



Glenstal Abbey
SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

Feb 2024

Document Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	2008	Original Version
2.0	Feb 2024	New Version

MISSION STATEMENT

At Glenstal Abbey School we offer our students a Christian environment in which to grow together. We foster independent, critical and imaginative thinking that will help guide them through life.

Our Graduates

We believe that this educational experience will equip our graduates with:

- A lifelong willingness to learn
- A healthy sense of personal identity and courteous self-confidence
- A spirit of creativity and innovation
- Compassion and care for the needs of others
- Independence and originality of thought
- Honour and integrity in all they do and say
- An ability to communicate
- A capacity to lead
- Resilience and courage in adversity
- A knowledge of and appreciation for the tradition of Benedictine spirituality
- Respect for the dignity of others and diversity within the community
- Readiness to adapt to changing situations and circumstances

OUR ENABLING STRENGTHS

Glenstal's distinctive strengths that enable such beneficial outcomes include:

- Our Benedictine ethos and tradition
- Very capable and committed teaching and support staff
- Smaller class sizes and individual care and attention
- Remarkable companionship between students
- The experience of living in a vibrant community
- The unique beauty of the Glenstal demesne
- A safe and secure environment

RATIONALE

Rule of Saint Benedict

“That the strong may have something to strive after and the weak may not fall back in dismay, let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may He bring us all together to everlasting life.”

It is our objective that all students with Special Educational Needs will reach their full potential, both academic and personal, during their educational experience at Glenstal Abbey School.

A description of our Learning Support Department is available on our website at:

<http://www.glenstal.com/our-students/learning-support/>

“Special education needs means a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate and benefit from education on account of enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition” (Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004).

This policy is drawn up in compliance with the Post-Primary Guidelines for Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs & informed by The Education Act (1998), Equal Status Act (2002), Education Welfare Act 2002 and Disability Act 2005 . It considers the relevant DES Circulars and DES guidelines as outlined by the NCSE and NEPS continuum of support.

Glenstal Abbey School is a boys boarding and day school. The process of application to, and enrolment in, Glenstal Abbey School is set out in the Admissions Policy. In the context of the Application & Admissions Policy, Glenstal Abbey School makes no prior categorisation of applicants based on previous educational attainment. This policy aims to ensure that all students with special educational needs are included and receive the optimal educational experience during their years at Glenstal Abbey School to realise their potential.

SEN Allocation Model

Special educational needs resources are allocated based on the Department Continuum of Support model. Under the revised model, the Department provides special education teaching support directly to schools based on their educational profiles including a baseline component.

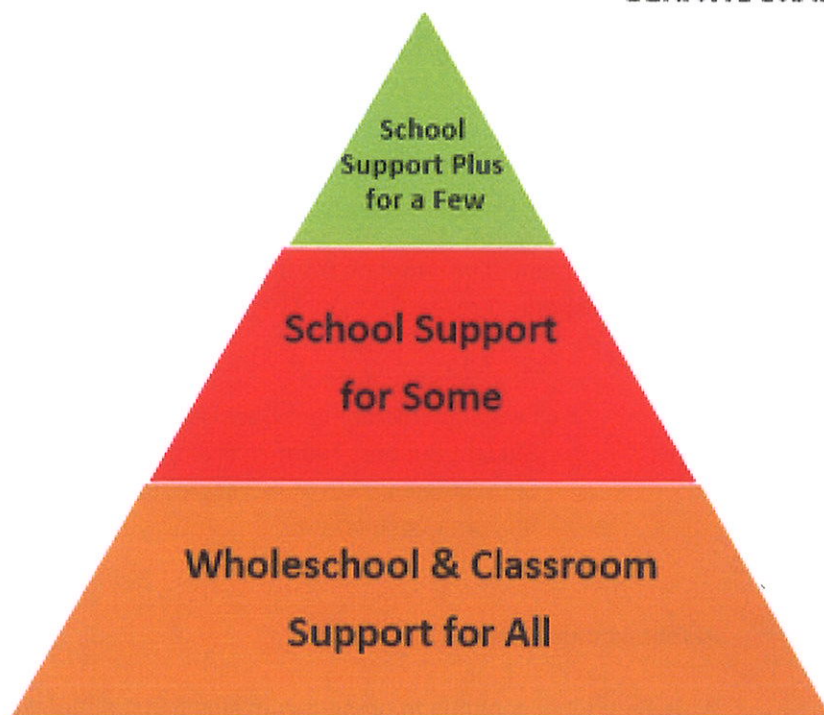
The core objective is that special education teaching resources are distributed in an optimum manner to improve the learning experience and learning outcomes. (Special Education circular 0014/2017)

A Continuum of Support

ACADEMIC SUCCESS



SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL &
BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE



Assessment of Needs

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.

Table 1 outlines how a school can collect evidence about students' educational needs at each level of the Continuum of Support. This evidence can then be used to adapt teaching, to plan the next steps in students' learning and to gauge their responses to intervention.

Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

Table 1

Whole-School and Classroom (Support for All)

The Post-Primary Continuum of Support contains a range of ideas and resources to assist in identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes. The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class.

Identification of those needing additional support can be informed by:

- Intake screening

- Collection of information from primary schools, including Student Passport
 - Teacher observation
 - Teacher assessment
 - Learning Environment Checklist
 - Student Support Team involvement
 - Standardised tests of literacy/numeracy
 - Student consultation

Parental consultation

Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole-school interventions (such as differentiated teaching, a mentoring programme or social skills group), School Support (for Some) is initiated.

**School Support
(for Some)**

At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:

- Teacher observation records
 - Teacher-designed measures / assessments
 - Parent/student interview
 - Learning environment checklist
 - Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy
- Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures
 - Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Support at this level can take many forms, for example: team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, peer mentoring, inclusion in social skills groups, behaviour reward and consequence systems.
- A Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

**School Support
Plus
(for a Few)**

At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate.

Data generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and serve as a baseline against which to map progress.

A Support Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.

Roles and Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for the provision of education to all students, including students with special educational needs, lies with the Board of Management. Under current legislation, the Principal of the school has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met. In order to facilitate the organisation and provision of education for students with special educational needs a multidisciplinary approach is applied to include the following personnel:

- Assistant Principal II - Special Educational Needs Teaching and Learning
- Head of Learning Support
- Junior and Senior Deans
- Special Education Teachers
- Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
- Guidance Counsellors
- Mainstream Teachers
- Class Tutors
- Housemastering Team
- Health Centre
- Student Support Team

Continuous Professional Development

Appropriate CPD will be highlighted and organised by the Learning Support Department for teachers and other staff on a regular basis.

Enrolment

A student's transfer from Primary School, or into other year groups, occurs following the parents'/guardians' acceptance of the offer of a place at Glenstal Abbey School.

Where details are shared with the school of a particular need, the Learning Support Team and the Principal may request that parents/guardians of incoming students meet with the Learning Support team prior to entry. Having received parental consent, discussions may ensue with the student's Primary School Principal re matters relevant to the successful integration, educational and social progress of a student.

The parents/guardians of all incoming students are required to provide copies of prior documentation and/or reports (e.g. Educational Assessments, Occupational Therapist reports,

Clinical Psychologist reports, medical/emotional/behavioural information) which may be of relevance to the provision of additional support for their children. The documentation will be used by the school to effectively plan the support of the student and monitor progress, it is therefore important that it is provided in a timely manner.

Pertinent information about all students with special educational needs is communicated by the Learning Support Team in a sensitive manner to relevant school staff and Compass database. Our student information system is regularly updated and access is restricted accordingly.

We endeavour to be flexible when timetabling the school's special educational needs provision; however it is not always possible to allocate additional learning support to a new student mid-cycle.

Provision of Resources

Our Learning Support team works closely at all times with our guidance counsellors, chaplain and Student Support team, along with subject teachers, regarding whole school student wellbeing and development.

The school year commences with an Induction for all new students. Students in all year groups are allocated a Class Tutor. Subject teachers are requested to liaise with Class Tutors and the Learning Support Team regarding the progress of students.

First Year and Transition Year students sit screening tests in literacy and numeracy during their first year and CAT4 standardised tests (Cognitive Abilities Test 4th edition). These test results identify educational needs and feed into the planning of educational support. Students in Junior Cycle are divided into mixed-ability base class groups. Access to all subjects and extra-curricular activities is available to all students. The school actively promotes inclusivity, tolerance and acceptance of diversity in its day-to-day activities.

At Junior and Senior Cycle learning support may be timetabled during Irish and/or MEL (Modern European Languages) class periods, in the case where students are exempt from languages. Those students with additional needs who are not exempt from the study of Irish or MEL may, in some cases, reduce their optional subject choice load in order to receive support or access support at an appropriate timetable slot. Additional support may be provided in a variety of ways. These include SNA assistance, team-teaching, in-class support, targeted withdrawal from mainstream class, small group/individualised teaching. Teaching support should not be solely

equated with withdrawal from class for one-to-one tuition.

Parents/guardians are welcome to make contact with the Learning Support Team regarding their sons(s) education. Teachers also welcome the input of parents/guardians and seek to work collaboratively to support student needs and development.

Reasonable Accommodations

- State Examinations: (RACE Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations). Applications for reasonable accommodations are made in 3rd year and 6th year for students who meet the State Examinations criterion.
- House Examinations: The school facilitates, where practicable, reasonable accommodations for students who may meet State Examinations Criterion.

Disability Access Route To Education (DARE)

'DARE is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education' <https://accesscollege.ie/dare/>.

DARE applications are made through the Career Guidance Department with the support of the Special Educational Needs team, particularly in relation to Educational Impact Statements and standardised testing to establish whether a student meets the criteria for this scheme.

Liaison with External Agencies/Services

Glenstal Abbey School maintains links with a range of local and regional organisations in support of its students with special educational needs. These include the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) for the region appointed by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the National Psychological Service (NEPS), who provide recommendations and advice. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides support for students experiencing difficulties of a behavioural/emotional nature and advice on how best to address those concerns in a school environment. Other agencies include the Health Service Executive (HSE), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the Special Education Support Service (SESS), the Second Level Support Services (SLSS), the Dyslexia Association of Ireland, the Department of Education and Skills and The Child and Family Agency (TUSLA).

Review

The Policy will be reviewed regularly after its implementation.

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management in February 2024

Signed: 

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 19th Feb 2024

Signed: 

Headmaster/Principal

Date: 19th Feb 2024