



Drumragh Integrated College

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

INCLUSION STATEMENT

In keeping with our motto 'Excellence for Everyone', Drumragh Integrated College is dedicated to enabling students to fully develop as learners and citizens. The college is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all members of our college gain confidence, develop their abilities and are supported to achieve their potential. To this end we –

- Value the needs of all learners;
- Have in place identification, assessment and intervention procedures;
- Employ learning and teaching methods taking into account preferred learning styles;
- Value partnership with parents.

ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM:

SENDO legislation specifies that -

“A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Governors and staff of Drumragh College will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in relation to the education and other services provided. This means that we will endeavour to anticipate where barriers to learning lie and shall take action to remove them in so far as we are able to do so. We will also plan strategically to increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum. The duty is 'anticipatory' and this Plan indicates the steps we will take to become increasingly inclusive over the three year period that it covers. Additional equipment and adjustments will be made in the school environment to address identified need.

Participation in whole College activities

Having gathered information on the nature and degree of impairment and access needs of the disabled student(s) we will endeavour to provide access by offering –

- A full and balanced curriculum – with differentiation and IEPs to maximise students' access to an appropriate curriculum.
- Timetabling which includes supervised movement between lessons for students with a disability.
- The grouping of students in sensitive ways (e.g. in Form Classes - valuing mixed ability groupings, friendship groupings as well as difference of race, gender, ethnicity, disability or religion).
- Ensuring that students feel equally valued through their experiences of:
 - the allocation of teacher and support staff time
 - being listened to / paid attention to
 - being respected
 - achieving
 - interacting with peers
- Procedures to ensure that mutual respect is encouraged and to deal with bullying or harassment.
- Access to activities to supplement the curriculum – e.g. educational visits and residential trips.
- Access to College sports and clubs, etc.
- Suitable arrangements for Break and Lunch times
- Access arrangements for classwork, assessments, tests and examinations – (taking into consideration a student's normal way of working).
- Preparation for transition (as required).
- Access to advice from specialists services/outside agencies – e.g. Educational Psychologist, Advisory Teachers or Health professionals.

Accessing the Curriculum - supporting the needs of learners:

All staff will follow the procedures and processes for teaching and learning contained in our College's 'Beautiful Simplicity' File. Teaching approaches will be flexible in nature to allow all students with disabilities to learn effectively in their classrooms and experience success at their optimum level as follows:

- Having high expectations – many students with disabilities will experience no problem with acquiring new concepts. However, we will aim to be realistic about their written responses and keep in mind that our students can sometimes 'do' rather than explain. (For example, a student may be able to create a circuit which lights a bulb but may have difficulty in writing down an explanation of why the bulb lights).
- Ensuring that written materials are accessible to all: e.g. consideration of formats; readability; length and content. (Teachers will provide scaffolding / practical materials such as writing frames, pictograms, sounds, pictures, objects, artefacts, word lists, etc.).
- Specific pairs of students working together in lessons – e.g. stronger reader / weaker reader.
- Allowing for appropriate use of augmented communication and ICT (including access to assistive technology).
- Providing information / texts, etc. in alternative forms (e.g. large print, use of i-pad apps / e-mailing, etc.).
- Explaining things repeatedly, in many ways – sometimes individually. Be slow, quiet and sensitive when giving instructions.
- Involving students in target setting and assessing their own progress.
- Enabling students to show their interest, knowledge and skills despite, for example, difficulty with communication. Often they will be able to 'shine' orally or in other ways and teachers will encourage this.
- Offering support with organisational skills – some students with disabilities need to be taught many things that others pick up without specific adult help – e.g. how to pack their school bag for the next day, fasten shoe laces, etc.
- Being aware of signs of fatigue – students with disabilities often have to try harder than other students.
- Watching out for signs of falling confidence and low self-esteem.
- Reacting appropriately to situations which may arise when dealing with students – e.g. anxiety/stress or behaviour difficulties (e.g. use of de-escalating strategies, 'Time Out', etc.).
- Being prepared to challenge negative attitudes of other students.

Deployment of learning support staff:

- The SENCo, Head of Pastoral Care, Medical Officer and teachers (as appropriate) will communicate with learning support staff detailing individual students' special needs and/or disabilities. Appropriate training will be provided to address identified needs.
- Support Staff are asked to ensure that all students are equally included in class activities. The nature of withdrawal sessions will be monitored to avoid 'exclusion'.

Dealing with unexpected incidents:

In collaboration with the College's Medical Officer, Health & Safety Officer (and other personnel as appropriate) – staff will be made aware of the systems for dealing with unexpected incidents – e.g. evacuation, fainting or fits, incontinence, medical emergencies.

PHYSICAL ACCESS

Drumragh Integrated College is a modern purpose-built school and the building complies with the Department of Education's physical access requirements / legislation. However, further access requirements have been identified and have been referred to the College's Board of Governors. The College currently meets the needs of physically disabled students by providing easy accessible entrances, a lift close to the main entrance, appropriate toilet and changing facilities (the latter two are based at ground floor level only).

Classroom organisation:

Classrooms in Drumragh College are designed to be safe and to facilitate mobility and accessibility. Seating and/or activities are carefully planned so that it is accessible for students with:

- Mobility impairments - e.g. circulation space, table height in classrooms. (Home Economics to be looked at in this connection.)
- Hearing impairments – e.g. sight line for lip reading / interpreter / no glare.
- Visual impairments – e.g. maximise residual sight.
- Challenging behaviour – e.g. in adult gaze; at front for eye contact.
- Short attention span/easily distracted – e.g. sit on their own, distraction free zone.
- Learning difficulties who need a lot of support – e.g. next to classroom assistant or peer supporter.

Issues to be addressed:

- Need for automatic opening of corridor doors to address the needs of wheel chair users.
- The absence of disabled toilet facilities on the top floor of the College building.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

This Policy links to other College Policies including the Special Educational Needs Policy, Health & Safety Policy and Pastoral Policies. The Policy will be reviewed regularly in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

The Policy will be monitored by the SENCO (from an inclusion perspective) on a planned annual basis with advice being sought from the BoG as part of a three-yearly review process.

Policy Date: _____

Signed: _____ *(Principal)*

Signed: _____ *(Chair of Governors)*

Review Date: _____