

Laurelhill Community College



Special Needs Policy

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1. Mission Statement and Aims

Our Mission

We are guided by the principle that children and young people with additional needs are children and young people first. We recognise that everyone is different. We aim to be responsive to the needs of our pupils and help them feel valued, understood and ensure they experience success.

Our Aims:

1. To value all of Laurelhill's students equally
2. To provide all of our students with a secure inclusive learning environment in which they can develop to their full potential emotionally, socially and academically
3. To ensure that students are informed and involved in decisions affecting their education
4. To use assessment procedures to provide a Baseline Assessment, early identification and regular review of pupils with Special Needs
5. To have a well planned and well structured system of support
6. To employ a wide ranging selection of resources and teaching strategies, including ICT, to meet the needs of students
7. To liaise with specialist agencies, support services and other relevant agencies when necessary
8. To liaise with parents when necessary
9. To maintain a Special Needs register and other methods of assessment, monitoring and evaluation
10. To support the work of all the departments within the school so that pupils can progress
11. To ensure the representation of Special Needs interests at Pastoral and Curriculum Team meetings
12. To liaise with the Head of Year and the Examination Officer when making arrangements for exam concessions
13. To liaise with the Learning Mentors, the Deputy Principal and the SLT
14. To communicate with Classroom Assistants / General Assistants and provide professional advice and support

2. Additional Needs – Definition and Categorisation

Definition

Additional needs can be defined as any student or young person who has learning, social, emotional, behavioural or medical needs.

Categories of Additional Needs within Laurelhill Community College

- Students with SEBD
- Students with Medical Needs
- Students with Learning Needs

Students with SEBD

Our students with SEBD are supported by all staff. Additional support is provided by the Pastoral Team, the Learning Support Team, our Counselling Services and the Pastoral Senior Leadership Team. Students are placed on the Special Education Needs Register and monitored by the SENCO at Stages 1 – 3. (Please refer to our Pastoral Care Policy, Discipline Policy, Child Protection Policy and other Pastoral Policies)

Students with Medical Needs

Our students with Medical Needs are supported by all staff. Additional support is provided by the Pastoral Team and the Classroom Assistants. Parents will forward all relevant and updated information to the Health Officer within the College who will liaise with staff and relevant medical professionals to share information and implement appropriate actions. Medical care plans should be sent by external health agencies and will be distributed to staff accordingly.

Students with Learning Needs

Our students with Learning Needs are supported by all staff. Additional support is provided by the Learning Support Team and the Classroom / General Assistants. Additional support will also be provided by the SENCO and relevant members of the Pastoral Team. The Special Needs policy will outline the range of support and intervention available to our students with Learning Needs.

3. Identifying Students with Additional Needs

The Learning Support team have a range of strategies which assist with the identification of students with Special Needs:

- Primary School Reports (Pastoral Transfer Form)
- Students with 'Statements' will have specific needs identified
- Sharing/communicating of information between Primary Schools, the Primary 7 Coordinator, the Year 8 Head of Transition, and the SENCO
- Generic Education Plans
- The results of standardised tests during the Primary 7 year
- Analysis of standardised tests
- Concerns expressed by parents
- Concerns expressed by teachers (Student Referral Form – Appendix 1)
- Ongoing observation by classroom teachers

4. Triggers for Intervention

Interventions are triggered by a concern raised by a member of staff, a parent/guardian or a student. In the case of a member of staff identifying a student who they feel has a learning need, a completed Student Referral Form should then be forwarded to the SENCO.

Teachers/Classroom/General Assistants/Other members of staff should watch out for the following:

- A student who makes little or no progress even when teaching focuses on a particular area of weakness
- A student who displays signs of difficulty in the areas of literacy and/or numeracy
- A student who presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which are not overcome by the usual behavioural management techniques
- A student who has communication/interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress

- A student who has persistent concentration and organisational difficulties which impacts on the progress they make in relation to their peers

Parents and students can also be involved in the identification process. They should report areas of concern to their form tutor, Pastoral Leader or SENCO.

Parents should watch out for:

- Persistent low attainment scores across a variety of subjects
- Difficulties in reading, spelling and numeracy
- Difficulties with hand-writing

Students should watch out for:

- Areas that they find challenging which their peers do not
- Difficulties in reading, spelling and maths skills which are affecting progress
- Difficulties with hand-writing and keeping on track in class

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal:

- Determines the school policy with governors including staffing and funding arrangements
- Ensures full staff participation in policy development
- May consult the Board and neighbouring schools about policy
- May modify or disapply the National Curriculum
- Has continued responsibility during statutory assessment and statementing procedures
- Keeps governing body informed of issues relating to Additional Needs
- Ensures adequate INSET arrangements for all staff
- Senior Leadership Representative – SENCO
- Liaises with the Learning Support Coordinator and outside agencies
- Has a general responsibility for the learning support service
- Ensures that students with Special Educational Needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which reflects the NI Curriculum
- Ensures that students with Additional Needs are integrated into all the activities of the school as far as is practical

The Special Education Needs Co-ordinator:

To assume responsibility for:

- The day-to-day operation of the school's Special Needs Policy
- Liaising with and advising staff and providing support and advice at Stage 1
- Co-ordinating provision for students with Special Needs – arranging in class support and withdrawal programmes
- Maintaining the Special Educational Needs Register and overseeing records on all pupils with Special Needs
- Liaising and informing parents

- Taking the leading role in drawing up of Individual Education Plans
- Liaising with Primary Schools, the P7 Coordinator and the Year 8 Head of Transitions
- Liaising with external agencies including the Educational Psychologist, AAIS, SPLD Services, Sensory Support, medical professionals and Social Services
- Reviewing the procedures surrounding students with Special Educational Needs
- Representing Special Educational Needs interests at Senior Leadership Meetings
- Liaising with the Assistant Learning Support Coordinators regarding all areas of Learning Support
- Liaising with the Learning Support Coordinators regarding exam concessions, and the Examination Officer in making submissions for examination special arrangements
- Communicating with Classroom Assistants, offering professional advice and support and coordinating timetables

HODs:

- To ensure that Special Educational Needs is integrated into Departmental Policy and Schemes of Work where relevant
- To ensure differentiation occurs so as to cater for those students with Special Educational Needs
- To lead subject teachers in maintaining high expectations for students with Special Educational Needs
- To work with the department member who has been designated responsibility for Special Needs and ensure discussion at Departmental meetings (remain a focus of the department agenda at all meetings)
- To share good practice in the learning and teaching of students with additional needs

Subject Teachers:

- To be aware of those in your class who have Special Educational Needs
- To deliver quality teaching for pupils with Special Educational Needs
- To develop their understanding and knowledge of additional needs and relevant class-based intervention – make use of Good Practice Guidelines available on Fronter and Staff Documents
- To use differentiation and a range of learning and teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students
- To report concerns using the Special Educational Needs Referral Form to the SENCO
- To record and forward any additional requirements or reasonable adjustments used to assist pupils in their lessons to Head of Department who will then inform SENCO at end of each term to form a history of need and establish a normal way of work
- To record and forward access arrangement referrals to SENCO by End of Term 1 of Year 11 (if GCSE)
- To share, monitor and review the Individual Education Plans from Stage 2 onwards with pupils in their lessons
- To listen to the concerns of students with special needs and adopt an individual approach if needed
- To meet with parents when necessary, listen to concerns and provide feedback

Form Tutors:

- To liaise with the SENCO and Head of Year
- To liaise with subject teachers when necessary
- To collect information such as reports, behavioural observations and attainment if required
- To collect information from parents such as parental insight as to the student's health, development, progress and factors contributing to any difficulties in Year 8

- To meet with the student and discuss feelings, difficulties and issues
- To encourage students with special educational needs to develop self-esteem, to praise and acknowledge all achievements

The Classroom / General Assistants:

- Have a role in policy development and review
- Work in close partnership with the class teacher
- Act as a bridge between the student and the mainstream curriculum
- Continue to develop knowledge and understanding of all areas of additional needs and pastoral and curricular development
- Encourage independence, achievement and moral reasoning of our students with additional needs
- Liaise regularly with the SENCO
- Plan with the subject teacher and agree their role within learning and teaching
- Complete a written report twice per year for the purpose of annual review and at end of year encase a hand over is required to another assistant for the next academic year
- Attend fortnightly meetings with the SENCO
- Report any concerns or issues to SENCO and keep the Form Tutor informed of these as well

Our Parents:

- To work in partnership with the College, the SENCO and other professionals involved with the student
- To provide information when necessary and alert the school to any changes in a student's medical needs or family circumstances which may impact on learning
- To provide help and support at home
- To support the implementation of Individual Education Plans
- To be involved in the Annual Review and Transition Meetings

Our Students:

- To take responsibility for their own learning and report any concerns or issues
- To be aware of their targets
- To work with the Classroom/General Assistant

6. School Based Stages in Laurelhill Community College

The Special Education Needs team in Laurelhill Community College adhere to the Northern Ireland Code of Practice when working with students with Special Educational Needs. The following procedures are used:

Stage 1

The Pupil Profile information is shared with the relevant teachers. Using this information along with on-going observation and subject specific testing, the class teacher identifies a student's Additional Needs. The student is placed on the Additional Needs Register and parents are informed.

EDUCATION PLAN

Following the discussion an Education Plan is drawn up by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator in consultation with the Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators and also Pastoral Leaders. This IEP is then disseminated to all teachers of the student concerned.

Education Plans are drawn up twice a year. Targets set out on the IEP are discussed with the student and strategies for learning and teaching are recommended by the classroom teacher.

Support at this stage can be in-class or withdrawal. The SENCO will decide what methods to use in order to support the student in school.

MONITORING OF PROGRESS

In January and June, the Individual Education Plans are reviewed by Subject Teachers. The information on returned Review Forms is collated by the SENCO and an overall review of the Education Plans targets is carried out.

There are three possible outcomes of this review: -

- The student is no longer a cause for concern. His/her educational needs can be met within the normal classroom situation. (Returns to Stage 1).
- The student continues to need additional help and a new Education Plan is drawn up.
- The student is making unsatisfactory progress and additional expertise is necessary. (Moves to Stage 2).

The outcome of review is discussed with parents and the student.

Stage 2

After review of at least 2 IEPs (one academic year) pupils who are not making sufficient progress may be required to move to Stage 2 of the Code of Practice. This involves the support of external agencies and will require a consultation with an EA Appointed Educational Psychologist. Support may be in the form of medical agencies or literacy, numeracy, hearing, etc.

Stage 3

Stage 3 are the responsibility of the EA. At Stage 3 the student receives a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The SEELB will provide additional assistance over and above what the school can cater for. At this stage the SENCO will meet with parents and the student to inform them of the new support arrangements.

What is Differentiation?

Differentiation in Laurelhill is best viewed in terms of 'intervening to make a difference' rather than highlighting differences which will show themselves anyway.

Teachers work with the Revised Curriculum in order to promote the development of skills and focus on what students can do.

Laurelhill Community College recognises four main ways of providing differentiated support to pupils with Additional Needs. These are by:

- Task
- Resources/Text used
- Support provided
- Response

8. Support available within the school

In Laurelhill we offer a variety of support strategies to help students with Special Educational Needs. These include:

1. Transition from Primary school – the SENCO and Yr8 Head of Transitions will meet with students with specific difficulties and their parents/guardian in preparation for their attendance in Year 8 of Laurelhill Community College. The meeting will include a tour of the school, sharing of information, agreeing on appropriate targets and in-school provision for the child.

2. Withdrawal (literacy) – For a number of classes there exists the facility for withdrawing a small group of students for support with literacy difficulties. Students are selected when evidence from a number of sources has been considered. Sources include Teacher observation, primary school reports, results from baseline testing, results of class tests, concern expressed by parents. The Learning Support Team will meet with the support teacher to discuss support arrangements. Phonics programmes and literacy-based software are available to provide additional support for the teacher.

3. Learning Assistants/General Assistants - A number of students have Statements of Additional Needs. Many of these students have been allocated additional help from an adult in the form of a Learning Assistant or General Assistant.

4. Literacy Co-ordinator – students with Specific Literacy Difficulties (SPLD) at Stage 3 may receive one-to-one support following a phonics programme, using assistive technology and multi-sensory activities. The literacy co-ordinator may provide support for the students in all literacy-based subjects and collaborate with subject teachers and the SPLD services.

5. Numeracy Co-ordinator – students with Specific Numeracy Difficulties at Stage 3 may receive one-to-one support which will further develop their knowledge and understanding of numeracy. The numeracy co-ordinator may provide support for the students in all numeracy-based subjects and collaborate with subject teachers providing advice and resources

6. Access Arrangements – We test all students in Year 11; those pupils scoring below average or with a history of SEN will be further assessed if required to identify how to best meet their needs in being able to access external and internal exams. These can include a reader, a scribe, a prompter, extra time or supervised rest breaks. We give priority to students sitting external exams and pre-exam students as well as our students with ASD, SpLD and physical difficulties.

7. Extra curricular – Laurelhill Community College offer a wide variety of ‘clubs’ for students to take part in.

9. Working Collaboratively with Other Agencies

The SENCO also works closely with outside agencies in order to offer support for students with Special Educational Needs.

Where a student has a specific need and a referral has been made to a specialist support agency, all staff work collaboratively to ensure needs are met. Agencies currently providing support in school include:

1. Autism Advice and Intervention Service
2. Sensory Support (Hearing Impaired)
3. Peripatetic Literacy Service.
4. Behaviour Support Team.

SENSORY SUPPORT

Laurelhill Community College liaises with the Sensory Support Team to provide suitable support arrangements for students. Laurelhill promotes the inclusion of all students and students with sensory difficulties attend mainstream class. Additional teaching support is provided by the EA. The SENCO liaises with the Examination Officer to provide appropriate examination concessions and provisions. Appropriate training is provided by all staff to promote the use of inclusive strategies for students with sensory difficulties.

AAIS SUPPORT

Laurelhill Community College has a growing number of students with ASD and has strong links with the AAIS. The SENCO provides one-to-one support when needed for students with communication difficulties. The SENCO promotes the development of social skills for students with ASD in collaboration with the Learning Assistants and the Learning Mentor. Information for all staff on suitable strategies and guidelines to support students with ASD will be provided by the Learning Support Team. The Learning Support Team attends an annual transition programme organized by the AAIS and provides a transition booklet for students with ASD.

SPLD SUPPORT

SPLD support is provided for students at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. The student attends one-to-one support from a literacy teacher. The provision includes phonic programmes, literacy-based ICT programmes, multi-sensory strategies, and the use of assistive technology and the promotion of self-esteem. The literacy teacher will maintain links with subject teachers to share information and expertise and promote the use of appropriate strategies to all staff. The literacy teacher will meet with the SENCO to share information and monitor the progress of the students receiving support. The literacy teacher will meet with the parents and children as part of the Annual Review Meeting.

10. Code of Practice (COP) and Behaviour Management.

Close co-operation and collaboration continues between the SENCO and the Pastoral Team. The SEELB Educational Psychology (EP) personnel meet with the SENCO and SLT to discuss behaviour management strategies and Special Educational Needs strategies. These forums are convened by the SENCO and chaired by the Pastoral Team. Our main focus in Laurelhill Community College is to maintain placement for the young person in mainstream education.

11. Glossary

Below is a list of some abbreviations used on Generic Education Plans and in student's statements:

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
COP	Code of Practice
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
DSD	Developmental Coordination Disorder
DYC	Dyscalculia
DYL	Dyslexia
IEP	Individual Education Plan
LA	Learning Assistant
LST	Learning Support Team
LSA	Learning Support Area
MILD	Mild Learning Difficulties
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment
VHI	Visually/Hearing Impaired
SEBD	Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulties
SPLF	Student Parent Learning Facility

Special Educational Needs Referral Form

Name of Student:

Class:

Teacher:

Subject:

Date Concerns Recorded:

Area of Concern
Reading <input type="checkbox"/>
Written Work <input type="checkbox"/>
Spelling <input type="checkbox"/>
Speech <input type="checkbox"/>
Concentration and/or attention <input type="checkbox"/>
Communication and Interpersonal Skills <input type="checkbox"/>
Co-ordination and/or physical difficulties <input type="checkbox"/>

Please detail the concerns you have regarding this pupil and provide some evidence of the student's performance in class:

Please provide a brief description of the action you have implemented in response to these concerns:

Action Taken by SENCO:

Meeting with Student: **Date:** _____

Monitoring of student across other subjects:

Contact Parent: **Date:** _____

Move to Stage 1: **Move to Stage 2:**

Request for Additional Support:

Signed: _____ (SENCO)

Date: _____

Please return completed form to the SENCO