



September 2018

AUGHACASLA NATIONAL SCHOOL
Special Needs Assistant Policy

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SNAs are appointed by the Board of Management subsequent to the allocation of SNA hours for individual children by the SENO. Depending on the cumulative number of hours allocated to the school they may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis.

All SNAs, whether full-time or part-time, will be required to sign a contract which lays out the terms of their employment.

The Policy was devised following a consultative process with all interested parties, and is guided by the relevant legislation such as The Education Welfare Act 2000 and the EPSEN Act 2004 and DES Circulars 07/02, 08/03, 24/03, 13/04, 02/05.

RATIONALE

The policy was formulated:

- To provide staff and parents with clear guidelines and expectations with regard to the SNA role and responsibilities within the school
- To ensure each SNA appreciates and understands the important role they have in contributing positively to the learning experiences of the children and the overall efficiency of the school
- To ensure best practice and continuity in how we work in Aughacasla National School.

AIMS

- To facilitate the recognition SNAs as valuable members of staff in a whole school context
- To ensure the effective deployment of SNAs in enhancing the social skills and self-esteem of the children with Special Educational Needs
- To enable the SNA to be an effective support to the class teacher
- To support and facilitate those pupils with SEN, so that they feel happy, valued and supported to enable them to develop to their full potential
- To clarify the tasks and duties to be undertaken by the SNA
- To ensure accountability and effective record keeping

STAFF ROLES

The Principal has responsibility for

- Assigning role specific and child specific tasks to the SNA
- Co-ordinating the integration and devising the role profile of the SNA
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the SNAs contribution to the needs of designated children
- Promoting in-service training. The Board of Management may fund or part-fund this professional development
- Managing areas of conflict which may arise, with the assistance of the Deputy Principal

Special Educational Teachers

- Assume responsibility for Student Support Plans and Personal Pupil Profiles in consultation with all relevant parties including the parents, SNA, class teacher and principal.

Class Teachers

- Ensure SNA support is available for those who need it in a class situation and identify the appropriate tasks to be completed by the SNAs
- Provide a suitable seating arrangement for the SNA and child in the mainstream setting

- Collaborate with the SNA with regard to planning and timetabling
- Devise a list of classroom tasks to be undertaken by the SNA when time is available e.g. Staff meetings, 10 minutes before/after school, etc.

SNAs

- There are 3 SNAs presently employed in the school. They are considered an important part of the school team and carry out duties of a non-teaching nature
- The SNA always works under the direction of the class teacher or Principal
- The teacher plans lessons and directs learning. The SNA provides support in assisting the pupil to access the curriculum.
- The SNA should be familiar with all relevant school policy, in particular the school Code of Behaviour and Child Protection guidelines.

SNA DUTIES

- To provide special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties, for example, helping SEN pupils with typing, writing, computers or any other equipment as required
- To assist with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of the health and safety needs of the pupil.
- To assist on out-of-school visits, walks, and similar activities
- To assist the teachers in the supervision of pupils when entering and exiting the classroom
- To accompany individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another
- To provide general assistance to the class teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. It is accepted that the SNA may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers
- To participate with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process
- To engage with parents of SEN pupils in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management
- To assist in preparation and tidying up of classroom
- To assist school children to board and alight from school buses
- To assist with other duties appropriate, as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Special Needs Assistants may be re-assigned to other work appropriate when SEN pupils are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise

FUNCTION OF THE SNA

- To assist the pupils assigned to them in accessing as much of the normal curriculum as possible
- To assist the class teacher in implementing the curriculum
- To help pupils carry out assigned tasks
- To help pupils learn and adopt new skills
- To praise, support and encourage pupils and to be a positive influence in the class
- To facilitate periods of time-out for pupils where appropriate
- To encourage and support pupils to be as independent as possible
- To foster co-operative learning and facilitate development of friendships

CONFIDENTIALTY

SNA's will carry out their duties in a caring, professional and confidential manner. Information on SEN pupils shall only be disclosed on a need to know basis to the relevant people. While supporting the pupil's development in ways that will foster security and confidence, SNA's must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with school management in order to safeguard children.

TEAM SPIRIT

At all times SNA's should endeavour to create an environment which is conducive to achieving the aims of Aughacarla National School and recognize that the aims of SNA's are best achieved in a caring, mutually supportive and respectful manner.

SCHOOL POLICIES

SNA's should be aware of all Aughacarla National School Policies, particularly those policies relating to Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, Safeguarding Children Guidelines, the Policy for Special Needs Education and the school's Fire Drill.

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

SNAs are not specifically assigned to an individual child but rather to the school as a whole. The school operates a 'last in, first out' policy. However, it must be noted that all positions are up for regular review in association with the DES, the BOM, NEPS, and NCSE.

SENIORITY

The sequence in which special need assistants are appointed to the school determines their seniority. Seniority is important in determining which special need assistant(s) should be offered reduced hours or have their employment terminated when the allocation of the school is reduced. The seniority listing will be used in determining 'last in, first out' for the purpose of redundancy.

The Board of Management determines the seniority based on special need assistants' date of commencement of duty as an SNA in a school.

RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

This plan was formally ratified by the Board of management on _____.

The plan will be implemented by the teachers and SNAs supported by the Board of Management from _____.

It will be reviewed every ____ years.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, BoM

Date: _____

