

ST. JOSEPH'S N. S.
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CO. LOUTH
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Nurturing excellence in education

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Inclusion and Integration Policy

Introduction:

In St. Joseph's we value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

Aims and objectives:

Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our school;

- ✚ Girls and boys
- ✚ Children who need support to learn English as another language
- ✚ Children with special educational needs
- ✚ Gifted and talented children
- ✚ Children who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion
- ✚ Children from different ethnic and minority groups

The Primary Curriculum is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. We meet these needs through;

- ✚ Setting suitable learning challenges
- ✚ Responding to children's diverse learning needs
- ✚ Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- ✚ Providing other curricular opportunities outside the primary curriculum to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children. (This includes speech and language therapy and mobility training)
- ✚ We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, through asking ourselves these key questions;
- ✚ Do all our children achieve their best?
- ✚ Are there differences in the achievement of different groups of children?
- ✚ What are we doing for those children who we know are not achieving their best?
- ✚ Are our actions effective?
- ✚ Are we successful in promoting racial and social harmony and preparing pupils to live in a diverse and multicultural society?









Teaching and learning style:

We aim to give all our children the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement. We analyse the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure that all pupils are achieving as much as they can. We also make ongoing assessments of each child's progress. Teachers use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. For some children, we use the programmes of study from other classes. This enables some of our children to make progress in their own lessons, perhaps after significant amounts of time spent away from school.

When the attainment of a child falls significantly below the expected level, teachers enable the child to succeed by planning work that is in line with that child's individual needs. Where the attainment of a child significantly exceeds the expected level of attainment, teachers use other materials, or extend the breadth of work within the area or areas for which the child shows particular aptitude.

Teachers are familiar with the relevant legislation governing equal opportunities, race, gender and disability.

Teachers ensure children;

-  Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
-  Appreciate and value the differences they see in others
-  Take responsibility for their own actions
-  Are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
-  Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
-  Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
-  Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed
-  Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs

International Children - Children entitled to Language Support



A number of our children have particular learning and assessment requirements, which are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language.

The teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of all our children are important. We encourage all our children to achieve to the highest possible standards. We do this through taking account of each child's life experience and needs.

Children who are receiving language support have skills and knowledge about language similar to Irish children speaking English. Their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English.

In St Joseph's teachers take action to help children who are learning English as an additional language by various means:

1. Developing their spoken and written English by;

-  Ensuring that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms,
-  Explaining how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects

- ✚ Providing a range of reading materials that highlight the different ways in which English is used
- ✚ ensuring there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing
- ✚ Encouraging children to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another
- ✚ Building on children's experiences of language at home and in the wider community, so their 'developing uses' of English and other languages support one another.

2. Ensuring access to the curriculum by;

- ✚ Using accessible texts and materials to suit children's ages and levels of learning
- ✚ Providing support through IT and video and audio materials

All children in our school follow the requirements of the Primary Curriculum. Children receiving language support do not produce separate work. We do not withdraw children from lessons to receive language support. The Learning Support Teacher works in partnership with class teachers in the classrooms. This involves supporting individual children or small groups of children and, at times, teaching the whole class. Sometimes the Learning Support Teacher works with groups of children, of whom only one or two may be language support children.

Children with SEN including Disabilities:

Some children in our school have disabilities and consequently need additional resources. The school is committed to providing an environment that allows these children full access to all areas of learning. All our classroom entrances are wide enough for wheelchair access, and the designated points of entry for our school also allow wheelchair access.

Our teachers modify their teaching and learning as appropriate for these children. For example, they may give additional time to children with disabilities to complete certain activities. They speak clearly and slowly as required, use a range of communication techniques; arrange the classroom furniture for optimal accessibility, incorporate technical aids as part of the educational experience and

work with Special Needs Assistants on toileting and other physical needs. In their planning, teachers ensure that they give children with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers ensure that the work for these children;

- ✚ Takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use
- ✚ Takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids
- ✚ Is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials
- ✚ Allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies
- ✚ Encourages social interaction
- ✚ Uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities

In response to the Disability Act 2001, the Board of Management is constantly reviewing how the school can be made more accessible for disabled children.

Racism and inclusion:

The diversity of our society is addressed through our schemes of work, which reflect the programmes of study of the primary school curriculum. Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnic or social background. All racist incidents are now recorded and reported to the Principal. The school contacts parents of those pupils involved in racist incidents.

Integration; Staff Roles:

Special Class Teachers:

The Special Class teachers will

- identify the appropriate curriculum area the Special Needs child should experience(**ART/MUSIC/PE/**)
- ensure S.N.A support is available during integration
- collaborate and consult with mainstream class teachers in setting realistic targets

- assume responsibility for an on-going individual education plan in consultation with support services, parents and Principal

Class Teachers:

The mainstream class teachers will

- ✚ adjust programmes to meet the needs of the Special Class pupil
- ✚ provide a suitable seating arrangement in the mainstream setting
- ✚ collaborate with the Special Class teacher and the S.N.A

Implementation:

- ✚ Integration will occur informally in term one and three and formally in term two.
- ✚ Term two: 15-30 minutes weekly.

The school promotes a policy of integration with age appropriate peers on a **social level and ability** appropriate on a curriculum level

For integration/inclusion to be effective it must

- ✚ further develop social skills
- ✚ not interfere with the level of learning within each class
- ✚ be done in conjunction with and have the goodwill of the class teacher
- ✚ The process must be open to review at all times.
- ✚ The school insists that a maximum of 2 children per aspen class and 1 per willow class be integrated at any given time.
- ✚ Early levels of integration into mainstream are on a social level only.

The Special Needs child will not partake in general class learning until they have mastered the art of -

- ✚ entering the class without trepidation
- ✚ sitting down at a designated desk
- ✚ interacting on a social level with child(ren) nearest them
- ✚ **having lunch/snack break with the whole class**
- ✚ engaging in a "buddy" system at playtime
- ✚ re-acting to general teacher instructions within the classroom setting

Curricular Integration:

- ✚ When the Special Needs child has adjusted on a social level he/she will slowly be introduced to areas of the curriculum appropriate to ability level.
- ✚ **Art/music/PE** classes at Junior and Senior Infant level will be targeted initially.
- ✚ Integration into this class will continue up through the classes.
- ✚ The school policy also offers **Physical Education** as a curricular area open to integration. The Special Needs child is integrated into the class that best suits his/her physical condition.
- ✚ Children from the Special classes are also integrated for mainstream school outings and mainstream activities such as Sports Day and Fire Drill, Christmas Concerts.

Reverse integration:

The school operates a policy of reverse integration and this extends to all classes.

- ✚ Special Needs children being integrated for **core curriculum subjects** such as Maths and English do so through the reverse integration route initially.
- ✚ This involves withdrawing 3-4 children from mainstream to work with the Special Needs child in his/her own environment
- ✚ **Children from mainstream Junior/Middle classes engage in EBD skills integration with the Special Needs children on a weekly basis**

Assessment:

Assessment by observation will be conducted by the class teachers supported by SNA covering 3 aspects of development

- ✚ social integration
- ✚ language and communication
- ✚ class Engagement
- ✚ *St. Joseph's Integration Record Booklet* records the effectiveness of integration.
- ✚ This is completed by the SNA and used by class teacher and special teacher when assessing integration and developing new learning targets

Summary:

In our school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of every child are important. We follow the necessary regulations to ensure that we take the experiences and needs of all our children into account when planning for learning.

Other relevant school policies include;

Code of Behaviour/Child Protection and Risk Assessment/ SEN Policy/RSE Policy/ Anti-bullying Policy/ Health and Safety Policy

This policy was ratified by the BOM on March 5th 2019

This policy was reviewed by the BOM on Feb 7th 2023

This policy will be reviewed if and when required

Sr. Joan Waters
Chairperson of BOM

Dr. Roz Morris
Principal