

**St. Louis Community School Kiltimagh**

**Special Needs Assistant Policy**

**St. Louis CS Mission Statement**

St. Louis Community School is a student-centred, post-primary school that extends a warm welcome to all. In our co-educational environment we offer a broad curriculum which seeks to enhance the holistic development of all our students in an equitable manner. The cornerstone of our ethos is formed by working in partnership with the community, fostering innovative teaching, good academic achievement, creating a caring atmosphere and the development of self-worth.

**Introduction:**

The Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) policy of St. Louis Community School 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 is formulated so that

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

**Aims:**

* To outline the role of the SNA in a whole school 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 judicial 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 school 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 he/she has access to, 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. Louis Community School are as follows:**

* To foster the participation of assigned students in the social and academic processes of the school. This is achieved 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 SEN 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 Year Head.
* 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.
* Assistance with clothing, feeding, intimate care, toileting, general hygiene, general care and observation.
* The SNA will also assist teachers in the supervision of students during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods, walks and similar activities.
* To fully participate in the life of St. Louis Community School.
* 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 school policy.
* Parents with questions or issues about school policy or practice should be referred directly to the class teacher, Year Head, Principal or SENCO. This applies to direct face- to face communication, home/school communication or indirect telephone communication.

# Staff Meetings

The SNA team will meet regularly and the minutes of their meetings will be 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 Principal.

1. All SNAs 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.

1. 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 her absence the Deputy Designated Liaison Person - the Deputy Principal. 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 school. 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.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Next Review: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_