



OUR LADY'S SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

Date: _____

Signature: _____

(Chair of the Board of Management)

Commenced: October 2018

Date of last Review:

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1. Introduction

Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in Our Lady's School is an integral part of the continuum of support within the school. The main aim, in line with the Our Lady's School Mission Statement, is to help all students reach their potential within an inclusive school environment.

The SEN Department emphasises the individual needs of each student in our care. We appreciate that each student learns in different ways and at different rates so a variety of teaching methods are employed across the school and within the SEN Department.

a) Definitions

Special Educational Needs: 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. *Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004)*

Inclusion: Inclusion is defined as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and removing barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements, to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her attendance at school. *National Council for Special Education (2011)*

b) Scope of Policy

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy applies to all students with SEN including those with exceptional ability. The requirements of identified SEN students are taken into account by all involved - parents/guardians, teachers, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, ancillary staff, etc., and across all areas of school life, e.g. class work, homework, pastoral care, study, extra-curricular, etc.

As part of the continuum of support the following applies:

1. The student is taught by the subject teacher who may provide differentiated material or learning environment where needed.
2. The student is part of a class where team teaching is taking place.
3. The student is withdrawn for small group or one to one teaching.

c) Mission Statement

Our Lady's School is a community that embraces Christian values. The education it provides is rooted in a deep sense of faith.

We aim to create a positive inclusive environment which enables everyone to reach their full potential. We promote mutual respect within the school community and strive to provide a happy and secure atmosphere which fosters a love of learning.

We encourage the development of the whole person, by fostering the personal, spiritual and moral development of every student. The realisation of individual talents and academic excellence is paramount.

We aim to create a friendly, healthy, safe and caring environment which affirms our pride in the school.

We promote the development of the necessary skills so that students may become responsible members of society. It is our wish to see every student leave Our Lady's School with moral integrity and a heightened sense of social conscience.

d) Rationale

Our model of support for SEN students is based on the research which shows that students with extra challenges should receive their education in the least restrictive environment possible making learning more relevant and meaningful to all. We endeavour to make our school an educational setting where all students are supported, whatever their needs.

e) Objectives of this policy

- To ensure an inclusive learning environment for students with special educational needs (SEN).
- To explain how SEN students access learning support and resource (i.e. SEN teaching).
- To maintain a line of communication between parents/guardians, staff, students and outside agencies, where applicable.
- To identify, plan, evaluate and review supports for SEN students in Our Lady's School.

f) Legal Framework

Our Lady's sets out to provide education for all its students with reference to legislation regarding students with SEN as listed:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)
- The Equality Act (2004)
- The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
- The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
- The General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR)
- The Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017
- Who deals with child protection concerns?
- DES Circular Letters
- The guidelines published by the NCSE
- The Guideline for the Continuum of Support for Post-primary Schools (NEPS)

2. Aims of SEN Support

- To implement cohesive and inclusive practices that help us embrace the heterogeneity of the student body.
- To ensure that students of all levels and abilities may access the curriculum to the best of their ability through a Whole School Approach including support from the SEN Department.
- To ensure all students are given the opportunity to achieve their individual potential.
- To develop a team approach involving all with an interest in the student's progress i.e. subject teachers, Year Head, Form Tutors, Guidance team, SEN Teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), ancillary staff, school management, outside agencies, parents/guardians and students.
- To develop and enhance the inclusive teaching strategies within the classroom enabling SEN students to share with their peers as complete an educational experience as possible. To support this by ensuring that students are identified, lessons are differentiated and work is monitored by subject teachers as part of on-going support and/or resource provision.
- To ensure that all members of staff are aware of the specific needs of SEN students and of the contribution staff can make in this area.

- To ensure that SEN is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
- To outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to SEN students.
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching and learning in relation to SEN students.
- To show all SEN students are integrated in every aspect of school life.

3. Identification and Planning For SEN Support

a) Gathering information

Information for incoming students

- The Education Passport from primary schools, as well as visits to primary school and contact with parents prior to entry.
- CAT4 scores in literacy and numeracy.
- The Year Head for incoming 1st Years in conjunction with either the Principal or a member of the SEN Department contacts feeder schools to gain insight into the needs of the incoming students.
- Information from Educational Psychological Reports or other outside agency reports are consulted, if available.

All students

- Information from Educational Psychological Reports, other schools attended or other outside agency reports are consulted, if available.
- Consultation with parent/guardian and student is sought to gain a deeper understanding of a student's needs.
- Information from observations by Year-heads, Form Tutors, subject teachers and Guidance Counsellors is collated.
- Examine referrals from subject teachers, form tutors, parents/guardians, Guidance Counsellors, relevant outside agencies, educational psychologists.

a) In-School Screening and Assessment

Incoming students

- Screening/assessment of all incoming 1st Years each Jan/Feb prior to entry using CAT4 to identify all those at or below the 10th percentile, including those who have previously diagnosed difficulties. Identify if this group has literacy needs or numeracy needs or both.
- Identify those with SLD with/without a language exemption.

All students

- In order to determine the type of intervention necessary and to identify specific needs, individual school-based assessments can be administered to students whose profiles show a discrepancy in their general assessments using DES approved standardised tests.
- Arrange for Educational Assessments if necessary.
- Screen for RACE applications
- Teacher assessment
- Where appropriate an application is then made to the NCSE through the local Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) requesting appropriate resources to support the students identified as having a special educational need.

b) Planning, Monitoring and Reviewing

- When data gathering and analysis are complete a proposal of how best to meet the student's needs is put together and shared with relevant staff in accordance with the GDPR guidelines. See Appendix 8.
- The SEN timetable is formulated for identified students in accordance with the Continuum of Support.
- Referral of students who wish to take up an exemption from languages to the relevant Year-head and Guidance Department.
- Ensure Resource Teachers and SNAs maintain relevant records. The SEN Department and SNAs meet on a weekly basis to record and assess progress of their allocated students. Observations by the SNA team are a valuable source of information.
- Suggested strategies from educational reports are implemented where feasible and depending on the resources available.
- Each Year Head attends the Care Team meeting at least once a term to keep all relevant parties updated.
- The Continuum of Support model is used by the SEN Department as follows:
 - Stage 1(Support for All) Teacher and/or parent concerns lead to classroom intervention.
 - Stage 2(Support for Some). If targets were not met in Stage 1 then in-house testing will be carried out.
 - Stage 3(Support for a Few) Where a student's Special Educational Needs are severe and persistent then intensive support may be required and referral to outside agencies if necessary.
- The SEN Department liaise with Year Heads regarding academic tracking and progress in general. The November Progress, February and May examination reports are used in this process and are available to parents/guardians.
- All teachers will monitor students' progress through observation and class tests; where concerns arise, the class teacher can liaise with the Year Head, SEN Department or the Guidance Department as appropriate.
- Suggested strategies from Educational Psychologist Reports are implemented, where feasible and depending on the resources available.
- Learning Support teachers record material covered in one-to-one/group classes and monitor students' progress. See Appendix 7.
- The school facilitates parents/guardians wishing to discuss the needs of their child by appointment with relevant support personnel.
- Parents/guardians are recognised as the primary educators and as such play a pivotal role in the support and on-going monitoring of SEN students.

4. Curriculum Provision for SEN

The integration of SEN into the curriculum is based on the Continuum of Support Model. The aim is to be both flexible and responsive to the student's needs. Reduced timetables are facilitated in special circumstances in consultation with all relevant parties and available resources.

Support for All

The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class. A Personal Pupil Plan (see Appendix 8) is shared by the SEN Department for identified students with particular Special Educational Needs. In-class support is assigned on a case by case basis whereby a Learning Support teacher comes in to the

classroom to support the classroom teacher in meeting the full range of needs of the students in the class.

Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole school interventions such as differentiated teaching, Support for Some is initiated.

Support for Some

Support at this level can take many forms, for example, team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, behaviour reward and consequence and token systems.

A support plan (PPP - Appendix 8) operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review and is recorded in a student's file in the SEN office.

Support for a Few

At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required, engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate.

Data generated from this process may be used to make an application for SNA access. The SNA will be an integral part of the plan for these students. A Student Support File (see Appendix 9) at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.

SNAs are assigned to provide appropriate care to students in their charge. They engage sensitively with SEN students to ensure that no stigma is attached. The aim is to gradually reduce the support needed so that the SEN student can gain maximum independence.

5. Intervention Programmes

The following are some specific support programmes that are used to support SEN students:

- SRA reading programme
- *Accelerated Reader*
- *Spell/Write*
- *Let's Stand* oral programme
- *Talkabout* social skills programme and *Talkabout Teen*: all years as appropriate.

This list is not exhaustive and changes from year to year.

a) Provision of Support Teaching

- The school has two SEN teachers who provide support to SEN students.
- At Senior Cycle especially, subject teachers are asked to provide support to SEN students.
- Access to a Visiting Teacher for those students with hearing / visual impairment is facilitated.
- SNA Support is provided in the classroom, where students face particular challenges and in the library where one-to-one support may be possible.
- The Guidance Department provides social skills and stress management support.

b) Other Supports

- SEN and Guidance teams meet with the Principal once a week at the Care Team meeting.
- SEN team meets once a week to discuss active cases.
- SEN team have scheduled planning sessions as part of the Croke Park Hours allocation.
- Extra-curricular activities are open to all and encourage inclusion.
- Differentiation occurs within subjects to encourage participation of students of all levels of ability in class.
- Varied methodologies are encouraged and supported to include all students e.g. using concrete materials, group work/ paired work, differentiation of class/homework and AFL strategies.
- Additional learning extension/stretched learning opportunities are provided for students at the top end of the spectrum.
- Confidential reports etc. are filed securely in the SEN Department.
- Student Support Files are drawn up annually for students who have been identified as Stage 3 – Support for a Few. These are reviewed on an on-going basis and complement monitoring by the Year-heads and Form Tutors.
- Communications with outside agencies such as NEPS and Lucena occurs as the need arises.
- Applications are made for RACE based on the criteria set out by SEC.
- The SNAs actively encourage the SEN students to participate in extra-curricular activities e.g. library clubs, sports, November Knitathon, running club, etc.
- Whole school initiatives e.g. Health Promotion Week, House System, Annual Theme all promote respect and inclusion for everyone within the school community.
- Visiting speakers e.g. "As I Am" promotes understanding of difference.
- Supported Study is available every day after school for students who need extra support. A teacher is in place to help this smaller cohort of students with homework and study. In cases of financial difficulty, access to after school supported study can be discussed with the Principal.

6. Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of the policy:

- SEN students are included into all areas of our school environment.
- SEN students are participating to the best of their abilities in class.
- SEN students are able to complete suitable assignments and tasks independently.
- Feedback from teaching staff, Special Needs Assistants, parents/guardians, pupils, psychologists and other interested parties, which shows progress in any area.
- Improvement in results of class tests over time.

7. Communication

Between school and home

- Parent /Teacher meetings are held annually. Resource Teachers may be available in a quiet area during Parent/ Teacher meetings.
- The procedure for parents/guardians making contact with the school is to contact the Form Tutor.
- Progress reports are sent out in November.
- Full school reports are sent out twice yearly, after the February and May in-house examinations.
- Resource teachers communicate with parents/guardians by email and by phone, or in person when necessary.
- School journals are available for communication.

Within the school

- Student Support meeting for all staff is part of the return to school schedule.
- Information is communicated through the Care Team's weekly meetings.
- Resource teachers meet on a weekly basis.
- Year-heads and SEN Department liaise constantly to monitor the progress of each student.
- SEN Department is available to advise or research issues as they arise through the referral form system.
- Care meetings occur before each Parent /Teacher meeting.
- Care Team's Green and Red sheet system is used to highlight any student who may have special needs on a temporary or on-going basis.
- Resource material is available in work room.
- Resource teachers are available to staff during the school day for consultation.

Between School and Outside Agencies

Communication between the SEN Department and outside agencies only happens with the consent of the parents/ guardians.

8. Student Records

The SEN Department keeps information on individual students on file in a secure place.

- The SEN Department shares information on individual students around learning, student academic strengths and academic challenges. This information is shared in accordance with the GDPR guidelines.
- A record is kept on file of each of the following for the duration of a student's time in school:
 - o Student's assessment details
 - o What resources each SEN student receives
 - o Academic tracking in consultation with Year-heads
 - o Parents/guardians of students applying to transfer from primary schools will be obliged to provide the Principal with details and records of any Learning Support intervention prior to entry. These records will be kept on file.
 - o Records are kept of applications for RACE, Irish Exemptions, SNA reports, reports/letters furnished by parents/guardians and any other relevant material.
- Minutes of meetings within the SEN department are kept on file.

9. Review and Evaluation of SEN department.

The SEN Department, together with the Year-head and Subject Teachers, evaluates its work by:

- Class test results
- Term tests results
- Reviews by individual teachers for each SEN student
- Observations by Subject Teachers and Form Tutors
- Consultation with students (to encourage ownership of their learning) and parents/guardians
- Personal Pupil Plans and Student Support Files contain the dates / timeframes for targets and reviews

10. Applications to Outside Agencies

The SEN Department applies to outside agencies for the following:

- Resource materials such as laptops, hearing aids etc.
- SNA access
- Guidance and counselling
- Full educational assessments
- Special arrangements/consideration in State Examinations e.g. Separate centres, access to scribes, and access to helper for practical examinations i.e. RACE. This is done in co-operation with the Guidance Department.

11. Board of Management

- This policy will apply after the relevant bodies have been consulted and the Board of Management (BOM) has ratified it.
- To ensure that all students with SEN are identified and assessed.
- To ensure that the school has an up to date SEN policy in place, monitor the implementation of that policy and ensure its evaluation and regular review.
- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided to ensure that students learn the skills necessary to participate in society.
- To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with SEN
- To ensure the development of positive partnerships with parents and other relevant agencies and 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 develop a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of EPSEN
- To promote inclusion by ensuring that an awareness of SEN is instilled in all of the school community.

12. Principal

- To appoint a SEN Co-ordinator and work closely with the co-ordinator to inform the Board of Management.
- To consult with the SEN Co-ordinator and other personnel who liaise with the Department of Education regarding needs and provisions.
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds.
- To establish a Special Educational Needs Support Team in the school to ensure identification of needs and support for students with SEN.
- To promote a whole school approach to Special Educational Needs, make 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 SEN students.
- To ensure that procedures exist for consultation with primary schools with regard to the enrolment of students with SEN.
- To process applications for Irish Exemptions.

- To provide leadership in developing relevant whole school policies: enrolment/ assessment/ inclusion.
- To manage the implementation of policies and practices.
- To provide strategic support for evidence based interventions.
- To assign roles and responsibilities.
- To direct the work of the SNA's.
- To ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Appendix 1: Definitions of SEN Categories (from NCSE)

General learning Difficulty / GLD

Borderline mild general learning disability.

This category consists of children who have been assessed by a psychologist as having a borderline mild general learning disability (DES Circular Special Education 08/02).

Mild General Learning Disability. This category consists of pupils who have been assessed by a psychologist as having a mild general learning disability (DES Circular Special Education 08/02).

Mild GLD: IQ score of between 50 and 70 on a standardised test of intelligence.

Moderate GLD: Moderate general learning disability - IQ score of between 35 and 49 on a standardised test of intelligence.

This category includes pupils who have been assessed by a psychologist as having a moderate general learning disability (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Severe/Profound GLD: Severe and profound general learning disability -IQ score of less than 35 on a standardised test of intelligence.

This category includes pupils who have been assessed by a psychologist as having a severe or profound general learning disability. In addition, such pupils may have physical disabilities (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

A formal diagnosis of a general learning disability also requires that a student is experiencing a significant impairment in the area of adaptive functioning or general life skills.

Specific learning disabilities include:

Specific learning disability / SLD: This category includes children who have been assessed by a psychologist as: being of average intellectual ability or higher having a degree of learning disability specific to basic skills in reading, writing or mathematics which places them at or below the 2nd percentile on suitable, standardised, norm-referenced tests.*

Children who do not meet the above criteria and, who in the opinion of the psychologist, have a specific learning disability are more properly the responsibility of the Learning Support teacher and/or the class teacher (Circular Sp Ed 08/02).

Dyslexia: is a difficulty in learning to read. This may mean that the child finds it hard to learn to read words or to understand what is written.

Dyscalculia :is a difficulty with numbers. This may mean that the child finds it hard to understand how numbers work or learn to count or add, subtract, multiply and divide.

Dysgraphia: is a difficulty with writing/spelling. This means that the child finds it difficult to write legibly and may have problems with spelling. They may find it hard to order their thoughts when writing a story or essay.

Physical disability

Pupils have permanent or protracted disabilities arising from such conditions as: dyspraxia, congenital deformities, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, brittle bones or severe accidental injury.

Because of the impairment of their physical function they require special additional intervention and support if they are to have available to them a level and quality of education appropriate to their needs and abilities. Many require the use of a wheelchair, mobility or seating aid, or other technological support. They may suffer from a lack of muscular control and co-ordination and may have difficulties in communication, particularly in oral articulation, as for example severe dyspraxia.

Pupils with a physical disability who have learning difficulties arising from the disability may need resource teaching where there are consequent significant learning difficulties.

Others may need assistive technology only (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Hearing impairment

This includes pupils who have a hearing disability that is so serious as to impair significantly their capacity to hear and understand human speech. This prevents the child from participating fully in classroom interaction and from benefiting adequately from school instruction. The great majority of these children have been prescribed hearing aids and are availing of the services of a Visiting Teacher.

This category is not intended to include pupils with mild hearing loss (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Note: Hearing loss is measured in decibels and can be mild, moderate, severe or profound (Special Education Review Committee (SERC) Report, 1993).

Levels of hearing loss as defined in the SERC report are illustrated in the following table:

Minimum audible intensity Level of impairment

20-30 decibels	Mildly Hard of Hearing
30-60 decibels	Moderately hard of hearing
60-89 decibels	Severely hard of hearing
90 decibels or over	Profoundly Deaf

Blind/visual impairment

Pupils have a visual disability which is so serious as to impair significantly their capacity to see, thus interfering with their capacity to perceive visually presented materials, such as pictures, diagrams, and the written word. Some will have been diagnosed as suffering from conditions such as congenital blindness, cataracts, albinism and retinitis pigmentosa. Most require the use of low-vision aids and are availing of the services of a Visiting Teacher (This category is not intended to include those pupils whose visual difficulties are satisfactorily

corrected by the wearing of spectacles and/or contact lenses) (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems

Pupils are being treated by a psychiatrist or psychologist for such conditions as neurosis, childhood psychosis, hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and conduct disorders that significantly impair their socialisation and/or learning in school. (This category is not intended to include pupils whose conduct or behavioural difficulties can be dealt with in accordance with agreed procedures on discipline).

Some pupils in this category may need resource teaching support. Care support from a special needs assistant may be required where a pupil's behaviour is a danger to himself or others or where it seriously interferes with the learning opportunities of other pupils.

In certain circumstances, some pupils may require both supports (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Severe emotional disturbance and/or behaviour problems (severe EBD).

A child with severe EBD must be in the care of a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist for a severe clinical disorder. A very small number of pupils would be expected to fall within this category.

Autism/autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

This category includes pupils who have been assessed and classified by a psychiatrist or psychologist as having autism or autistic spectrum disorder according to DSM-IV, DSM-V or ICD-10 criteria.

In the interest of the pupil with an ASD and in order that the needs of the pupil are adequately addressed, it is important, where feasible, that for a definitive assessment of ASD, a multi-disciplinary assessment team should be involved. The need for a multi-disciplinary assessment is also in keeping with NEPS policy (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Pupils with special educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome

The level of additional support to be provided for pupils who present with a particular syndrome, for example Down syndrome, William's syndrome and Tourette's syndrome, will be determined following consideration of psychological or other specialist reports which describe the nature and degree of the pupils' special educational needs (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Specific speech and language disorder (SSLD):

This category includes:

- pupils assessed by a psychologist on a standardised test of intelligence that places non verbal or performance ability within the average range or above

- pupils assessed by a speech therapist on a standardised test of language development that places performances in one or more of the main areas of speech and language development at two standard deviations or more below the mean, or at a generally equivalent level
- pupils whose difficulties are not attributable to hearing impairment; where the pupil is affected to some degree by hearing impairment, the hearing threshold for the speech-related frequencies should be 40Db
- pupils whose emotional and behavioural disorders or a physical disability are not considered to be primary causes of the difficulty experienced

This category is not intended to include pupils with speech and language delays and difficulties. Two assessments, a psychological assessment and a speech and language assessment are necessary in this case (DES Circular Special Education 02/05).

Multiple disabilities

Pupils assessed with multiple disabilities meet the criteria for two or more of the low incidence disabilities described above (DES Circular Special Education 02/05) – taken from the NCSE information booklet.

Appendix 2: Junior Certificate RACE testing application form



Our Lady's School

Founded 1953
Templeogue Road, Terenure, Dublin 6W
Telephone 4903241 Fax 4922511

Email: principal@olschool.ie



Dear Parent/Guardian,

It is now time to decide whether 3rd year students sitting the Junior Certificate will require reasonable accommodations from the State Examinations Commission, i.e. RACE. The guidelines from the SEC state that:

Candidates with permanent or long-term conditions, including visual and hearing difficulties, or specific learning difficulties, which they believe will significantly impair their performance in the examinations may apply to the State Examinations Commission for a reasonable accommodation(s) to be made to facilitate them taking the examinations.

The reasonable accommodations are intended to: remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the candidate's performance and thus enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment and ensure that, whilst giving candidates every opportunity to demonstrate their level of attainment, the special arrangements will not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates in the same examination. Please see SEC website for more information.

Please indicate which accommodation you would like to be considered for your daughter:

Spelling and Grammar Waiver Separate Centre

Two empty orange rectangular boxes for writing.

Reader
Laptop

10

If you would like to proceed with the application process please complete the form below and return to the school by

Kind regards

SEN Department – Our Lady's School

I/WE give permission for our daughter _____ to apply for RACE in her upcoming Junior Certificate and to any in-school testing that may be required for that application.

Date

Appendix 3: Leaving Certificate RACE testing application form



Our Lady's School

Founded 1953
Templeogue Road, Terenure, Dublin 6W
Telephone 4903241 Fax 4922511

Email: principal@olschool.ie



Dear Parent/Guardian,

It is now time to decide whether 6th year students sitting the Leaving Certificate will require reasonable accommodations from the State Examinations Commission, i.e. RACE. The guidelines from the SEC state that:

Candidates with permanent or long-term conditions, including visual and hearing difficulties, or specific learning difficulties, which they believe will significantly impair their performance in the examinations may apply to the State Examinations Commission for a reasonable accommodation(s) to be made to facilitate them taking the examinations.

The reasonable accommodations are intended to: remove, as far as possible, the impact of the disability on the candidate's performance and thus enable the candidate to demonstrate his or her level of attainment and ensure that, whilst giving candidates every opportunity to demonstrate their level of attainment, the special arrangements will not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates in the same examination. Please see SEC website for more information.

Please indicate which accommodation you would like to be considered for your daughter:

Spelling and Grammar Waiver Separate Centre

Reader
Laptop

100

If you would like to proceed with the application process please complete the form below and return to the school by

Kind regards

SEN Department – Our Lady's School

I/WE give permission for our daughter _____ to apply for RACE in her upcoming Leaving Certificate and to any in-school testing that may be required for that application.

Date

Appendix 3: Equipment receipt form

Our Lady's School



Founded 1953
Templeogue Road, Terenure, Dublin 6W
Telephone 4903241 Fax 4922511

Email: principal@olschool.ie



Receipt of equipment form

I _____ acknowledge receipt of
_____ (state piece of equipment received)
from the SEN Department, Our Lady's School.

Date _____

Appendix 4: Basic Needs Checklist

Basic Needs Checklist

This page shows a checklist can be useful in considering a pupil s basic needs

Name: _____

Headings under which to consider a pupil s basic needs:

- Physiological needs e.g. does the child have adequate food, warmth, housing etc?

- Safety needs e.g. does the child need physical or psychological protection?

- Belonging needs e.g. does the pupil have close family and friends, feel part of his / her class.

Appendix 5: Change of subject/level procedure

Subject Change / Level Change

Procedures

- 1) If a student is considering changing level or dropping a subject at any stage, they must first discuss the matter with their Parents/Guardians and their subject teacher. No commitment should be given at this stage.
- 2) The subject teacher liaises with the Year Head.
- 3) The Year Head will arrange meet with the student as they are best placed to give an overview of the student's academic progress.
- 4) An appointment with the Guidance Department is arranged to check the possible impact on career choice.
SEN Department is consulted where relevant.
- 5) Consent form is completed by parents/guardians.

The Guidance Department return documentation to the Year Head and subject teacher is informed of outcome.

The office are asked by the Year Head, to change the student role.

- PLEASE NOTE: Junior Certificate levels are submitted to the DES in March and except in exceptional circumstances, these cannot be changed.
- Where classes are blocked, a class change is arranged through the subject coordinator and the Year Head is kept informed.

Options at Senior Cycle in Our Lady's School

The Leaving Certificate Applied Course is offered as an alternative to the traditional Leaving Certificate Course. The SEN Department as part of Our Lady's Student Support Team plays a pivotal role in identifying students, who, in consultation with their parents/guardians, may choose this course.

Appendix 6: New Resource Teaching Allocation Model 2017

The new Special Education Teaching allocation will provide a single unified allocation for special educational support teaching needs to each school, based on that school's educational profile. This single allocation is being made to allow schools to provide additional teaching support for all pupils who require such support in their schools. Schools have the autonomy to deploy resources based on each pupil's individual learning needs. The New Model outlines:

- Resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs should be used to facilitate the development of truly inclusive schools.
- Supports provided to pupils with SEN should be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Special education teaching supports provided to schools should be used solely for the support of pupils with identified special educational needs, including those pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL).
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need should have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils should be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.

By effectively implementing the new model in it is envisaged:

- That barriers to accessing resources will be removed and children who need support can have that support provided immediately, rather than having to wait for a diagnosis;
- Resources will be linked to genuine need, and children will not be unnecessarily, or inappropriately, labelled in order to access support;
- Resources will be linked closely with the learning needs of children;
- It will ensure that children with special educational needs are properly integrated into the school;
- The school will be able to allocate resources to pupils taking into account their individual learning needs as opposed to requiring a particular diagnosis of disability.

Appendix 7: Class Logs



Class Log

Subject:

Classroom Teacher:

Support Teacher:

To be updated by Support Teacher



SEN Class Log

Subject: Teacher:

To be updated by Support Teacher

Students:

Date	Actions	Next

Appendix 8: Personal Pupil Plan



Personal Pupil Plan

1. SUPPORT PLAN: Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate

To be completed by the teacher(s).

For help, see SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers; BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers pp.71-74; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Student's name			
Start date of plan			
Review date of plan			
Student's strengths and interests			
Priority concerns			
Possible reasons for concerns			
Targets for the student			
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets			

2. Log of Actions: Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate

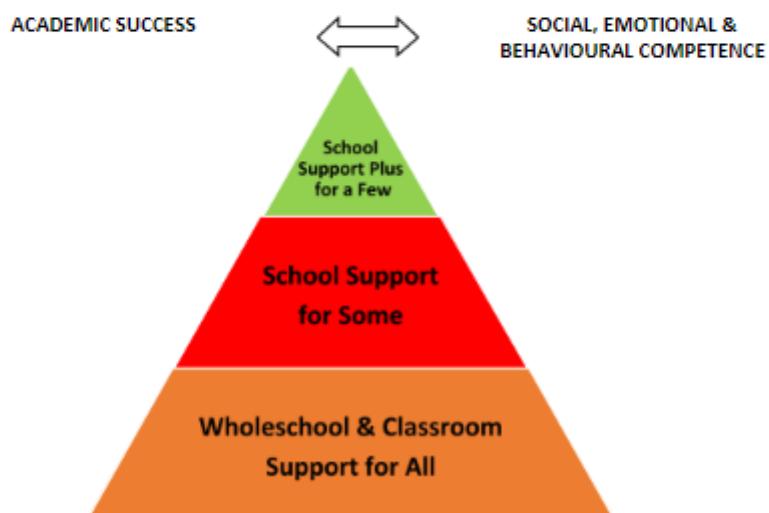
Appendix 9: Student Support File



Student Support File

Personal Pupil Plan	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
Date of entry	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	
Nature of SEN	

A Continuum of Support



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

1. SUPPORT PLAN: *Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate*

To be completed by the teacher(s).

For help, see *SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers*; *BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers* pp.71-74; *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers*, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Teacher's name		Subject	SPHE
Start date of plan			
Review date of plan			
Student's strengths and interests			
Priority concerns			
Possible reasons for concerns			
Targets for the student			
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets			

2. LOG OF ACTIONS: Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate

3. SUPPORT REVIEW/OUTCOME RECORD: *Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate*

To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.
For help, see SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers; BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools.

Teacher's name	Subject
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?	
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?	
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when?	
Any comments from the student?	
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) comment?	

Outcome of review (tick as appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support		Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
	Continue at Current Level of Support		Request consultation with other professionals

*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

4. SUPPORT CHECKLIST: *Classroom Support (Support for ALL)/School Support (Support for SOME)/School Support Plus (Support for A FEW) delete as appropriate*

Support Checklist			
Name: Casey Anne Wynne Robinson	Age:	Class: first year	
General Information		Date Checked	Comments
1. Hearing			
2. Vision			
3. Medical Needs			
4. Basic Needs Checklist completed			
5. Assessment of learning- screening			
6. Observation of learning style/approach to learning			
7. Observation of behaviour			
8. Interview with pupil			
9. Learning environment adapted?			
10. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?			
11. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?			
12. Other interventions put in place in school?			
Action needed			
<small>Helpful references: SEN: A Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 13-16, 18 to 20; BESD: A Continuum of Support, p 7; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp32-36; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools, pp20</small>			

Appendix 10: Special Needs Assistants

Context

Five Special Needs Assistants (3 full time and two job sharing) are presently employed in the school. They are valuable members of the school team and carry out duties of a non-teaching nature. They play an important role in contributing positively to the learning experiences of the students and the overall school community.

SNAs work under the direction of the Principal in so far as the Principal has responsibility for assigning role specific and child specific tasks to the SNAs, in consultation with the SEN Department and the SNAs, regarding the needs of the students.

The school's aim is to ensure the effective deployment of SNAs in enhancing the social skills, self-esteem and inclusion of students in school with Special Educational Needs.

The role of the SNA is to:

- work with students who have been granted SNA access in order to facilitate them experiencing a safe and stimulating environment in school.
- focus on the care issues (both within the classroom and outside it) of the assigned student(s).
- provide support in assisting the students to access the curriculum in a way that encourages them to become independent learners and acquire life skills. The teacher plans lessons and directs learning. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the SNA is clear about where help is needed. The SNA refers matters on curriculum, classroom management, discipline or incidents of concern, etc., to the subject teacher.
- be involved in consultation with the SEN Department in the creation of Personal Pupil Plans and in documenting progress of students as requested by the SEN Dept.
- be familiar with all relevant school policy, in particular the school Code of Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment, Child Protection Guidelines, Intimate Care Procedures and the SEN Policy.
- assist on out-of-class/school visits, walks, examinations and similar activities.
- sensitively and carefully handle observations carried out in classrooms and information received on children.

Appendix 11: Provision of Intimate Care

Context

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of an individual student. Intimate care can include dressing, helping someone to use the toilet, supervision of a student involved in intimate self-care, etc. Our Lady's School aims to ensure that students who require assistance with intimate care receive appropriate support at school. We appreciate that students may feel especially vulnerable when being helped with intimate care and the staff involved need to be particularly sensitive to their individual needs. The student's safety, dignity and privacy are of paramount importance. These procedures have been developed to safeguard both students and staff and should be considered in conjunction with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.

Guidelines:

- Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child.
- The school has a responsibility to work in partnership with students, parents/guardians and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students who require assistance with intimate care.
- In accordance with the fundamental principles of Intimate Care (Health Information and Quality Authority, 2014), every student requiring intimate care has the right to:
 - o Be safe
 - o Have privacy
 - o Be valued as an individual
 - o Be treated with dignity and respect
 - o Be consulted on her own intimate care support
- All staff members and parents/guardians are made aware of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment along with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 published by the Department of Education and Skills. Copies of these documents are published on the school website, the staff website and made available on display at Reception.
- All staff members are Garda Vetted and have undergone on-line training in Child Protection Procedures (Tusla: Introduction to Children First and PDST Course 2) and are made aware of the school's Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
- The student and her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be involved with the Intimate Care Plan and arrangements on a regular basis. The needs and wishes of students and parents will be carefully considered alongside any possible constraints; e.g. staffing.
- The student's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, respect, choice and control will be provided to them.
- The school is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of students will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.
- The school will make sure that provision of intimate care is consistent and only carried out by the staff identified in the student's Intimate Care Plan.
- Wherever possible, staff should work with individuals of the same sex in providing intimate care. Religious and cultural values must always be taken into account.

- Sensitive information about a student's intimate care is confidential and should only be shared in order to facilitate the provision of intimate care support.
- Wherever possible staff, who are involved in the intimate care of children, will not be involved with the delivery of relationship and sex education (RSE) to those children as an additional safeguard to both staff and children involved.
- Students will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their needs.
- Careful consideration will be given to each student's situation to determine how many carers might need to be present when a student receives intimate care. Where possible, one student will be cared for by one adult unless there is a sound reason for having two adults present.
- The Intimate Care Plan will be reviewed with the student and her parent(s)/guardian(s) on a regular basis and any concerns raised will be addressed.

Appendix 12: Procedures for one-to-one Teaching/Counselling

One-to-one Teaching/Meeting Procedures

If it is deemed appropriate for an individual student, one-to-one teaching may be provided. If this is the case, parents should be advised of the rationale for this and the arrangements in place.

Every effort should be made to ensure the protection of students and staff. These guidelines are intended to create a non-threatening environment for both staff and students in one-to-one situations so that all interactions and communications are open and transparent.

In one-to-one situations it is important that clear boundaries are put in place regarding the physical environment. Where there is a need to see a child in a one-to-one situation (e.g. learning support, one-to-one feedback, special examination centres, Year Head interventions, etc.):

- The teacher/SNA must be visible at all times through an open door or a clear glass panel.
- Where practicable, the seating arrangements should be such that the student and teacher work across a table, rather than side by side, ensuring that personal space preferences are not infringed upon.
- It is preferable that the student sits nearer the door.
- A record should be retained of the meeting (e.g. a record of meeting form, SEN Log, etc.).
- Work being carried out by SNA's will be carried out under the direction of the class teacher/the SEN Department and, where possible, in an open environment.

Guidance Counselling Procedure (*further information is available in the Guidance Policy*)

General

Guidance counsellors are fully qualified and full members of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), attending sessions of Supervision through the IGC each academic year. Guidance counsellors are members of the Teaching Council, Garda Vetted and appropriately trained in Child Protection Guidelines, as outlined in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment.

Guidance counsellors undertake professional development activities to satisfy eligibility for membership of the IGC and of other professional bodies to which they subscribe. Any concerns that the guidance counsellors have regarding the safety of a student is discussed with the principal (also the Designated Liaison Person, DLP) as a matter of urgency. If the principal is unavailable, the issue will be discussed with the DDLP.

Referral

Guidance Counsellors are available to meet with students throughout the school day either by appointment or referral through:

- Year Head/Class Tutor
- Other school staff
- Care Team (Year Head, SEN, Guidance Department, Senior Management, Chaplain)
- Parents
- Self-referral by student

Following this referral, the Guidance Counsellor will schedule a time to meet the student (in a guidance counselling office) and a notice of this will be given to the student at registration. All students who attend the Guidance Counsellor receive a written note to allow teachers to be informed of any student absence due to guidance meetings. VSware is also used to record student attendance whilst at appointments.

Ethics

The guidance counsellors must act within the law and within the ethical guidelines outlined by their profession. The guidance counsellors work within the Institute of Guidance Counsellors Code of Ethics. This ensures that the student's needs are prioritised and their rights are protected. The counselling service in the school is both reflective of and in line with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, *Children First* (2011), and with the Department of Education and Science *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post- Primary Schools* (2017). The guidance counsellors follow the recommended procedures for ethical decision making from the IGC Code of Ethics.

Confidentiality

Guidance counsellors will take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information about students. However confidentiality is limited. The limits to confidentiality are explained openly. A clear and truthful oral confidentiality contract is established with the student from the beginning of any counselling session. The students are made aware that if they are in danger, or another person is in danger, or where the law requires it, the guidance counsellor has an obligation to bring the matter further by informing school management, and/or year head and/or parents/guardians. Parents may contact the Guidance Department if they have queries or concerns with regard to confidentiality in guidance and counselling in Our Lady's School. If the guidance counsellor has a concern around child protection, the concern will be discussed with the DLP as a matter of urgency.

Record Keeping and Access to Records

All written records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Guidance Counselling office. Digital records are password protected. When making or keeping records, care is taken to distinguish between fact, observation and opinion and only such information as is required for the purpose of professional involvement with the student is included.

Appendix 13: Assessment

1. Rationale – why assess?

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to students and their parents. In fulfilling this requirement, schools develop assessment procedures, which provide an accurate account of a student's progress and achievement.

Assessment is part of good teaching and learning. It:

- monitors a student's progress
- provides the teacher with information to make decisions about what and how the student is learning
- provides the students and parents with information regarding student progress
- identifies the next steps for progressing the student's learning (for both teacher, student and parent)
- establishes baseline data in relation to a student's attainments in certain subjects
- assists in the identification of students who may need additional learning supports
- assesses a student's eligibility for additional supports and services and informs consultations with the NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) psychologist where necessary or referral to an outside professional or agency for further assessment.

2. Definitions – what is assessment?

2.1 Assessment

In relation to education, the term assessment can refer to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a pupil's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths and learning needs. Assessment processes can be formal or informal. Information obtained can measure pupils' progress and achievement, highlighting areas of strengths or weakness. Assessment provides valuable information for use in the planning of learning and of teaching.

2.2 Assessment as Learning

AaL is characterised by students reflecting on their own learning. It emphasises assessment as a process of metacognition for students to become adept at personally monitoring their own learning, to make adjustments and even make changes in their thinking.

2.3 Assessment for Learning

AfL is the process of seeking evidence from a student's work and interpreting it to decide where students are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. It is a form of Formative Assessment.

2.4 Assessment of Learning

AoL refers to the 'traditional' form of assessment whereby assessment is used to confirm what students know and to demonstrate whether they have achieved the curriculum

outcomes. It shows how they are placed in relation to their peers. It is a form of Summative Assessment.

(SESS, Glossary of Assessment Terms, 2016)

3. Assessment in OLS

3.1 The OLS Context

A focus of our School Improvement Plan, through the lens of School Self Evaluation, is Assessment for Learning. We began our whole-school approach to Assessment for Learning in 2016-17 using the framework document *Looking at Our School* (2016). We identified, as our focus, the domain of Learner Experiences and the standard: *Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning*. We engaged in whole-school AfL strategies (e.g. the use of success criteria, Placemat, KWL). For the academic year 2017-18 we decided, through staff consensus, to continue our work in this domain, expanding our repertoire of AfL strategies through the work of the Teaching and Learning Committee who developed a wealth of resources designed around AfL in hard copy and a staff Padlet. In 2018-19, we progressed to working towards Highly Effective Practice within the domain of Teacher's Collective/Collaborative Practice. The standard we have chosen to focus on is: *Teachers collectively develop and implement consistent and dependable formative and summative assessment practices*. Through this we are building on the AfL base established in the past two years and we have identified the area of Formative Feedback as a focal point for future action.

3.2 The Role of Formative Assessment in OLS:

3.2.1

Definition: **Assessment is formative when** either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process, and used to adapt teaching to meet student needs. The process permits teachers and students to collect information about student progress and to suggest adjustments to the teacher's approach to instruction and the student's approach to learning. **Assessment for learning** covers all aspects of formative assessment but has a particular focus on the student having an active role in his/her learning. (NCCA, <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary>)

3.2.2

As a school we have adopted the Assessment for Learning (AfL) approach to formative assessment. Our aim is to use the whole process of assessment to help learners improve their learning. It is formative because its intention is to form, shape or guide the next steps in learning. It is about 'learning to learn.'

3.2.3

In line with the demands of the syllabus in each curriculum area, teachers set regular homework and give verbal and written feedback on the merits of the students' work as well as making suggestions for improvement.

3.2.4

We have changed the style of our November Progress Reports to be formative in nature (i.e. rather than grades, teachers give a formative report detailing areas of success and next steps for learning).

3.2.5

Formative Assessment involves using methodologies such as:

Sharing of Learning Outcomes with students:

Teachers share the learning outcomes with students at the beginning of each lesson/ where deemed necessary and refer back to them during questioning throughout the lesson and again at the end of the lesson if necessary. This helps to clarify what the student was supposed to have learned and will assist both teachers and students in determining the levels to which the outcomes have been achieved.

Sharing of Features of Quality/ Criteria for Success:

Teachers tell students in advance of a piece of work what exactly they will be looking for when assessing it. Teachers are aware that it is important to share this information with students beforehand so that they will be in a better position to know what is expected of them.

Comment - Only Marking:

Teachers will periodically engage in comment-only feedback: This will include 3 things: What the student has done well, where the areas for improvement are and how the improvement might be made. This allows both teacher and student to identify the next steps in learning.

Peer Assessment and Self-Assessment:

Teachers will, occasionally, supervise students to correct their own or their peer's work, based on a list of criteria for success. Following such methods, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work.

Traffic lights:

Teachers may use traffic lights (printed in school journal) as a visual means of showing understanding. RED, AMBER, GREEN

- Either give students red, amber, green cards which they show on their desks or ask for raised hands
- At the beginning of the lesson teachers ask for prior knowledge.
- Review in the plenary session.

Think Pair Share:

Teachers pose an opened ended question or problem to which there may be a variety of answers.

THINK: Allow 'thinking time' and direct them to think about the question.

PAIR: Students then work in pairs to share ideas, discuss, clarify and challenge.

SHARE: Share ideas with another pair or with whole class. Following these and other AFL methods selected by the teacher, teachers will encourage students to reflect on their work.

3.2.6

Formative Assessment requires some key classroom practices and strategies:

- a positive classroom culture and ethos, which encourages students to think and talk about their learning and which provides a safe place for open, honest and respectful discussion.
- questioning skills (student to teacher/ teacher to student/ student to student), which stimulate thinking and reflecting on learning and explicit teaching of how to consciously reflect on what one knows and how to make an evaluative comment on it (Bloom's Taxonomy).
- frequent identification and review of learning goals through teacher-directed discussion, clearly defining learning objectives and success criteria thereby empowering students and enabling them to take responsibility for their learning a recognition and acknowledgement of the purpose and importance of collaboration between home and school in the student's learning process.

3.3 The Role of Summative Assessment in OLS:

3.3.1

Definition: **Assessment is summative when** it is used to evaluate student learning at the end of the instructional process or of a period of learning. The purpose is to summarise the students' achievements and to determine whether and to what degree the students have demonstrated understanding of that learning by comparing it against agreed success criteria or features of quality. (NCCA, <https://www.ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/assessment-and-reporting/glossary>)

3.3.2

Subject teachers give class based tests as appropriate to the subject curriculum. Teachers record these grades to track student progress. Students are encouraged to use their school journal to track their own progress within subject areas.

3.3.3

All year groups sit house examinations in February. This is when Mock Examinations for 3rd and 6th Year students occur. 1st, 2nd, TY and 5th Year also sit house examinations in May. There is a common assessment and marking scheme within subjects at each level. The mode of assessment may include: written examinations, practicals, aural and/or orals.

3.3.4

3rd and 6th Year students sit the Junior and Leaving Certificate/Leaving Certificate Applied Examinations respectively in June.

3.3.5 Reports are made available to Parents/Guardians of all year groups in November (formative only) and February (a combination of formative and summative). Reports are made available to Parents/ Guardians of all year groups bar 3rd and 6th Year students (sitting state examinations) in May (a combination of formative and summative).

3.4 Transition Year Assessment

3.4.1

TY assessment for certification involves a credit system rewarding attendance, participation, application in all subjects studied, work experience, involvement in activities showing initiative (e.g. Gaisce), portfolio work and an end of year interview.

3.4.2

Students will be formatively assessed throughout the year. The students will keep an e-portfolio of their work completed during the year. This will be in the form of Google Sites. Each student is asked to have at least three pieces of work per subject uploaded onto their portfolio by the end of the school year. The student is responsible for choosing the pieces of work.

3.4.3

Each student will sit two interviews, one in February and one in May. Self-assessment is a key tenet of TY interviews. The interviews will be conducted by teachers who are given guideline questions and use a rubric to allocate credits which contribute towards TY Certification.

3.4.4

Summative tests will be held in February and at the end of the year.

3.4.5

Students' midterm progress reports are shared with parents in November. These are formative in nature and, rather than a grade, focus on formative comments affirming good practice and signposting steps for improvement.

3.4.6

Reports are also shared with parents after the February and May in-house exams. These contain a balance of summative and formative information.

3.4.7

Certificates for the students will then be awarded to the students at TY Night in May along with a portfolio of other certificates the students may have earned during the year.

3.5 Leaving Certificate Applied Modes of Assessment

Assessment takes place over two years based on the satisfactory completion of modules (attendance and key assignments: 62 credits) and tasks (project and interview: 70 credits). There is also a set of final examinations in June during the Leaving Certificate exam period (68 credits) in each of the following areas:

- English and Communication
- Two Vocational Specialisms
- Mathematical Applications

- Language (Irish and a Modern Foreign Language - one at the end of 5th Year, one at the end of 6th Year)
- Social Education

Students who successfully complete the programme are awarded a Leaving Certificate from the Department of Education and Science. The certificate is awarded at three levels: Pass (120 - 139 credits); Merit (140 - 169 credits); and Distinction (170 - 200 credits). Students who acquire less than 120 credits or who leave the programme early will receive a Certificate of Experience.

3.6 Junior Cycle Assessment

Assessment at Junior Cycle places the student at the centre of the learning process and allows for new ways of learning and a broader range of skills to be assessed. As part of their classroom work, students will engage in assessment activities that can be either formative or summative in nature.

Class teachers will assess as part of their daily practice by observing and listening as students carry out tasks, by looking at what they write or make and by considering how they respond to, frame and ask questions. Teachers will use this assessment information to help students plan the next steps in their learning.

Periodically this assessment will be in more structured, formalised settings where teachers will need to obtain a snapshot of the students' progress in order to make decisions on future planning and to report on progress. This may involve the students doing projects, investigations, case studies and/or tests and may occur at defined points in the school calendar.

Summative Assessment at Junior Cycle will take the form of:

- *Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)*
In each subject, students will undertake two Classroom-Based Assessments facilitated by their teacher. Generally, one Classroom-Based Assessment will take place in 2nd Year and a second Classroom-Based Assessment in 3rd Year. Classroom-Based Assessments will provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and skills in a way which would not be possible in a formal examination. A particular purpose of the Classroom-Based Assessments will be to facilitate developmental feedback to students during their engagement with the assessment task and at the end of the process. The Classroom-Based Assessments will be at a common level. In the case of a small number of subjects (Art, Music, Home Economics and Technology Subjects), the second structured Classroom Based Assessment will involve practical work, or the creation of an artefact or a performance.
- *The Assessment Task*
The written Assessment Task, marked by the SEC, will be specified by the NCCA and will relate to the learning outcomes of the second Classroom-Based Assessment. The written

Assessment Task may require the student to demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills developed during the second Classroom-Based Assessment. It may facilitate the student in highlighting key learning points gained as the student undertook the Classroom-Based Assessment in question. The written Assessment Task may also provide an opportunity for students to refer to skills and competences that were developed and describe ways in which their learning might be applied to new situations. The Assessment Task will be completed in class under the supervision of the teacher and will be sent to the State Examinations Commission for marking along with the script for that subject in the state certified examination. Marks for the Assessment Task in each subject will be incorporated into the presentation of the grade for that subject.

- *Final Assessment*

The Final Assessment will take place in June of 3rd Year. The written examinations will be of no longer than two hours duration in a maximum of ten subjects. The final examination will be available at a common level apart from English, Mathematics and Irish where there will be two levels (higher and ordinary) available.

4. Psychometric Tests:

4.1

CAT4 tests are administered to students prior to entry to 1st Year.

When the results of the tests become available:

- Students with particular needs are identified.
- All parents receive an information booklet specific to their daughter's results.
- Results are coded and made available to teaching staff to inform their in-class strategies and planning for differentiation.
- These results also provide one piece of a broader picture compiled of each student's progress through academic tracking, which is led by each Year Head and their team.

4.2

In house and external assessments are arranged on an individual basis as deemed necessary by the SEN Department.

4.3

Eirquest & Cambridge Profile and Aptitude Tests are completed by all TY students, following which they have an individual meeting with a Guidance Counsellor who explains the results and how parents and students can make the most out of the information they have received.