



*Pobalscoil na Rosann*  
An Clochán Liath, Co. Dhún na nGall  
*The Rosses Community School*  
Dungloe, Co. Donegal

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## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY 2012

Draft School Policy Review 2012 -2013  
For the integration of pupils with Special Educational Needs

### **Rosses Community School Special Educational Needs Policy (draft)**

#### **Scope:**

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of students who have special educational needs. The Education Act 1998 defines the term "special educational needs" as "the educational needs of students who have a disability and the exceptionally able students". The Education Act 1998 also defines the word "disability" and its meaning in this policy is the same as defined in the Act. This Policy statement has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, Staff, Parents and Students of the Rosses Community School. It applies to all pupils in the school, their parents, and all members of the school staff and management.

#### **Relationship to Mission Statement:**

This policy statement is based on the schools Mission Statement to provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education, open to all the children of the community, promoting a concerned and caring environment within which all students may realise their full potential and respecting the dignity, worth, and individuality of every member of the school community.

#### **Rationale:**

Legislation, in particular the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act of 2004, provides that a child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment, with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs are such as would be inconsistent with:

- a. The best interest of the child as determined in accordance with an assessment carried out under the Act.
- b. The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

#### **Goals and objectives:**

1. To define the duties and obligations of parents / guardians of children with special educational needs, to co-operate with and support the school management in the education of their children.
2. To define the duties and obligations of school management and staff towards pupils with special educational needs.
3. To provide for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs.
4. To define the level of teaching and other resources to be made available by the school to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
5. To outline the form that additional educational supports for SEN students in the school in context of the Education Act 1998 and of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and its Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
6. That students 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.



### **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

There are three categories of Special Educational Needs that are subject to different levels of resource provision:

Students with special needs as defined in the Education for Persons with special Educational Needs Act 2004.

#### **1. Physical Disabilities.**

The provision of support services for these pupils is the responsibility of the National Council for Special Education. Such provision may include –

- Resource teaching provision.
- Special needs assistants.
- Access to particular special services e.g. speech therapy.
- Provision of special infrastructure and equipment.

#### **2. General Learning Difficulties (GLD),**

Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD), and The Exceptionally Gifted. There is provision for the allocation of a "Learning support Teacher (remedial) " in certain circumstances. Otherwise the school must cater for this category of pupil from within existing resources.

#### **3. Special Educational Needs deriving from Social Disadvantage.**

Schools serving areas of disadvantage are entitled to 1.5 whole-time teacher equivalent allocation that includes provision for a Home-School Liaison teacher. Apart from these provisions schools are expected to cater for pupils in this category within their normal teaching resources.

### **Policy Content – Roles and Responsibilities**

- Admissions policy as it applies to Special Educational Needs pupils.
- Procedures for the identification of SEN pupils and the obligations of parents to cooperate with these procedures.
- Allocation of pupils to classes.
- Subject choice
- Choice of programmes – JC, JCSP, TY, LC, LCVP LCA.
- Provision of Special groups or tuition.
- Use of facilities - ICT, PE, Practical subjects, Work experience.
- Restrictions that may apply to particular school activities, sports trips, tours or other out of school activities.
- Physical access to buildings and facilities.
- Travel arrangements.
- Care of pupils on school premises.

This policy is informed by the school's Mission Statement, which commits us to preparing **all** students for the challenges of adult life and to respecting the dignity, worth and individuality of every member of the school community.

**Application for entry to the school is made on a standard application form.**

#### **Sharing of relevant information:**

- Parents/guardians are required to make known their child's needs.
- Has the student had access to any of the following resources?
- Special needs assistant, learning support or resource, psychological assessment,
- Occupational therapy report, support in relation to a sensory impairment, support in relation to travel or mobility, assistance with behavioural difficulties, referral to NW health board for any reason, specific ICT support.



### **The identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs:**

The identification of pupils with special educational needs may be accomplished in a number of ways.

- a. Information from Parents / Guardians  
Parents have an obligation on enrolment, to make known to the school authorities details of any previously diagnosed disability or special educational need and to make available to the school reports of examinations or assessment tests which have previously carried out.
- b. Liaison with Primary Schools:  
Parents are required to sanction the release of any relevant information from the Primary School on transfer.
- c. Initial testing:  
The school carries out assessment tests on incoming students for the purpose of identifying children who might experience learning difficulties on transfer to the post primary school. Rosses Community school currently use WRAT testing.
- d. Consultation between parents and staff.
- e. Consultation with appropriate support agencies.
- f. school based referral forms.

### **Section 3, Education for persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004:**

“Where a Principal forms the opinion that the child is not benefiting from the education programme provided in the school he/she must take such measures as are practicable to meet the educational needs of the pupil concerned. Such an opinion may be formed as a result of representation from Parents, from Teachers or through school assessment procedures.”

### **Allocation of pupils to classes:**

- Pupils are allocated to non-streamed classes in first year.
- **Banding** occurs in Mathematics, English and Irish (pupils can be moved between classes according to ability).

### **Subject choice - where accommodations/restrictions apply:**

- Health and safety issues are taken in to account.
- Recommendations from relevant experts or Health Board personnel are implemented.
- Students with SLD may be exempt from studying a 3rd language i.e. French which is offered to all incoming students.
- Students with SLD may be exempt from studying Irish in accordance with DES rules.

### **Choice of programmes:**

- Junior Cert. JCSP, TY, Leaving Cert. LCVP, LCA are available to all pupils depending on educational needs and in consultation with parents/guardians.

### **Provision of special groups or tuition:**

- Dedicated groups are set up depending on the need and resources available and according to provision by the DES.

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### **Use of facilities – ICT, PE, Practical subjects, Work experience:**

- These facilities are available to all students with restrictions where there are Health and Safety issues or other extenuating circumstances.

### **Restrictions which may apply to particular school activities – sports, trips, tours etc.**

- Restrictions apply only on the following grounds:
  - Health and Safety issues,
  - Lack of specific, adequate and appropriate supervision/support.



- Costs. Financial resources (where financial costs impact on other students or on the provision of other resources).
- Availability of suitable transport.

**Physical access to buildings and facilities:**

- The school continues to review its accessibility needs on an ongoing basis.

**School Transport:**

- Arrangements re-school attendance are in accordance with the provisions of the School
- Transport section of DES.

**Care of pupils on school premises:**

- The school endeavours to provide supervision for all pupils in so far as is practicable, under the parameters laid down by DES.
- Restrictions may apply in certain circumstances and the school may have to rely on other agencies (Health Board) to provide specialist care.

**Roles within Resource / Learning Support Department**

**Resource Teacher**

The role of the Resource Teacher is to provide support for children with SEN. The Resource teacher has responsibility for recording and students' needs and progress. The Resource teacher also meets and advises Parents and other relevant professionals.

**Learning Support Teacher**

The role of the Learning Support Teacher is to support and remediate the literacy and numeracy needs of the students. The Learning Support Teacher has responsibility for diagnostic assessment, programme planning, consultation with parents, teachers, and pupils. They are also responsible for communication with whole staff and for teaching, monitoring and evaluating students' progress.

**Classroom Teacher**

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class. The class teacher plays an important role in the early identification of pupils with SEN. There is a referral system whereby students are referred to the Learning Support teacher for assessment. (Referral Form attached/See teacher handbook) The SEN department works closely with all of the staff, particularly

**The Guidance Counsellors & the Chaplin.**

**Special Needs Assistants.**

The Role of the SNA is pivotal and important in the school. We recognise the enormous contribution our SNA's make to the life of the school.

**Role of the Special Needs Assistant in support of the student:**

As laid out in **Circulars 07/02, 24/03 (Appendix 4,5)** responsibility for the care and well being of the student in a manner that values, respects and supports the student as well as promoting independence. Duties include: Supporting, listening, encouraging, clarifying, observing, reading material, make note in homework diary, keeping the student focused and on task.

**Role of the SNA in collaboration with the Teacher:**

Assist, communicate, support, free up in the class, prepare materials, feedback observations, maintaining work areas.

- The SNA may not be left in sole charge of a class.



••The SNA is privy to confidential information pertaining to SEN students. As such confidentiality is of paramount importance.

### **Model of SEN provision**

**The Rosses Community School** organises its classes in a mixed ability setting. Each first year group is made up of a deliberate mix of all ability ranges. The school does take into account that some subjects do not lend themselves to being taught as mixed ability and may have different requirements depending on the syllabus being taught. This can result in some classes being banded.

### **SEN Pupils Register**

At the beginning of the new school year, every teacher receives a detailed register of all students with SEN, especially incoming first years.

### **School based identification:**

A class teacher, tutor or year head can refer a student for assessment. (Referral form) The SEN team meet to identify the nature of SEN being experienced. The Learning, emotional, behavioural and social needs of the student is established.

### **Parent Referral process:**

A parent may notify the Principal that a student is not benefiting from the regular programme provided by the school. The Principal with the parents' approval, initiates the preliminary screening process (outlined above). Once the Principal forms the view that the pupil may have SEN, the Principal will advise the parent in relation to appropriate assessment.

In assessing and deciding which students need supplementary teaching and may benefit from support within the mainstream context the following options are considered` ;

- Team Teaching
- Support Teaching
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- Curricular reduction
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes.

### **Irish Exemptions**

All students who have an Irish exemption at Junior Cycle (See Irish Exemption criteria) are timetabled for Resource at this time, where possible.

### **Modern Language Waivers**

SEN students may attend Resource at this time. SLD students may have Learning Support at this time. **Note** at Senior Cycle a modern language is a compulsory aspect of LCVP.

**JCSP programme** has been introduced to support students in Junior cycle.

### **Transition Year**

At present there is no facility other than SNA support available on the TY timetable to meet the needs of SEN students, however this is reviewed annually and in accordance with student needs.

### **Senior Cycle**

At Senior Cycle Resource support decreases, but is still available according to allocation.



**The Leaving Cert. Applied** is recommended for students whose learning needs would not be met by the demands of the traditional Leaving Cert. Where an SEN student chooses LCA it is generally accepted that the curriculum itself supports the student thus additional support is unnecessary. However where it is apparent that additional support is necessary for an SEN student, this will be reviewed on an individual basis.

**Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations:**

Where appropriate the school, in consultation with the Parent and student may apply for RACE in State Exams. This information will be circulated to class teachers and other relevant personnel, who work with the student concerned.

**Record keeping:**

- A minutes book is kept recording all meetings by or involving SEN team / personnel.
- The SEN department maintains an up to date record of all student referrals.
- All relevant documentation including every communication with parent, teacher, or other is recorded in this file. These files are monitored and maintained by HSCLO and in this office.

**All applicants must answer the following question:**

Has this student ever been:

- (1) diagnosed as having any of the following or
  - (2) recommended by their school for assessment for any of the following.....
- A. ... any form of **Physical Disability**. Yes /No
  - B. ... any form of **Hearing Impairment** Yes/ No
  - C. ... any form of **Visual (Sight) Impairment** Yes /No
  - D. ... any form of **General Learning Disability** Yes /No
  - E. ... any form of **Specific Learning Disability** (e.g. Dyslexia) Yes /No
  - F. ... any form of **Speech or Language Disorder**. Yes/ No
  - G. ... any form of **Emotional or Behavioural Disorder** Yes/ No
  - H. ... any form of **Autistic Disorder** Yes/ No
  - I. ... **any other disability** Yes/ No

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, please fill in the details requested below for each heading to which you answered "yes". You must also let the school have a copy of the relevant reports as soon as possible. If your child was recommended for assessment by the school and you did not follow that advice please, explain your reasons in the comment section (over).



Type of Disability: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment:

Please give details of the most recent assessment:

**Childs PPS no:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Did your child's National School ever recommend that your child attend the Learning Support Teacher or their Resource Teacher. Yes /No

Did your child attend the **Learning Support Teacher** at National School. Yes/ No

If "yes" please state for how long they attended \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Learning Support Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Did your child attend the **Resource Teacher** at National School. Yes/ No

If "Yes" please state for how long they attended \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Resource Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

If your child was recommended for such support, why did you choose not to avail of it. Please note that

- All pupils at Junior Cycle in this school follow the Junior Certificate programme.
- Some students are placed in an extra resource class instead of French.
- Some students are withdrawn from some classes in second year for extra tuition.
- Instruction is provided for all pupils in mainstream, class size groups for all other classes.
- The school will make every effort to provide the best possible education for your child with the resources available to it. However it may not always be possible to implement every recommendation made in an assessment report.

Parents/guardians have a serious responsibility to ensure that the programme on offer in this school is the most suitable for their child. Where there is any concern, parents/guardians must contact the Principal, Deputy Principal, and/or the Guidance Counsellor as appropriate.

In particular, where parents/guardians wish to seek special consideration for their child for the State Examinations they should make this request as soon as a psychological report becomes available for Junior Cycle; and on entrance to Senior Cycle.

**The Department of Education & Science decides eligibility on an individual basis.**



### **Role of Guidance Counsellors in SEN:**

- To assist in the transfer and induction programme from primary to post primary.
- To assist in the testing and monitoring of students.
- To assist with subject and programme selection.
- To assist in the progression to further education, training and employment.