



St. Michael's College Special Educational Needs *A Continuum of Support*

The Special Educational Needs policy of St. Michael's College Senior School aims to comply with the following definition from the EPSEN Act (2004):

"A special educational need means, in relation to a person, a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition..."

Students with Additional Needs are:

- Students with general learning difficulties
- Students with average and above average ability who experience specific learning difficulty. (SLD's include Dyslexia and Dyscalculia)
- Students with Exceptional Ability
- Students with a physical handicap or sensory impairment
- Students with a diagnosed social, emotional, behavioural or communication difficulty
- Students for whom English is a second language
- Students whose education has been interrupted for a significant period.

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department at St. Michael's College aims to support students with Special Educational Needs as set out in The Education Act 1998, The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 and The Equal Status Acts 2000-2004.

The aim of the SEN Department is to identify and support all students who have additional needs in the college and to provide an appropriate, coordinated, continuous and caring response to these needs as students' progress through the school. This involves educating these students in an inclusive environment, and ensuring that they share a complete educational experience with their peers.

The identification of students experiencing learning difficulties may entail one or more of the following elements:

- Liaison with Primary Schools.
- Contact with parents, medical professionals and visiting teacher services

- Screening of all new students enrolling in First Year
- Liaison with N.E.P.S and Educational Psychologists to arrange educational assessment when appropriate.
- Liaising school management, guidance counsellors, core care team, year heads and subject teachers.

Educational Support for students with Additional Needs: Resource and Learning Support teaching is provided for students with assessed special educational needs and those who qualify for resource hours under Dept. of Education guidelines. Support is delivered according to the National Educational Psychological Service's guidelines "A Continuum of Support". A Learning Plan is drawn up for students who have LITH Resource Hours in conjunction with student, staff and parents. Support teaching is delivered as part of a whole class setting, via team-teaching, small group settings or individual support classes. This is determined according to the needs of the student. Learning Support teachers provide support in the curriculum primarily in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Students can also avail of study skills, social skills programmes and subject specific support. SNA's work as part of the SEN department, supporting students with additional care needs.

Irish Exemptions

The Dept. of Education have strict guidelines regarding the granting of an exemption from the study of Irish at Post-Primary Level. For further information, please see the following link:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/ppc10_94.pdf

Reasonable Accommodations

The SEN Department works in conjunction with parents and the State Exam Commission to ensure that all students in St Michael's College have the necessary accommodations to allow them equality of access to the state examinations. Parents should contact SEN Coordinator **Susan Healy** for further information at Susan.Healy@stmichaelscollege.com

To view the St. Michael's SEN policy and plan in full please see here: www.stmc.ie

Websites that offer more information on Special Educational Needs in an Irish context:

www.sess.ie Special Education Support Service

<https://www.examinations.ie/?l=en&mc=ca&sc=ra> State Examinations Commission link for Reasonable Accommodations at Leaving and Junior Certificate.

<http://www.dyslexia.ie/> Dyslexia Association of Ireland

<http://www.dyspraxia.ie/> Dyspraxia DCD Ireland

<http://www.aspireireland.ie/cmsWP/> Aspire (Asperger's Association of Ireland)