

**ST. PAUL'S SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
**Greenhills**  
**Dublin 12**



# **Special Educational Needs Policy**

---

## 1. School Ethos and Mission Statement

St. Paul's is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School for girls. We endeavour to care for the students in an all-encompassing holistic manner in keeping with the ethos of the school which is *Omnibus Omnia* meaning 'all things to all':

- where all persons are sacred because each is made in the image of God and therefore deserving of respect
- where all creation is an expression of the goodness and love of God
- where all are entitled, in justice, to be given the opportunity to develop fully as persons

The aim of St. Paul's Secondary School is to enable students to become well-balanced and mature persons through a programme that caters for the spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic potentialities of the individual.

This is achieved by helping students match their skills and abilities, interests and knowledge, values and preferences with plans that meet students' educational and future goals. Striving to increase the students' self-esteem, confidence and achievement in all areas of school life is the philosophy on which our work is based.

Students will be prepared to embrace the challenges of tomorrow and inspired to create opportunities for their futures in a diverse, dynamic and complex society. Each student is engaged on a journey through life and the guidance provided will ensure that students develop awareness and explore many opportunities on this journey.

## 2. Aims and Objectives of the Special Educational Needs Policy

St. Paul's Secondary School aims to:

- Give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children who have a disability or who have other Special Educational Needs (SEN), as they relate to education and in so far as the school can cater for them.
- Provide in line with the new model of allocation, Circular 14/2017, a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students in the school.
- Ensure that students with SEN are educated in an inclusive environment.
- Ensure equality between students with SEN and those without
- Ensure that students with SEN are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their learning potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected.
- Assess sensitively students with SEN on entry into the school both formally with all of the other students (unless there is a need to be assessed separately) and informally by means of observation, taking of handwriting samples, comprehension, reading and dictation samples for those engaging in separate LS programmes (i.e. Irish Exempt students, EAL students or those with complex needs)

- Share with all members of staff, under the SEN tab on VShare, the needs of students with SEN and to actively support staff in the differentiated teaching of students with SEN.
- Creation of an environment of collegiality where teachers can seek advice and practical help, to ensure that SEN is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
- Ensure that students with SEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Set high expectations for students with SEN and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging them to achieve to their full potential.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with SEN.
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at home.
- Provide for the involvement of parents in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to their children, in so far as is practical.
- Co-operate and work closely with the National Council for Special Educational Needs (NCSE) and other agencies regarding the education of students with SEN
- Develop staff expertise in dealing with SEN by means of CPD
- Implement the advice, guidance and support of other agencies in supporting students with SEN
- Plan, target, monitor, evaluate and review the progress of students accessing Learning Support

### 3. Scope of Educational Policy Pertaining to Special Needs

This policy applies to all students attending St. Paul's Secondary School

#### 3.1 Provision for students with Special Educational Needs

- Section 9 (a) of the Act states that “A recognised 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 use its available resources to (a) ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for”

#### 3.2 The Education for Persons with Special Educational Need Act (2004)

- **The EPSEN Act** details how schools would put a three staged plan in place to provide for an Inclusive Education with an accompanying Individual Education Plan for students with Special Needs
- This policy is in keeping with Circular 14/2017 (New Model of Allocation) and the corresponding Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017)

- It also adheres to the policy document Looking at Our School 2016: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools. In particular to the importance of wellbeing to learning, “The quality framework sees students’ well-being as intrinsic to this holistic view of learning, both as an outcome of learning and as an enabler of learning. It recognises the crucial role of schools in promoting and nurturing students’ well-being through their practices in the key areas of school environment, curriculum, policies, and partnerships.” The importance of students’ well-being is therefore paramount in our approach to students with SEN

#### **4. Identifying Students with SEN**

St. Paul's Secondary School recognises these needs in the following categories of students:

- Those who have already been identified as having SEN prior to transfer as per DES guidelines
- Those who are identified after enrolment as requiring additional educational support while in the school
- Provisions are in place for students whose first language is not English and who have been assessed and diagnosed with SEN according to DES Guidelines
- Students who are exceptionally able in one or more areas of the curriculum

#### **5. Admissions**

- St. Paul's Secondary School affirms the right of all students to a full education in as inclusive a setting as possible in line with the school mission statement outlined above
- Students with SEN follow the school’s Admissions Policy. However, to ensure that the school can provide for individual needs the procedures are as follows:
  - All applications for entry to St. Paul's Secondary School are processed without prejudice to the SEN needs of the student. If a report from professional(s) who have assessed the student, indicate that the student should not attend mainstream school, this will be discussed with parents and relevant professionals prior to enrolment
  - All supporting documentation including medical and educational reports must accompany enrolment forms
  - The SEN team request that parents fill out a Post Primary Transfer Review Information Form (Pink Form) which includes information regarding SEN, Learning Support, Irish Exemptions, Resources, SNA entitlement and permission from the parent to access confidential information regarding the student
  - The Guidance team arrange visits to the feeder primary schools to gather information on students with SEN. Arrangements are also made to inform primary schools of CAT4 testing in January. All information gathered is given to the SEN team for investigation
  - Where deemed necessary, to best facilitate students, after receiving the above information, the St Paul’s SEN team meets with the Primary School Principal/Resource Teachers to discuss the nature of support of the SEN students making the transition from primary school to secondary

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **6.1 The Role of the Board of Management**

- To ensure that all students with SEN are identified and assessed
- To ensure that the school has a SEN Policy in place, to monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation
- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in the school to ensure in as far as is practical that students with SEN leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society
- To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with SEN
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents and other relevant agencies/personnel and to ensure that parents are informed of their child's SEN and how these needs are being met
- To ensure that parents are consulted with regard to and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education
- To ensure that the SEN Policy forms part of the School plan
- To develop a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004

### **6.2 The Role of the Principal**

- On behalf of the Board of Management of St. Paul's Secondary School, the Principal has responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day management of policy and provision for students with SEN
- To inform the Board of Management of issues, which are relevant to SEN
- In consultation with the SEN Coordinator and other relevant personnel, to liaise with the Department of Education and Science regarding needs and provision. This also includes applications for reasonable accommodations and the exemption from Irish in relation to state examinations as well as assessments
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds
- To establish a 'Special Needs Team' within the school with a specific remit to ensure identification of and support for students with SEN
- To promote a whole school approach to SEN, making all staff aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development in this area
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents of students with SEN
- To ensure that an effective transition programme is in place for consultation with feeder primary schools regarding the enrolment of new students with SEN
- To ensure that teaching and learning methodologies promoted in the school are based on the principles of differentiation and inclusion

### **6.3 The Role of the Deputy Principal**

- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in the school to ensure in as far as is practical that students with SEN leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society

- To manage the timetable of the SEN team, teachers of Learning Support / Resource (including team teaching), SNAs, and students with SEN
- To plan for all new students with SEN in the school. The deputy principal will meet with the SEN Team and discuss the various methods of supporting each child with SEN
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds
- To establish a ‘Special Needs Support Team’ within the school with a specific remit to ensure identification of and support for students with SEN
- To deliver a whole school SEN meeting at the beginning of the year to discuss and update staff on the progress of each child with SEN in school
- To promote a whole school approach to SEN, making all staff aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development in this area
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents of students with SEN
- To ensure that an effective transition programme is in place between St Paul’s and their feeder primary schools regarding the enrolment of new students with SEN
- To ensure that teaching and learning methodologies promoted in the school are based on the principles of differentiation and inclusion

#### **6.4 The Role of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team**

The SEN team plays a key role in the evaluation of practice and procedures relating to SEN. The School acknowledges that it is particularly important to continually review and develop our practices in relation to:

- Accessing relevant information about all our intake students.
- How SEN information is made available to staff.
- Being mindful of GDPR in relation to SEN information (sensitive information)
- How we use assessment data results, including the Cognitive Ability Tests to support and challenge our students.
- Literacy and Numeracy Testing for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle students.

The SEN team comprises a core team of two co-ordinators and an ICT specialist, and a team of year group co-ordinators. The core team members have admin. hours on their timetables to cover duties such as applications for RACE, in-house testing and the encryption of SEN data. The year group co-ordinators have a time allowance to co-ordinate the SEN provision in their respective year groups.

The roles include:

- Weekly meeting of the year group co-ordinators to oversee the daily operation of the schools SEN policy
- Meeting weekly with the team of SNAs
- Identifying students with SEN
- Teaching students with SEN in small groups or one-to-one settings
- Providing additional support in the areas of literacy and numeracy
- Planning and implementing effective teaching strategies for students with SEN

- Helping students to cope with and overcome problems that arise because of learning difficulties
- Encouraging students to develop self-confidence and independence, and to reach their full potential
- Developing and fostering the appropriate skills and social abilities to enable the optimum development of pupils
- To facilitate access to the curriculum for students with learning difficulties by identifying priority targets than may be addressed in the teaching of small groups or in whole class settings
- To liaise with the Guidance Department to collect SEN information gathered from feeder schools
- To liaise with feeder schools, teachers and parents of incoming students
- To liaise with follow-on schools and colleges of further education
- To support the Principal/Deputy Principal in overseeing the provision of SEN in the school
- To liaise with and advise colleagues on issues relating to SEN
- To co-ordinate, formulate, implement and review individual plans for students with SEN
- To monitor and track students with SEN
- To oversee the registering, recording and reporting of students with SEN
- To liaise with the parents/guardians of students with SEN
- Test students who wish to apply for Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations
- To liaise with external agencies including:
  - The National Council for: Special Education/Support Service
  - The National Education Psychological Service
  - State Examination Commission
  - Autism Ireland
  - Dyslexia/Dyspraxia Associations
  - Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists
  - The National Council for: Deaf/Blind Ireland
- Formulate, implement and review the SEN policy

## 6.5 The Role of the Subject Teacher

At St. Paul's Secondary School, **the academic progress of students throughout the school rests in the first instance with the subject teacher.** In order to ensure that as a school we meet the needs of all our students' subject teachers are encouraged to:

- Be aware of the School's policy and procedures (as outlined in this document) for dealing with students with SEN.
- Be familiar with the SEN Register and the learning difficulties of students in their class groups
- Ensure that in-class support teaching sessions (team teaching) are planned and targeted at supporting students with SEN
- Assess the ability of SEN students in their subject early in the academic year and to ensure the appropriate materials/content is used
- Tap into areas of interest for students with SEN to spark interest or create real life examples which relate to their lives and thus create real possibilities for success

- Seek advice from the SEN Department regarding students with Special Educational Needs
- Take responsibility for their own continuous professional development particularly regarding common difficulties e.g. Dyslexia & Specific Language difficulties
- Where a student has an SNA, the subject teacher should plan how to most effectively engage the SNA in consultation with the resource teacher or the SEN Coordinator and the SNA
- Support/encourage independent learning in the student. This is particularly important for Senior Cycle students
- Fill in referral forms for students about whom they have a concern. The obligation is on the subject teacher to refer students with SEN
- Ensure the progress of all the pupils in his/her class
- Assist in identifying and referring students who have learning difficulties
- Facilitate access to the curriculum for students with learning difficulties
- Be aware of the SEN students and what information is available on these students and to implement, where possible, the recommendations made in the psychological report
- Exchange information with the Resource teacher on the student's progress
- Co-operate with the provision of accommodation in House and State examinations
- Advise on options
- Partake in a whole school approach to Learning Support
- Be aware of CAT 4/Literacy tests/Numeracy tests results but not to use them as a definitive measure of a student's ability and in so doing to limit a student's possible achievement except in the case of the top cohort of students
- Help create and maintain Student Support Plans for students with SEN

## 6.6 The Role of the Guidance Counsellor

Prior to entry:

- Annual Open Evening in September allows potential students the opportunity to look around and experience the atmosphere of the school. Teachers and students are available to answer questions and give information regarding subjects and supports
- Information evening for prospective parents/guardians is held in October/November. Detailed information about the school, the subject choices, extra-curricular activities, and methods of communication between home and school are provided
- Arrangements are made for prospective first year students to complete an Aptitude Test in January. The test results are then interpreted by the Guidance Counsellors and are given to the Principal, Learning Support and Resource Teachers. These results are also uploaded onto VShare
- The Guidance Counsellors visit the established feeder primary schools to:
  - Discuss each student's scores with their teachers
  - to receive an accurate profile of the incoming student
  - Based on all the information to hand, students receive advice and recommendations regarding subject choice

On entry to St Paul's Secondary School:

- The Guidance Counsellors visit each class to introduce themselves, to explain their role and procedures for requesting an appointment. The Guidance Counsellor meets each new student individually during to the month of September to assess how the student is settling into their new school
- A buddy system exists whereby senior prefects are linked with first year students prioritising students with SEN
- The Guidance Counsellor is also responsible for informing 6<sup>th</sup> year students of their right to apply for DARE access to 3<sup>rd</sup> level

### **6.7 The Role of Year Head**

The Year Head liaises with parents, subject teachers, form teachers, Home School Liaison Officer and the Guidance Counsellor to address any issues of concern. The role also includes the following:

- Be involved with the transition programme of incoming First Years
- Meet with incoming students outside of First Years
- Become familiar with any difficulties each student may have through the SEN Register
- Be aware of students results in psychometric testing
- Communicate the social, behaviour and emotional needs of students with SEN to teachers in conjunction with the SEN Dept.
- Keep records of attendance, punctuality and encourage good practice in both areas
- Link with the Student Support Team (SST) regarding students with SEN who are at risk
- Communicate with parents of student with SEN re his/her social, behaviour and emotional and learning needs where necessary
- Provide information for students to get involved in extra-curricular activities and leadership programmes
- Support the students in developing study and exam skills

### **6.8 The Role of the Class Tutor**

The role of the class tutor in St. Paul's is a very important one in the school. The class tutor's responsibilities include:

- Get to know each student in their class group
- Liaise with SEN Dept where necessary
- Communicate regularly with parents/guardians through the journal
- Monitor attendance and punctuality
- Monitor effort and participation and motivation level of all students with attention aimed at supporting those with SEN
- Talk to students about their progress
- Encourage students to get involved in extra-curricular activities and leadership programmes
- Monitor the social interaction of the group
- Support any student whose friendship group has changed, or who is excluded

### **6.9 The Role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA)**

The Special Needs Assistant provides care assistance to students who have SEN. They make a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education to these students. The SEN Coordinator and SEN Team work collaboratively in devising an appropriate strategy plan for a student with SEN. The SNA is made aware of this plan and given guidance on their role in the successful implementation of this plan. The SNA plays an important role in the health and safety of the student and in their social, emotional and educational development. It is important that the SNA supports student participation in school life without developing a culture of dependency. The duties of the SNA involve tasks of a non-teaching nature such as:

- Attending Staff meetings
- Attending a weekly meeting with the SEN Coordinator
- Assisting/escorting students on school trips
- Supporting students before and after school at the lockers
- Monitoring students at breaktimes
- Giving special assistance as necessary for students with difficulties e.g. helping students with SEN with typing, writing or other use of equipment
- Assisting with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of the health and safety needs of the student
- Assisting with examinations (if appropriate)
- Assisting the teacher in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and in movement from one classroom to another
- Accompanying individual or small groups who may be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom. An SNA should not be asked to withdraw a student from a classroom unless this is a strategy that has been agreed by the SEN department. In such instances, teachers will have been informed
- Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process
- Other appropriate duties as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school
- SNAs may be re-assigned to other appropriate work when special needs students are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise

### **6.10 Role of the Parent / Guardian**

- Parent(s) / guardian(s) are required to supply all relevant reports / documentation as may be required in order to make an application to the DES for extra resources required for their daughter(s)
- Parent(s) / guardian(s) are required to attend any meetings scheduled to discuss their daughter's progress in the school
- Care Plans, if relevant, must be made available to the school by parent(s) / guardian(s)

## **7. Transfer from Primary School**

### **7.1 Transition Programme**

Formal enrolment takes place in November prior to entry to First Year. Parents are asked to furnish the following documentation in advance of the meeting:

- Formal Application Form
- Formal Acceptance Form
- Birth Certificate
- Post Primary Transfer Review Information Form (Pink Form)
- Copies of the official Irish Exemption Certificate
- Copies of Psycho-educational Reports
- Copies of OT, Speech & Language or other relevant reports

The completion of this pack will allow the school to liaise with parents and primary schools to ensure the transfer of relevant documentation to the school.

Following on from this meeting, parents and students will be furnished with the Options Form and asked to choose 2 options for First Years and one MFL (German, French, Spanish). The CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) assessment will be held in January and based on the results of the CAT assessment, the SEN Dept and Guidance may advise parents on the most suitable options for their child according to his/her strongest cognitive score.

All teachers of First Year are briefed on matters relating to the students they are going to teach at a plenary staff meeting in August. The relevant information is uploaded on VShare.

## **7.2 The Model of SEN Provision**

- The Model of SEN provision is focused on the individual needs of the student. It is firmly based on the following principles:
  - The support of students with special needs in the school as a whole-school responsibility
  - The Special Needs Team oversee a support team (of teachers and SNAs, i.e. Special Needs Assistants) that assists the class teacher to meet the needs of students with special needs
  - Parents/guardians are involved in the process of supporting their children through their partnership with the class teacher/s, the support team of SEN, the Year Head and school management
  - The Principal/Management provides a structure and environment that supports and monitors the learning of all students and is particularly sensitive to the learning needs of students with special needs

## **7.3 The provision for students with special educational needs is carried out in several ways including:**

- Withdrawal of students with complex needs for extra support on a 1-1 basis
- Support is also allocated to those students with and without psychological assessments in accordance with the continuum of support
- Some students have modified programmes and timetables appropriate to their individual needs
- For students with Irish language exemptions, the SEN Department have structures in place to ensure that students get maximum benefit from the additional timetable allocation that exemption from Irish creates, including extra support with literacy and numeracy

## 8. Continuum of Support

The model of assessment and intervention, as practiced in St. Paul's Secondary School, is underpinned by recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum from mild to severe and from transient to long term. Our response to the needs of students is organised according to NEPS's Continuum of Support.

### 8.1 Student Support Plans

A Student Support Plan is devised for students with Special Education needs. All students involved in SEN support will have a tailored learning plan. Prioritising the needs of students informs the development of Student Support Files (SSF). Staff are briefed and informed about the SSFs by the SEN team and it is made available to staff on VShare.

Once developed, Student Support Files for the students concerned set clear learning/behavioural/social targets.

The Student Support File process involves:

- Gathering Information: Personal/ Background details
- Educational details (primary school details/assessment and learning support details)
- Categorisation of need (assessment reports/ information attained from parents)
- General profile based on formal/informal assessment
- SEN provision
- Priority Need
- Setting targets for each priority learning need
- Identifying the strategies and resources required
- Relevant documentation
- Reviews occur mid-year. However, they may occur more often dependent on student progress and circumstances
- The purpose of the SSF is to include the most relevant information in a clear and concise manner. It is modified and updated regularly to ensure only the most important information is included and that the SSF functions practically as a working document

## 9. Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable Accommodations for State and Examinations (RACE) Applications are made by the SEN team for students with SEN sitting a Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate Examination. From October 2016 the State Exams Commission SEC now operates a devolved model at both Junior and Leaving Cert Level. The school makes an application for relevant accommodations for students who meet the criteria as laid down by the SEC at Junior Cycle and these accommodations can be reactivated for Leaving Cert, with the school being satisfied that the student still has a need for the accommodation. Further details are available in the RACE Guide for Exam Students at [www.examinations.ie](http://www.examinations.ie). Where resources permit and when deemed appropriate, readers, scribes and

other accommodations are available to students who qualify for such accommodations at mock exams.

If the student meets the criteria for reasonable accommodations following the appropriate testing, applications will be made to the DES. This may include:

- The assistance of a scribe or reader/ reading assistance
- The use of assistive technology
- A waiver in spelling or grammar
- The use of a separate/shared centre

The State Examinations Commission considers and decides on the matter and all parents and/or students over 18 years of age, are notified of the application as well as their consent for the application on behalf of the student or themselves, in the case of students over 18 years of age.

## 10. Monitoring, Evaluation, Assessment and Reporting

In St. Paul's Secondary School, all students are assessed on an ongoing basis. Assessment may be formal, informal, summative or formative. The information gathered will be treated as private to St Paul's Secondary School and will be collected and used in compliance with the Data Protection Acts and the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### 10.1 Formal Assessment

- Incoming First Year students sit the Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT -Level E) prior to entry
- Students sit house examinations in December and at the end of the school year
- A continuous assessment grade is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings
- First Year students sit the NGRT in Sept / Oct
- Fourth Year students sit the CAT4 at the beginning of the year
- Other professionals working with the school may formally assess students with SEN for RACE applications. All results are recorded and analysed as part of the SSF progress

### 10.2 Informal Assessment

- An Assessment for Learning (AfL) approach to learning is promoted in the school
- Continuous assessment based on class tests is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings
- End of unit/chapter tests
- In class questioning
- Assessing homework/project work
- Progress recorded, monitored, reviewed and adjusted at meetings throughout the year with SEN team and resource teachers

**The responsibility for many aspects of formal and informal assessments lies in the first instance with the subject teacher.** The organisation of the CAT tests is the responsibility of the Guidance

Department who are supported by the SEN team. The SEN team take responsibility for literacy and numeracy testing of students with SEN. The interpretation of results is the remit of the SEN Department.

### 10.3 Using Assessment Data

Assessment data is used to:

- Identify students with SEN.
- Identify students' individual needs
- Aid in the design of intervention strategies
- Monitor student progress
- Inform future learning direction

### 10.4 Recording Assessment Data

- Teachers record assessment marks both formal and informal in the Teacher Planner / Diary
- House examination results / junior cycle descriptors are included on the school report to parents in December, March and at the end of the school year
- A continuous assessment result is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings. Copies of the student's reports are available on VShare
- The SEN department maintain files for the students with whom they work (Learning Support and Resource students). Included in these files are any additional assessments, carried out by the SEN team, that the students may have taken.

### 10.5 Access to Assessment Records

The school is aware that some assessment material is of a sensitive nature and therefore it is treated confidentially and only made available to appropriate personnel. Relevant information is disseminated as appropriate by the SEN team in accordance with GDPR guidelines on VShare

### 10.6 Monitoring Arrangements

**The responsibility for monitoring student progress lies in the first instance with the subject teacher.** If a student has been identified as having SEN, the SEN Department will also play a key role in monitoring student progress and supporting the resource teachers.

### 10.7 Evaluation

The successes of any intervention strategies are monitored on an on-going basis through formal and informal assessment. The SEN year group co-ordinators endeavour to evaluate the progress of students with SEN on a continual basis and adjust intervention strategies when and where necessary. The SSF is submitted at the end of the year by the resource teachers for review by the SEN team for the forthcoming year.

## 11. Involvement of Parents

St. Paul's Secondary School regards the partnership with parents as a very important one and is always open and responsive to expressions of concern made by parents. Parents/Guardians are invited and encouraged to attend any meeting concerning their daughters progress. The Deputy/Principal/Year Head or Learning Support Teacher are available to meet with parents regarding concerns. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss any issues or concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity.

The school recognises its responsibility under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 to:

- Inform parents of their child's SEN and how those are being met.
- Consult parents regarding the making of all decisions of a significant nature concerning their child's education and invite them to participate in such decisions.

The Special Needs Department is in regular contact with the parents of students with SEN. This contact can take the form of a meeting or a telephone call. Students receive a school report on two occasions in the school year. There is one parent teacher meeting each year where parents can meet with all teachers. The SEN Team make themselves available to parents on these evenings. As part of the planning and targeting of priority needs of a student with SEN, parents are given the opportunity (on two occasions throughout the year) to identify specific areas of the students learning/development that can form part of the SSF and be implemented in resource time. Parents have access to VShare and can view student reports there.

## **12. Involvement of Students**

Students with SEN are encouraged to adopt an active approach to their education. Where appropriate, their needs and supports required are discussed. Thus, the student is involved in a practical way in learning plans and programmes and assessing progress.

## **13. Links with Outside Agencies and Services**

The school consults with a significant number of outside agencies.

These include:

- National Education Psychology Service (NEPs)
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- State Examination Commission (SEC)
- TUSLA
- Visiting Teacher Service HSE to include students who are sight and/or hearing impaired
- HSE Social Worker Team
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Consultant paediatricians
- Foster Care Workers
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists

- Speech & Language Therapists
- College & University Student Support Services
- Dyslexia Association of Ireland
- Aspire (Asperger's support)
- Association for Higher Education Access and Disability
- National Council for the Blind of Ireland
- Irish Learning Support Teachers Association (ILSA)
- Irish Association of Special Education Teachers
- The Dyspraxia Association

This list is not exhaustive, and the school will further develop links with outside agencies as the needs of the students dictate.

## 14. Conclusion

This policy is organic by its nature. It is envisaged that with changing perceived needs and with insights gained that it will need to be constantly appraised and, if necessary, changed.

***Ratified by the Board of Management on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2020***

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson: Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal/Secretary: Board of Management

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

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