordinator. This is to facilitate any external assessments which may be thought necessary and to allow an appropriate programme to be put in place for the student.

Curriculum Provision:

Where a student has been psychologically assessed and formally diagnosed as having learning difficulties, one or more of a number of options may be pursued.

- An individual education programme (IEP) will be created for the student.
- A student who qualifies for exemption from Irish will be given tuition, where resources allow, in a small group or individually in the SEN department. It is NUI's policy that a student with an exemption from Irish will also be given an exemption from a foreign language.
- According to the Special Educational Needs of the student, a programme of support tailored to meet the specific needs of the student will be offered. A range of flexible resources are available. Support programmes may include:

Reduced subjects
Withdrawal from class
Small class groups

Special Arrangements in State Examinations:

- Each year, when the Department of Education informs the school of the special arrangements available for the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations, parents of students likely to receive reasonable accommodation in Certificate examinations will be notified. In cases where parents wish to avail of the special arrangements, an application will be submitted to the DES on their behalf by the SEN coordinator.