



Rosemont School Special Needs Policy

Reviewed: 2021

Due for review: 2024

Introduction

Rosemont School's Special Educational Needs policy is based on the school's mission statement. It has been drawn up according to the guidelines of the Department of Education and Skills and other relevant educational bodies. Its main concern is the Wellbeing of each student.

Our School Mission and ethos

Our Catholic ethos values each person as a child of God and encourages our parents, staff, and students to live their faith in everyday life. The parents who founded Rosemont built this ethos from the message of St. Josemaria, founder of Opus Dei. www.opusdei.ie

Ethos in Rosemont means:

- Personal excellence and virtue are goals worth striving for
- Academic achievement enables our students to serve society
- An atmosphere of trust and freedom empowers learning

Parents, as the primary educators of their children, work with the school to foster our ethos. Rosemont is open to students from all beliefs and backgrounds.

Rosemont recognises that parents have the primary responsibility for the social, personal and health development of their children. As part of the partnership that we seek to foster with parents we support them in this role in many ways, one of which is the SPHE Short Course . The SPHE Short Course is provided within our Wellbeing programme and in a way that is in keeping with the mission and ethos of Rosemont School.

This policy document aims to outline the form that additional educational support for students with learning difficulties or special educational needs takes in Rosemont School and the philosophy which underpins it. Rosemont School operates an inclusive mixed ability policy where students of all abilities are taught in the same classes. Streaming of classes occurs in 3rd and 6th year for core subjects such as Irish and Maths.

Rosemont School Policy on Special Educational Needs February 2019

Definition:

Students with learning difficulties or special educational needs are: Students whose educational difficulties or special educational needs prevent or hinder them from benefiting adequately from the education normally provided for students of the same age.

Students who have been identified as being 'gifted and talented' in Rosemont are also included in this policy on SEN. Please refer to the Gifted and Talented policy for more information.

Note: for the purpose of this policy document, the term "special needs" should be understood to include the terms "learning difficulties" and "special educational needs" unless otherwise stated.

Key Objectives of Special Educational Needs Policy:

The general educational objectives for students with special educational needs are the same as for all students. The main aims are:

- To help each pupil reach her full potential according to her capabilities.
- To establish lines for clear communication and feedback between all parties involved.
- To work on a team approach to learning support
- To further develop skills among teachers for mixed ability teaching
- To support the wellbeing of each student

Admission to the school

More detail on admission to the school may be found in the school's Admissions Policy.

Career guidance

Students meet with the career guidance counsellor regularly. CATS tests are carried out regularly and these help highlight any special educational needs. Students are referred for further assessment if necessary. CATS are carried out early in first year and again in 2nd Year and finally in 4th year.

Coaching

Coaching is central to Rosemont's ethos and success. Each student has a Coach who meets with her approximately every three weeks, for a 10–20 minute conversation. With the assistance of her Coach, a student sets or reviews her goals in academics, extra-curricular, sporting, social or other areas. Coaching provides students with the opportunity to evaluate the progress they have made on their goals and devise new strategies for success. This will necessarily involve helping each student to know herself better, set personal goals, cultivate interests and foster her own potential. A Coach helps a student to acquire perspective on

life's ups and downs and to grow in virtues such as honesty, self-mastery, sincerity, gratitude, cheerfulness, generosity, hard work, modesty and respect.

Coaches are one of the key contacts for parents. Coaches may contact parents, if necessary, to ensure their involvement in their daughter's education. Coaches are available to meet parents each term to learn how to help the student grow and develop. Coaches prepare for the meeting by talking to the relevant subject teachers for any updates on the student's progress. Coach-Parent meetings are approximately 20 minutes in duration.

Coaches meet regularly for meetings with the Head of Coaching.

Student Support Team- Year Heads and Class Tutors

Each Year has a Year Head and Class Tutor. These are members of the teaching staff with a special pastoral care role including each student's wellbeing. As well as having specific administrative duties, the Year Head and Class Tutors monitor class progress and is therefore a valuable point of contact for all parents. They also deliver the Wellbeing programme weekly.

Subject Teachers

Subject teachers have an important role to play in helping any students who may have special educational needs. They provide personal oral feedback and encouragement both in the class and outside to students of all abilities.

Subject teachers closely monitor class atmosphere and the demeanour of individuals, taking account of each students' wellbeing. They discuss with the Year Head or Class Tutor if concerned about a particular student or the class. They actively encourage the development of values such as empathy, kindness, generosity, sincerity and integrity etc., within the context of the classroom, and place particular value on the appreciation of differing talents and skills within the class.

There is open communication between Year Head and Class Tutors, Coaches and Subject teachers to collaborate to achieve specific, student-centred goals and to ensure an awareness of the specific needs of any pupil at a certain time.

Planning

Subject plans are based on the school's mixed ability policy, creating activities within and outside of the classroom which allow a positive and meaningful learning experience for the full ability range. Subject plans all include a range of teaching methodologies and resources which cater for all students' needs. Staff planning sessions incorporate planning for students with special educational needs.

The Curriculum

It is school policy that all students, including students with special needs, should have access to the broad and balanced curriculum provided in the school. Students with special needs require more flexibility of choice. Special care is taken with option subjects chosen.

Methodologies

Teachers employ a wide range of techniques and methodologies to reach out to the different learning styles of students. Teachers receive regular training to ensure that they are up to date with the latest developments in methodologies, which allows them to reach out to students of all abilities. Examples of modules staff have taken are co-operative learning, and active/discovery learning.

The transition from primary school to secondary school.

At Rosemont School we are aware of possible difficulties encountered by students of all abilities, which can be caused by the move from primary to secondary school. Induction afternoons are organised for incoming students prior to entry. This allows students to get to know the other members of their class. Again, activities are based on our mixed ability policy to allow all students to become involved.

Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations

The school management applies for Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations for students with learning difficulties or special educational needs each year in consultation with the parents, the student and the school's designated NEPS psychologist.

Gifted Students

The term 'special educational needs' also applies to those students who may be especially gifted in one or more areas. Diverse methodologies employed by teachers allow students of all levels to be challenged in class. School planning also incorporates planning for gifted students. Rosemont's emphasis on the use of technology provides scope for students to work at a pace appropriate to their abilities.

Technology/Laptop Usage

Students who may have language difficulties are provided for by use of laptops for written assignments, in keeping with the Department of Education policy. Such students may be allowed to use laptops for completion of state examinations.

Transition Year

Rosemont's policy of inclusion is maintained throughout Transition Year. The TY programme aims to challenge and affirm the full range of abilities of participating students. In some cases this means specific activities targeted at students with particular learning abilities or

particular learning needs. Individual cases which have been identified as requiring special learning support continue to be monitored to ensure ongoing progress for the given situation. Over the years we have been happy to note how many of the modules that students experience in Transition Year prove to be particularly constructive in building self confidence among those with special needs. In particular, it has been found that the teamwork involved in social work, adventure sports, the mini company, to mention a few, have affirmed students who have special needs due to academic, personal or family challenges

Students

Results of this policy of inclusion have been positive to this point. Feedback from students and parents has been very encouraging and affirming of our approach in facilitating students with special educational needs. Our policy approaches true inclusion as the specific coaching of each individual gives to each student complete equality in the school environment.

Bibliography

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017)
Rosemont's Child Safeguarding Statement
"Exceptionally able students" National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2006)
Inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs-Post-Primary Guidelines
Department of Education and Science (2007)
"Chief Inspector's report" DES Inspectorate (2005)
The Education Act (1998)