

Inclusion Policy

**Introduction**

Scoil Mochua is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all students, regardless of ability or disability, are valued and supported to achieve their full potential regardless of each student’s background. This policy is informed by the latest legislation and best practices in special education and inclusion, ensuring compliance with national and international standards. This policy represents Scoil Mochua’s commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive learning environment for all students.

**Vision for Inclusion**

Our school believes in creating a welcoming environment where diversity is celebrated, and all students are provided with opportunities to participate fully in school life. We are dedicated to providing equal access to education and ensuring that each student’s unique needs are met through individualized and supportive learning programs.

**Legal and Policy Framework**

This inclusion policy is underpinned by current Irish and international laws and best practices that advocate for the rights of students with disabilities to receive appropriate education. These include:

* Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004: This Act promotes the integration of students with special needs into mainstream education where possible and provides for the development of individual education plans (IEPs).
* Disability Act 2005: This Act provides a statutory framework for the assessment of people with disabilities, including children, ensuring they receive appropriate supports.
* Children and Family Relationships Act 2015: Ensures that children’s rights are central in family law matters and provides protection for children’s education.
* UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) 2006: Ratified by Ireland in 2018, this convention advocates for inclusive education for children with disabilities in mainstream settings.
* The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994): This international document promotes inclusive education systems.
* Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018: Ensures transparency in school admissions and the provision of supports for students with special educational needs.

**Aim**

This policy aims to:

* Ensure all students feel included, respected, and supported in their learning journey.
* Provide equitable access to education and participation in all school activities for students with special educational needs (SEN).
* Encourage collaboration with parents, caregivers, and external agencies to develop comprehensive, individualized educational plans (IEPs) that reflect each student’s unique needs.
* Ensure staff receive regular professional development to support inclusive teaching practices.

**Key Principles of Inclusion**

*Accessibility*

All students should have access to a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. The school will adapt teaching methods, classroom environments, and resources to ensure accessibility for all.

*Individualized Support*

The development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be central to meeting the specific needs of each student. IEPs will be reviewed regularly with input from students, parents, and professionals.

*Collaboration and Partnership*

Inclusive education relies on strong partnerships between educators, parents, external support services, and the students themselves. Regular communication and collaboration are essential to ensure a holistic approach.

*Professional Development*

Continuous training and development for all staff in inclusive education practices will be prioritized. This will include training in differentiated instruction, assistive technologies, and social-emotional support strategies.

**Implementation and Procedures**

*Identification and Assessment*:

* Early identification of students with SEN will be prioritized.
* Appropriate assessments will be carried out to ensure timely interventions.

*Universal Design for Learning, Curriculum and Differentiation*:

* The curriculum will be differentiated to accommodate different learning styles and levels of ability.
* Staff will use various instructional strategies and resources to meet the needs of all students.

*Support Structures*:

* Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) will work alongside teachers to provide additional support for students where needed.
* External professionals such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and psychologists will be engaged as appropriate.

*Monitoring and Review*:

* Regular review meetings will be held to monitor the progress of students with SEN.
* This will include reviewing IEPs, academic progress, and emotional well-being.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

*Board of Management*

The Board of Management will ensure compliance with legislative requirements and oversees the implementation of this policy.

*Principal*

The principal will lead the development of inclusive practices in the school and ensures staff have access to the necessary resources and training.

*Teachers*

Teachers have an obligation to adapt teaching methods and materials to meet the diverse needs of students and collaborate with other professionals to implement IEPs.

*SNAs*

The SNA team in the school will adapt to the diverse needs of the students in the school and assist all other professionals in creating a school environment that supports every child.

*Parents/Guardians*

Parents and/or guardians should actively participate in the development and review of their child’s IEP and support their child’s learning at home.

*Students*

Students are encouraged to participate in decisions that affect their education and well-being.

**Anti-Bullying and Inclusion**

Our school has a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying and discrimination. The Anti-Bullying Policy works hand in hand with this Inclusion Policy to ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students.

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every three years or sooner if required, in response to changes in legislation, school practices, or new research in the field of inclusive education. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian, or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. The next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2027/2028.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in

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Matthew Swain Sophia Casey

Chairperson of BoM Principal/Secretary to the BoM

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