



cavan
institute

POLICY & PROCEDURE
for
Special Educational Needs
November 2021

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Special Educational Needs Policy

1. Policy Statement

Cavan Institute is committed to providing the best possible learning environment for students with special educational needs and it makes provision, wherever possible, to facilitate access and participation in the academic courses and student life of the Institute.

The Institute will put in place supports to assist and empower students so that they can reach their academic potential.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students who have specific needs for learning support arising from the presence of one or multiple difficulties, for example,

- Blind/visual impairment
- Deaf/hearing impaired
- Mental health problem
- Physical or mobility disabilities
- Specific learning difficulties, e.g., Dyslexia, Dyspraxia
- Asperger's Syndrome/Autism
- ADD/ADHD

This list is not exhaustive.

Cavan Institute makes an application to the SOLAS under the Fund for Student with Disabilities. The purpose of the fund is to provide resources to colleges for the delivery of key services, reasonable accommodations and supports for students with disabilities on full-time courses. The fund aims to support the personal, educational and professional development of the participating student and contribute to the achievement of their full potential.

The type of supports that may be accessed depending on the student's needs include the following;

- Personal Educational Assistant or Personal Assistant (PA)
- Note-taker
- Subject Tuition
- Assistive Technology

- Examination Accommodation
- Photocopying/Hand-outs
- Transport

3. How to Access Support

Students can access support in the following ways:

- 3.1 The student discloses on their on-line application form that they need support by selecting YES in the special educational need section
- 3.2 The student completes the “Student Support Form” where they can outline their disability and forward the relevant documentation e.g. educational psychologist report, consultant report, orthopaedic consultant report to Cavan Institute
- 3.3 The student discloses the information during a need’s assessment interview with the special educational support team at the start of the academic year. Early disclosure is encouraged.
- 3.4 The student may be referred to the learning support team by a teacher with that student’s consent by filling out a “Referral Form”.
- 3.5 Students are welcome to call in to the Open Learning Centre (OLC).

4. The Assessment Process

The process involves the following three stages:

- Verification of Disability
- Needs Assessment
- Application Form

4.1 Verification of Disability

This process applies to eligible students for which a funding request is being made for the first time. The criteria set out in this section are specifically associated with the SOLAS Fund for Students with Disabilities. Funding can be requested for eligible students who have provided evidence of disability documentation that meets the criteria for the Fund as set out below.

Acceptable evidence of disability documentation consists of a report that meets the criteria as set in the Fund for Students with Disabilities Guidelines for Further Education Institutes.

Letters from GPs are not acceptable as evidence of disability for the purposes of the fund.

4.2 Needs Assessment

Discovering the exact nature of a student's need is the beginning of the process of understanding how they can best be supported. A needs assessment is the process of collecting information upon which to base an accurate description of the strengths and learning needs of a particular individual in order to identify supports, learning strategies and accommodations required. The needs assessment involves meeting with a student and or parent/guardian if they so request to discuss the following:

- Nature and degree of disability
- Impact of the disability on a student's ability to participate in his or her course of choice
- Physical environment
- Intimate Care Issues
- Supports required to deal with demands of the course e.g. learning support, subject tuition, examination accommodation, assistive technology

4.3 The Application Procedure

Based on the information from the needs assessment interview, an application is forwarded to SOLAS for approval for funding on behalf of the student. Early disclosure is important in order to access relevant supports.

Students must sign the Compliance with Data Protection Requirements form. (See Appendix 4).

5. Learning Support Service

Cavan Institute provides a learning support service for students who have learning difficulties. Students who have been assessed as having learning difficulties are encouraged to contact the support team early in the academic year to discuss their individual needs.

The learning support service operates from the *Open Learning Centre (OLC)*, which is open to students who have special educational needs such as a specific learning difficulty. Staff at the OLC support students in meeting the challenges involved in independent learning.

The following types of supports are available in the OLC:

- Specific subject tuition
- Study skills information
- Writing skills
- Access to technological aids and specialised software
- Organising reasonable accommodations at examinations
- Liaising with relevant staff to ensure students achieve their full potential at Cavan Institute.

Supports can be delivered on a one-to-one or group basis by appointment only.

6. Communications

Information about disability is classified as sensitive personal data and will be processed with a high level of confidentiality and respect. All documentation will be stored in a secure locked cabinet or on SEN MS Team which is restricted to use by CI SEN Team only and password protected.

We do not pass on personal or sensitive information without the student's written permission. This allows us to forward on any relevant information regarding their disability and/or support needs to staff and support workers.

On some occasions we need to communicate with outside agencies. This is done with the written permission of the student.

7. Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined as any item, piece of equipment or product system that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Examples include voice recognition software, adaptive keyboards, loop systems (for hearing impaired students), *LiveScribe* pens as well as computer programs such as *Texthelp* and *Inspiration*.

AT can be critical in supporting and developing independent learning for students with disabilities, and AT skills learned and utilised in education can be transferred very effectively into other environments, such as the workplace. Many students now use laptops, tablets, i-phones and MP3 players which brings a whole new level of independence to their learning. Students who are provided with a laptop or other device for the duration of their studies at Cavan Institute are required to sign a Student Device Agreement and return the device at the end of the academic year. (See appendix 3).

There is also a wide range of learning software available in the Institute, which can be used by students to access notes, carry out research and complete assignment/projects.

Students are encouraged to meet with the learning support teacher to find out which software will work best for them and to receive training.

8. Examination and other Assessment Accommodations

Examinations are stressful events for all students, yet they are central to the academic process. Appropriate exam accommodations will be discussed and offered during the needs assessment interview. As per CMETB Reasonable Accommodations in Assessment policy, the SEN support team will make an application for accommodations for students. A variety of examination supports are available as follows, depending on the student's individual needs.

- 8.1 Reader or scribe (where the student has a significant reading and writing difficulty)
- 8.2 Separate examination centre

- 8.3 Extra time /Rest Breaks
- 8.4 Spelling and grammar waiver
- 8.5 Use of a computer/software/use of assistive technology
- 8.6 Papers presented in alternative formats, e.g., in large print, as an audio file
- 8.7 Extra time for assignments to be negotiated with the appropriate subject teacher
- 8.8 Sign Language Interpreter

Arrangements can also be put in place for in-class exams that are part of the overall assessment during the academic year. Subject teachers are required to make the appropriate examination accommodations arrangements with the Exam Secretary/office.

9. Intimate Care

The policy aims to give clear direction with regard to staff interaction with students who require intimate care.

Intimate care is a key area of a person's self-image and respect and as such it is vital that it is practised in a sensitive manner. It is essential that the needs and rights of students and staff are protected and that the highest standards of best practice are ensured at all times in the area of intimate personal assistance.

The level of assistance required will reflect the needs of each individual student at any given time which will be discussed at the need's assessment interview.

8.1 Definition of Intimate Care

Intimate care refers to all aspects of support to a student, whether by direct or indirect contact, which are associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene involving intimate parts of the body.

Direct contact involves physical contact between the student and the staff member. It may involve touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts.

Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the student to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care includes dressing and undressing (underwear), support with using the toilet, changing of continence pads, washing intimate body parts, showering (if required) and menstrual care.

The objective of this section of the policy is to give direction to staff with regard to supporting students in their intimate care needs in a way which promotes the dignity and privacy of the student while also protecting the integrity of the staff involved.

8.2 Intimate Care Plan

- Students needing assistance with toileting/intimate care, can discuss their individual needs at the Need Assessment interview where an Intimate Care Plan can be agreed. (see **Appendix 1**).
- The specific needs of the student and how Cavan Institute can best meet those needs will be clarified.
- The staff to be involved in this care will be identified.
- As far as possible the student will be involved in the identification of his/her personal wishes or requirements
- Additional items of clothing and sanitary wear will be provided by the student or parents/guardians as necessary
- A written copy of what has been agreed will be made, signed by the parties involved and retained in the student's file in the Open Learning Centre.
- Where a student requires manual handling (lift/transfer) as part of their intimate care needs, manual handling procedures will be outlined in the intimate care plan. Staff will be trained in the use of lifting/transfer equipment in consultation with the student's care givers, e.g., occupational therapist.
- Where applicable, the student's intimate care plan will be reviewed at the beginning of each academic year or as needs arise during the year, e.g., where there is a change in the student's mobility.
- Parents/Guardians and/or the student are responsible for keeping the Institute up to date with any changes to the student's intimate care requirements.

8.3 Procedures

- Two members of staff should be present when dealing with intimate care/toileting needs.
- Temporary staff and persons in the school on work placements will not be involved in dealing with intimate care needs.
- Any change of personnel will be discussed with the parents/guardians and student.
- Provision will be made for occasions when the particular staff involved are absent.
- It will not be necessary for two people to administer intimate care. However, the door is to be left slightly ajar with the second person remaining outside the door.
- Staff members will be trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual student.
- Appropriate protective gear will be provided (e.g. gloves, aprons, etc.).
- Appropriate disposal of sanitary wear, etc., will be provided by student, parents/guardians.
- The student's intimate care needs will be discussed in private where confidentiality can be maintained.
- Before commencing an intimate care task, the staff member will explain to the student, using an appropriate method of communication, what they are about to do and how they will do it.
- Staff will check in advance that suitable facilities exist for intimate care procedures when on school outings or field trips.
- At all times, the dignity and privacy of the student will be paramount in addressing intimate care needs.
- A record of intimate care tasks undertaken should be maintained (**Appendix 2**)

Any deviation from the agreed procedure will be recorded and notified to the deputy designated liaison person and the parents/guardians.

A disabled toilet is located on the ground floor in Block A which has been designated as the Changing Room. An Occupational Therapist has been consulted re the design of this room and the identification of equipment required. A locked cupboard is available in this room for changing equipment and personal items.

8.3 Child Protection

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member will report this concern immediately to the director who is the designated Liaison Person (DLP) or a deputy director who are deputy designated liaison persons. Such issues may include:

- The student seems unusually sore, tender or bruised
- The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause
- The student makes an allegation against a staff member

Any concerns will be dealt with by the DLP in accordance with *Children First* and the *Department of Education's 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.'*

8.4 Implementation

The director, deputy directors, SEN co-ordinator, personal assistants and other relevant staff members will be responsible for implementation of this policy.

The director is responsible for

- Ensuring that any member of staff who is required to provide intimate care support is made aware of this policy and receives appropriate training and advice prior to supporting a student with his/her intimate care.
- Ensuring that staff members carrying out intimate care fully understand the confidential and sensitive nature of the task and the potential for misinterpretation involved.
- Ensuring that staff members involved in providing intimate care are given the opportunity to advance their skills and expertise in this area.

- Ensuring that any deficits in terms of resources which may affect the manner in which intimate care is delivered are addressed.
- Ensuring that, as DLP, any child protection concerns reported by staff members carrying out intimate care duties are addressed immediately.
- Ensuring, with the SEN co-ordinator, that the Intimate Care Plan is reviewed, with the student and parents/guardians at the beginning of each academic year.

Staff members who are required to provide intimate care support to students should:

- Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with this policy.
- Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the individual student's Intimate Care Plan.
- Report any concerns, which may arise when carrying out intimate care duties, immediately to the DLP.
- Use protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks.

This policy will be made available to staff, students, parents/guardians via the Institute's Intranet or on request from the director.

10.Related Policies

This policy should be read in light of other Cavan Institute and CMETB policies, as well as national policies and guidelines. Of particular relevance are:

- Cavan Institute's Code of Behaviour
- Cavan Institute's Child Protection Policy
- CMETB's Adult Safeguarding Policu
- Cavan Institute's Equal Status Policy
- Cavan Institute's Health and Safety Policy
- Cavan Institute's Assessment Policy
- Cavan Institute's Teaching and Learning Policy
- CMETB Reasonable Accommodation and Assessments

11. Review and Adoption

This policy shall be reviewed periodically, in light of emerging legislation and circulated Guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), the Health Service Executive or other statutory body.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Cavan Institute at its meeting on 12 Nov 2014.

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Chairperson

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Director/Secretary to the Board

Appendix 1

INTIMATE CARE PLAN

Name of Student	
Course	
Parent/Guardian	

Tasks	Requires Intimate Care intervention from staff	Students can perform with supervision/minimal assistance from staff
Toileting		
Menstruation		
Hand Washing		
Dressing and Undressing for PE		
Supported Eating (including tube feeding)		
Administering Medicines (including skin creams)		

Facilities/Equipment Required	Yes/No	Comments
Changing table/bed		
Grab rails		
Step		
Locker for supplies		
Lever taps (Hot & cold water)		
Mirror at suitable height		
Disposal unit/bin		
Hoist		
Other moving and handling equipment		
Emergency alarm		
Other		

Supplies	Family Supplies	School Supplies
Pads/nappies		
Wipes		
Spare Clothes		
Antiseptic Cleanser		
Cloths/Paper Towels		
Soap		

Disposable Gloves & Aprons		
Disposal Sacks		
Sterilising Fluid and equipment		
Toilet Paper		
Other		

Staff Members	Details of Training Required	Training Given (date)

Comments

Permission for Cavan Institute to provide intimate care

I/We give permission for Cavan Institute to provide intimate care to myself/son/daughter.

I/We will advise the Institute of anything that may affect issues of personal care.

I//We understand the procedures that will be carried out and will contact the Institute immediately if there are any concerns.

1. Signature: _____ Date: _____

2. Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to student: _____

Appendix 3



Agreement for the use of Institute IT Device

The IT device listed below has been issued to the named student:

Name of Student		Course	Date signed out:
Make of Device 1	Model of Device 1	Serial No. of Device 1	
Make of Device 2	Model of Device 2	Serial No. of Device 2	
Signed back in by <i>(signature)</i>		Date signed back in:	
Report of any damage/ not working properly			

- I agree to my/my child's usage of the device listed above, issued by Cavan Institute.
- I understand that at all times the device remains the property of Cavan Institute and CMETB.
- I understand that the device is for my/my child's use only and is not to be shared with other individuals.
- I understand that I am responsible for this device and that it must be kept safe and secure.
- I understand that the device is only to be used for activities related to college and course work.
- I understand that the device is to be used responsibly and it must not be used to bully, harass or intimidate others or to carry out illegal activities.
- I understand that any misuse of this device may result in sanctions under the Institute's Code of Conduct and the withdrawal of permission to use the device.
- I understand that Cavan Institute will not be responsible for any access to the internet and social media occurring outside the confines of the school.
- I understand that the device software and virus protection must be kept up to date.
- I understand that I am to keep regular data backups of any data I store locally/directly on the devices internal/onboard storage in the event of a device malfunction.
- I agree to return the device to Cavan Institute on request/instruction of the Director or other authorised staff member.
- I agree to delete all personal data from the device before it is returned to the college.
- With regard to recording devices such as the Echo smartpen, Dictaphones etc I understand that they are **only used** in class with **the permission** of the teacher and **must not** be given to any other person or broadcast in public e.g. the internet.
- I understand that I **must not** record student voices during class.

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Parent/ Guardian of student under 18 years _____

Signed on behalf of Cavan Institute _____ Date _____

Appendix4



Application to The Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD) from ESF to provide supports and services for students with disabilities

I _____ declare that all the information provided is true, complete and accurate and that assistance from other sources has not been received for the stated purpose/service which is the subject of this application.

Compliance with Data Protection Requirements

I have been informed that by providing this personal data as part of my application this data may be:

- processed for the purposes of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the operation of the Fund and to comply with EU requirements,
- this personal data may include personally sensitive data and,
- this personal data may be shared with third parties for monitoring and reporting on European Social Fund co-financed activities.

Signed _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian of student if under 18 _____ Date _____

