



## ST. MAC DARA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### Special Needs Assistant Policy

The College's Vision 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."**

#### Introduction:

The Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) policy of St. Mac Dara's Community College with reference to relevant legislation such as The Education Welfare Act 2000, the EPSEN Act 2004 and D.E.S Circulars 07/02, 08/03, 24/03, 13/04, 02/05, 30/14, 51/19, 30/20, 2014, 2019 & 2020 is formulated so that

- All SNA staff have clear guidelines on procedures within the college.
- Each SNA can see him/herself as contributing positively to the learning experiences of the children and the overall efficiency of the college
- We endeavour to provide a culture of fairness, transparency and equality throughout the college
- The college promotes a policy of Inclusion for all stakeholders.

#### Aims:

- To outline the role of the SNA in a whole college context
- To ensure the effective deployment of SNAs to meet the identified needs of students with special needs
- To enable the SNA to be an effective support to the children in his/her care
- To enable the SNA to be an effective support to the class teacher in matters relating to SEN students.

- To provide optimum learning experiences for all SEN students through judicious use of the skills and talents of the SNA.
- To clarify the tasks and duties to be undertaken by the SNA.

### **Staff Roles**

The Principal, through the SEN Coordinator (SENCO) has:

- Responsibility for assigning role specific and child specific tasks to the SNA.
- Responsibility for co-ordinating the timetable of the SNA
- Responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the SNAs' contribution to the needs of the students.
- Responsibility for managing areas of conflict, which may arise.
- Responsibility for co-ordinating meetings with SNAs Minutes of these will be held by the SENCO.
- Assume responsibility for the Personalised Pupil Plan (PPP) for students with SNA access in consultation with all the relevant people including SNAs.

The Teachers

- The subject teacher has a key role in bringing about the successful inclusion of students with special educational needs in mainstream class.
- Collaborate with the SNAs to ensure that the PPP is put into practise.
- The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the educational progress of all students in his/her class.
- To acknowledge the SNA's role of supporting the Care needs of the student in class.

The Special Needs Assistant

- The SNAs are considered an intrinsic part of the college team
- The SNA always works under the direction of the SENCO.
- Each SNA has a duty to maintain confidentiality.
- Each SNA has a duty of care to the student who has access, supporting the care needs of the student.
- The teacher is responsible for planning lessons, setting educational targets and outcomes and directs learning. The SNA provides support to the teacher and the SEN students thereby facilitating the teaching of the curriculum.

**The role and responsibilities of the SNA in St. Mac Dara's Community College are as follows:**

- Assistance with clothing, feeding, intimate care, toileting, general hygiene, general care and observation.
- To foster the participation of assigned students in the social and academic processes of the college. This is done through supervising and assisting SEN students in activities set by the teacher and promoting the inclusion of these children in work and keeping them on task. It may also include tasks such as accompanying teachers and AEN students to activities outside of the classroom, assisting students boarding

and alighting from buses when required, assisting SEN students in P.E and all practical classes.

- The SNA will help supervise SEN students during break times. Where care needs require this.
- The SNA may bring any observations to the attention of either the class teacher or the Tutor.
- The SNA can also play an important part by supporting the work of other agencies and professionals such as the Speech Therapist, Physiotherapist, Behaviour Therapist and Occupational Therapists under the guidance of the SEN Co-ordinator.
- The SNA will also assist teachers in the supervision of students during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods, college visits, walks and similar activities.
- To fully participate in the life of St. Mac Dara's Community College.
- The SNA will participate in further training.

#### **Classroom Procedure**

- The SNA must be aware that the class teacher is responsible for all matters on curriculum, classroom management, discipline etc.
- Recording sheets may be required by the Principal on individual children on a case by case basis.
- Information received on children, and observations made in classrooms need to be handled sensitively, carefully and with the utmost confidentiality as per college policy.
- Parents with questions or issues about college policy or practice should be referred directly to the class teacher, Tutor, Year Head, Principal or SENCO. This applies to direct face- to face communication, home/college communication or indirect telephone communication.

#### **Staff Meetings**

The SNA team will meet regularly during college arranged subject meetings. The minutes of the meetings are given to the Principal and the SENCO.

#### **Reporting Procedures**

1. All SNAs are expected to report directly to the SENCO. In the event that the SENCO is absent then to the Principal or in his/her absence the Deputy Principals.
2. All SNA's must inform the teacher on duty of incidents/accident/injury/observed bruises immediately. An incident report form must then be completed by the appropriate teacher / staff member.
3. The exception to this reporting procedure is in the case of concerns re Child Protection. In this instance report directly to the Designated Liaison Person who is the Principal and in his absence the Deputy Designated Liaison Person - the Deputy Principals. These positions have been authorised by the Board of Management.

## Training

- Induction of new SNAs is the role of SENCO and the Principal. A member of the SEN team will assist induction of a new SNA for familiarisation following commencement of employment.

## Success Criteria

This Policy is focussed on making a difference to the inclusion of and teaching and learning of students with additional needs in our college. We will know that the Policy is achieving its aims when

- Students are experiencing a safe and stimulating environment
- The students with SENs are becoming more independent learners and acquiring life skills.
- The student with SEN is reaching the targets set out in the Personalised Pupil Plans.
- All staff experience team work and support.

## Implementation and Review

The plan will be implemented by the SNAs and teachers supported by the Board of Management and will be reviewed in 2021 or if there are revisions by Circular.

## Ratification and Communication

This Policy will be circulated to all staff members and the Board of Management for approval.

Review of policy date: November 2021.

Signed: Deeex Saad

Date: 1 Dec 2020

(Principal)

Signed: Pamela Keus  
(Chairperson of Board of Management.)

Date: 11 Dec / 2020,

Date of Next Review: Dec 2021