

# **Rochestown Community Special School**

## **School Profile**

### **1. Foundation of Rochestown Community Special School**

In 2022, the Department of Education (DE) granted Patronage of a new special school in the Cork County and Cork City areas to Cork Education and Training Board. Cork Education and Training Board is excited at being granted this new school and we look forward to working with all the stakeholders to develop a school that meets the needs of our students, their parents and the wider school community.

Rochestown Community Special School (RCSS) is a Community Special School that will provide for the needs of students with autism and complex learning needs and for students with complex learning needs who require the support of a special school, from the beginning of Primary school up to eighteen years of age.

As per DE regulations, students will leave school at the end of the school year in which they reach the age of 18 years old. To facilitate this age band, the range of classes extend from primary to post primary. Class groupings will be based on a combination of age, appropriate peer groupings and the needs of each child.

The school operates within the regulations as outlined by the Rules for National Schools and relevant circulars and directives issued by the Primary/Special Education sections of the Department of Education. The school is funded by grants from the Department of Education. Staffing allocations are in line with those set out by the Department of Education. Under the direction of the Patron, the school will be managed on an interim basis by a Single Manager pending the appointment of a Board of Management. The Board of Management will be made up of representatives of the Patron, parents, school staff and the community.

### **2. Location**

The new school will be located on an interim basis in Rochestown in a property which will become available in early 2023. Some reconfiguration work will be undertaken to the property and the Department of Education will make arrangements to have these works completed with a view to having the property available for occupation as quickly as possible. The Department will liaise with Cork ETB to implement the necessary arrangements in relation to the management of the property.

While a permanent site is not yet identified for the school, the Department will be engaging with Cork ETB regarding permanent accommodation for the school in due course.

### **3. Capacity and Resources**

It is intended that the new school will cater for an enrolment of up to 30 students when it is established and, on a phased basis, is expected to grow its capacity to provide up to 64 school places, pending a new permanent school building being provided on a permanent site.

The school will be supported by the necessary staffing and resources provided by the Department to new special schools. The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) will also liaise closely with Cork ETB and the school to ensure that a requisite training and support programme is developed and tailored to the needs of the new school community, on a timely basis. NCSE will also liaise with NEPS and the Department's Inspectorate in this regard.

### **4. Ethos and Characteristic Spirit**

Rochestown Community Special School is a state, multid denominational, co-educational school underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Respect
- Community



In Rochestown CSS, all students will be given equal opportunity for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018 and the criteria set out in the School's Admissions Policy. Once enrolled, Rochestown CSS will strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage in learning and in school life. All members of our school community will be treated equitably, regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status.

Rochestown CSS will provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. It strives to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. Cork ETB Community Special Schools promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents/guardians and staff. Students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. The school environment and activities do not privilege any group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs.

Our school will be a place where everyone is encouraged to feel a sense of belonging and ownership. The school will actively seek to promote an ethos that supports a safe, caring and welcoming environment, where all members of the school community are valued and are treated with respect and dignity.

Rochestown CSS will endeavour to ensure that all members of the school community work in partnership and will have the best interest of our students at heart at all times.

## **5. Curriculum**

Rochestown CSS will deliver the curriculum for Special Schools as prescribed by the Department of Education and adapted to meet the educational needs of each student. A variety of methodologies and strategies will be adopted to maximise the students' learning potential. Supported by the child's multidisciplinary team, the teachers and staff will provide a caring and challenging learning environment which fosters personal, social and academic development. All students will have an Individual Educational Plan designed specifically for them.

## **6. Admissions Policy**

The admissions policy is located on Cork ETB's website – [www.corketb.ie](http://www.corketb.ie).

## **7. Participation in the School**

While it is envisaged that, once admitted, most students will remain in Rochestown CSS until they complete their education at 18 years of age, a child's ongoing participation is contingent upon the child's continued adherence to the Code of Behaviour. The policy of the school is to admit students whose Parent(s) / Guardians(s) confirm that the Code of Behaviour, as well as other policies on curriculum, organisation and management, is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the Code of Behaviour. Where possible,

students are expected to participate in all aspects of the school curriculum. The Single Manager/Board of Management places Parent(s) / Guardian(s) as responsible for ensuring that their child co-operates with these policies in a reasonable manner.

#### **8. Changing and evolving student needs**

Additionally, some student's needs may change over time and exceed what the school can cater for. If at any point during the student's time in the school, a psychiatrist or psychologist assesses the child and confirms in writing that allowing the child to remain in the school may result in adverse educational outcomes for the child or other children, a review meeting with the class teacher, Principal and clinical team will be held to consider the child's progression and continued participation in the school.

Where the Single Manager/Board of Management deems that further resources are required to meet the child's needs, an application will be submitted to the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) supported by relevant professional report(s). These resources may include access to or the provision of any of the following: special needs assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, transport services or other. Parent(s) / Guardians(s) will need to complete relevant NCSE documentation to enable the school to apply for such resources.