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*Cavan and Monaghan
Education and Training Board*

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LARGY COLLEGE

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

CAVAN AND MONAGHAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

**BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA AN CHABHÁIN AGUS
MHUINEACHÁIN**

Special Education Needs Policy Document

Year:

2016/2017

Introduction

Largy College fully supports

- inclusiveness
- equality of access and participation in the College
- parent/guardianal choice in relation to enrolments
- respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society

Largy College will endeavour to take steps at an early stage to identify children with special educational needs who may be applying for admission to the college and become familiar with their needs.

Copies of relevant reports (psychological, medical etc.) and copies of Individual Education Plans will be requested from the parent/guardian or primary school.

At times it may be necessary to make a referral to a psychologist or other professional for a formal assessment of a student's special educational needs.

The College will endeavour to identify students with special educational needs and apply for such additional support services as are deemed appropriate, whether from the DES, Health Boards or other Agencies, in good time.

A Largy College representative will in any case meet the parent/guardians/primary school to discuss the pupil's needs and the school's capability of meeting the pupil's needs.

Furthermore it is the College's policy to ensure:

- A smooth and effective transfer of students with special educational needs from feeder primary schools.
- A smooth and effective transfer of pertinent information with regard to the individual's levels of attainment, effective teaching strategies, etc.
- Contact is made with parent/guardians during the transfer process to assist parent/guardianal choice.
- Maximum co-ordination regarding the input from various agencies and/or interested parties into the educational plan for each student with special needs.
- That every young person, including those with special educational needs, will share, with his or her peers, as complete an educational experience as possible.

Largy College

This is a statement of the school policy and plan for the integration and inclusion of students with special educational needs.

Background

The Special Educational Needs department (S.E.N.) in Largy College has a policy for its operation dating back many years. We are updating that policy/plan now in light of legislative changes and the evolving nature of S.E.N.

The S.E.N. Dept. in Largy College is a very active department and links with all subject departments in the school. There is a special needs co-ordinator (SNC), who co-ordinates all activities relating to the Dept., liaising with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals, Heads of Departments, Programmes Co-ordinator, Home School Liaison Officer (H.S.C.L.O.), the School Completion programme co-ordinator, the Guidance Counsellor, the Chaplain, the Pastoral Care team and all teachers. The S.E.N. co-ordinator also liaises with the DES and other outside agencies e.g. NEPS, HSE etc. There is one permanent Resource / Learning Support teacher in the Dept. In addition, the remaining resource hours are distributed among subject teachers, some of whom specialise in Resource/ Special Education. We have Special Needs Assistants (S.N.A.'s), who are allocated on a needs basis by the DES (NCSE/SENO).

The format for the identification of students with S.E.N., information distribution about the student and allocation of extra learning support are detailed later in this document. (Within sections: *Identifying Students with S.E.N. and procedures*) The Learning Support Department in Largy College operates in line with the NEPS Continuum of Support: A staged approach to intervention.

Largy College Mission Statement

In Largy College all students and staff are cherished in an environment where Christian values of mutual respect, tolerance, honesty and humility are nurtured.

We provide the widest range of educational experiences and opportunities to enable all our students develop their individual multiple talents, to realise their full potential and be prepared to meet the many challenges they will encounter in later life as mature, confident, responsible participants in society.

Relationship with the School Mission Statement

The Mission Statement is understood to include an obligation on the part of the school to provide the opportunity for all students including those with special educational needs to receive a holistic education and achieve their full educational potential which it is hoped will prepare them to meet the many challenges they will encounter in later life.

Rationale

This policy document aims to outline the form that additional educational support for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) takes in the school and the philosophy, which underpins it. It is written in the context of the Education Act 1998, and takes account of the *Education for Persons with Disabilities Act (EPSEN)* published in 2004. This policy should be viewed as a working document and be reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy bases its rationale on the principles laid out in the EPSEN Act which state that:

“The education of people with SEN shall take place in an inclusive environment with those who do not have such needs”,

“People with SEN shall have the same right to avail of and benefit from, appropriate education as do their peers”, and “That people with SEN leave school with the skills necessary to participate, to the level of their capacity, in an inclusive way in the social and economic activities of society and to live independent and fulfilled lives.”(**EPSEN Act 2004**) We see this policy as a reflection of our current practice.

This policy sets out the means by which the school will endeavour to meet its obligations to provide a holistic education to every student including those with S.E.N (including gifted students) taking into account current legislation i.e.

- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs 2004
- Education (Welfare) Act 2001
- The Equal Status Act 2000
- The Education Act 1998
- The Constitution
- All DES circulars

Special Educational Needs Plan : Largy College Vision

In Largy College all students are afforded equal access to an education. This education is to be stimulating, relevant and as broadly based as possible within the constraints of school resources, the needs of the individual student and the needs of the general student population.

Our intention is that each student will develop socially, academically and practically and reach his/her potential, thereby increasing their sense of self-esteem and self-worth. Each student with S.E.N. will be offered as much support to achieve this success as is possible within the constraints of school resources and personnel.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

In the context of this school, students with Special Educational Needs are those students whose needs are not met by standard classroom provision. Those with such needs include:

- Students who have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students in their class group
- Students with a Specific Learning difficulty
- Students with a sensory or physical disability which hinders their use of everyday educational facilities.
- Students with emotional or behavioural difficulties which may be long or short term.
- Students with temporary emotional trauma.
- Students who fall behind the general level of progress of their class for other reasons i.e. through illness.
- Students whose first language is not English.
- Students who are particularly gifted and who need additional stimulus.

Identifying Students with Special Educational Needs

Students may be identified on the basis of one or a combination of any of the following:

- Information from Feeder Primary Schools or other schools when the Special Needs Co-ordinator/ H.S.C.L.O visits and liaises with the Principal / Resource/Learning Support Teacher / 6th Class teacher.
- Expression of concern from parent/guardians.
- Reports from outside agencies i.e. Psychologists (Including NEPS), Health Board, etc.
- Assessment Tests completed in March prior to entry.
- Expression of concern (written) from Subject teachers or Year Heads
- Post-Primary Transfer Review

Model of Special Education Provision

Each year the college receives an allocation from the Department of Education and Skills based on a general allowance for learning support. Additional applications are made by the school, which are based on individual pupils who have a psychological assessment and who fulfil certain criteria as decided by the Department of Education and Skills (NCSE and SENO).

Prior to enrolment, the school plans and prepares for students who may have additional learning needs. Primary schools are contacted and visited by the SEN Co-ordinator and HSCLO who will request Post-Primary Transfer Review to be fully completed. The SEN Co-ordinator will read the review and visit the primary school to discuss such. Standardised entrance tests are conducted shortly after the final enrolment date. Parent/guardians of students with low incidence SEN are invited to attend a meeting with the NEPS psychologist and SEN team if deemed necessary. The SEN co-ordinator will speak with the time-table co-ordinator regarding SEN timetable requirements.

Largy College endeavours to provide an eclectic mix of teaching styles and strategies when working with SEN students. These teaching styles include 1-1 support, team teaching and target teaching. Team teaching when appropriate is encouraged and the college acknowledges its place in promoting inclusion. When deciding on the approach best suited to the student the SEN Co-ordinator will, at all times, ensure that adequate consultation takes place with parent/guardians, year head/class teacher and subject teachers prior to the commencement of the programme.

The individual needs of the student dictate what type of practice is most appropriate. In deciding how best to support a student in a sympathetic manner the special educational needs team take account of:

- The programme required
- The student's personality /wishes
- Recommendations from relevant clinicians such as psychological reports, screening test results and class teacher recommendation.

The majority of this support is provided by the S.N.C and a core team of teachers whose timetables include a mixture of learning support and their specialised teaching subject. The core team may change from year to year depending on subject choices and timetabling constraints. Largy College will endeavour to keep the number of teachers in the department to a minimum to provide students with continuity. Training needs will be addressed, where needed, for staff in line with the Code of Conduct outlined by the Teaching Council.

Learning support is normally provided in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year during the subject option bands. Students will typically have four class periods of learning support per week, usually delivered by a combination of individual in-class support or in small groups where possible (timetabling permitting), depending on the identified needs of the student.

During fourth year students do not normally avail of Learning Support due to the structure of the Transition Year Programme.

Students then avail of Learning Support/ Resource hours once again in 5th and 6th year where necessary.

Timetabling for SNA's revolves around the needs of the individual students to whom they are assigned. Where possible, a student will be assisted by different SNA's after a period of time to promote independence.

Procedures

Stage 1

- The Special Needs Co-ordinator analyses all the reports of incoming 1st years, (from Psychologists, primary school reports, parent/guardian concerns etc.). In consultation with the Principal and HSCLO and applications are then made to the Dept. of Education and Science (NCSE through the SENO) for Resource hours and Special Needs assistance.
- The assessment tests are held and the Special Needs Co-ordinator corrects and analyses the results.
- A decision is then taken on how much support the student needs to allow him/her to reach their potential. In consultation with the Principal and senior management students are then placed into class groupings. Each student is treated accordingly to his or her needs.
- Year Heads / Class Tutors and Subject Teachers are informed of any difficulties which the student may have through the Confidential Profile. All are involved in monitoring the student's progress, especially in the initial transfer period.
- The student may be recommended / offered a place on the Junior Cert Schools Programme (JCSP) involving monitoring and rewarding good attendance, behaviour, homework and school participation. (Parent/guardian consent will be obtained prior to entering the student onto this programme).

If progress is satisfactory, after about a two-month period of monitoring, following consultation with the relevant teachers, the SNC will make out a plan which will then be forwarded to all Subject teachers, the relevant Year Head, Parent/guardians etc. outlining the main areas of difficulty and suggested strategies to help overcome the difficulties. The plan will also include targets for the individual student and the personnel responsible for helping the student achieve them.

Stage 2

- If the student is not progressing then all the personnel involved will consult and decide on an appropriate course of action involving any of the following: a class change / extra support / psychologists assessment or review or counselling.
- The HSCLO will liaise with parent/guardians/guardians, especially if any difficulties arise.

- Information / results / reports from teachers / advice from psychologist will be analysed and a revised course of intervention will be implemented.
- End of year assessments (Star Reading Test if student is on Accelerated Reader Programme, End of year house exams) are carried out and analysed and added to the students file.
- Applications are processed for students requiring an exemption from Irish (if applicable) as well as special arrangements / accommodations in the Mock and State Junior / Leaving Cert. Examinations (R.A.C.E.)
- Contact will be maintained with parent/guardians, Year Head, subject teachers, HSCLO and anyone else involved with the student.
- A new profile will be forwarded to the above personnel with revised suggestions for effective learning.
- Advice will be sought and given to Students and their parent/guardians on suitable Leaving Certificate courses such as Transition Year or L.C.A. programme.
- Regular monitoring and meetings or other forms of communication will take place between all parties involved with the student. This ranges from internal support services such as school counsellor/ guidance counsellor to full review meetings involving the School personnel, Parent/guardians, Student and outside agencies. Information in relation to changing circumstances will be communicated to the NCSE through the SENO.

The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP)

The JCSP is organised by the SEN dept. The programme encourages self-monitoring and the acquisition of skills for life. The subjects are broken down into learning targets and students can monitor their own progress. Cross-curricular areas are also monitored in addition to punctuality, attendance, behaviour, organisational skills etc. Teachers also organise projects and trips to enrich student's school experiences.

Roles and Responsibilities of All Teaching Staff

- **The Class Teacher:** Has primary responsibility for the progress of all students in his/her classes including those selected for supplementary teaching (Learning Support Guidelines) Meeting the needs of the students with SEN is a whole school effort and not the responsibility of the Resource Teacher alone because these children are fully integrated into a mainstream school and will spend most of their time with the mainstream teacher (Circular 08/02)

- **The Resource Teacher:** Provides support to those students assessed by a relevant professional as having complex special educational needs e.g. Learning Disability/Speech and Language Disorder/ Emotional Behavioural Difficulty/Physical Disability, as termed by Circular 08/02, 24/03 and have been allocated resource teaching hours According to Circular 08/02, **the role of the Resource Teacher** is to provide additional teaching support for students with special educational needs arising from a disability. The Resource Teacher provides this support by:
 - A. Assessing and recording students' needs and progress
 - B. Setting specific, time related targets
 - C. Team teaching
 - D. Advising Class teachers
 - E. Meeting and advising Parent/guardians
 - F. Meeting relevant professionals

The Learning Support Teacher: Provides supplementary teaching to those students assessed as being at or below the 10th percentile on school based screening of Literacy and Numeracy. The Learning Support teacher acts in a consultative role within the school on the strengths and needs of learning support students.

Programmes linked to the Special Needs Department

The Special Needs Dept. works with every subject department and is involved in all programmes that are offered in Largy College. However the Special Needs Department is closely linked with two programmes in particular:

1. The Junior Cert Schools Programme (J.C.S.P.)

The JCSP is organised by the Co-ordinator and the Special Needs Department. It is a programme that encourages self-monitoring and the acquisition of skills for life. Currently students are involved in JCSP English, Maths and Science as well as cross-curricular statements. JCSP students are mostly placed in mixed ability classes. Each of the aforementioned subjects is broken down into Learning Targets and the students monitor their own learning/progress through the use of the statement record sheets.

As part of this programme (through the JCSP and HSCL Initiatives funding) Largy College has developed a Reading Programme and a Numeracy Programme, which requires parent/guardians and students to work together for 2 six-week periods to improve basic Literacy and Numeracy in accordance with the new Literacy and Numeracy strategies directed from the Department of Education and Skills.. At the end of each programme a celebration night is organised to recognise and reward the students on their good work. Largy College works very closely with Clones Library to support student's literacy and students regularly visit the library during English classes.

As part of the reading programme students produce 2 books (one on their book reviews and the other on Amazing Facts), which are then forwarded to the JCSP Make a Book Exhibition.

During this current academic year Largy College has been asked to pilot “The Accelerated Reader Programme” (for the JCSP Support Service) – This is a programme which uses computer software to assess a student’s reading ability, then prescribes book titles which are within the students reading and comprehension ability, and then quizzes the student on the book they have read to ensure comprehension. This is an excellent programme as it allows students to see for themselves their improved reading skills and thus encourages further reading.

2. Leaving Certificate Applied (L.C.A.)

The Leaving Cert Applied programme is a self-contained two-year Leaving Certificate programme aimed at preparing students for adult and working life.

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) is a distinct, self-contained Leaving Certificate programme. It is designed for those students who do not wish to proceed directly to third level education or for those whose needs, aspirations and aptitudes are not adequately catered for by the other two Leaving Certificate programmes.

The Leaving Certificate Applied is structured around three main elements – Vocational Preparation, Vocational Education and General Education – which are interrelated and interdependent. This programme is characterised by educational experiences of an active, practical and student-centred nature.

It is divided into four sessions over the two years and at the end of each session students are given credits for work completed and these results returned to the Department of Education and Skills.

RACE (Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations)

Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations

Students with identified SEN need may be eligible to avail of Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Examinations. A history of their difficulty will be necessary to consider them for eligibility. Arrangements for house exams may include, where eligible: Reader, Spelling and Grammar waiver/Laptop/Scribe/Tape Recorder. Parent/guardian consent will be obtained prior to implementation. Teachers within the SEN Department and SNA’s are most often used as exam readers (with parent/guardian consent). Once the Department of Education and Skills issues the application forms, students will be re-tested with standardised tests and parent/guardian consent obtained for the application.

Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO): The SENO represents the local delivery aspect of the work of the NCSE. There are approximately 70 SENO's employed nationally and all have a qualification and work experience relating to service delivery to children with SEN. SENO's have responsibility for:

- Co-ordinating and facilitating the delivery of educational services to children with SEN.
- Processing applications for resources for children with SEN.
- Regular and detailed engagement with organisations such as health authorities, the DES, the Inspectorate and National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS): Largy College is provided with a senior psychologist from NEPS. The service that is delivered by NEPS operates under the following framework:

1. Consultation about individual students
2. Recommendations and advice on individual students needs
3. Advice on classroom strategies and resources
4. Advisory work in relation to SEN policy and practice
5. Consultation and recommendations in relation to R.A.C.E. (Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations).
6. Full psychological assessments available to students.
7. Student's cases are presented to the NEPS psychologist and each case prioritised for assessment on its merits by the psychologist in consultation with the SENO and school Principal.
8. **Health Service Executive:** Referrals will be made as appropriate by school management to the HSE.

Record Keeping

All records are retained in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy. All reports are kept in a secure cabinet and information only circulated on a need to know basis. The assignments undertaken in resource teaching/learning support will be kept in individual folders in the Resource/Learning Support rooms.

Liaison with Teachers:

- The SEN department will notify staff annually of the procedures of the SEN department.
- The SEN department will maintain a list of students who have special needs and at the start of the year this information will be shared with relevant teaching staff.
- Teachers are requested to liaise with the SEN staff to familiarise themselves with details of Educational Psychological reports or IEP's.
- Teachers are free to seek background information on students from SEN staff.

- The SEN department will endeavour to support teachers by providing them with specific information on exam accommodation granted by DES and well as with useful resources to assist them in meeting the needs of SEN students.
- Subject teachers liaise with the SEN department in the provision of differentiated teaching and assessment for SEN students

The Role of the Board of Management

- To ensure that all students with learning support / special educational needs are identified and assessed.
- To ensure that the school has a special educational needs policy in place, to monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation.
- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in the school to ensure in as far as is practical that students with special educational needs leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society.
- To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with special educational needs.
- To promote the development of positive partnership with parent/guardians and other relevant agencies / personnel and to ensure that parent/guardians are informed of their child's special educational needs and how these needs are being met.
- To ensure that parent/guardians are consulted and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education.
- To ensure that the Special Educational Needs Policy forms part of the School plan.
- To develop a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.
- To ensure that an awareness of special educational needs is inculcated in students in the school.

The Role of the Principal

- On behalf of the Board of Management, the Principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of policy and provision for students with special educational needs. The Principal may delegate certain functions to appropriate teachers (as outlined in Section 18 of the EPSEN Act 2004)
- To appoint a special needs co-ordinator from amongst the staff.
- In consultation with the Special needs co-ordinator, to ensure that an Individual Educational Plan(IEP) is prepared for relevant students in the given time frame (i.e. one month from the date of issue of an appropriate assessment)
- To inform the Board of Management of issues, which are relevant to special educational needs
- In consultation with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and other relevant personnel to liaise with the Department of Education and

Skills regarding needs and provision. This also includes applications for reasonable accommodations and exemptions in relation to state exams as well as assessments.

- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds.
- To establish a 'Special Needs Support Team' within the school with a specific remit to ensure identification of and support for students with special educational needs.
- To promote a whole school approach to special educational need, make all staff aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development in this area.
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parent/guardians of students with special educational needs.
- To ensure that procedures exist for consultation with feeder primary schools with regard to the enrolment of new students with special educational needs.

Role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

The duties are:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the school's SEN policy
- Managing the SEN team of teachers, liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- Individual Education Plan co-ordination
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN
- Overseeing the records on all pupils with SEN
- Liaising with parent/guardians of pupils with SEN
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Liaising with external agencies including :
 1. Special Education Needs Support Service (SESS)
 2. National Education Psychology Service (NEPS)
 3. State Examinations Commission
 4. Visiting Teacher Service
 5. Psychologists, Speech & language Therapists, Occupational Therapists
 6. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia Associations
 7. Autism/Asperger Support Ireland
 8. National Council for the Blind of Ireland
 9. National council for the Deaf

(This list is not exhaustive and the school will further develop links with outside agencies as the needs of the students dictate.)

- Irish and 3rd language Exemptions
- Reasonable Accommodations

These duties are reviewed regularly and may change to ensure the priority needs of the department are met.

Role of Subject Teacher

At Larcy College the academic progress of students throughout the school rests in the first instance with the subject teacher. The college recognises that it is the professional duty of each subject teacher to support the students

using strategies which will have been made available to them. In order to ensure that as a school we meet the needs of all our students subject teachers are encouraged to:

- Be aware of the school's Policy & Programme (as outlined in this document) for dealing with students with special educational needs.
- Collaborate with the LESU Co-ordinator regarding students with special educational needs. Advise the LESU Co-ordinator where necessary.
- Participate in continuous professional development, particularly with regard to common difficulties eg. Dyslexia, Specific Language difficulties and Dyspraxia.
- Support the provision of differentiated learning in the classroom for students with Special Educational Needs.
- Support / encourage independence in the student. This is particularly important for Senior Cycle students.
- Help identify students that may need learning support.

Adopted by the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: 8th February 2017

Signed: _____
School Principal

Date: 8th February 2017

Proposed: _____ **Seconded:** _____

Review Date: February 2020