



St. Angela's School

Special Needs Assistant (SNA) Policy

Mission Statement:

St. Angela's School is a girls' Catholic school which aims to cherish the uniqueness of each individual and develop her to her full potential, in the spirit of the Ursuline ethos.

Characteristic spirit and general objectives of St. Angela's:

St. Angela's school motto is 'Non Sibi Sed Cunctis' meaning 'Not for self but for all'.

The Ursuline vision of education is articulated in the Six Touchstones of Ursuline Education:

- A personal relationship with God.
- The holistic development of each individual.
- The dignity and uniqueness of each person.
- The importance of courtesy and kindness.
- The fostering of courage and confidence to live in justice and truth.
- The encouraging of a caring & respectful attitude towards self, others and the environment.

Rationale:

Special Needs Assistants are recruited to provide schools with additional adult support staff who can assist children with special educational needs who also have additional and significant care needs. SNAs assist schools in providing the necessary non-teaching services to students with assessed educational needs in order to be able to attend school and to participate in education.

Their duties are assigned by the Principal acting on behalf of the Board of Management. Their work is supervised either by the Principal or another teacher as determined by the Principal.

This policy was formulated to provide clear guidelines regarding the roles and responsibilities of the SNA team and to acknowledge the significant role they have in contributing positively to the learning experiences of the students in St. Angela's School.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Primary Care Needs

1. Assistance with feeding: where a child with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time
2. Administration of medicine: where a child requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time
3. Assistance with toileting and general hygiene: (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so
4. Assistance with mobility and orientation: on an ongoing basis including assisting a child or children to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a child to access school transport), or helping a child to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.)
5. Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.
6. Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.
7. Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a child may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.
8. Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.
9. Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.

Secondary Care Needs

1. To help students stay on task, follow procedures, access equipment and to prepare/ tidy classrooms and materials and clean materials. Assist students who are not physically able to perform such tasks.
2. To assist students to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another.
3. To support the needs of students in effectively accessing the curriculum.
4. To help students to manage day to day organisation.
5. To offer general assistance to the class teachers with duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special needs assistants may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class or group of children at timetabled class times).
6. To assist with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety of students.
7. To accompany students on out of school activities/ trips.
8. To assist with house and state examinations.
9. To support teachers in the supervision of students during assembly, recreation and dispersal from the classroom for one reason or another.
10. To accompanying a student or small groups of students who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom.
11. To participate with school development planning, where appropriate, and cooperate with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process.
12. To engage with parents of special needs pupils in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management.
13. To assist with other duties appropriate to the grade as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Special Needs Assistants may be re-assigned to other work appropriate when special needs pupils are absent.
14. To help students build self-esteem and independence. This may include problem solving and self-help skills.
15. To ensure that all information related to students' needs are handled with discretion and shared only with relevant staff members.
16. To collaborate with the SENCOs/ Pastoral Care Team regarding the Student Support Plans/ Care Plans with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the needs of the student concerned and the review of such plans.
17. To engage in relevant Continuous Professional Development. A full-time SNA works 32 hours per week, which includes time before and after school for classroom preparation, plus 72 additional hours per year outside of the normal school year.

18. To assist teachers and/or Principal in maintaining a journal or care monitoring system for students including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.
19. To help plan for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with class teachers and other teachers such as the resource teacher and school principal, attending meetings with parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of class teacher/principal.
20. To assist with enabling students to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel including class teachers or support teachers.

Meetings:

The SNA team will meet on a regular basis with input from the Senior Management team and the SENCOs. These meetings aim to encourage commitment, team spirit and provide an opportunity where the SNA's combine their skills and talents for the overall benefit of the students in St. Angela's.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 27-2-2026

Implementation and Review: This policy will be implemented from January 2026. It will be reviewed every two years.

Chairperson of Board of Management: Aidan McGeath