



SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY



Special Education Needs Policy Jonah Special School

Introduction

All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. As far as possible therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum. These are:

1. Setting suitable learning challenges –

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve their fullest potential.

2. Responding to children's diverse learning needs –

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning.

3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment –

We recognise that our children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements.

In making provision for children with special needs, our policy objectives are:

- To ensure that our duties, as set out in The Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 and the EPSEN Act 2004 are fully met.
- To enable our children to join in the normal activities of the school as fully as possible.
- To ensure that all children gain access to a broad, balanced and age appropriate curriculum and have an opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs.
- To use our resources as efficiently and equitably as possible when assessing and meeting the special educational needs of our children.
- To develop a partnership with parents/carers in order that their knowledge, views and experience can assist us in assessing and providing for their children.
- To take into account the ascertainable wishes of the children concerned and, whenever possible, directly involve them in decision making in order to provide more effectively for them.
- To ensure collaboration with the Department of Education in order to take effective action on behalf of children with special needs.
- To monitor our effectiveness in achieving the above objectives.

The school currently has the following provisions to cater for children with Special Education Needs:

- 1 Administrative Principal.
- 1 Clinical Director/Behaviour Analyst.
- 1 Administrative Deputy Principal.
- 2 Class Teachers.
- 7 Special Needs Assistants.
- 1 Part time caretaker/cleaner.



Inclusion

The goal of inclusion is to enable all students to belong within an educational community that values their individuality. The Jonah Special School attempts to promote inclusion through:

- Modifying activities and materials used so that all can participate.
- Allowing all children the opportunity to participate in group work.
- Providing appropriate tasks and practical work.

Communication

Communication in relation to Special Needs is ongoing with –

- Principal.
- Clinical Director.
- Deputy Principal.
- Teachers.
- Special Needs Assistants.
- Parents/Guardians.
- Board of Management.
- Health Service Executive.
- Special Education Needs Officer.
- Speech and Language Therapists.
- Occupational Therapists.
- Educational Psychologists.
- Psychiatrists.
- Social Workers.

Roles and Responsibilities

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the Board of Management, Principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

Board of Management

The Board of Management will fulfil its statutory duties towards students with special needs. It will ensure that the provision of appropriate training is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be knowledgeable about the school's SEN provision – funding, equipment and personnel.



Management Team

The Principal has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of SEN provision. She will work closely with the staff and will keep the Board of Management informed of the working of this policy. She will encourage members of staff to participate in training to help them meet the objectives of this policy. In consultation with the Clinical Director and class teacher, she will liaise with the SENO regarding support hours and either she or the Clinical Director will attend meetings with external bodies. The management team will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the SEN policy.
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs.
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in service training of staff.
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs.
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs.
- Monitoring and evaluating provisions.
- Overseeing the records of all children with special needs.
- Liaising with external agencies including the psychology services – organising assessments etc.
- Liaising with the health and social services.

Responsibilities of Staff

All staff should be fully aware of the content of this policy and of the procedures described below. Appropriate in - service will be made available where appropriate.

Classroom Practices

"The teacher must be expert in monitoring performance at the level of each student in the class as corrective feedback is geared to individual needs and learning rate" – Westwood.

In Jonah Special School, teachers are encouraged to:

- Review the work of the previous day.
- Present clearly new skills and concepts, and monitor the reinforcement and maintenance of same in the work of the auxiliary staff.
- Guide student practice through provision of feedback.
- Provide modified instruction appropriate to developmental age, ability and learning style.
- Adjust questioning to different ability levels.
- Present materials at the appropriate level of difficulty.
- Present materials geared to learning styles and tailor individual programmes, taking into account sensory needs.



Recognising the needs of the individual involving Parents/Carers and Children.

Parents/carers are encouraged to be fully involved at all times in their child's education. If they have any concerns they are encouraged to make an appointment to see the Class Teacher, Principal or Clinical Director. The views of parents/carers will be sought at all stages of assessment and provision. Whenever and wherever possible the views of the child will be ascertained and the child will be directly involved in the process.

Enrolment

The school aims to meet the needs of any child whom the parent wishes to register at the school as long as a place is available and the admission criteria are fulfilled. The Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that "*A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs*". The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child can be refused admission solely on the grounds that he/she has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school. (Please see Admissions Policy for more information).

Referral to out of School Agencies

- The Principal and Deputy Principal co-ordinates the referral of students to outside agencies, e.g. Educational Psychologist, etc.
- The Principal, Clinical Director and/or Class Teacher meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.
- The Class Teacher and Clinical Director complete the necessary referral form in consultation with the appropriate school personnel.
- The external professional visits the school to meet with the students, parents, Principal, Clinical Director and Class Teacher as appropriate, and the assessment is conducted.
- This is followed by a return visit at which findings are discussed, recommendations are considered and an appropriate response is agreed.
- Where concern arises regarding the manner of speed of the follow-through post assessment, such concern is pursued by the Principal with the out of school agency concerned.

Special Facilities

Jonah Special School is a single storey school with ramps where appropriate. The school boasts three classrooms together with office, kitchen, staffroom, sensory room and playground. Where specialised equipment is used, training will be given to staff where appropriate. Quiet/Sensory rooms are in use for children who may need a break from the demands of the classroom, and regular movement breaks are built in to the classroom routines where appropriate. Jonah Special School is a well – resourced school, which constantly monitors and updates its resources. IT provision is good and is updated regularly.



Assessment

The class teacher will perform diagnostic tests on these children usually at the beginning and end of the school year. These tests will include, but may not be exclusive to the Pep-3, ABLLS, VB Mapp, AFLS, T-TAP (seniors where appropriate), sensory checklists and teacher designed tests.

Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including IEP targets and strategies. (Please see Assessment & Reporting Policy for further information).

Individual Educational Plans

Based on Psychologist's reports, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists reports and tests; the Class Teacher, Clinical Director, parents and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary), formulate an Individual Education Plan. This is formulated by breaking down the existing levels of attainment of the student into finely graded targets, taking into account parental concerns and priorities. This is a collaborative process between class teachers, management team, behaviour analyst, parents, SENO and outside agencies.

The plan includes:

- The nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills.
- The degree and nature of the child's Special Needs.
- The child's present level of performance.
- Priority learning needs.
- The services to be provided.

The school has its own particular IEP template (Appendix 1). The management of the IEP strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher, data collection and its feedback to the class teacher will be the responsibility of the Clinical Director. Data will be collected on all IEP goals, and this will be reviewed frequently by the class teacher. A further review will be conducted with the parents at the end of 6 months, if necessary. If a child is reaching targets consistently, goals and targets will be adjusted appropriately. The strategies set out in the IEP will, as far as possible, be implemented in the normal classroom setting.

School Trips

School trips are a regular feature of Special Needs Provision. Permission forms in relation to the proposed trips and for seeking medical assistance in the event of an accident are sought from parents. A number of contactable mobile phone numbers are held by the Class Teacher. SNAs are issued with clear instructions as to their duties for the day.



Success Criteria

- Review and evaluation of IEPs.
- Positive inclusion practices.
- Positive parental feedback.
- Teacher observation and data collection.
- Testing.

Monitoring

The school will evaluate the effectiveness of Special Needs Provision through monitoring standards reached, case samples from children, the views of parents, staff feedback and continued levels of intervention.

Ratification and Communication

This policy is to be circulated to:

- Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Clinical Director.
- All teaching staff.
- Parents of Special Needs students.
- Special Needs Assistants.

Jonah Special School

Special Educational Needs Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next Review Period: *September 2027*



Appendix 1

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

Name:

D.O.B:

Address:

Telephone:

IEP Development Team:

School:

Review Date of next Reassessment:

Nature and Degree of Abilities, Skills, and Talents:

(Including his Special Educational Needs)

Further Information:

Formal Assessment			
Date	Name of Test	Administered by	Outcome



Summary of Information from contributing parties

Self-Management Skills	
Motivation	
Social and Interpersonal Skills	
Language and Communication	
Motor Skills	
Access to National Curriculum	
ICT	
Learning Style	
Attendance	
Hobbies and Interests	



Specific Child Goals

Current Skills (What he can do already in this area)	Goal (What we want him to learn now)	How will we make progress towards the goal (Strategies and resources)	National Curricula & Overlap with evidence based curricula
<u>Language</u>			
<u>Maths</u>			
<u>SPHE</u>			
<u>Physical Education</u>			
<u>Other curricular areas</u> <u>Visual Arts,</u> <u>Drama, Music</u>			

Other Resources Recommended:

- 1. Occupational Therapy:**
- 2. Speech and Language Therapy:**
- 3. Parents to support at home with the following activities:**
- 4. Education Setting:**

Signed –

Principal – Clinical Director – Teacher – Parents –

Date: _____