

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

For school year 2018-2019  
Date of approval: 20.08.2018

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Special Educational Needs Policy is to create a structured and comprehensive framework for defining, addressing and supporting students' special educational needs at Avenor College.

### 2. Aims

- Raise awareness related to mild special educational needs;
- Understanding the difference between supporting students with SEN until the age of 5 and supporting students with SEN with ages between 5 and 18;
- Raising awareness related to the importance of supporting students with SEN.

### 3. Introduction

Students who have special educational needs (SEN) are students who require an educational approach adapted to their individual characteristics and/or to the particular aspects of their deficiency or learning disabilities, as well as a specialised intervention in order to ensure an appropriate rate of recovery and academic progress.

UNESCO classifies special educational needs as follows:

- Learning disabilities;
- Mental retardation / Severe learning disabilities;
- Language disabilities;
- Visual impairment;
- Auditory impairment;
- Emotional and behavioural disorders.

The education provided in order to meet individual characteristics and/or adjusted to the features of a deficiency bears the name of "special needs' education". This type of education is destined for all the students with special educational needs who are not able to progress academically according to their developmental stage while included in an educational facility.

Learning disabilities are neurologically-based processing problems. These processing problems can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing and/or mathematics. They can also interfere with higher level skills such as organisation, time planning, abstract reasoning, long or short term memory and attention. It is important to realise that learning disabilities can affect an individual's life beyond academics and can impact relationships with family and friends.

Avenor College is a school that believes in and promotes equal opportunities, integration of students with mild special educational needs in the global process of schooling. Integrating students with mild special educational needs with the general classrooms in Avenor College is possible with the assistance of teaching assistants and school counsellors.

### **3. Mild special educational needs**

If a student can be part of the general education classroom, their disability can range from mild to moderate. Students with more mild disabilities range from specific learning disabilities, like struggling in reading or math, to speech impairment where the student needs speech therapy for pronunciation issues.

These students can normally function within a general classroom setting with additional support from the teaching assistants and/or the school counsellors. Even a physical disability, such as a hearing impairment or health impairment, can be mild. A student with a hearing impairment might just need a hearing device to hear in the classroom, but may not need any other accommodations to succeed.

**Avenor College cannot accommodate students with moderate or severe special educational needs.** The logistic and human resources involved in ensuring equal opportunities of learning and development for students with moderate and severe special educational needs are not available in Avenor College at the present moment. In order to avoid misunderstandings related to discrimination or lack of professionalism, Avenor College has a transparent approach in recommending educational facilities that have the resources necessary to provide education for students with moderate and severe SEN.

By this predicament, Avenor College respects [The Salamanca Statement](#), which makes reference to the effective way to combat attitudes of discrimination in inclusive schools.

*The inclusive school represents a means through which welcoming communities are created. Inclusive schools build an inclusive society and make education available for all.*

In accordance with the 5379/2004 Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding the “Methodology of organising and functioning of educational services through support teachers for students with special educational needs included in the mass schooling system”, Avenor College follows the main principles:

- Ensuring each student’s right to education;
  1. Students have the right to learn together, irrespective of difficulties and differences;
  2. Each student is unique and has a specific learning and development potential;
  3. The school and community ensure equal opportunities of accessing education for all students
- Providing specialised services centred on meeting the needs of students with special educational needs;
  1. Correlating the types of education and the types of schooling depending on the purpose, objectives and outcomes of education;
  2. Ensuring educational progress through complex activities.

### **4. Supporting the learning and development of students with mild special educational needs**

**For students under the age of 5, SEN support includes:**

- A written progress check when the student is 2 years old (Nursery Green Group);
- A recommendation made to parents to go with the student for a health check, if they're aged 2 to 3;
- A written assessment in the summer term of the student's first year of primary school (at the end of Reception Group);
- Making reasonable adjustments for disabled students, like providing aids like tactile signs;
- A recommendation made to parents to opt for a type of educational facility that is suitable for the student's needs;
- An individual educational plan that states the baseline (in terms of strengths and challenges) and sets attainable learning objectives that are reviewed at the end of each term.

**For students between the ages of 5 and 18, SEN support includes:**

- A learning programme adapted to the needs of the student;
- Extra help from a teacher or teaching assistant;
- Working in smaller groups;
- Observation in class or during breaks;
- Help taking part in class activities provided either by the teaching assistant, the teacher or one of the counsellors;
- Extra encouragement in their learning (e.g. providing support in asking questions, creating a space where his/her opinions are listened to, exposing him/her to new experiences and activities);
- Help communicating with other students provided by the teachers, form tutors or counsellors;
- Support with physical difficulties (e.g. going up and down the stairs, adapting physical activities to the special physical needs of students);
- An individual educational plan that states the baseline (in terms of strengths and challenges) and sets attainable learning objectives that are reviewed at the end of each term.

Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all members of the Avenor community implies also abiding by the fundamental principles of:

- Equal rights;
- Equal opportunities;
- Access to all types of education;
- Early intervention;
- Cooperation and partnership;
- Ensuring support services within the community;
- Resources adapted to student's needs.

Avenor College will take steps to ensure that students and their parents are actively supported in contributing to needs assessments, developing and reviewing Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).

Avenor College students have a right to receive and impart information, to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them from the early years. Their views will be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability.

Avenor College will enable parents to share their knowledge about their student and give them confidence that their views and contributions are valued and will be acted upon. At times, parents, teachers and others may have different expectations of how a student's needs are best met. Sometimes these discussions can be challenging, but Avenor College is committed to prioritise the student's best interests and contribute to maintaining a positive dialogue between parents, teachers and others, to working through points of difference and establishing what action is the most suitable one.

From Grade 11 onwards, Avenor College will be involved in planning the transition of students with SEN to adult life, the future and how to prepare for it, including their health, where they will live, their relationships, control of their finances, how they will participate in the community and achieve greater independence.

## **5. Roles and responsibilities of different members of the Avenor College community in supporting students with SEN**

### **Head of School / Director of Learning**

- Create and promote a school culture of inclusion and equality;
- Collect feedback from the members of the Avenor community regarding the SEN support system;
- Sign partnerships with other schools, educational facilities and SEN support NGOs;
- Provide SEN training opportunities for staff each year;
- Model interaction and behaviour with students with SEN.

### **Level Coordinators / PSHE Coordinator**

- Have an updated evidence of SEN students on their respective level (lower primary, upper primary, secondary, high school);
- Offer guidance for differentiated teaching strategies and educational content for SEN students;
- Coordinate with the teaching assistants and counsellors for the learning support activities;
- Monitor the educational progress of SEN students;
- Provide support in students' transition from one level to another and for exam preparation.

### **Form Tutors**

- Ensure a climate of inclusion and equality within their group;
- Have frequent discussions in Form Time with regards to problematic situations involving the SEN students from their group;
- Model interaction and behaviour with students with SEN;
- Maintain a supportive and honest flow of communication with the families of students with SEN to strengthen the school – home partnership;

- Keeping a consistent flow of communication with the counsellor, parents and other teachers looking out for the best interest of students with SEN.

### **Teachers**

- Teach in a differentiated manner, depending of the type and level of abilities of students with SEN;
- Encourage peer-to-peer teaching and small group tasks in order to support the academic progress of students with SEN;
- Take part in SEN trainings and use SEN-related information in the classroom for both teaching and class management purposes;
- Keep a consistent flow of communication with the form tutors about students with SEN;
- Consult with the form tutor with regards to organising meetings with parents of students with SEN;

### **Teaching Assistants / Substitute Teachers**

- Provide learning support for students with SEN in accordance with the framework provided by the PSHE Coordinator and the IEP objectives;
- Model interaction and behaviour with students with SEN;
- In whole group activities, work in an integrated manner with students with SEN, in order to ensure social adherence and the development of functional social relationships within the group;
- Record and report the academic and personal progress of students with SEN to the level counsellor;
- Vary the learning support strategies taking into account the overall state of well-being of students with SEN.

### **Counsellors**

- Hold PSHE activities aimed at promoting inclusion, positive relationships and empathy;
- Make a baseline evaluation of the overall personal, social and emotional context for the students with SEN in order to draft the IEP;
- Coordinate with the teaching assistants and PSHE Coordinator with regards to learning support activities, monitoring progress and updating the IEP of students with SEN;
- Implement whole-school projects that promote diversity, inclusion, respect and equality;
- Hold counselling sessions with students with SEN and their families;
- Hold group counselling activities with all the groups that have students with SEN in order to ensure early anti-bullying interventions.

### **Administrative Staff**

- Check frequently the school facilities and ensure that all the systems for students with SEN are functional;
- Make yearly adjustments to the school facilities depending on the nature of the special needs students might have;
- Ensure a consistent flow of communication with the rest of the staff members about realistic and unrealistic changes that can be made to better accommodate students with SEN;

- Coordinate with the Compliance Department to implement all the aspects required by the Romanian legislation for students with SEN;
- Ensure school campus maintenance services for all facilities and provide visual signs that inform with regards to exit routes.

### Parents

- Inform the school with regards to the full medical history of the students with SEN, their prognostic and the recommendations of the multi-disciplinary team of specialists consulted outside the school setting;
- Facilitate the contact between the school and the multi-disciplinary team in order to ensure a suitable decision-making process focused on the best interest of the student;
- Are actively involved in all the decisions concerning the student with SEN starting from the IEP, continuing with implementing the learning support in a coherent manner in school and at home and updating the IEP constantly with relevant information;
- Consults with the school in case of changing the educational facility with one that is more suitable for the special needs of the student;
- Offers support and encouragement to the student with SEN in order to ensure academic and personal progress depending on their IEP.

### Students

- Contribute to creating a school climate of inclusion, diversity, equality and respect;
- Communicate concerns related to potential bullying activities targeting students with SEN that they know to form tutors, counsellors or PSHE Coordinator;
- Support and encourage students with SEN to express their opinions and participate in academic tasks in the classroom;
- Participate in whole-school activities aimed to raise awareness related to the strengths and struggles of students with SEN;
- Promote the Avenor values in relation with students with SEN and discuss in Assemblies and Student Council meetings about peer-to-peer support actions targeting SEN students.

## 6. Assessing students with SEN

Students with ages between 2 and 4 years old with special educational needs (SEN) will be assessed using the assessment templates deriving from the EYFS framework.

Students with ages between 5 and 18 years old with special educational needs (SEN) will be assessed using performance attainment targets (P scales) and performance descriptors.

**Performance descriptors** show the range of overall performance that students might demonstrate. Subject-focused examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which attainment might be identified in different subject contexts.