

Temple Carrig School

Support for Learning (SFL) Department Policy

Formerly known as SEN, the Support for Learning (SFL) Department plays a crucial role in Temple Carrig School. In the spirit of the Statement of Ethos, the School aims to provide an inclusive environment for all the students in our care, including those with individual learning differences.

Legal Context:

- Education Act (1998): *A recognized school shall provide education to students which is appropriate to their abilities and needs and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, it shall, as far as resources permit, ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with special educational needs, are identified and provided for.*
- Equal Status Act (2000 - 2004): *Discrimination on the grounds of disability is prohibited. Disability is broadly defined and includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions. Schools are required by law to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities.*
- Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004): *Definition of Special Needs: A person who has special educational needs, ... defined as a restriction in the capacity of the child to participate in and benefit from, education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition.*

Aims and Objectives

The SFL Department aims to establish clear guidelines for

- The identification of students with additional/individual needs
- Procedures to be followed once students are identified
- The training and support of staff in their work with SFL students

The objectives of the SFL Department are to ensure that students who are identified with support for learning

- Are provided with as much support as resources allow in an inclusive environment throughout their time in the school
- Receive the appropriate tuition within the context of mainstream classrooms or individually or in small groups for students with more particular needs
- Are assessed in a way appropriate to their needs
- Are monitored and reviewed regularly to establish their changing needs.

Identification of Students with additional/individual needs

Students will be identified in the following ways:

- By parents/guardians who contact the school directly. Parents/guardians of a student with additional educational needs who wish to enrol their son/daughter in the school are requested to provide all educational/psychological/medical reports at the earliest opportunity prior to the date of enrolment (to allow the school time to apply to the DES for appropriate resources.)
- From information gathered by the Guidance Counsellors and the SFL Coordinator.
- Following the confirmation of a student's enrolment in a post-primary school, the Principal should send a written request for the student's end-of-year 6th class report card to the primary school. This should include assessment results, standardised test results and any other relevant information on the student.
- By subject teachers, form teachers and Year Heads once the student is in the school.
- By recommendation as a result of referral forms and reports.

Organisation of Additional Support for SFL students

- Provision of Learning Support suite of rooms
- Individual withdrawal
- Small group withdrawal
- Classroom assistant / Special Needs Assistant (SNA) see Role of an SNA
- Reduced timetable / restricted range of subjects
- Staff with expertise
- Use of iPads, laptops and appropriate software programmes
- Use of library facilities
- Differentiated materials within subject departments and individual classes
- Provision of reasonable accommodation (RACE) during in-house examinations

Provision of Learning Support and other resources

- The school will do all that it reasonably can to comply with all DES guidelines for individual students. The school will maintain regular contact with the regional Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) in the interests of SFL students.
- Management will work to ensure that there is sufficient staff to meet the needs identified.

Role of the SFL Coordinator

To provide support for students with additional/individual needs through:

- Comprehensive liaison with management, parents, Guidance Counsellors, Year Heads, subject teachers, SNAs, Librarian, ancillary staff, SENO, NEPS and other relevant professionals.
- To have responsibility with Guidance Counsellors for assessing First Year students.
- Early identification of the students
- To assess the strengths and needs of SFL students
- Specialist tuition
- To implement appropriate learning and, where necessary, behaviour plans.
- To assess and analyse the results of psychometric testing and advise students and parents re RACE applications.
- To work with the Examinations Aid in organising RACE for in-house and external exams.
- To advise management re applications for an exemption from the study of Irish.
- To make applications for assistive technology and SNAs.
- To access resource materials including ICT materials.
- To timetable the provision of learning support classes.
- To keep files in a secure area on each student with SFL.
- To develop SSPs and review them annually.

Role of Support Teacher

- The support teacher provides direct teaching to a student with additional educational needs either to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom or to improve upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully access the curriculum.
- The role of the support teacher is to support and remediate the literacy and/or numeracy needs of a student.
- The support teacher has a very good insight into a student's needs and when appropriate can provide advice to subject teachers as to the teaching methodologies best suited to that student.
- The support teacher monitors how a student has progressed and decides (in collaboration with other relevant parties) how a student should and can be furthered.
- Support teachers and subject teachers work in partnership thus ensuring that students are supported as effectively as possible.

Role of an SNA

- To assist the students assigned to them in accessing as much of the normal curriculum as possible.
- To assist the class teacher in implementing the curriculum.
- To help students carry out assigned tasks.
- To help students learn and adopt new skills.
- To praise, support and encourage students and to be a positive influence in the class.
- To facilitate periods of time-out for students where appropriate
- To provide assistance for students who have granted RACE in state and

in-house examinations.

- To encourage and support students to be as independent as possible.
- To foster co-operative learning and facilitate development of friendships.
- To liaise with the SFL Co-ordinator regarding the inclusion, behaviour and learning difficulties of SFL students.
- Other work which may be determined by the needs of students with additional/individual needs and the school.
- To assist in the development of SSPs.

SNAs will carry out their duties in a caring, professional and confidential manner. Information on SFL students shall only be disclosed on a need to know basis to the relevant people.

While supporting the student's development in ways that will foster security and confidence, SNAs have a professional responsibility to share information with school management in order to safeguard children in our care.

Role of the Year Head

- Tracking progress of students.
- Oversee the SFL student' engagement with school life through pastoral care, extra-curricular and other activities.
- Monitor social interaction of students and relationships with peers.

Role of Subject Teacher

- To have primary responsibility for the progress of all students in her/his classes
- To collaborate with SFL Co-ordinator in identifying students who may have general or specific learning difficulties.
- To collaborate with the SFL Coordinator in identifying students who may require short-term remediation.
- To develop individual programmes in the class room for SFL students and forwarding these to the SFL Coordinator.
- To differentiate the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all students within the class
- To provide learning activities and materials that will ensure success and progress for all students at their own level.

Role of Principal/Deputy Principal

- To take overall responsibility for SFL Programme and the provision of resources for students with additional/individual needs.
- To work with BOM, staff and parents/guardians in the development of a whole school plan for supporting SFL students.

- To monitor implementation of SFL programme and selection of students for supplementary teaching.
- To provide for continuing professional development to increase teachers' knowledge of appropriate teaching methodologies

Role of the Board of Management

- To oversee development of SFL Support Policy.
- To provide continuing professional development for teachers in supporting students with additional educational needs.
- To ensure adequate accommodation and resources.
- To provide secure facility for storage of records.

Role of the Chaplaincy Team

- To provide pastoral care and support to SFL students, to deal with particular emotional, personal and social issues which may affect them.
- To provide pastoral care and support to parents of SFL students in need of this support.

Role of the Library

- To provide curriculum support for the support and subject teachers and students by
 - Acquiring curriculum material that is age and interest appropriate and suitable for the required reading levels
 - Providing assistance to students on a 1:1 or group basis in identifying resources for project work
 - Making the Library available for use by SFL students and their teachers
- To promote reading for pleasure and information by
 - Acquiring material that is age and interest appropriate and suitable for all reading levels
 - To design, deliver and evaluate Information Skills classes to ensure that all students including students with additional/individual needs will acquire the required information skills and become confident and effective Library users
 - To ensure that the physical layout and signage within the Library is welcoming and effective for all Library users.

Role of Parents/ Guardians

- The school recognises the right of parents/guardians of students with additional/individual needs to be involved in and consulted about the programme of education available to their child.
- Parents/ guardians are requested to support the work of the school by

providing all relevant information as soon as it is available, ensuring regular attendance, encouraging and supporting their child to participate positively in learning and all school activities.

- The school recognises the right of appeal of parents/guardians as set out in the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.

Role of Students in the SFL Department

- The school welcomes the involvement of students with additional/individual needs in planning for their own learning. They will be consulted and involved in the development of an SSP.
- The school requires that all students participate actively and positively in the development of their own learning. This means attending school regularly, bringing the correct textbooks/iPad and equipment, participating positively in classroom activities and completing appropriate homework and assignments.

Record Keeping

- All records relating to assessments of individual students will be kept in a secure location.
- Individual psychological assessments will be kept on file and the student's right to confidentiality will be respected.
- Assessment records will be kept on file for seven years after the student has left the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring and evaluation of the support programme for students with additional/individual needs will be conducted on an on-going basis throughout the year by the Principal, Deputy Principal and SFL Coordinator supported by a review committee.
- Weekly meetings will be held to constantly review SFL issues. These will be attended by Principal, SFL Coordinator, SFL teaching staff (where possible).

SFL in TY

- SFL support is an integral part of TY.
- A review of learning support available to students up to their Junior Cert will be carried out at the beginning of Transition Year and the SFL team, in consultation with subject teachers, will determine which students will continue to receive support during TY. This review will analyse

information from the following sources: Assessment tests, NGRT, Junior Cert, DATS and class progress.

- Due to the open nature of the TY programme it is considered to be an ideal opportunity for remediation as deemed necessary by the SFL Coordinator in collaboration with the SFL team and subject teachers.