

# **The Inclusion Policy of St Mac Dara's Community College to include Diversity and Special Educational Needs.**

This policy is in keeping with the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2004 and Circular 14/2017 (New Model of Allocation), the corresponding Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017) and The NEPS Continuum of Support.

St. Mac Dara's is an inclusive school and no student will be refused admission on discriminatory grounds as referred to in Admissions Policy. No person in the college will be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, physical or intellectual disability or other special educational needs, race, Traveller community. This list is not exhaustive.

## **Introduction:**

### **St Mac Dara's Community College Mission Statement:**

**"We, the community of this college, through a caring and collective approach, aspire to provide a broad-based education for all, to foster respect and dignity and to promote a safe and just environment by, positively encouraging all to realise their potential."**

St. Mac Dara's Community College aspires to be a responsibly inclusive school. The principles of inclusivity and respect are enshrined in the Mission Statement. Responsible inclusion means working towards what is best for the student. To have responsible inclusion, St. Mac Dara's Community College has a curriculum, which includes all aspects of education in school life, (hidden, implied, social skills, life skills, extra –curricular activities etc.) and that considers curriculum as a process and education as development of students rather than content and product.

Inherent in this is an understanding that individual needs or learning differences should not prevent a student from flourishing in St. Mac Dara's Community College. It is our aspiration that if a child is assessed or diagnosed as needing support, they will receive whatever assistance they require to enable them to reach their full potential (subject to this support being resourced by the Department of Education and Skills). This will involve a whole-school approach to supporting the child with individual needs.

## Aims:

St. Mac Dara's Community College aims to:-

- Ensure that students with individual needs are educated in a responsibly inclusive environment.
- Ensure that students with special educational needs are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their learning potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected.
- 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.
- Provide, in line with the new model of allocation, a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students in the College.
- Affirm that students with special educational needs have the same right to avail of, and benefit from, education as students who do not have those needs.
- Provide for the involvement of parents in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to the children.
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at school and at home.
- Acknowledge the primary responsibility of the subject teacher and work to support them in meeting the needs of the student.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with special educational needs.
- Ensure that students with individual needs are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the individual needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area.
- Ensure that special educational needs are not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole College and community.
- Co-operate and work closely with the National Council for Special Educational Needs (NCSE) and other agencies with regard to the education of students with special educational needs.
- Co-ordinate the advice, guidance and support of other agencies, including the staff of St Mac Dara's Community College, in supporting students with special educational needs.
- Provide programmes that meet the individual needs of a student. At Junior Cycle such programmes might include Level Two Learning Programmes (L2LPs), Skills for Life (QQ1Level 3), Short courses, Social skills, Literacy and Numeracy Support. At Senior Cycle programmes might include Skills for Life, Life Skills, Preparation for Work and Preparation for Further Education.

- Ensure that where appropriate, students can achieve the learning outcomes and intentions of their individual programmes in the mainstream class.
- Set high standards for students with special educational needs and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging them to achieve their full potential.
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with special educational needs.

### Categories of SEN:

All students attending St. Mac Dara's Community College are unique.

Some students attending St. Mac Dara's College have a variety of individual needs.

We aspire to put the student and not the need first.

These needs may include (but are not restricted to) the following:-

- Physical Disability  
For example, hearing or visual impairment, wheelchair user, epilepsy, diabetes, cystic fibrosis and co-ordination difficulties
- Emotional/Behavioural Disability  
While some of these students can present challenges, (e.g. ADHD other disabilities can apply) with the right support and/or medication the students can thrive in a "mainstream" environment.
- Specific Learning Difficulty
 

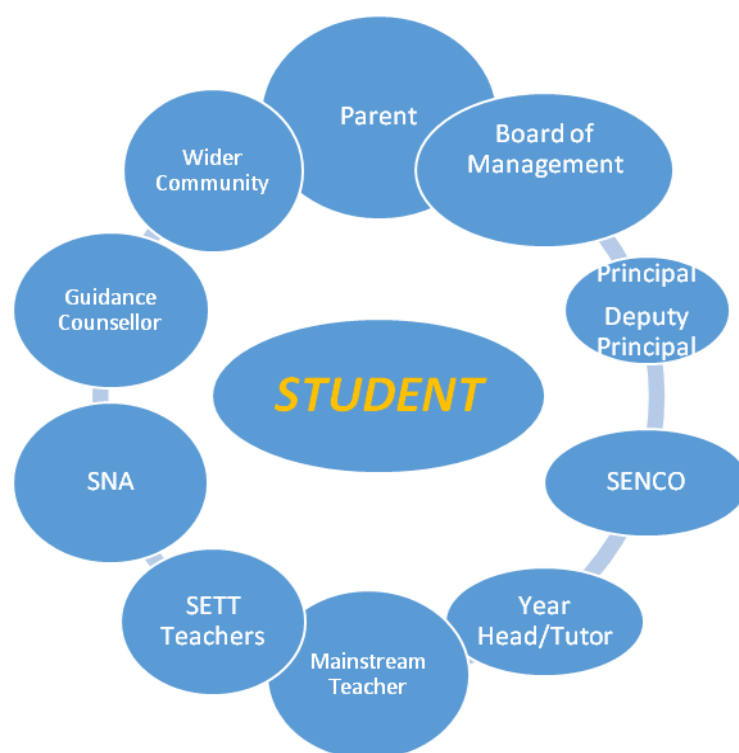
Dyslexia	Difficulty with language
Hyperlexia	Difficulty with comprehension
Dyscalculia	Difficulty with numbers
Dysgraphia	Difficulty with writing
- General Learning Disability (GLD)  
Students can present with Borderline Mild, Mild, Moderate or Severe and Profound General Learning Disability. Teachers of students with GLD can access a variety of teaching tools and advice from the SEN Team, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Guidelines for students with GLD and the Special Education Support Services (SESS).
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Many students on the Autistic Spectrum when supported can succeed or exceed expectations in the responsibly inclusive environment of St. Mac Dara's Community College.

### *Roles and Responsibility of Team Members within the SEN Team:*

**(See Also Appendix A)**

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) team comprises of; the Student with SEN, Parents, the Board of Management, Principal, Deputy Principals, SENCO, Year heads and Tutors, Subject teachers, Special Education Teachers (SET), SNAs, Guidance Counsellor and outside-supporting agencies.



## 1. *The Student:*

Students have a critical role to play in the development and evaluation of their own learning.

The Student can:

- Become more independent as learners and are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Become successful as learners and better able to develop skills and strategies to maximise their own learning and to become critical thinkers.
- Become more aware of different teaching and learning styles – Meta-cognition.
- Contribute to the development of their educational plan.
- Become more aware of the importance and value of working co-operatively with others.
- Engage to their ability in the life of St Mac Dara's Community College.
- Achieve at their potential.

## 2. *Parents/Guardian:*

Where the word "parent" is used, it is understood to refer also to "guardian" if appropriate. The effectiveness of any assessment or intervention will be crucially influenced by the involvement of the student's parents as per the Department Education Act 1998, 'the parent is the primary educator'.

- Parents will access information through the College website regarding SEN ie The Inclusion Policy.
- Parents have a central role to play in the College transition programmes, primary to secondary and secondary to tertiary.
- Throughout the year further updates and details will be communicated to parents. In return parents are expected to keep the SENCO or the link person (See Appendix B) updated with developments from their perspective. They are also expected to work closely with the SEN team to make their child's learning experience as positive as possible.
- Parents are invited to contact the link person during the year in addition to meeting the SEN teachers at Parent/Teacher meetings.

- Parents are encouraged to attend College induction evening where they obtain further information from the SENCO regarding SEN.
- Permission in writing is sought from parents if a student is to be referred for assessment. A meeting is arranged to discuss the outcome of the assessment, with a view to creating and developing and reviewing an educational plan.
- Parents are expected to support the work of the school with the student and to ensure the correct use and maintenance of any aids or equipment that are provided for the student.

### 3. *Board of Management:*

Ultimate responsibility for the education of children with individual needs in St. Mac Dara's Community College rests with the Board of Management.

The Board and the Principal acting on its behalf will:

- Work with the staff and SEN team to monitor the implementation of the Inclusion Policy and the SEN programme on an on-going basis to ensure best practice.
- Promote a whole-school approach to special educational provision.
- Will also appoint various staff to operate the programme.

### 4. *Principal:*

The Principal has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the College's policies.

The Principal will:

- Sanction exemption from certain subjects as requested. In relation to Irish please see Minister of Education's instruction to Management in the following link:  
[https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-andForms/ActiveCirculars/ppc10\\_94.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-andForms/ActiveCirculars/ppc10_94.pdf)
- Ensure adequate timetabling of hours for educational support.
- Facilitate meetings of, and in-service training for the SEN team.

### 5. *Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO):*

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will have overall responsibility for the management of the daily operations of the SEN team. Practical and administrative duties attached to the post are included in Appendix A.

These duties are reviewed regularly and may change to ensure the priorities of the SEN team are addressed. The special roles and responsibilities of personnel are as described in the DES publication "Inclusion of students with special needs Post Primary Guidelines 2007".

*Pastoral Care Team = Principal, Deputy Principals, Assistant Principals, Year Heads, Tutors, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor and the Care Team:*

Their role is to:-

- Support the SEN team.
- Identify students with need of support.
- Assist with testing.
- Communicate with parents.
- Communicate with College management.
- Communicate with College staff.
- Refer to outside agencies.

#### 6. *Subject Teachers:*

The subject teacher has a key role in bringing about the successful inclusion of students with special educational needs in mainstream classes. The class teacher has primary responsibility for the educational progress of all students in his/her class. It is particularly important that all class teachers create a class room environment that accommodates and takes account of learning and physical difficulties. It is expected that teachers will implement differentiated approaches to teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that the skills of all students, including students with SEN are developed.

Subject teachers will make themselves aware of the special educational needs of students in their classes. Attainment levels in literacy and numeracy plus a mini profile of all pupils with a psychological assessment is made available to all teachers at the first staff meeting of the new school year and is available through the Co-ordinator on request. Teachers take steps to inform themselves of the special needs of any student in their classes and to bring any new concerns regarding students to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

The subject teacher also plays an important role in the early identification of students with SEN. The subject teacher is alert to the possibility of general and specific learning difficulties and brings their concerns to the attention of the Special

Education Teacher (SET) team. A key element of successful provision for students with SEN is a high level of consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and the SET team. A subject teacher, Tutor or Year Head can refer any student they are concerned about to the SENCO through the SEN Referral Form.

The academic progress of students through the College rests in the first instance with the mainstream class teacher. In order to ensure that, as a school, we meet the needs of all our special educational needs students, all teachers are encouraged to:-

- Be aware of the College's policy and procedures for dealing with students with SEN
- Seek advice from the SEN Co-ordinator and/or team member regarding students with SEN
- Take responsibility for their own continuous professional development particularly with regard to common difficulties, e.g. Dyslexia
- Develop an attitude of ownership to the education of students in their classes with SEN
- Plan how to most effectively engage the SNA, where relevant, in consultation with the SEN Co-ordinator
- Support/encourage independence in the student; this is particularly important for Senior Cycle students.

#### *7. Special Needs Assistants (SNAs):*

Where it is recommended by an outside or supporting agent and agreed by parents that SNA support is required, an application will be made by the SENCO to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Depending on an allocation being granted, an SNA will cater for the care needs and particular non-educational difficulties of this student. The SNA will provide assistance as required which could be in the area of student organisation, extra-curricular activities, helping teachers in the supervision of students with SEN, or helping students to become more independent and self-reliant. Students are granted **Access** to SNA support and this could mean that the number of students in receipt of **Access** to SNA support can be greater than the number of SNAs allocated to the school. In this case the Principal and SENCO must assign SNA **Access** based on needs. Therefore students may be in some classes without SNA support. SNAs should be involved in training and attend meetings relevant to their role. They will also carry out duties as assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal and SENCO in accordance with the school's SNA Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

#### *8. Guidance Counsellor:*



As a member of the SEN team, the Guidance Counsellor will:

- Work with members of the SEN team in facilitating the education of students with SEN and their inclusion in the College.
- Liaise with SET Team (Link person) in relation to DARE, HEAR, RACE applications to ensure appropriate accommodations are in place for State Exams and in the CAO process.
- Counselling in personal, educational and career development.
- Co-ordinating a number of assessments including the CAT 4 prior to entry and again in 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
- Provide career information.
- Present at the Options Information Evening for students and parents progressing to Senior Cycle.
- Consult with parents and staff.
- Provide vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience.
- Work close with Year Heads and the SEN team to identify students requiring support.
- Facilitate individual appointments for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Transition year and Leaving Certificate to support them in making career decisions.
- Advising students and parents on subject choices.

#### *9. Outside Agencies:*

St. Mac Dara's Community College has fostered and maintained positive links with a significant number of outside agencies that support our students.

These include:

- National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
- Special Education Support Services (SESS).
- State Examinations Commission (SEC).
- National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).
- HSE Social Work Department.
- DDLETB Psychological Support Services (PSS).
- Outside Agencies – both public and private services to include:
  - Psychologists.
  - Clinical psychologists.
  - Psychiatrists.
  - Occupational therapists.

- Speech and language therapists.
- Medical practitioners.

This list is not exhaustive and the College 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.

It may be necessary to complete questionnaires/forms from these agencies regarding our students. These forms are filled with the permission of the relevant parents and always returned directly to the supporting agent.

### **Identifying Students with Individual Needs and Learning Differences.**

#### *Access to Support:*

As of March 2017 there is a new model of allocating teaching resources to students. Individual students are no longer granted specific hours from the NCSE based on their diagnosis. From September 2017 schools will have the autonomy to allocate teaching resources based on the level of a student's need, rather than on the basis of diagnosis.

Decisions on the support offered to students will be made based on a number of criteria. These include, but are not limited to:-

- Information gathered from a psychological assessment (where the student has presented with same).
- Information gathered from parents.
- Information gathered from Primary School.
- Teacher referrals: student's learning, emotional, behavioural and social needs are evaluated. The Co-ordinator will gather all the relevant information and consult with school management, the parents and the student.
- Formal and informal school assessment including 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Standardised tests (Literacy and Numeracy Group) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year DATS tests (Guidance Counsellor).
- Observation by teachers.
- Communication with outside agencies.
- Student self-referral.

A student plan is then developed to support the student. This plan will be made available to all staff, monitored and reviewed and student progress will be recorded.

#### Methods of Identifying Students with Individual Needs and Learning Differences:

##### *(i) Pre-enrolment:*

- On acceptance of their child's place in the college, parents will forward relevant documentation to the SENCO, as requested in the letter offering a place. This is in line with the Admissions Policy of St Mac Dara's Community College.
- The SENCO will contact feeder schools.
- The SENCO and/or Principal will meet with parents. in order to ensure that adequate resources can be accessed for that student.
- 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 college to answer that need. It may therefore be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a student.

##### *(ii) Screening of First Year Students:*

- All 1<sup>st</sup> year students are screened using standardised screening tests in literacy and numeracy – CAT 4.
- Students who are achieving below the 14<sup>th</sup> percentile in literacy and numeracy may be selected for further diagnostic assessments
- All 1<sup>st</sup> year students will be screened for their writing ability and speed.
- All 1<sup>st</sup> year students will be screened for their typing ability and speed.
- If considered appropriate, certain students' parents will be offered the opportunity for their child to avail of support
- Further referrals may be made to outside agencies e.g. the NCSE, PSS, HSE, privately, in consultation with parents and the SENCO, where it is deemed appropriate by the SENCO or Principal.

##### *(iii) Students with SEN who transfer from another post-primary school:*

Students with SEN who transfers from another post-primary school are expected to present with their educational passport and ensure that information is passed to the SENCO. These students will be assessed according to the criteria used for assessing 1<sup>st</sup> year students and will have the appropriate resources made available to them.

*(iv) On-going assessment of students:*

- From time to time, it can emerge that a student who was not previously identified as having individual needs and learning differences is experiencing barriers to learning. For students who continue to cause concern, referral to the SET team may be appropriate.
- If the SET team decides that a student would benefit from further intervention they will assess the student informally. Parents are informed and their consent is sought prior to any assessment taking place. The outcome of this assessment and college resources will determine what course of action is taken.
- The results of the assessment may indicate that a student does not have a learning difficulty. In this case the student's needs are supported through the structures available to all students, such as mentoring/monitoring by Year Head, support from the Guidance Counsellor, review of entry levels for State Examinations.
- If the results of the assessment show that the student has emotional/social difficulties a decision may be made to the parents for a referral to a relevant outside agency.
- In its operations, the College shall be guided by the New Model of Allocation (DES) [https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014\\_2017.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2017.pdf) the DES Guidelines <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Special-Education/Guidelines-for-Post-Primary-Schools-Supporting-Students-with-Special-Educational-Needs-in-Mainstream-Schools.pdf> and the National Education Psychological Services (NEPS) [https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps\\_post\\_primary\\_continuum\\_resource\\_pack.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_post_primary_continuum_resource_pack.pdf) for establishing a continuum of assessment and support.

### **Allocation of NCSE Resources and Teaching of Students with SEN.**

NCSE resources in our College will be directed towards the student with the greatest need and in accordance with the model of allocation for resource hours.

The SET team will interpret the outcome of assessments and consider the most appropriate form of intervention for the student, in consultation with parents, subject teachers, SNAs and relevant outside agencies.

The College aspires to educate students with SEN in an inclusive setting within the class group, supported by an SNA, where allocated. This may take the form of co-teaching in particular subjects. It may also take the form of small classes. One-to-

one classes may occur if other students of similar needs are not available at that time in the day.

If withdrawal of students with SEN from mainstream classes for supplementary or support teaching is deemed necessary, parents' permission will be sought via a letter.

### **Transitioning of Students with SEN.**

Incoming first year students are screened for SEN as in Section 5.ii (i) and 5.ii (ii) above and applications to the NCSE are completed.

The SENCO invites the incoming SEN students to tour the college grounds during the previous May. The students have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the building, ask questions and to meet members of the SEN team including: SETs, SNAs, management and subject teachers.

Members of the SETs' and SNAs and subject teachers' teams participate in the "Introduction to Second Level Day" in August.

Students with SEN who transfer from another post-primary school please 5.ii (iii) above.

Students with SEN who transfer from post-primary to Tertiary are assisted with all applications which can include:

- CAO i.e. DARE and HEAR See Appendix B.
- Apprenticeships.
- Development of Curriculum Vitae.
- Interview Skills.

### **Models of Provision of Support**

We aim to provide a model of responsible inclusion that best meets the needs of the individual student, in line with the New Model of Allocation and Guidelines (DES).

- As an inclusive college, support for achieving learning outcomes or intentions in the mainstream class group is the preferred method of provision. Co-Teaching – where students with educational needs and all students are supported in the main-stream class room when a Special Education Teacher teaches in cooperation with the subject teacher supports this.

- Small group classes are arranged on the basis of similar need profiles and the capacity to withdraw students at the same time. The organisation of these groupings is the responsibility of the individual resource teachers and overseen by the SENCO. Withdrawal for small groups usually occurs at times when the students have official exemptions from subjects.
- Individual support classes are used only where a student requires specialised individual support.
- Literacy and numeracy, curricular and organisational, emotional and social skills, and technology support is given during individual and small groups where appropriate.
- An alternative timetable may also be arranged for a small number of students for whom it is deemed necessary, after consultation with the psychologist, parents and teachers. These students have their timetable reduced because they cannot sustain a full curriculum.

### *Approaches to Learning in the SET Team.*

The SET team will provide a variety of experiences/activities during a course of study and during a lesson. Teachers will identify the learning style of the individual and use suitable methodologies to appeal to the kinaesthetic, auditory, sensory, linguistic, visual and interpersonal intelligences.

Lessons are conducted in a secure, supportive and disciplined manner. The students and the staff interact in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect. Our College believes that learning takes place most effectively in the context of a caring relationship and that a good teacher/student rapport fosters trust and promotes self-reliance and initiative in the student.

Some of the programmes offered include:-

- Level Two and Three Learning Programmes
- QQI Level 3 Skills for Life
- Literacy and Numeracy Programmes
- Social Skills
- Independence Programmes
- Behaviour Support
- Restorative Time

- Technology

### Administrative Issues in the SET Team

#### *Reasonable Accommodations in Certified Exams (RACE):*

The RACE link person from the SET Team (See Appendix B) in cooperation with the Guidance Counsellor will liaise with the State Examinations Commission (SEC) to secure and facilitate reasonable accommodations for eligible students with individual needs and learning differences during State Examinations.

Eligibility is based on the criteria set out by the SEC. <https://www.examinations.ie/schools/BI-1013-78746779.pdf> Application dates and guidelines are given to schools each academic year by the SEC. Parental permission is always sought at this stage.

Students with individual needs and learning differences sit house exams in accordance with the College procedures. Within resource constraints, students who have officially been awarded RACE for State Examinations will have the benefit of the same in school examinations.

#### *Equipment:*

The SET Team will liaise with the Department of Education and Skills and the NCSE to secure and facilitate personal equipment (such as laptop computers, mobile devices, notebooks, voice recognition software) for eligible students with individual needs and learning differences.

### Code of Behaviour.

All students in St. Mac Dara's College are expected to adhere to the College's Code of Behaviour. However, it is accepted that for some students extra layers of support/interventions will be needed before implementing sanctions according to the Code of Behaviour. This does not remove sanctions but adjusts the sanctions to meet the individual situation. It is accepted that if a ladder of supports does not change the student's behaviour the Code of Discipline will be acted upon.

### Relationship with other College Policies.

The Inclusion Policy adheres to the terms of all other policies in St Mac Dara's Community College. <http://www.stmacdaras.ie/?s=Policy>

### Date for Review of Policy. September 2019

## **APPENDIX A**

<u><b>Board of Management</b></u>	<u><b>Principal</b></u>	<u><b>SENCO</b></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the College has an up to date policy in place</li> <li>• Ensure that all students with SEN are identified and assessed</li> <li>• Ensure that a broad balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided to guarantee that students learn the skills necessary to participate in society</li> <li>• Ensure that positive partnerships with parents and other relevant agencies are developed and ensure that all parents are informed of their child's SEN and how these needs are met within the College.</li> <li>• Ensure that parents participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education</li> <li>• To promote the inclusion by ensuring that an awareness of SEN is instilled in all of the College community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To appoint a SENCO and work closely with the co-ordinator</li> <li>• To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources including the allocation of resource hours and funds</li> <li>• To promote a whole school approach in special educational needs, making sure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development</li> <li>• To establish a 'Special Needs Support Team' in the College to enable identification of needs and support for students with SEN</li> <li>• To manage the implementation of policies and practices</li> <li>• To assign roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To co-ordinate and devise a school SEN plan</li> <li>• To assist the principal in the allocation of resources</li> <li>• To report annually to BOM</li> <li>• To direct the work of the SNAs</li> <li>• To collaborate with SNAs in relation to relevant students</li> <li>• Establishing and updating a special needs register.</li> <li>• Coordinate the creation and review of Student Support Profiles.</li> <li>• Coordinate the creation and review of Personal Pupil Plans.</li> <li>• To communicate the needs of students to all teachers and advise teachers of the recommendations made in professional assessments relating to individual students.</li> <li>• Listening to colleagues with concerns about students, to be approachable, patient and persistent.</li> <li>• Advising colleagues about their concerns.</li> <li>• To administer and correct standardised assessments</li> <li>• Monitoring any screening or assessments in order to pick up children who are falling behind.</li> <li>• Calling and chairing meetings as necessary of SEN Team members.</li> <li>• Meeting parents to develop profiles or who have concerns about their children. Such meetings usually result in some action.</li> <li>• Meeting and or communication with outside support agencies involved with students on the SEN register.</li> <li>• Developing and maintaining a system of storing records.</li> <li>• Developing SEN Teachers and SNA Timetables. This can be a complex juggling act which often continues throughout the year: fitting often-scarce resources to support students in class or to withdraw them for individual or small group</li> </ul>



		<p>help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating, supporting, encouraging and advising the SNAs.</li> <li>• Liaising with the National Council for Special Needs (NCSE) through the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), applications for incoming first years and for newly identified SEN students throughout the year for SNA access and/or access to assistive technology.</li> <li>• To inform the SENO of changes in the SEN team.</li> <li>• To coordinate the days of the SENO's review of college SEN resources.</li> <li>• Coordinate the review of the SEN and SNA policies of the school on an annual basis and updating it as necessary.</li> <li>• Liaising with DDLETB Psychological Services in support of our SEN students.</li> <li>• Referring a student for educational assessment is the responsibility of the SENCO. This involves collecting of evidence, necessary in showing that the student concerned has significant needs and that the school has done all that it could be reasonably expected to do.</li> <li>• Coordinating the meetings necessary to develop this assessment – informed consent meeting, meeting to assess the student, feedback to parents and student and feedback to concerned staff.</li> <li>• Taking an active role in the College Care Team and coordinating relevant recommended actions.</li> <li>• Working with students' timetables in support of strengths and needs.</li> <li>• Assisting in the application to the State Exam Commission for reasonable accommodation (RACE) in both Junior and Leaving Certificate Exams for students with SENs. This requires the gathering of data from testing.</li> <li>• Making arrangements during House Exams, to support students with SENs who are entitled to reasonable accommodation in State Exams.</li> <li>• Ensuring all documentation is in line for students who have exemptions</li> </ul>
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		<p>in Irish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising certificates of exemptions in Irish for newly identified students with appropriate SENs.</li> <li>• Maintaining a file of useful SEN information for other staff.</li> <li>• Monitoring the resources devoted to special educational needs and making cases for funding where necessary. These resources include books, other teaching materials and practical teaching aids including, if funds allow and technological aids such as laptops.</li> <li>• Initiating in-service training/giving input for the whole staff in order to update knowledge and strategies.</li> <li>• Liaising with feeder Primary schools with regard to those with SENs in order to ensure continuity of care and ease of transition into first year.</li> <li>• Assist the students in transition to third level or work – CAO, completing DARE forms, passing on of relevant records.</li> <li>• Advising staff in the school: helping other staff to understand the educational implications of various conditions and the needs of individual children, and helping them to think of ways of adapting the curriculum, teaching or classroom to suit them.</li> <li>• Keeping up to date with professional training needs. There is such a range of potential problems and new initiatives that the SENCO needs continual updating.</li> <li>• Attendance at SENCO's Network Meeting facilitated by the DDLETB.</li> <li>• Keeping up to date with laws, circulars and directives from DES, NCSE, CAO, SEC, Dept. of Justice etc.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Year Head</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SEN Teacher</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guidance Counsellor</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support an inclusive climate within the College and contribute to the work of the SEN Team</li> <li>• To facilitate the inclusion of an individual student with SEN by monitoring the student's progress within the year group</li> <li>• To promote and encourage an awareness of SEN needs from the students and also a respect for students with SEN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide diagnostic and informal assessments for students on a regular basis in order to monitor their progress and evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention</li> <li>• Collaborate with subject teachers by giving advice on teaching methodologies best suited to the student</li> <li>• Providing direct teaching to the students with SEN whether to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom or to improve upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully assess the curriculum</li> <li>• Provide team teaching/co-operative teaching when withdrawal from the classroom may not always be an appropriate means of supporting the student</li> <li>• Planning, implementing and review individual and/or group interventions</li> <li>• To advise SNA's around the care needs of relevant students</li> <li>• To liaise with external agencies</li> <li>• These duties are reviewed regularly and may change so that the priorities of the SET are addressed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work with members of the SEN team in facilitating the education of students with SEN and their inclusion in the College.</li> <li>• Liaise with SEN Team (Link person) in relation to DARE, HEAR, RACE applications</li> <li>• Counselling in personal, educational and career development</li> <li>• Co-ordinating a number of assessments including the CAT 4 prior to entry and again in 3<sup>rd</sup> year</li> <li>• Provide career information</li> <li>• Present at the Options Information Evening for students and parents progressing to Senior Cycle</li> <li>• Consult with parents and staff</li> <li>• Provide vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience</li> <li>• Work close with Year Heads and the SEN team to identify students requiring support</li> <li>• Facilitate individual appoints for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Transition year and Leaving Certificate to support them in making career decisions</li> <li>• Advising students and parents on subject choices</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u><b>Parent</b></u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u><b>Student</b></u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u><b>Subject Teacher</b></u></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i><b>St. Mac Dara's Community College acknowledges its responsibility under Section 14 of the EPSEN Act 2004 with regard to informing and consulting with parents on all matters relating to their child's education.</b></i></li> <li>• <i><b>We recognise the parent as the primary educator (Article 42 of Irish Constitution).</b></i></li> <li>• <i><b>St. Mac Dara's Community College provides support to parents as follows:-</b></i></li> <li>• Having an effective anti-bullying policy (including a 'buddy helper' system) and keep parents informed of issues relating to bullying</li> <li>• Encouraging parents to contact the SEN team.</li> <li>• <i><b>Parents and the Transition of information:-</b></i></li> <li>• The parents of a child with SEN can provide valuable information to the College in relation to their child's learning difficulties, learning differences and learning preferences. The SEN team seeks relevant professional reports upon acceptance of a place in our College.</li> <li>• <i><b>Parents and home-school links:</b></i></li> <li>• The College provides parents with regular reports on the progress of their son/daughter.</li> <li>• The school journal is used for weekly/daily home-school communication and parent-teacher meetings are held once every year for face-face communication.</li> <li>• For some students with SEN a differentiated report is provided. Special arrangements may be made with the parents in relation to the homework that each individual student with SEN is expected to undertake. Regular communication is available through direct e-mail to SENCO and meetings on request</li> <li>• Parents help the College by keeping the teachers informed of the progress/difficulties they observe in their child's learning as they progress through P.P. school. This should include showing an interest in the completion of homework and familiarising themselves with approaches taken in the College.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have a critical role to play in the development and evaluation of their own learning.</li> </ul> <p>They can –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become more independent as learners and are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning</li> <li>• Become successful as learners and better able to develop skills and strategies to maximise their own learning and to become critical thinkers (meta-cognition)</li> <li>• Become more aware of different teaching and learning styles</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of their own education plan</li> <li>• Become more aware of the importance and value of working co-operatively with others</li> <li>• Reach their potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be aware of the school's policy and procedures (as outlined in this policy) for dealing with students with SEN and ensure all student's needs are met.</li> <li>• To seek advice from the SEN team regarding students with SEN</li> <li>• To participate in CPD in the SEN area</li> <li>• To devise a plan in consultation with the SEN team on the most effective use of an SNA for a student in the class.</li> <li>• To support and encourage independence in the student</li> <li>• To create a positive classroom environment for all students</li> <li>• To differentiate teaching and learning activities for students, including exceptionally able/gifted students</li> <li>• To use assessment for learning and comment only marking</li> <li>• To assess/monitor progress</li> <li>• To consider the needs of students with SEN in all aspects of classroom planning</li> <li>• To complete referral forms, transfer of information forms, etc. as required</li> <li>• Implement agreed strategies</li> <li>• Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies</li> <li>• Direct the work of the SNA's in the classroom</li> <li>• Inform parents of the progress of students through the parent-teacher meetings, school reports and journal</li> <li>• Contribute to the school development planning for their subject area whilst always have concern for students with SEN</li> <li>• Build a bank of differentiated resources pertaining to their subject area which are shared collegially</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Link People for 2018-2019**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Link Person</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Years</b>	<b>Ms M Bowe</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ms A Elliott</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ms L Rowden</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ms C Ward</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ms D Brennan</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Year</b>	<b>Ms R Cairns</b>
<b>DARE/HEAR</b>	<b>Ms M Allsopp &amp; Mr D Finnigan</b>
<b>RACE</b>	<b>Ms M Allsopp &amp; Mr D Finnigan</b>
<b>SENCO</b>	<b>Ms C Ward</b>

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Relevant Laws, DES Circulars and Guidelines and Support Agencies.**

Education Act 1998:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html>

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/enacted/en/html>

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2004/act/30/enacted/en/html>

The Equal Status Acts 2000

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/8/enacted/en/html>

The Equality Act 2004:

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2004/act/24/enacted/en/html>

Circular 14/2017 (New Model of Allocation):

[https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014\\_2017.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2017.pdf)

The Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017):

<https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Special-Education/Guidelines-for-Post-Primary-Schools-Supporting-Students-with-Special-Educational-Needs-in-Mainstream-Schools.pdf>

The NEPS Continuum of Support:

[https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps\\_post\\_primary\\_continuum\\_resource\\_pack.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_post_primary_continuum_resource_pack.pdf)

National Council for Special Education:

[www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)

Department of Education and Skills:

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

St Mac Dara's Community College:

[www.stmacdaras.ie](http://www.stmacdaras.ie)