

Meánscoil na mBráithre Críostaí, Cill Chainnigh
Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny.

Phone: 056 7721402

Fax: 056 7763652

email: office@cbskilkenny.ie



SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY March 2021

School Name:	Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
School Address:	James's Street, Kilkenny
School Details:	CBS Kilkenny is a Voluntary Roman Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills and is a single sex (boys) school.
School Management:	The Board of Management of CBS Kilkenny is a statutory Board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

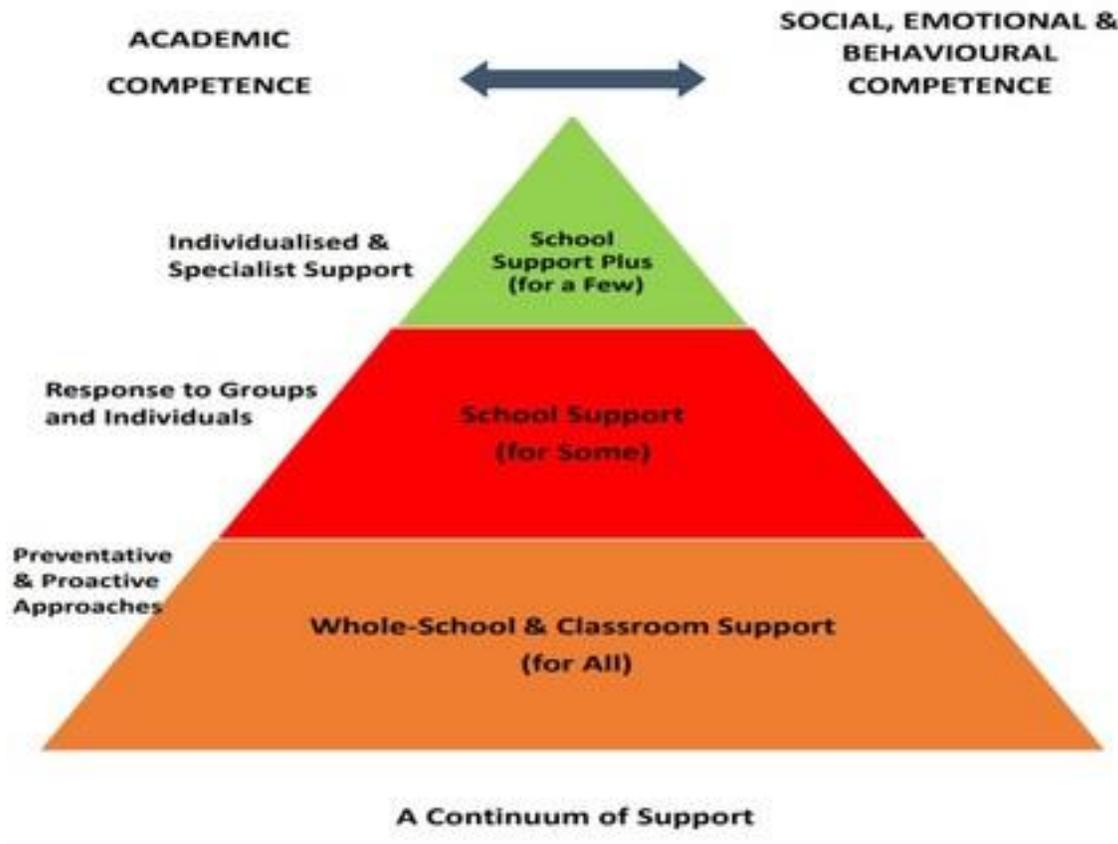
Mission Statement

Inspired by its founder, CBS Kilkenny aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Kilkenny seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.



Students with Special Educational Needs

The inclusion of students with special education needs in mainstream schools is a national and international development that is supported in national legislation and in statements and reports that have emanated from such international bodies as the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

With the mission statement above as its guiding principle, the school believes that all children and young adults should be valued equally irrespective of any individual needs or differences. The school is committed to making effective provision, through the Department of Education & Skills (DES) and other agencies, for those students in the school who have special educational needs. Inclusion requires a whole school approach through: school culture, management, organisation, approaches to teaching and programme delivery.

The term “special educational needs” is defined in the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs 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 or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition”

Relevant Legislation

This policy is drafted in the context of the specific provisions and definitions with regard to children with disabilities and special educational needs and the statutory requirements placed on schools, Boards of Management and the DES by the following legislation:

- The Data Protection Acts, 1988-2003/2018
- 2015 Children First
- 2004 Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act
- The Freedom of Information Acts, 1997-2003
- 2000 Education Welfare Act
- 2000 & 2004 Equal Status Act
- 1998 Education Act

These provide a legislative framework for the inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN) into mainstream schools.

This policy is drafted in close consultation with:

- 2020 Circular 0067/2020
- 2017 Circular 14/2017: Special Education Teaching Allocation
- 2017 National Council for Special Education (NSCE) Toolkit: New SET Allocation Model 2017
- 2007 Guidelines for Schools Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools DES 2007

Aims and Principles

1. To ensure that students with SEN are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their learning potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected
2. To ensure that all members of staff are aware of the SEN of students and of the contribution they (the staff members) can make in this area
3. To increase the literacy and/or numeracy skills of SEN students to the best of their ability.

4. To ensure that SEN is not viewed in isolation but in the context of the whole school.
5. To ensure that students with SEN are offered a broad, balanced, relevant, progressive, continuous and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
6. To enable students to access the curriculum and to develop students' self-esteem, confidence and feelings of achievement and fulfilment in accordance with the school's mission statement and related policies.
7. To assist the general teaching staff with the educational management of students with SEN where appropriate.
8. To encourage and foster positive partnership with parents in order to achieve appropriate support at school and at home.
9. The school will endeavour to seek from all available agencies the required resources (including staff, funding and materials) to meet the educational needs of SEN students.
10. To co-ordinate the advice, guidance and support of the agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in supporting students with SEN.
11. To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.
12. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with SEN.

Organisational Structure

1. The school practises a system of mixed ability teaching as well as withdrawal of individuals and small groups for the purpose of special educational support.
2. The number of students receiving support in any one year may vary according to:
 - The number of students presenting with psychological assessments
 - The number of students identified by the SEN team as requiring support
 - The resources provided by the DES through NCSE
3. The SEN team consists of:
 - SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO)
 - Special Education Teacher (SET)
 - Special Needs Assistants (SNA)
 - Classroom teachers
 - Guidance Counsellor
 - Year Heads
 - Senior Management

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

1. To ensure that the school has a comprehensive SEN policy in place that has been developed collaboratively with all the relevant partners, to monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation.
2. To ensure that a broad, balanced, relevant and progressive curriculum is provided in the school.
3. To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with SEN.
4. To ensure that the SEN Policy forms part of the school plan.
5. To ensure that the school meets its requirements in relation to students with SEN under relevant legislation as outlined earlier.

The Principal/Deputy Principals

- The Principal has responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the policy and provision for students with SEN
- To appoint SEN coordinator(s) from among the teaching staff and to work closely with the coordinator
- To keep the Board of Management informed regarding issues of relevance to SEN
- In consultation with the SEN coordinator to liaise with the DES and other outside agencies.
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of hours and funds.
- To promote and support CPD of staff involved in SEN provision, and where relevant whole school staff.
- To provide adequate time for planning consultation and review of all aspects of SEN by the SEN team.
- To ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the involvement of parents/guardians, students and external professionals/agencies (Guidelines for Post Primary Schools, DES).

SEN Coordinator (SENCO)

- Liaise with the Principal/Deputy Principals regarding all SEN matters.
- Liaise with parents/guardians and students.
- Transition planning for students with SEN.
- Co-ordinating the work of the SNA team
- Co-ordinate data gathering, timetabling, screening, and testing.
- In consultation with the Principal and Guidance Counsellor, coordinate the allocation of resource hours in line with the Department's New Allocation Model.
- Co-ordinate the SEN team and liaise with class teachers as necessary through Google Doc submission.
- In consultation with school management and the Guidance Counsellor, compile a database of special educational students at the start of each school year.
- Disseminate all relevant information to staff through VShare.
- To ensure that the SEN team fully implements the NEPS continuum of support as a model of best practice in identifying students in need of support.
- To work with the Guidance Counsellor to conduct the necessary testing in order to apply for Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Exams RACE at Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate level.
- To attend all relevant meetings.

Guidance Counsellor

- To work with the Principal and SEN Coordinator in the implementation and review of this policy.
- As a member of SEN team to attend all relevant meetings.
- To liaise with primary schools regarding previous SEN provision and requirements of incoming 1st years.
- To liaise with parents of incoming 1st years requiring SEN provision.
- To conduct assessments of incoming 1st years and to advise the SEN team and the Principal of the results of same.
- To liaise with outside agencies such as, NCSE – Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) – NEPS- HSE and other relevant agencies.

- In conjunction with the SEN team provide a continuum of support for students who have been referred or assessed.
- To apply to the SENO for assistive technology and SNA provision and other supports necessary for students.
- To co-ordinate Irish exemptions.
- To work with the SEN Coordinator to apply for RACE at Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate level.
- To advise Leaving Certificate students and parents on the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) scheme and other college access routes, and to support them in making an application for such.
- Co-ordinate the “Health Forms” for incoming 1st years and entrants to other year groups within the school.
- Co-ordinate the training and activities of the *Cairdeas* Group as they support the smooth transition of 1st years from primary to secondary school.

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) play a key role in the support of the care needs of students diagnosed with particular difficulties.

- SNAs contribute significantly in the drawing up of the Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) required for all students with SNA access. SNAs also supervise lunch-time activities for SEN students and contribute to the Student Support Plans for additional students on an informal basis, i.e. and when students with SNA access are not in school. SNAs contribute to the Student Plans by completing observations on students in mainstream class. A PPP involves individual planning for students with special educational needs and a care needs dimension should be included. A stand-alone document is not necessarily required. The PPP requirement may be incorporated into the Student Support Plan.
- Supporting a positive transition from primary school initially, and the safe movement of such students between classes.
- Transition planning for students with SEN
- Assisting students with poor organisational skills at lockers, with school books and planning from the timetable.
- Reducing the anxiety and frustrations of students with students with SEN in a sensitive, appropriate manner.
- Managing behavioural issues, as may present in students with ADHD.

- In all situations where a student needs assistance with toileting/intimate care, a meeting will be convened before the student starts at CBS Secondary School Kilkenny. Parents/Guardians, SEN Coordinator, SNA(s), and if appropriate, the student, will attend (refer to Intimate Care Policy May 2019).
- Mindful of child welfare, child protection and health and safety matters, to appropriately assist students with physical disabilities
- Assist students with SEN, during out-of-school visits, walks and other similar activities.
- Administration of medication. SNAs are NOT trained medical personnel as per Administration of First Aid policy March 2020.

Special Education Teacher (SET)

- Teach individual and small groups of students requiring learning support.
- Develop individual programmes for those students
- Liaise with subject teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources in their subject teaching.
- Liaise with outside professionals when requested to by management.
- The SET provides direct teaching to a student with special educational needs either to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom or to improve upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully access the second level curriculum.
- Supporting students with literacy and numeracy.

General teaching staff

- To be aware of students with SEN in their class and their specific needs.
- Mainstream teachers have the primary responsibility for progress of all students in his/her class.
- Mainstream teachers should liaise with SET and work together collaboratively for the benefit of the student.
- In so far as possible, classroom teaching should be differentiated to meet the individual needs of students in classes.
- To be part of a whole school approach in relation to literacy and numeracy.
- To develop a positive ethos in the classroom for fostering an inclusive approach to meeting social and educational needs.
- To identify training needs and to secure training where needed.

- Class teacher should inform the SEN team of any concerns regarding special educational needs arising in their classroom.
- The class teacher is welcome to contribute to the individual planning process of the SEN student.

Parent/Guardian involvement

- CBS Kilkenny encourages communication with parents and guardians.
- To work in positive partnership with the school and other agencies.
- To support and encourage their child in their education.
- Parental/guardian permission will be sought before a child will be given learning support.
- To keep school fully informed of any SEN related changes.
- Parents/ guardians are responsible to keeping the school fully informed of up to date and accurate medication.

Students with SEN

Students receiving learning-support should:

- Provide information about his own learning, talents, abilities, skills, interest, wishes and concerns.
- Assist in the identification of priority learning needs, targets and strategies.
- Contribute to the programme being drawn up to support their needs.
- Give feedback which will contribute to the monitoring and recording of progress.
- Co-operate with the agreed programme, and its evaluation by participating in appropriate tests and assessments.
- Develop ownership of the skills and strategies that are taught during learning support classes and learn how to apply these to improve their own learning across the curriculum.

SEN provision includes:

- 1-1 support (Please see One-to-One Teaching Policy)
- Small group support
- Withdrawal
- Ex-MFL
- Ex-Irish
- Team teaching where provision allows.

The development and delivery of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Personal Pupil Plans (PPPs) is the responsibility of SET in consultation with the teaching staff and relevant personnel.

Identification of Students with SEN

The school in conjunction with parents aims to identify possible needs at an early date so that appropriate resources can be applied for and be available to support students.

This process will usually involve the following, as appropriate to the identified student:

- At Open Night parents/guardians are informed that, on offer of a place, if their son has assessed needs or issues that might give rise to SEN, they should contact the school as soon as possible.
- Consultation with parents/guardians and primary school reports.
- Access to psychological reports (permission from parents/guardians for access to same needed).
- Analysis of screening tests (DRT)
- Use of continuum of support.
- Teacher opinion
- If necessary referral to the appropriate agency is made.

Where students do not have a psychological assessment, those with the lowest reading age coupled with below average DRT Scores are prioritised for support. Parental/guardian permission in writing is sought for same. 1-1 appointments are offered to parents/guardians by the SEN team if needed. Where students have assessed needs, appropriate applications are made, in good time, to the SENO.

Categories of SEN

The categories of SEN are those provided by NCSE for the purpose of applying for resources from the Department of Education:

- Borderline/Mild General Learning Disability
- Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties
- Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia/Dyscalculia)
- Physical Difficulties
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Sensory Impairments
- Spectrum Disorders

Assessments

The school expects that students will be assessed as follows:

- Standardised Assessments prior to entry to school.
- NEPS Assessment can be requested where deemed necessary.
- Review of any assessments already completed by outside agencies.
- Assessment through general teaching subjects.
- Informal observations by the teacher and the SNA.

Evaluation

All SEN students in CBS Kilkenny are assessed on an on-going basis. Assessment may be formal, informal, summative or formative.

The results of entrance tests are not disclosed to parents/guardians. However, where a concern arises, parents/guardians may contact the school and a student's individual needs are discussed.

The successes of any intervention strategies are monitored on an on-going basis through formal and informal assessment.

The SEN department review, evaluate and discuss IEPs/PPPs on a regular basis.

State exam results of SEN students are reviewed on a yearly basis to inform and ensure best practice.

All SET teachers submit student evaluations twice yearly to the SEN co-ordinator which is duly shared with management.

Materials

The SEN department has a range of materials, texts and reference material available to all teachers to support their work with students with SEN. The Principal supports the SEN Coordinator, in the purchase of resources for the SEN Department on a needs basis. A specific annual budget is not set.

Links with outside agencies

The school and the SEN Department and SEN team in particular will liaise, as required, with the following agencies with best practice and student welfare as its guide.

This is not an exhaustive list:

1. Primary schools
2. NEPS
3. NCSE – SENO
4. (NEWB) TUSLA
5. HSE: OT and Speech and Language Therapists
6. TUSLA
7. Library Services
8. Dyslexia Association
9. CPD supports
10. Visiting teacher services for Deaf and Visually Impaired
11. SESS
12. CAMHS

Parental/guardian permission will be sought for consultation with appropriate agencies listed above at 2, 3, 5, 6 (where appropriate).

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with CBS Kilkenny Child Safeguarding in line with the Children First Act 2015 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017.

While renewing this policy, due consideration has been given to all aspects of the wellbeing of students at CBS Kilkenny and particularly to the Wellbeing School Improvement Plan (May 2018).

General Data Protection Regulation came into force in May 2018, and this policy has been reviewed in accordance with best practice as detailed in this legislation.

Approval

This policy has been approved by CBS Kilkenny Board of Management.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: _____