



Policy Statement

Additional Needs / Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

Páistí sona ag foghlaim le Chéile

Definition of Special Educational Needs

It is the policy of Naíscóil na Seolta that special educational needs (SEN) be defined according to the Education (Northern Ireland) order 1996 which suggests that “A child has special educational needs if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age or a disability which prevents him or her from making use of educational facilities generally provided in mainstream schools.” Translated into the Naíscóil situation, the child will be deemed to have special needs if they demonstrate a significant delay in the development of cognitive skills, social/emotional skills and communication skills. It is noted that about 20% of children will have special educational needs at some stage in their education.

Aims of the Naíscóil

It is the policy of Naíscóil na Seolta that the aims for children with special educational needs are consistent. Naíscóil na Seolta endeavours to ensure all children learn at a pace appropriate to their ability and reach their full potential. Key to this is effective communication between the manager, staff, committee, parents and, where appropriate, external agencies in order to create a positive learning environment.

At Naíscóil na Seolta, children with special educational needs are integrated as fully as possible. Where it is deemed to be necessary, or appropriate, a child may be encouraged towards certain activities in order to address a specific developmental concern.

Admission Arrangements

Children with special needs are admitted to the Naíscóil in the same manner as all other children. Some pupils may require flexible settling-in arrangements and an extended period of ‘settling-in’ with reduced hours and this will be managed as appropriate to best meet the needs of the child.

Special Facilities

The main building is on ground level and is suitable for wheelchair access. Special arrangements for parking within the Naíscoil grounds can be made for children and/or parents with physical difficulties. If one to one support is required this can be adapted for by the staff rota. Without the appointment of additional designated support staff, the Naíscoil operates with the usual staff to child ratio, which is one adult to thirteen children if aged three and above and one adult to four children if aged between two and three.

Arrangements for coordinating provision

All staff should be familiar with the Naíscoil's special educational needs procedures and should be involved in the monitoring and review of the Naíscoil's Additional Needs / SEN Policy.

The Role of the Naíscoil leader

The Naíscoil leader will ensure the fostering of appropriate attitudes, set standards and monitor the provision for children with special needs. The responsibilities of the Naíscoil leader include:

- Helping to identify children with special educational needs.
- Providing support and advice to colleagues to ensure effective learning.
- Maintaining a special educational needs register if needed, with records of pupils with special educational needs.
- Managing and developing appropriate resources.
- Liaising with parents, support services and agencies.
- Reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's policy.

Support staff and outside agencies

There will be planned and regular opportunities for liaison between staff. Full cooperation will be given to all outside agencies and support staff, information made available and facilities provided for peripatetic staff to work with the SEN children within the school. This school maintains a multi-disciplinary approach and will liaise fully with external agencies.

Identification and assessment

Children with special educational needs are identified in different ways.

1. Healthcare staff such as the health visitor often identify many children with SEN prior to the child starting the Naíscoil and therefore it is aware of any special needs before the school term begins.
2. Children who are identified as having special educational needs after observations and assessments carried out by staff .
3. Communication of difficulties/concerns made by a parent or carer .

Staff will monitor and assess all children on a regular basis, with any concerns being acted on at an early stage.

If the Naíscoil leader deems that any child's needs may be beyond the capability of the Naíscoil team then a decision must be taken along with the staffing support sub-committee to make alternative arrangements for that child.

Special Educational Provision

Children with special educational needs should experience teaching and learning in a variety of situations. This will include working with the whole class, in a small group situation and on an individual one-to-one basis. Focused planning will ensure that children with special educational needs enjoy success in learning. The Naíscoil recognises the importance of providing a broad and balanced learning experience for children with special educational needs. Should one to one classroom assistance be in place, this is used as a support rather than to single out a child and therefore ensure that special educational provision is, as far as is possible, made within the classroom setting.

Allocation of resources

The number of children with special educational needs who are enrolled within the Naíscoil is not known until the new school year commences and the children have settled in. The needs of children will be identified through the year and these will be reviewed by the Naíscoil leader in conjunction with the staff sub-committee. Staff will also keep equipment and resources under review and, if the budget allows, any necessary additional resources can be purchased.

Partnership with parents and carers

Naíscoil na Seolta aims to work in partnership with parents/carers and to foster an atmosphere in which effective partnership between the parent and the Naíscoil can flourish.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and monitored in line with the Naíscoil’s policy review schedule.

This Policy last reviewed 12th Dec 2022 by Andrew McCammon	Date:
Signed:	Position in Naíscoil na Seolta: