

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

**Phone:** 056 7721402

**email:** office@cbskilkenny.ie



**SPECIAL (ADDITIONAL) EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY Feb 2025**

<b>School Name:</b>	Christian Brothers Secondary School, Kilkenny
<b>School Address:</b>	James's Street, Kilkenny
<b>School Details:</b>	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 and is a single sex (boys) school.
<b>School Management:</b>	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:

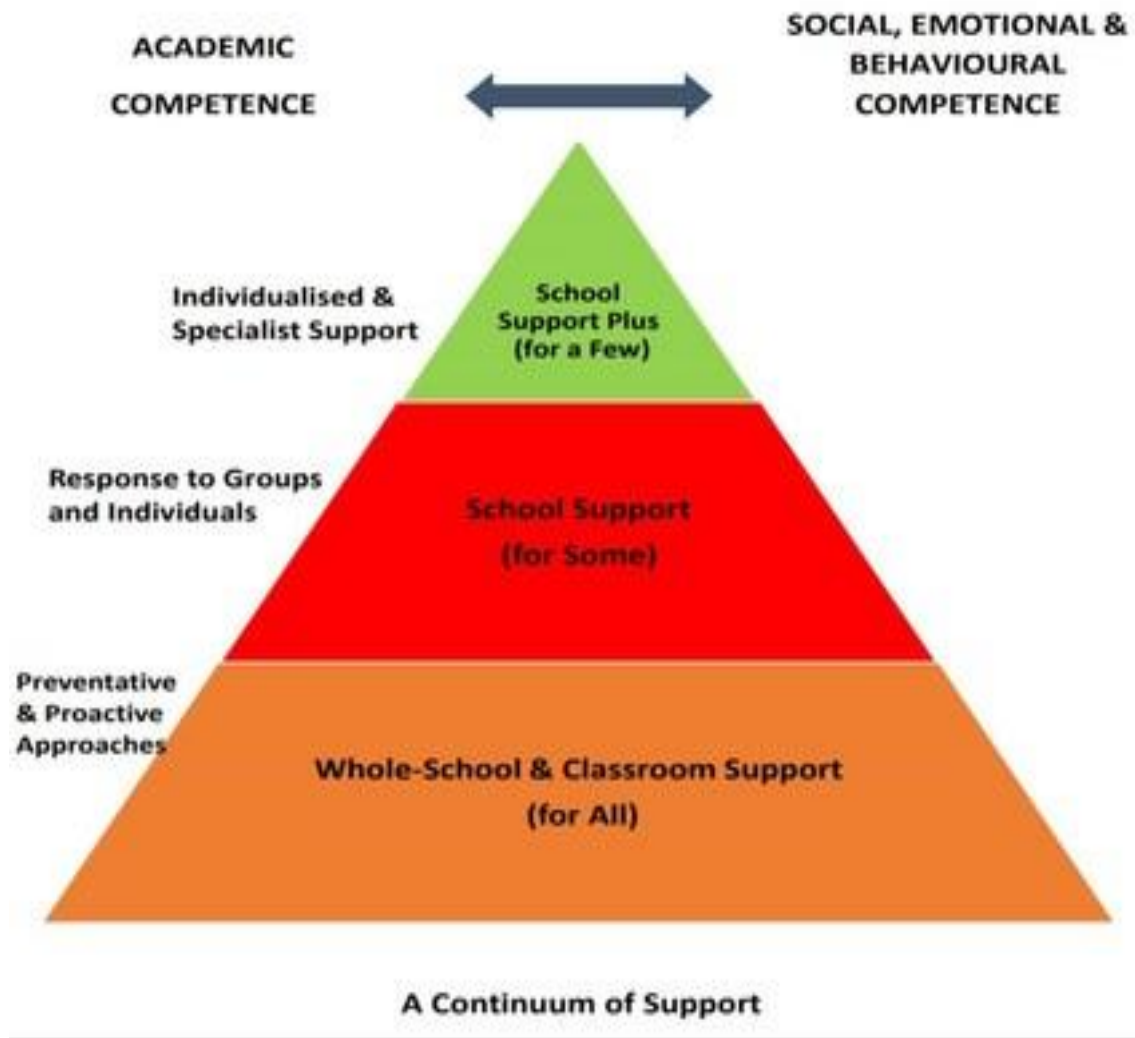
- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

## Introduction

The term “parents” refers also to legal guardians.

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 and revised 2023.

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).



## **Students with Special Educational Needs**

The inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN) 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 (DE) and other agencies, for those students in the school who have SEN. Inclusion requires a whole school approach through: school culture, policies, planning, partnership, approaches to teaching and curriculum and programme delivery.

The term “special educational needs” (also known as “additional 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 SEN, and the statutory requirements placed on schools, Boards of Management and the DES by the following legislation:

- 1998 Education Act
- 2000 Education Welfare Act
- 2000 & 2004 Equal Status Act
- 2004 Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act
- 2015 Children First
- 2018 General Data Protection Regulation

## **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 that the staff members can make in this area. Facilitate a team approach of subject teachers, SET Teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNA), counsellors,

- Year Heads (YH), chaplain, Senior Management Team (SMT), for all staff involved in SEN provision in the school. Mainstream teachers have the primary responsibility for progress of all students in their class.
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 encourage and foster positive partnership with parents in order to achieve appropriate support at school and at home.
  8. 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.
  9. To coordinate 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.
  10. To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.
  11. To 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 additional educational support. Other SEN support models utilised include team teaching and the floating teacher model.
2. The number of students receiving support in any one year may vary according to:
  - The number of students presenting with educational psychological assessments.
  - The number of students identified by the SEN team as requiring support.
  - The resources provided by the DE through NCSE.

3. The SEN team consists of:
  - SEN Coordinator (SENCO)
  - Student Support File (SSF) Coordinator
  - Special Education Teachers (SET)
  - Special Needs Assistants (SNA)
  - Mainstream Classroom Teachers
  - Guidance Counsellors
  - Year Heads (YH)
  - Senior Management Team (SMT)

## **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 and deputy principals have responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the policy and provision for students with SEN.

1. To appoint SEN Coordinator(s) from among the teaching staff and to work closely with the Coordinator
2. To keep the Board of Management informed regarding issues of relevance to SEN
3. In consultation with the SEN Coordinator to liaise with the DE and other outside agencies.
4. To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of hours and funds.
5. To promote and support CPD/TPL of staff involved in SEN provision and, where relevant, whole school staff.

6. To provide adequate time for planning consultation and review of all aspects of SEN by the SEN team.
7. To ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the involvement of parents, students and external professionals/agencies.

## **SEN Coordinator (SENCO)**

8. Liaise with the principal/deputy principals regarding all SEN matters.
9. Liaise with parents and students.
10. Transition planning for students with SEN.
11. Coordinating the work of the SNA team
12. Coordinate data gathering, timetabling, screening, and testing.
13. In consultation with the principal/deputy principals, coordinate the allocation of resource hours in line with the Department of Education Allocation Model.
14. In consultation with school management compile a database of SEN students at the start of each school year.
15. Disseminate all relevant information to staff through VShare in consultation with the SSF Coordinator.
16. 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.
17. 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.
18. To attend all relevant meetings.

## **SSF Coordinator**

1. Facilitate meetings with parents of students with SEN.
2. Coordinates the generation of SSFs and shares securely online as appropriate.

## **Student Support Team**

1. To work with the principal and SEN Coordinator in the implementation and review of this policy.
2. To liaise with primary schools regarding previous SEN provision and requirements of incoming 1st Year students.

3. To liaise with parents of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students requiring SEN provision.
4. To conduct assessments of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students and to advise the principal of the results of same.
5. To liaise with outside agencies such as, NCSE – Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) – NEPS- HSE and other relevant agencies.
6. Provide a continuum of support for students who have been identified as having SEN.
7. To apply to the SENO/NCSE for assistive technology and SNA provision as appropriate.
8. To coordinate Irish exemptions.
9. To apply for RACE at Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate level.
10. 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.
11. Coordinate the “Health Forms” for incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students and entrants to other year groups within the school.
12. Support the smooth transition of 1<sup>st</sup> Year students from primary to secondary school.

## **Special Needs Assistants**

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

1. SNAs contribute significantly in the drawing up of the SSF required for all students with SNA access. SNAs also supervise lunchtime activities for SEN students and contribute to the SSF for additional students on an informal basis, i.e. when students with SNA access are not in school. SNAs contribute to the student plans by completing observations on students in mainstream class. A SSF involves individual planning for students with SEN, and a care needs dimension should be included.
2. Supporting a positive transition from primary school initially, and the safe movement of such students between classes.
3. Transition planning for students with SEN/care needs.
4. Assisting students with poor organisational skills at lockers, with school books and planning from the timetable.
5. Reducing the anxiety and frustrations of students with SEN in a sensitive, appropriate manner.
6. Managing behavioural issues as may present in students.

7. 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, SEN Coordinator, SNA(s), and if appropriate, the student, will attend (refer to Intimate Care Policy).
8. Be mindful of child welfare, child protection and health and safety matters, to appropriately assist students with physical care needs.
9. Assist students with SEN during off-campus activities.
10. Administration of medication: SNAs are NOT trained medical personnel as per Administration of First Aid Policy.

## **Special Education Teacher (SET)**

1. Provide team teaching, floating model, individual and small group support for students with SEN.
2. Develop individual programmes for those students.
3. Liaise with subject teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources in their subject teaching.
4. Liaise with outside professionals when requested by management.
5. The SET provides direct teaching to a student with SEN 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.
6. Supporting students with literacy and numeracy.

## **Mainstream Teaching Staff**

1. To be aware of students with SEN in their class and their specific needs.
2. Mainstream teachers have the primary responsibility for progress of all students in his/her class.
3. Mainstream teachers should liaise with SET and work together collaboratively for the benefit of the student.
4. Classroom teaching should be differentiated to meet the individual and additional needs of students in classes. All subject departments are aware of the need for differentiation in their classes.
5. To be part of a whole school approach in relation to literacy and numeracy.
6. To develop a positive ethos in the classroom for fostering an inclusive approach to meeting social and educational needs.
7. To identify training needs and to secure training where needed. Staff training in the area of SEN is provided annually, with specialist courses also selected during the year.



8. Class teacher should inform the student support team of any concerns regarding SEN arising in their classroom.
9. The class teacher must contribute to the SSF of the SEN student.

## **Parent involvement**

1. CBS Secondary School Kilkenny encourages communication with parents.
2. To work in positive partnership with the school and other agencies.
3. To support and encourage their child in their education.
4. Parental permission will be sought before a student will be offered learning support.
5. To keep school fully informed of any SEN related changes.
6. Parents are responsible for keeping the school fully informed of up to date and accurate medication.

## **Students with SEN**

1. Students have a responsibility to participate in setting and achieving targets. They should strive to improve and take ownership of their learning.
2. Assist in the identification of priority learning needs, targets and strategies.
3. Contribute to the programme being drawn up to support their needs.
4. Give feedback which will contribute to the monitoring and recording of progress.
5. Cooperate with the agreed programme, and its evaluation by participating in appropriate tests and assessments.
6. 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
- Small group support
- Withdrawal
- Ex-MFL
- Ex-Irish
- Team teaching where resources allow.

**The development and delivery of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and SSF 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:

1. At Open Night parents 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.
2. Consultation with parents and primary school reports.
3. Access to psychological reports (permission from parents for access to same needed).
4. Analysis of screening tests.
5. Use of continuum of support.
6. Teachers' professional opinion.
7. If necessary, referral to the appropriate agency is made.

Where students do not have a psychological assessment, those identified by their PPAD-E scores with the lowest reading age coupled with below average test scores are prioritised for support. Parental permission in writing is sought for same. 1-1 appointments are offered to parents by the SEN team if needed. Where students have assessed needs, appropriate applications are made, in good time, to the SENCO.

## **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, etc.)
- Physical Difficulties
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Sensory Impairments
- Spectrum Disorders

This list is not exhaustive.

## **Assessments**

The school expects that students will be assessed as follows:

- Standardised assessments prior to entry to school. Further assessment occurs in early September.
- NEPS Assessment can be requested where necessary, within limitations of school allocation.
- 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 in line with the school assessment policy. Assessment may be formal, informal, summative or formative.

The results of entrance assessments are shared with parents. Where a concern arises, communication between the SEN team and parents occurs 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 SSFs on a regular basis.

All exam results, including State exam results, of SEN students are reviewed on a regular basis to inform and ensure best practice.

All SET teachers submit student evaluations twice yearly to the SEN Coordinator which are 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.

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

This list is not exhaustive.

Parental permission will be sought for consultation with above listed agencies where appropriate.

## **Approval**

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_