



# Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

## Additional Educational Needs Policy

**September 2024**

### General Information

<b>Name of School:</b>	Swords Educate Together National School
<b>Address:</b>	Applewood, Swords, Co. Dublin
<b>Telephone:</b>	01-8903899
<b>email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@swordseducatetogether.ie">info@swordseducatetogether.ie</a>
<b>Denominational Character:</b>	Equality Based
<b>Patron:</b>	Educate Together

### Special Educational Needs

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act was passed into law in July 2004. Special educational needs are defined in this act as “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.

### Rationale

The inclusive ethos and philosophy of Swords Educate Together National School is to cherish all children equally and to aid and support them in achieving their true potential. Therefore, the school recognises the pivotal role of Additional Education Needs (AEN) in pursuing its educational goals.

### Aims

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice that makes it possible. Our policy aims to enable children with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The principal aim of this policy is to provide practical guidance for Teachers, Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs), and Parents/Guardians on the provision of effective additional support to children in line with the Continuum of Support as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Welfare Act 1998.

**To support children with Additional Educational Needs, our aims are:**

- To ensure that all children gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have an equal opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs and their abilities.
- To enable all children to access the curriculum. This is done through the implementation of a differentiated programme that is specific to their learning needs.
- To develop self-esteem and positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- To enable children to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To involve Parents/Guardians and other outside agencies (e.g. Department of Education Personnel, HSE, Children Disability Network Teams (CDNT), Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists) in supporting children's learning.
- To recognise the key role of Class Teachers.
- To develop a partnership with Parents/Guardians in order that their knowledge, views, and experience can assist us in assessing and supporting their children.
- To establish specific models of support that are specifically designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.
- To ensure that our duties, as set out in The Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004, are fully met, to enable all children to participate in the activities of the school.
- To identify children in need of additional support.
- To use our resources as efficiently and fairly as possible when assessing and meeting the additional educational needs of our children.
- To provide a staged approach, via the Continuum of Support, to match the level of additional support with the child's level of need.

**Swords Educate Together National School is committed to providing the best possible educational service to children with Additional Educational needs.**

To ensure this, we require:

- A close level of co-operation between Parents/Guardians, Class Teachers, Special Education Teachers (SET), ANAs and any other school personnel assigned to support the child/children.
- Copies of the most recent psychological and medical reports prior to enrolment. These will be treated with the utmost confidence at all times. Copies of all relevant assessments and reports should be supplied to the school as these become available, on an ongoing basis.
- An assurance from Parents/Guardians that they understand that our responsibility is primarily to **all** children in our care, and therefore, if it becomes apparent to Teachers and Parents/Guardians that the integration of an individual child with an additional need is not meeting the needs of that child and is having ongoing adverse effect on the education of the other children in the class or school, and the Board of Management reserves the right to review the enrolment of the individual child.

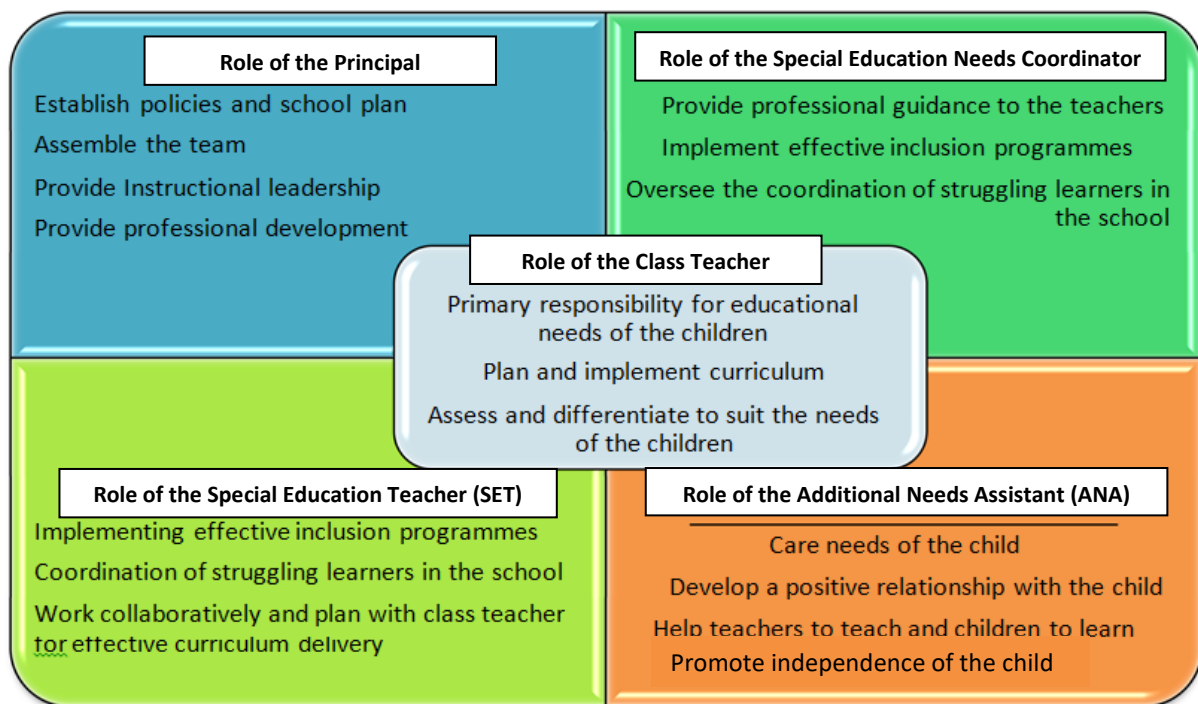
## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all: The Board of Management, Senior and Middle Management, SEN Coordinator, Teachers, Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs) Parents/Guardians, and children. It is important that everyone contributes to the planning and implementation of our AEN Policy.

### **SET Teams**

Class Teachers, SEN Teachers, the SEN Co-ordinator, ANAs, and the Principal constitute the school SET Team and each team member has a clear role in supporting children with additional educational needs to access the curriculum.

In our school, we view the Class Teacher as central to the educational needs of each child. All other staff members work with the Class Teacher to support the needs of the child.



## The Principal

The Principal, in consultation with the Board of Management, has overall responsibility for the school's AEN programme and for the operation of services for children with Additional Special Educational Needs. The Principal:

- Helps Teachers/ANAs to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of Additional Educational Needs by encouraging them and providing opportunities for them to avail of relevant professional development.
- Meets regularly with the SEN Coordinator/SET Team.
- Oversees AEN related policies and procedures.
- In conjunction with the SEN Coordinator, the Principal:
  - Liaises with outside agencies on AEN related matters.
  - Reviews, monitors, and applies for adequate resources for children with additional needs.
  - Reviews applications to outside Agencies for Additional Educational Needs support.
  - Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify children with low achievement so that such children may be provided with the support that they need.
  - Has responsibility for the Autism Class.
- Has responsibility for the allocation of SET/ANA positions and class allocation within the SET Team

## **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting, and monitoring school policy on Additional Educational Needs.

The Board of Management:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of the AEN policy.
- Ensures that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the SET Team.
- Ensures a secure facility for storage of records relating to children.

## **SEN Co-ordinator**

In SETNS, the role of the SEN Coordinator has been assigned to the Deputy Principal.

The SEN Co-ordinator:

- Works on the development of the school plan for Additional Educational Needs.
- Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening program to identify children with very low achievement, learning difficulties, and/or exceptional ability, so that they can be provided with the support they need to achieve their potential.
- Collaborates with the Principal, SET Team, Class Teachers, ANAs, External Agencies and Parents/Guardians of children with AEN.
- Keeps SET Teachers, Class Teachers, ANAs, and Parents/Guardians informed about relevant external assessment and Additional Educational Needs services that are available.
- Maintains a list of children who are receiving additional support.
- Helps to coordinate the caseloads / work schedules of the SET Team.
- Liaises with external agencies such as Psychologists, Family Doctors, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, NEPS, the Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT), and the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO).
- Collaborates with SET Team/Class Teachers in identification, screening, and referral procedures.
- Maintains records and disseminates information to relevant school personnel.
- Orders, purchases, distributes, and informs the staff on class screening materials and procedures.
- Ensures that all documentation relating to children who receive additional support is properly and securely filed.
- Facilitates regular meetings with SET Team and ANA Team.
- Facilitates regular (termly) planning meetings between Class Teachers and relevant SET Team members.

## **The Class Teacher**

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of **all** children in his/her class including those receiving additional support.

The Class Teacher:

- Liaises regularly with Parents/Guardians on their children's progress.
- Facilitates the implementation of various models of support, where available, provided by the SET Team.
- Liaises initially with Parents/Guardians to make them aware of any difficulties their child may be experiencing.
- Devises, implements, and reviews Classroom Support Plans in consultation with the child's parents.
- In conjunction with the SET Team, uses class observations, standardised tests and screening data, to inform children's required levels of support.
- Collaborates with the SET Team, SET Teacher, and ANA on the drawing up of School Support Plans and School Support Plus Plans.
- Attends support planning meetings with Parents/Guardians, SET Teacher, and ANA.
- Meets with the SET Teacher on a regular basis (at least once per term) to plan, monitor progress, and adapt the learning programme as necessary.
- Liaises with the SET Team/SET Teacher in the purchasing of relevant additional support materials.

## **SET Teacher**

The SET Teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of children assessed as having a specific learning difference and/or children who are experiencing low achievement as documented in standardised testing and/or screening data.

The SET Teacher:

- Maintains relevant monthly reports (Cúntas Míósúil) for children/groups in receipt of additional support.
- In collaboration with the Class Teacher, gathers information on children to create a profile of children experiencing difficulties (See NEPS *Continuum of Support*).
- In conjunction with the Class Teacher, implements various in-class models of support when available.
- Attends termly support planning meetings with Parents/Guardians, SET Teacher, and ANA.

- In consultation with the Class Teacher, administers relevant screening tests to children who have been identified as experiencing difficulties.
- Liaises with outside agencies (e.g. Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists) on providing support and input on the teaching of children with Additional Educational Needs.
- Develops a School Support Plan / School Support Plus Plan to address the needs of children experiencing low achievement as reported in relevant standardised and/or diagnostic test results. The SET Teacher agrees the specific targets with the Class Teacher and Parents/Guardians for children and/or groups of children.

### **Additional Needs Assistant (ANA)/ Special Needs Assistants (SNA) – See Policy**

*The role of the ANA is to support the care needs of students, to assist class teachers and special education teachers, and to ensure that the student is able to access education, as set out in DES Circular 30/2014.*

ANAs are deployed in a manner which best meets the care needs of the children in our school. Those with the greatest level of need receive the greatest level of support. It is a matter for each school to allocate ANA support through identifying and monitoring the care needs of all children in the school, thereby allowing flexibility in how the available ANA support is utilised. The work of ANAs is outlined in our ANA Policy.

### **Parents/Guardians**

*“Parents, through their unique knowledge of knowing their own child, have much to contribute to their child’s learning programmes” (Learning Support Guidelines, p.52).*

The role of the Parents/Guardians of a child with Additional Educational Needs is important to its success. Specifically, Parents/Guardians contribute through:

- Regular communication with the Class Teacher and SET Teacher.
- Creating a home environment where learning can thrive.
- Fostering positive attitudes in the child about school and learning.
- Attending support planning meetings and providing input/feedback to Class Teacher/SET Teacher/ANA.
- Collaborating in generating profiles through Diagnostic Windows and Questionnaires.

- Collaborating with SET/Class Teacher and ANA in formulating and implementing a support plan for their child.

### **The Role of the Child**

In recognition of the child-centred nature of the school's ethos, we recognise the importance of the child's own role in the provision of additional support.

A child-centred approach will enable the SET team to work with the child to:

- Take ownership of his/her own learning.
- Recognise his/her own needs and strengths.
- Take on a responsibility for his/her achievements and work hard to succeed.
- Work together from a shared understanding of the difficulties the child is experiencing.
- Set clear realistic and achievable goals so that the child experiences a sense of achievement.
- Whenever and wherever possible the views of the child will be ascertained and the child will be directly involved in the process by completing the NEPS (2007) *My Thoughts about School* questionnaire.

### **Identification of Children requiring Additional Support**

*Children with the greatest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support.*



The following criteria will be used by our school to prioritise children for additional teaching support, in line with the new model of Special Education Teaching (Circular 13/2017) and the *NEPS Continuum of Support*.

**Decisions on the provision of additional support are made on a case-by-case basis.**

1.	Pupils with significant Additional Educational Needs including pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, behavioural, social, and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
2.	Pupils performing at or below the 14 <sup>th</sup> percentile on standardised tests will be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.
3.	Early intervention in literacy and/or maths – infants class children who continue to experience difficulties in early literacy skills, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Level 1 Classroom Support. The teacher will have opened a support plan and recorded the interventions in it.
4.	Pupils with specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Level 1 Classroom Support. The teacher will have opened a support plan and recorded the interventions in it.
5.	Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties and attention control difficulties, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Level 1 Classroom Support. The teacher will have opened a support plan and recorded the interventions in it.
6.	Children experiencing serious difficulties with oral behavioural, social, or emotional development or application to learning, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Level 1 Classroom Support. The teacher will have opened a support plan and recorded the interventions in it.
7.	Children who have English as an additional language and whose English requires further support.
8.	Children scoring at or below the 30 <sup>th</sup> percentile on standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy who continue to experience difficulty, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Level 1 Classroom Support. the teacher will have opened a support plan and recorded the interventions in it.

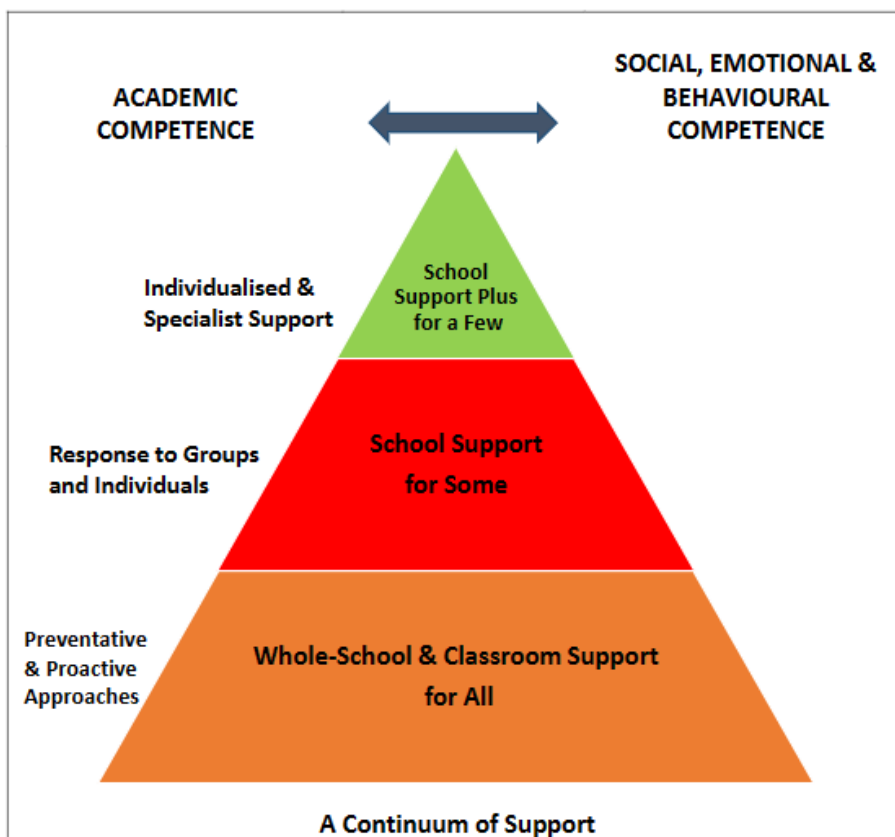
**Due consideration will be given to the overall needs of the school and all its pupils.**

## **The Continuum of Support**

Schools use their resources in many different ways to provide as much support as possible for students. Additional teaching support can be provided in the classroom by the class teacher or through team teaching with a support teacher. It can also be provided through small group

teaching both inside and outside the classroom or one to one teaching. The intention is always that *students with the greatest level of need are provided with the greatest level of support* and that support addresses the student’s identified learning needs.

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has developed a system to help schools to identify and support children with additional educational needs. This system is known as the *NEPS Continuum of Support*, and it works at three different levels: *Classroom Support*, *School Support*, and *School Support Plus*.



*As additional needs can vary from mild and transient to significant and enduring, educational planning should reflect the level of need of the individual pupil. In this regard, the Support Plan facilitates a graduated response across the three different levels of the Continuum.*

**Level 1: Classroom Support**  
*Support for All*

The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A Level 1 Classroom Support Plan is

developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.

At this level of support, the class teacher devises a simple differentiated plan which aims to meet the child's identified needs within the classroom setting.

This plan is informed by:

- Parental consultation
  - Teacher observation records
  - Teacher-designed measures /assessments
  - Basic needs checklist
  - Learning environment checklist
  - Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School questionnaire
  - Literacy and numeracy tests
  - Screening tests of language skills
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- The plan is devised, implemented, and reviewed by the Class Teacher in consultation with the child's parents. Advice can be sought from the SET Team throughout.
  - The Classroom Support plan is written up by the class teacher on Aladdin.
  - Classroom Support plans run for a **defined period of time** and are subject to review.
  - Exceptionally able/gifted children: Interventions will be made by the Class Teacher at this stage of the Continuum of Support. These interventions are recorded on the Classroom Support Plan.
  - If concern remains after a number of reviews and adaptations to the plan, the SET Team may be consulted about further screening assessments and the desirability of intervention at **Level 2: School Support**

## **Level 2: School Support**

### ***Support for Some***

- Additional support teachers are involved.
- The child can be supported in the classroom setting and in the support setting (e.g. Literacy, Numeracy, Social/Emotional/Behavioural Support).

At this level a School Support Plan is devised and informed by:

- Teacher observation records

- Teacher-designed measures / assessments
  - Parent and pupil interviews and questionnaires
  - Learning environment checklist
  - Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy
  - Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures
  - Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties.
- The plan is devised, implemented **for a defined block of time**, and is reviewed by the SET Teacher and Class Teacher collaboratively, following consultation with the child's parents.
  - The School Support plan is written up by the SET Teacher on Aladdin.
  - If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, a group support plan may be implemented.
  - All children will require written consent (*School Support Pre-Planning Questionnaire*) from Parents/Guardians to be withdrawn from class to avail of additional teaching support.
  - Following a review, supplementary teaching may be discontinued and deployed elsewhere throughout the school.
  - Where progress is such that the child is no longer experiencing difficulty, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children (**Level 1 Classroom Support**) and will continue to be monitored by the Class Teacher and SET Teacher.
  - If concerns remain after the block of intervention, the SET Team may be consulted about further screening assessments, the desirability of intervention at **Level 3 (School Support Plus)** and/or consultation with external professionals (e.g. NEPS, NCSE, and/or the clinical services of the HSE).

### **Level 3: School Support Plus**

#### ***Support for a Few***

For children with significant, enduring, and complex needs, collaboration with external professionals, including multi-disciplinary teams is advised (e.g. occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, psychologist).

This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:

- Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures
- Parent and pupil interviews and questionnaires
- Functional assessment
- Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional, and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc.
- Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.
  
- Children with more complex learning needs may have an individualised programme in place. They may require access to ANA support and there is often external specialist involvement and/or support.
  
- A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.
  
- The School Support Plus plan is devised, implemented, and reviewed by the SET Teacher and Class Teacher collaboratively, following consultation with the child's parents and, where appropriate, external agencies. ANA input is necessary for plans that include a PPP (Personal Pupil Plan).
- The plan is written up by the SET Teacher on Aladdin.
  
- The child can be supported in the classroom setting and in the support setting. All children will require written consent from Parents/Guardians to be withdrawn from class to avail of additional teaching support.

- Level 3 School Support Plus Plans are reviewed twice per year (Spring and Summer). The Class Teacher consults with the SET Teacher, Parents/Guardians, the child (where appropriate), and ANA if appointed. New targets are agreed by all members.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer experiencing significant difficulty, the child will revert:
  - to **Level 2 (School Support)**, depending on the nature of support that is required. Their plan changes to a Level 2 School Support plan.

**Or**

  - to **Level 1 Classroom Support**, the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children, and will continue to be monitored by the Class Teacher and SET Teacher.

## Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the relevant targets have been met and the child is achieving at a level that can be sustained within the mainstream classroom setting. The school may decide to adjust supplementary teaching with some children in order for the SET Team to provide additional support elsewhere throughout the school.

## Other Relevant Policies/Circulars

Relevant Policies	Relevant Circulars/Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance Policy</li> <li>- Enrolment and Admissions Policy</li> <li>- Communications Policy</li> <li>- Staff Development Policy</li> <li>- ANA Policy</li> <li>- Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>- Data Protection Policy</li> <li>- English Language Policy</li> <li>- Maths Policy</li> <li>- Assessment Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education and Welfare Act 1998</li> <li>- Circular 07/02</li> <li>- Circular 0030/2014</li> <li>- NEPS Continuum of Support 2007</li> <li>- Learning Support Guidelines</li> <li>- Assessment in the Primary School</li> <li>- Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools</li> <li>- The Disability Act 2005</li> <li>- The Data Protection Acts (1998, 2003)</li> <li>- Freedom of Information Act 1998</li> </ul>

## Ratification and Review

**Implementation Date**

This policy will come into effect from \_\_\_\_\_.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary

**Ratification**

The Board of Management of Swords Educate Together ratified this policy on

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_