

SEN Policy

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Grange Community College
Special Educational Needs Policy 2022

Mission Statement

“Enabling Students to develop their talents to the full by providing a balanced, challenging curriculum which fosters intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical growth. Fostering an atmosphere which promotes self-esteem, honesty, justice, and respect for others. Creating a safe, healthy learning environment that nurtures self-discipline and encourages our pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Promoting Cooperation, teamwork and commitment within the school and community so that all are unified as partners in learning for life”

Introduction/ Vision

The principles of inclusivity and respect are enshrined in the Grange Community College Mission Statement and are lived out as much as possible in the day-to-day life of the school. The school is committed to enabling students to develop their talents to the full by providing a balanced, challenging curriculum which fosters intelligent, spiritual, emotional and physical growth.

Grange Community College is a multi-denominational co-educational college delivering both second level and further education under the auspices of Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education Training Board. Students’ attainment is fostered through mutual respect and the positive expectations of respect, responsibility and cooperation, as outlined in the Code of Positive Behaviour.

It is our aspiration that if a child is diagnosed/recognised as needing support, he/she will receive assistance, within the school’s capacity to enable them to reach their full potential. This will involve a whole school approach.

Relevant Legislation

- Article 42 of the Irish Constitution
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Education Act 1998 - Sections 28 & 29
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000 - Section 23
- Equal Status Act 2000
- EPSEN ACT 2004
- DES circular 0030/2014

Aims

Grange Community College aims to:

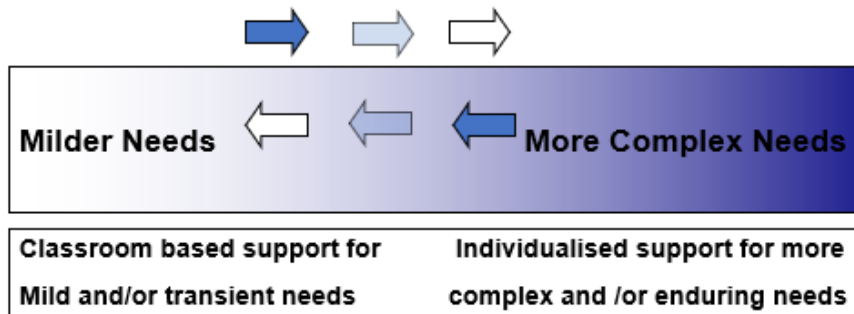
1. Ensure that students with individual needs are educated in a responsibly inclusive environment.
2. Ensure that students with special educational needs are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected.
3. Give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children who have a disability or who have other special educational needs, as they relate to education.
4. Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents/guardians to facilitate their involvement in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to their children.
5. Co-operate and work closely with the National Council for Special Educational Needs (NCSE) and other agencies in co-ordinating their advice, guidance and support regarding the education of students with special educational needs.
6. Aid to maximise success in State Examination through the Continuum of Support and Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations. In addition, other programmes may be provided as needed. At Junior Cycle such programmes might include the Level Two Learning Programme (L2LP), Skills for Life (QQI Level 2), short courses, social skills and literacy and numeracy support. At Senior Cycle programmes might include Skills for Life, Life Skills, Preparation for Work, Preparation for Further Education and the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme.
7. Acknowledge the primary responsibility of the mainstream subject teacher and work to support and inform them in meeting the needs of students both formally and informally.
8. Ensure that, where appropriate, students can achieve the learning outcomes/intentions of their individual programmes in the mainstream class.
9. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with special educational needs.
10. Liaise and meet with the Student Support Team and Student Care Team regarding complex student concerns. In addition, aid the implementation and monitoring of agreed interventions.
11. Assist, oversee and monitor the drawing up of SNA timetables and assigning of students with care needs to SNAs.
12. Facilitate and enable regular meetings and feedback to and from the SNA team.

The Continuum of Support

The Department has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to students' needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

The process is underpinned by a response to intervention approach

- Use of evidence informed interventions
- Careful monitoring of outcomes
- More intensive supports as required



Support for ALL Students

Intervention at the whole-school level is intended to be proactive.

It is focused on the main student body, and this phase of intervention should effectively meet the needs of about 80-90% of the school population. It aims to support and promote positive student behaviour and learning for all. An integral part of this level of support is effective whole-school screening for learning and behavioural needs, so that there is early identification of 'at risk' students.

School Support (for Some Students)

Intervention at this level is for those students, typically around 10-20% of the school population, who do not respond to the whole-school strategies sufficiently and who need more support. A range of approaches and interventions may be used, some of which may be short-term, while others may be longer term.

These may include:

- A process of consultation and planned intervention
- Group and/ or individual plans and interventions
- Subject goals
- Accommodations to support learning and social interaction

School Support Plus (for a Few Students)

These students, typically about 2-5% of the school population, have significant difficulties and may require intensive, individualised interventions.

Interventions at this stage are likely to include:

- Individual Educational Plans (including behavioural plans)
- Involvement of additional professional input, such as from psychologists/ speech and language therapists etc.
- Specialist interventions

The Student

Special educational needs are defined in the EPSEN 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.” The EPSEN Act recognises that special educational needs may arise from four different areas of disability:

- Physical
- Sensory
- Mental health
- Learning disability

Or from any other condition that results in the child learning differently from a child without that condition. It is also important to understand that a child can have a disability but not have any special educational needs arising from that disability which require additional supports in school.

The Special Educational Needs Department Roles and Responsibilities

SEN Core Team: The Principal, the deputy principal, SEN Co-ordinator, SEN Year Co-ordinators, EAL Co-ordinator, Gareth Suite Co-ordinator, Learning Support Teachers, Team Teachers and Special Needs Assistants comprise the core Students with Additional Needs team. The activities of the SEN team may include both teaching & non-teaching duties, including assessment, RACE applications, AT applications, meetings with students and parents and other administrative duties as appropriate to the role. The roles should be viewed as interdependent and collaborative and assume a degree of flexibility, particularly during peak assessment times.

Principal/Deputy Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school’s policies on Special Needs and Learning Support. He/she will sanction exemption from certain subjects as requested, ensure adequate timetabling of hours for learning support, resource and language support as well as facilitating meetings of, and in-service training for, the SEN team staff.

SEN Co-ordinator

SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) should:

- Communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis.
- Liaise with external agencies about the provision for students with additional needs.
- Liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the SEN team and class teachers to prioritise students for psychological assessments (NEPS) and Occupational Therapy (OT) assessments.
- Liaise with SEN Year Co-ordinators to identify, support and monitor students with additional needs.
- Meet weekly with Student Support Team and liaise with year co-ordinators for follow on.

- Co-ordinate regular SEN team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for students with additional needs.
- Collaborate with senior management and the SEN team in creating timetables for additional support.
- Meet with parents, where necessary, regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress.
- Develop and maintain electronic records in the SEN OneNote.
- Liaise with Guidance Consular with school standardised testing at each year level.
- Co-ordinate the screening of students for additional support, using the results of standardised tests.
- Manage ordering and ensure sufficient stock of assessments.
- Select students for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted.
- Oversee the tracking system of test results on password-protected software to monitor the progress of students on OneNote.
- Maintain lists of students who are receiving additional support.
- In conjunction with year co-ordinators, devise SEN Student Profile for incoming students with and Educational Psychological Report or clinical report on file.
- Organise and purchase resources and support staff in implementing resources.
- Ensure staff are trained in CPD and organise CPD opportunities.
- Assist in the screening and testing of students when a referral or concern is raised.
- In conjunction with the Guidance Team and first-year co-ordinator, plan the transition for students with SEN from Primary to post-primary
- Provide supplementary teaching for literacy, numeracy, and social skills on a withdrawal and in class support basis.
- Work with the SEN team to co-ordinate list of students for Irish Exemptions.
- Work with 3rd year and 6th year co-ordinators to coordinate and assess students that may be eligible for RACE and assist in making RACE applications as required.
- Assist senior co-ordinator in managing the transition for students with SEN from Senior Cycle to further education, training or employment.
- Co-ordinate SNA team, complete PPP for primary care needs and ensure the collection of data.
- Gather and review data from SNA forms when needs arise and liaise with year co-ordinators.

SEN Year Co-ordinator

The Year Co-ordinator for each year group should:

- Co-ordinate and gather data on students.
- Support whole-school procedures for screening.
- Administer and interpret diagnostic tests in conjunction with the SEN Co-ordinator and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes.
- Follow up on referrals from subject-based teachers on the OneNote.
- Screen and test students when a referral or concern is raised.
- Plan the transition for students with special educational needs from primary to post-primary school or post primary.

- Support the communication of information regarding students' needs to subject teachers, form tutors and year-heads.
- Liaise with parents and students.
- Collaborate with senior management and the SEN team to co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding students on their caseload.
- Discuss the needs and progress of students on their caseload at planning meetings.
- Open a Student Support File once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support.
- Plan, implement and review student support plans on OneNote.
- Support the class teacher in implementing a Student Support Plan for the Students Support File once additional support is implemented.
- Liaise and consult with Learning support Teachers regarding units of work for students
- Consult with SET's, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each student in receipt of School Support Plus.
- Communicate with the SENCO and the SEN team regarding any concerns raised by subject teachers at SEN team planning meetings.
- Update and maintain relevant SEN records and test results on the OneNote.
- Liaise with external agencies about provision for students with additional needs.
- Support planning of termly Units of Work with Learning Support Teachers.
- Provide supplementary teaching for literacy, numeracy, and social skills on a withdrawal and in class support basis.
- Co-ordinate a list of students in year group with Irish Exemptions.
- Co-ordinate a list of students in a year group that may be eligible for RACE and screen accordingly.
- Assist Co-ordinator in making RACE applications as required.
- Communicate with parents as appropriate.
- Assist students with their concerns and be a point of contact for students
- Co-ordinate the completion of a Personal Profile Plan (PPP) and a Student Support File for students.
- Provide necessary information to a SEN student receiving third level institution once a transfer letter has been received.

Gareth Suite Programme Co-ordinator

The Gareth Suite Programme Co-ordinator should:

- Timetable for six students across the six year groups including the logistical movements of two SNAs.
- Manage daily timetable changes and multiple amendments to the timetable throughout the year, which may include a complete timetable change.
- Liaise with the School State Examination Secretary and RACE Co-ordinator(s) for the timetabling of in-house exams and applications for the state examinations.
- Liaise with mainstream teachers who are timetabled for delivering programmes in the Gareth Suite.
- Liaise with outside professionals and agencies.

- Be responsible for implementation and planning of Individual Education Plans for Gareth Suite students.
- Be involved in student enrolment process through:
Collating all application materials from prospective students.
Visiting students who have applied in their primary/special school, observing them in class, completing reports, meeting with staff and ensuring all relevant materials are supplied by the schools. Liaising with professional ASD services.
Preparing and planning for introductory staff meeting concerning Gareth Suite.
- Procure resources for the Gareth Suite.
- Liaise with SENO regarding Gareth Suite students' needs including Assistive Technology applications.
- Meet parents on a regular basis.
- Ensure the upkeep and implementation of Professional Educational Reports.
- Liaise with third level education agencies and programmes for transiting students.

EAL Co-ordinator:

The EAL Co-ordinator should:

- Identify students requiring Additional Language Support.
- Assess and monitor students' proficiency in English using the Cambridge English Placement Test.
- Devise appropriate language programmes, deliver the programmes and record and monitor students' progress in accordance with individual student support plans.
- Make deliberate and informed efforts to devise a timetable that prioritises the needs of the students.
- Assist the school in providing additional EAL support teaching for students.
- Work closely with subject specialist teachers, where the student remains the responsibility in mainstream classes.
- Share their expertise with mainstream class teachers to promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment and encourage communication amongst staff to optimise the opportunities students have for developing their proficiency in English.
- Assist in developing and disseminating good practice to support the development of students' English language proficiency.
- Meet with parents regarding concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.

Subject Teacher:

The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in his/her classroom, including students with special educational needs.

They should:

- Implement teaching programmes that optimise the learning of all students.
- Create a positive learning environment that accommodates and takes cognisance of learning difficulties.
- Differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class.

- Co-ordinate in-class interventions for students in line with the continuum of support.
- Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Year Co-ordinators to assist in the selection of students for Special Education.
- Link with parents regarding concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- Gather information and assess students presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support.
- Access Student Support Plans to inform lesson planning and to ensure consistent focus on students' targets and priority learning needs on OneNote.
- Where applicable, collaborate with the SEN team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching.
- Liaise with and seek advice from the SEN team when necessary.

Learning Support Teacher

A team of teachers will teach individual and small groups of students requiring learning support. An emphasis will be placed on team teaching. Flexibility will be built into teacher's timetables to run once off interventions or ongoing interventions with individuals, groups or year groups as need arises.

The teacher should:

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for learning styles and to meet a variety of need.
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention.
- Collaboratively develop Student Support Plans and Learning Programmes for each student selected for school support teaching with Year Co-ordinators.
- Collaborate and meet with the subject teacher to identify priority learning goals for a student in receipt of School Support Plus.
- Update and maintain planning and record progress on OneNote.
- Plan a unit of work for groups considering the needs of the student according to the Student Support Plans
- Reflect, evaluate and implement changes to a unit of work on a termly basis for individual and/or group of students in receipt of school support.
- Collaborate with SEN Year Co-ordinators on unit of work for group and allow flexibility for needs arising.
- Ensure the core skills of literacy, numeracy and social skills are targeted within the unit and are measurable.

Team Teacher

The Team teacher should work closely with the mainstream class teacher to:

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for learning styles and to meet a variety of need.

- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention.
- Collaboratively develop Student Support Plans and Learning Programmes for each student selected for school support teaching with Year Co-Ordinators.
- Link in with Learning support teachers to needs arising and targets set for students
- Implement small group/individual interventions for a timed period where necessary
- Meet with Year Co-ordinators in support of students and needs arising

Parent /Guardian

The Parent/Guardian should:

- Aid the transition of any documents relating to SEN for the student.
- Liaise with relevant year co-ordinator for needs arising under literacy, numeracy, and social skills.
- Collaborate with relevant co-ordinator on setting targets within the Student Support Plan.
- Liaise with 3rd year and/or 6th year co-ordinator where a student has been noted in applying for R.A.C.E.
- Be informed and familiar with all policies/guidelines published by the school and to sign any documents that are relevant to these policies.
- Ensure that their child is familiar with and adheres to the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Encourage student to attend homework club and facilitate a supportive environment to complete homework.

Student

The Student should:

- Work to their best ability and allow learning to take place within small group teaching.
- Work to engage with all aspects of school life.
- Develop as a learner through experiences that are challenging and supportive.
- Take ownership over their learning and be reflective in the process.
- Be open to opportunities as a lifelong learner.
- Follow the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

Depending on allocation being granted by the DES, a small team of SNAs will prioritise the primary care needs of specified students in the support for few continuum. SNAs will be given the opportunity to be involved in training and to attend meetings relevant to their role. They will carry out duties as assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal and SENCO in accordance with DES circular 0030/2014.

Methods of Identifying Students with Individual Needs and Learning Differences

Pre-enrolment:

Contact feeder schools to identify possible students with individual needs and learning differences.

- The SENCO and/or the Principal will meet with parents. All relevant documentation in relation to the student with SEN should be passed on to the School, in accordance with the Admissions Policy and in order to ensure that adequate resources can be accessed for that student when they arrive.
- Any documentation in relation to a student with SEN will be referred to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), who will decide what resources should be made available e.g. allocation of resource hours, SNA allocation, specialized equipment, etc.
- Where needed students and parents, will be given an introductory tour of the school and further induction supports
- It is to be understood that the ability of the school to respond to the educational needs of any student applying for admission is dependent on the Department of Education and Skills supplying the appropriate facilities and resources to allow the school to answer that need. It may therefore be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a student, pending provision of appropriate resources by the DES to meet the needs of that student.

Screening of First Year students:

- All incoming 1st Years are screened using the CAT4 (cognitive ability test) as the entrance test.
- Students who are achieving below the 10th percentile in any of the CAT4 batteries may be flagged for priority interventions.

Further referrals may be made to outside agencies e.g. the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), DDLETB Psychological Support Service or Mater Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAMHS) where it is deemed appropriate by the SENCO or Principal, in consultation with parents and the SENO

Models of Provision of Learning Support

We aspire to provide a model of responsible inclusion that best meets the needs of the individual student. In line with the new model of allocation, support for achieving learning outcomes or intentions in the mainstream class group is the preferred method of provision.

- Individual classes are used only where a student requires specialised individual support.
- Team teaching is the preferred method of provision under the new allocation model. Teachers are provided with ongoing in-service in this area.
- Small group classes are another valuable method of provision with most students in resource and learning support getting their allocation in small groups. Groups are arranged on the basis of similar need profiles and the capacity to withdraw students at the same time. Withdrawal for small groups usually occurs during Irish for those students who are exempt.
- Small group classes are used where groups of students are given Numeracy and Literacy, social skills and organisation support.

- An alternative timetable may be arranged for a small number of students for whom it is deemed necessary, after consultation with the psychologist (if applicable), parents and teachers. These students have their timetable reduced because they cannot sustain a full curriculum. In so far as it is possible, extra learning support or additional classes in remaining subjects are provided at the time of the dropped subjects. In some instances, students may simply need restorative time in their timetable to support them accessing their other subjects.
- Placement in the Gareth Suite (Autism Class) is based on a recommendation in the student's psychological report and there being availability in the class (see Admissions Policy for detailed information). The Gareth Suite operates as a facility to support all students in our school and students assigned to the Autism Class are registered in the class of their mainstream peers.

Links with Outside Agencies and Services

Grange Community College has fostered and maintained positive links with a significant number of outside agencies.

These include:

- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Special Education Support Service (SESS)
- State Examinations Commission (SEC)
- Mater Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)
- Beechpark Services
- Middletown Centre for Autism
- Psychological Support Service (PSS)
- HSE Social Work Department
- HSE Clinic services to include: Clinical psychologists, Occupational therapists and Speech and language therapists.

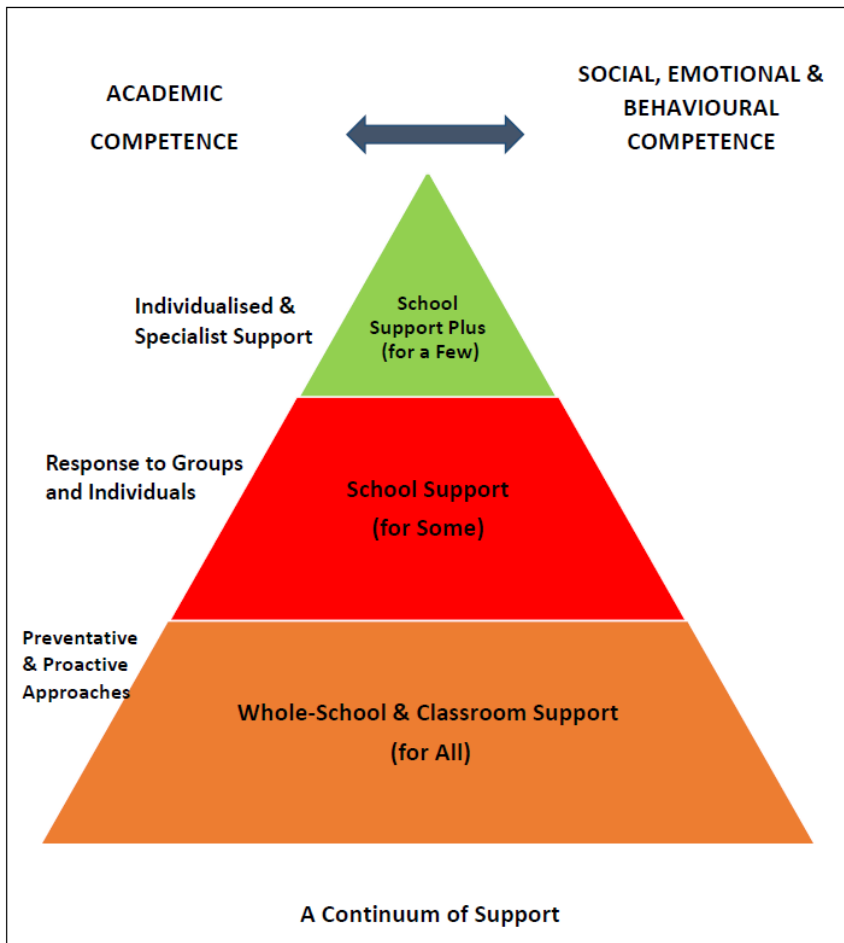
This list is not exhaustive and the school will develop further links with outside agencies as the needs of the students dictate. It may be necessary to hold case conferences with relevant professional experts with the permission and knowledge of the student's parents (and often their attendance) in order to determine the best approach and provision for that student.

Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with all the school's policies and in particular with:

- Admissions Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Communications Policy
- Homework and Study Policy
- Information and Communication Technology Acceptable Usage Policy
- Internet Safety and Usage Policy

Appendix 1



A Continuum of Support

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be under continuous review by the Special Educational Needs Team and a formal review will be established with the Board of Management. It will become part of the framework of the school and will be implemented by all staff members.

Implementation Date: _____

Suggested Review Date: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management