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SALT Guide

Inclusion

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3 Integration vs Inclusion

An integrated classroom is one where pupils with disabilities learn alongside their peers without disabilities. Extra supports help them to access the curriculum and often there will be an individualised education plan in place with the strategies and supports required. There will be input from parents and outside agencies may also be involved in devising this plan. In theory, integration is a positive approach that helps children to become part of a larger group. Practically, its effectiveness is questionable, given that there are so many needs in every classroom.

Inclusion is the merging of special education with mainstream or regular education with the belief that all children are different, learn differently and should have full access to an education which meets their needs. Pupils with disabilities are not expected to adapt within this model, rather the system adapts to meet them exactly where they are at. Different learning styles are met and the barriers of a busy classroom are removed so that all children benefit. When inclusion happens within a school environment, there is real and meaningful integration with peers when and where it works for each pupil and this is when the real magic happens!

4 Our School and Inclusion

Killeen National School is a small, rural school situated on the west coast of Ireland. We are like every other school in that there have always been pupils with Special Educational Needs in attendance, but what sets us apart from neighbouring schools is that despite our low numbers (76 pupils enrolled), we have a special class for pupils with multiple disabilities.

4.1 *SUNBEAMS*

'Sunbeams' is a purpose-built unit for pupils with low-incidence disabilities. The classification is 'multi-disability', which means that children must present with more than one disability – physical and / or intellectual. We have a low pupil-teacher ratio (6:1) in our 'Sunbeams' class, two full-time Special Needs Assistants and it is equipped with a variety of equipment and resources to enhance the learning of the pupils in the environment.



4.2 MEANINGFUL INTEGRATION

When a programme for each child in ‘Sunbeams’ is developed and in practice, productive and meaningful integration and reverse integration opportunities can be timetabled to happen. Pupils from the special class attend classes with their mainstream classes which enhance their learning and holistic development. Examples of this are:

- Physical Education
- Art
- Drama
- Music and Movement





4.3 SCHOOL MOTTO

Our school motto is 'Better Together'. We believe that each and every child is unique and an important part of our school jigsaw. We all fit together to complete the puzzle.

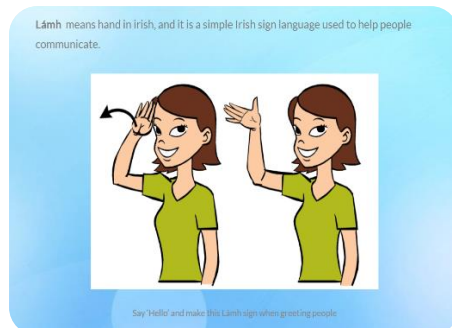


4.4 SIGN LANGUAGE AND THERAPIES

Communication is a key factor in the success of an inclusive school. Every child who attends Killeen National School learns our national sign language, 'LÁMĦ', pronounced 'law – ve'. We hold a weekly 'Lámh' assembly where we celebrate together using our sign language.

Other activities and therapies our pupils in 'Sunbeams' and our pupils in mainstream classes take part in are:

- Lego Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Horse Riding
- Mindfulness
- Drumming





5 Evaluation

In this guide, we have outlined the approach we take to inclusion in our particular school – Killeen National School. Every school and indeed every classroom has a different context with a different cohort of students.

We evaluate our success on student outcomes and the Department Of Education regularly evaluates programmes within our education system. However, in our school success is measured by something that isn't quite tangible – that is why our motto is 'Better Together' for our school family.

Inclusion is not simply about physical proximity, it is about intentionally planning for the success of ALL students!

