

1. Aims and introduction

The principles of inclusivity and respect are enshrined in the ethos of Confey Community College and are lived out as much as possible in the day-to-day life of the school. The school aims to provide a caring, happy and safe environment, to foster a love of life-long learning and to develop each person's academic, physical, moral, cultural and spiritual potential.

Confey Community College aims to be a responsibly inclusive school. Responsible inclusion means working towards what is best for the student. To have responsible inclusion, schools need a responsible, or total curriculum which includes all aspects of education in school life e.g. hidden, implied, social skills, life skills, extra-curricular activities etc. It considers the implementation of the curriculum as a process and education as development of students rather than content and product. Inherent in this is an understanding that individual needs or learning differences should not prevent a student from flourishing. Confey Community College aims to integrate all students socially and academically.

This will involve a whole-school approach to supporting the child with individual needs. This policy is in keeping to the Special Educational Need (SEN) as defined by the EPSEN Act (2004) as a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health, learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently (e.g. neurodiverse) from a person without that condition. This policy also refers to students requiring support with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and students who are exceptionally able and gifted.

It is the policy of Confey Community College to refer to students as having 'additional needs', not SEN, and the department that is responsible for such students is referred to as the 'Learning Support' department.

2. Rational

Confey Community College caters for a wide range of abilities, interests and aptitudes. This involves careful assessment, planning and teaching of all students' needs. It is our policy to address all types of learning difficulties/differences. We also are complying with the following legislation:

The Education Welfare Act 2000

Equal Status Act 2000

The Education Act (1998)

The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN)

The Disabilities Act (2005)

3. Objectives

Ensure that all students including those with additional needs are supported so that they can achieve their full potential.

Provide an environment in which pupils with additional educational needs feel welcome, included, and become fully integrated into the school.

Adopt a whole school approach towards the educational and personal development of students with additional educational needs. E.g.:

- Adopt an environment of equality where diversity is respected. Comply with legislation.
- Adapt and differentiate the curriculum by teachers where necessary.
- Participation of students with additional educational needs in the whole school experience.
- Provide training for teachers and SNAs.
- Involve parents in supporting their children's learning.
- Develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes towards school and the learning environment for all students.
- Set targets to improve the academic achievement of all students.

4. AEN Team

The AEN team is made up of: Senior Management, AEN coordinator, AEN teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs). Every member of our team is equally valued.

Identification and assessment of students with additional needs:

Enrolment forms are processed in September and October and parents/guardians are requested to forward any relevant reports to Confey Community College. The AEN coordinator may meet parents/guardians and students in order to glean any other relevant information to identify the student's individual strengths and the difficulties they may be experiencing. The student's primary school and other relevant agencies and/or personnel may also be contacted, pending parental permission, should further information be sought.

All first year students are assessed in the first term of each year using the Cognitive Abilities Test 4 (CAT4) or equivalent.

Literacy assessments (PPAD-E) are carried out to monitor literacy levels of students.

Mainstream teachers are requested to refer those students they believe to be struggling to access different aspects of the curriculum. - Referral (AEN forms) forms are available to staff through the pre-identified members of the support team. Completed referral forms

should be emailed to the coordinator.

Other sources of identification / assessment

- SENO
- NEPS Psychologists
- Contact received from outside agencies e.g. HSE, Enable Ireland, CAMHS, DCD Unit, Occupational Therapists, Speech & Language Therapists, National Council for the Blind, NCSE
- Liaising with primary schools – educational passports and STEN scores
- Subject Teacher referral

Identifying, assessing and testing students will be ongoing so that the necessary supports are applied for and put in place for the students.

Special Education Provision

Students identified as being eligible for additional support will be provided for through a variety of means: E.g.:

- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- In Class Support in a mainstream class
- Differentiated curriculum
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all:

The Board of Management

Senior Management Team (SMT)

AEN coordinator

AEN Teachers

Subject teachers

SNAs

Parents and Students

Outside agencies

The Board of Management must

- Ensure that the policy is approved and implemented.
- Consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy

The SMT must:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on additional educational needs in cooperation with the AEN Coordinator
- Liaise with teachers, parents/guardians and students in the development of the school plan on AEN
- Monitor the implementation of the school plan on supporting students with additional needs on an on-going basis
- Keep teachers informed about the external services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals
- Liaise regularly with the AEN Coordinator
- Ensure compliance with current legislation
- Consult and liaise as required with relevant external bodies and agencies such as the Department of Education & Skills, NEPS, NCSE, HSE and local agencies

The AEN coordinator must:

- Inform and advise AEN team of resources, materials and levels of support required
- Maintain a list of students who are receiving supplementary teaching and/or additional educational services
- Coordinate information gathering for incoming students
- Process Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Examinations (RACE) applications
- Process Irish, language or subject Exemptions
- Advise the SMT, AEN core team, Special Education Teachers on issues that may arise in the day to day implementation of the Learning Support programme in the school
- Make applications to SENO
- Timetable the Special Education Teachers hours
- Devise and regularly review student support plans
- Maintain records e.g. learning support plans, priority targets etc.
- Organise timetable for Reasonable Accommodations for in house examinations
- Chair and set the agenda for weekly meetings
- Advise parents on additional support services
- Liaise with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments and special provision for students with additional needs
- Read and interpret professional reports and advise accordingly
- Provide advice to the subject teacher about students
- Arrange for classroom accommodation and resources, as appropriate

Special Education Teacher must:

- Assess and record student's needs and progress
- Maintain a record of work completed
- Liaise with AEN Coordinator
- Liaise with subject teacher where necessary
- Seek out relevant information on each student's needs
- Plan a course of instruction to assist student with their needs
- Implement targets set out in student support plans
- Advise subject teachers in regard to adapting the curriculum, teaching strategies, suitable textbooks, use of information technology and suitable software
- Meet and advise parents, when necessary, accompanied by the subject teacher and AEN coordinator as necessary
- Attend short meetings with other professionals e.g. psychologists, speech and language therapists, visiting teachers of the deaf and teachers of the visually impaired etc. when necessary

Subject Teachers

Mainstream teachers have a key role in bringing about the successful inclusion of students with additional needs. They have primary responsibility for the progress of all students in their class, including those selected for supplementary teaching strategies. Subject teachers must:

- Create an inclusive classroom environment
- Adapt learning materials for students with additional needs
- Differentiate classwork, homework and exams as appropriate
- Inform Management, Education Support Coordinator of any observations or concerns
- Work closely with SNAs to ensure students fully participate in the day-to-day life of the school
- Be fully aware of the needs of their student(s) and work with the student in the classroom
- Upskill and engage in CPD in the area of additional needs
- Be fully aware of the student support plan targets of any of their students and support these targets in the mainstream classroom

Special Needs Assistants must:

- Work closely with subject teachers to ensure that students fully participate in the day-to-day life of the school. SNAs support teachers in a non-teaching capacity. SNAs may not act as substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstance may they be left in sole charge of a class.
- Be fully aware of the needs of their student(s) and work with the student in the classroom
- Inform Management, Education Support Coordinator of any observations or concerns
- Attend both staff and departmental meetings when appropriate

- Help the student to complete tasks assigned by the teacher
- Supervise and support students with additional needs at break times, before and after school
- Assist/escort students on school trips
- Provide feedback on the progress of students with additional needs to the relevant subject teachers, mentors and the Education Support Coordinator
- Assist students with additional needs in examinations
- Be flexible. SNAs may be assigned work (as per circular letter) in addition to or instead of their normal duties as determined by the Principal

SNAs address the relevant care needs of the students in their care by:

- Helping them to mix with peers
- Supervising them when taking medication. e.g Diabetes
- Administering medicine
- Assisting with clothing, feeding, personal care
- Assisting with mobility needs
- Preparation of classroom or work area
- Assistance with transport
- Assistance with out of school visits/outdoor activities
- Assisting with social and communication difficulties
- Assisting with students' physical or sensory needs
- Supporting student support plan development
- Assisting when student is a danger to themselves or others
- Assisting at assembly, dispersal times or breaks

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should:

- Submit all relevant documentation for accessing support i.e. any psychological reports, OT reports, Speech & Language reports
- Sign Parental Permission form for accessing resources such as additional teaching support, assistive technology, SNA as required
- Encourage and support the child with additional needs to maximise the benefit of the support for the student
- Maintain contact with the AEN coordinator
- Familiarise themselves with the arrangements in school that exist to support their child with additional needs
- Parents/Guardians may access professional assessment of students privately where such an assessment cannot be organised by the school

Students must:

- Complete homework to the best of their ability
- Participate in all appropriate assessment activities
- Participate actively and willingly in all support classes as appropriate to their needs

Following consultation with all stakeholders, this policy will be implemented.

The Principal will monitor the implementation of the policy.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

The AEN team will review this policy every January. The Board of Management will review this policy once in every school year.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____