

Transitioning Policy

Introduction

Danu Community Special School (CSS), under the patronage of DDLETB, will provide an education for students aged from four to eighteen years old who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a Moderate or Severe General Learning Disability. Our students have complex needs associated with this diagnosis such as communication difficulties and sensory processing difficulties.

In Danu CSS is committed to a spirit of inclusion, equality, and partnership in education. The school actively seeks to promote an ethos to provide a safe, warm, welcoming, caring environment where all members of the school community are valued and treated with respect and dignity. We believe that students learn to the best of their ability when they feel happy and secure in school. The school seeks to develop a sense of community and partnership with children, parents, and staff. We believe that every member of the school community has an integral part to play in the overall wellbeing of the school.

This Transition Policy has been developed by Danu CSS staff in consultation with school stakeholders.

On enrolment, the school will provide parents with a copy of this Transitioning Policy.

The School

- Supports a positive approach to teaching and learning, classroom management skills and whole school development.
- Works together as a whole team to create a positive atmosphere and climate where each student and staff member feels valued.
- Encompasses an educational approach to assist students to advance their learning and academic progress through a progressive and structured curriculum and the use of Individual Education Plans (IEPS).
- Encourages high expectations of all students.
- Recognises that the quality of teaching, the personal development of students and the quality of relationships in a school are fundamental to developing positive learning attitudes.
- Understands that careful planning and sensitive interventions in a classroom may considerably impact an individual student.
- Promotes an enhanced quality of life and a safe environment for all.
- Supports the ongoing need for delivery of needs-based training for staff.
- Fosters emotional wellbeing of all students and staff.

Rationale

This policy was developed to ensure

- A safe, secure, and happy transition to new students to our school.
- That best practice in relation to planning and promoting a positive transition
- The school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.

Aims

In devising this Transition Policy, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. Our aims are

- To create a positive learning environment that facilitates, encourages, and reinforces positive behaviour.
- To create a predictable, safe, structured learning environment for all our students so they can make progress with their education and develop their social, emotional and independence skills.
- To ensure that the individuality of each student is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each student to an education in a relatively disruptive free environment.
- To respect and safeguard the dignity and the individual needs of students.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where students can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To promote positive behaviour by providing opportunities and supports to enable pupils to make positive behavioural choices, thereby reducing incidents of challenging behaviour.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, and consideration of others.
- To teach, foster and encourage socially acceptable behaviour within the school and in the community.
- To assist staff, parents/guardians, and students in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of this Code of Behaviour and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

All adults encountered by the students at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the students and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the students.

The Board of Management

- Is responsible for ensuring that a Transition Plan is prepared and implemented in the school.
- Has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for students and staff in the school.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Transitioning Plan and process.

The Principal

- Create and promote a positive school climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Transitioning Plan is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for the review of the Transitioning Plan as required.
- Communicate with Parents/Guardians.

Staff

- Implement the transitioning plan.
- Promote a positive climate in the classroom and in the school community.
- To ensure consistency of approaches, strategies and supports as necessary.

Teachers

- Create a positive learning environment that facilitates, encourages, and reinforces good behaviour.
- Ensure all lessons are differentiated to meet the needs of each student.
- Communicate with Parents/Guardians regularly.
- To support and prepare students to understand what will happen when they arrive at school and how to go their classroom.
- Where necessary provide social stories and visual timetables to help students understand what will happen in school and what they will need to do when they arrive.

Students

- Are encouraged to understand and practice school rules.
- Are encouraged to cooperate with staff
- Are encouraged to treat other students and staff with respect.

Parents/Guardians

- Support their child in the implementation of the Transitioning Plan.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any issues which may affect their child's transitioning or general well-being.
- To work collaboratively with the school staff on the implementation of Transitioning plan designed for their child.
- To help their child understand what will happen on the first day of school and talk to them about what will happen when they arrive at school to be prepared and reduce worries.

Transitioning Plan

Communication with Parents/Guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to issues concerning their child's wellbeing and education. A high level of cooperation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging safe and positive transition in the school. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to talk in confidence to Principal and Teachers about any significant developments in their child's life which may affect the child's behaviour. The following methods of parent/guardian -school communication used include

- Formal parent/guardian Principal/Teacher meeting.

- Phone calls from school to home and home to school.
- For some student's daily communication notes.
- Letters/notes from school to home and home to school.
- Using Aladdin to Text a Parent/email a Parent.
- Emails to parents/parent emails to school via Office/teacher via school email using office hours.
- Use of Seesaw (teacher-parent-teacher) during Remote Learning.

Information will be gathered from all parties including previous school prior to student start date to ensure a smooth transition for the child. This may include a Pupil Passport, IEP, Danu CSS School to School Transfer Form, Student Support File/Personal Pupil Plan, School Report, Behaviour Support Plans (where necessary) or any other information deemed essential to support the child in their new school.

Two school visits will be offered to parents before their child commences. In addition, where possible, Danu CSS staff will speak with and/or visit the new students in the current school setting before they transition to Danu CSS. Agreements of times for visitation will be sought prior to child's start date in Danu CSS.

On starting in Danu CSS, a 2-week individual phased entry approach plan with shortened days of transitioning the new student will follow. In consultation with parents/guardians a pre-arranged agreement with parents will include a clear plan on time-line of shorter days, with a clear date for when the child will start on a full day. This plan may be subject to change dependent on student needs and the school's ability to meet the child's needs.

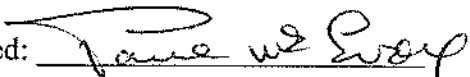
Success Criteria

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground, and school community.
- Practices and procedures listed in this Policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from Parents, students, and teachers.

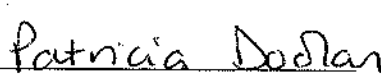
Review and Ratification

This Policy will be reviewed bi-annually by May 2023.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24.05.2021.

Signed: 

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: 

Principal, Danu CSS