



O Connell Primary Special Educational Needs Policy



An Edmund Rice School

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Introductory statement

This policy sets out to give an overview of what we in O'Connells are implementing as a whole school strategy for meeting the needs of all the children in our care. We strive to improve learning experiences and educational outcomes for our students with special educational needs. We believe effective provision for pupils with special educational needs is situated within an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all and good collaboration and engagement between schools, parents/guardians and pupils. This policy will support students all students with additional needs, those with low and high incidence disabilities, gifted children, children with language difficulties, students with English as an additional language, those struggling with behavioural and emotional difficulties or students whom are not reaching their potential in their current setting.

We believe that EVERY CHILD MATTERS and have sought to keep our Special Needs strategies under constant evaluation.

This policy has been drafted using the guidelines from the following documents and circulars:






- Circular 007/2019 - Special Education Teaching Allocation (new model)
- Circular 0013/2017 – Special Education Teaching allocation
- Circular 0030/2020 – Special Needs assistant allocations for the 20/21 school year for mainstream classes in primary and post-primary schools
- Circular 0030/2014 - The Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme to support teachers in meeting the care needs of some children with special educational needs, arising from a disability
- Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools. (Department of Education and skills)
- NCSE – Special Educational needs – A continuum of support – Guidelines for teachers.
- NCSE - Special Educational needs – A continuum of support – Resource pack for teachers.
- NCCA – Guideline for teachers of students with General learning disabilities.
- NCSE – Behaviour resource pack
- NCSE - The Education of Students with Challenging Behaviour arising from Severe Emotional Disturbance/ Behavioural Disorders
- NCSE – Inclusive education framework

The revised SEN allocation model facilitates our school to deploy our SEN teachers (Special Educational needs teachers) according to identified needs rather than being based on a diagnosis of a disability. This gives the school greater autonomy and flexibility in how resources are allocated. We have agreed as a school to deploy our SEN teachers in a variety of ways to effectively meet student's needs. These include in-class support, small group withdrawal and individual withdrawal. Within our school we currently have 6 support teachers and one behavioural support teacher. Support teachers are allocated to a year group. The number of SEN teachers allocated to a year group will be based on the needs of the children within that year group and may be subject to change as circumstances arise. This method enables each year group to best distribute resources based on the needs within their setting.

Within our school we also have one class for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which caters for children from 2nd to 6th class. The maximum enrolment in the class is 6 children, in line with Department regulations. This allows for delivery of intensive educational opportunities suited to each individual child's needs. The class is staffed with one full-time teacher and two full time Special Needs Assistants. Please see the 'Admissions policy for the special class' for further information on our special class.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

-  Provide practical guidance to all stakeholders on effective SEN procedures and practices in our school.
-  Outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
-  Fulfil circulars released by the department of education and skills mentioned in this policy.
-  Follow guidelines for primary schools as set out by the Department of Education and skills (DES) and the National council of Special Education (NCSE) and the National Council for Curriculum and assessment. (NCCA) .
-  To streamline the provision of SEN support structures in our school.

Belief Statement

Our school is dedicated to the implementation of an effective system for meeting the needs of all our pupils, in accordance with our mission statement, the resources provided by the DES and the Board of Management.

We believe that all our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to their individual needs. We strive to ensure that all our children feel that they are an important part of our school community. We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion. We wish to ensure that all inclusion is meaningful, so that all students are being taught in a stimulating and supportive classroom environment where they are respected and valued. This policy aims to enable children with Special Education Needs and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying the environment, activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

As it states in the Edmund Rice Charter:

The Edmund Rice School recognises the uniqueness of each individual. It identifies the educational needs of each student and puts in place appropriate resources, curricula, programmes and methodologies to enable everyone to achieve his/her full potential. Gifted children and students with learning difficulties in a particular subject are supported, while students with other special educational needs are welcomed and provided with special assistance in so far as is practicable. There is breadth and balance in the curriculum, while an extensive range of extra-curricular activities encourages participation and positive relationships, a healthy lifestyle and the holistic development of the person.

Aims of the school in providing SEN support

Through the implementation of this policy we also strive to:

- ✚ Identify additional needs of our pupils and ensure they are accessing the correct support and external services where required.
- ✚ To enable all pupils to participate in the full curriculum encouraging differentiation where required.
- ✚ Develop all pupils' academic, social emotional and independent living skills.
- ✚ To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils.
- ✚ To enable pupils to monitor and assess their own learning and become independent learners.
- ✚ To promote collaboration within staff and to set out a clear whole school approach to teaching and learning for pupils with additional needs.
- ✚ To actively involve parents as partners in their children's education.
- ✚ To establish early intervention programmes to support literacy and numeracy in our school.
- ✚ To support programmes designed to enhance learning and encourage positive behaviour throughout the school.
- ✚ To support the overall inclusion of SEN students in all areas of school life ensuring that all students experience a sense of community and belonging.
- ✚ Allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of children with additional needs.
- ✚ Divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs.
- ✚ Track, monitor, review and report on the progress of children with additional needs.
- ✚ To ensure that the staged approach/NEPS continuum of support is implemented effectively throughout the school.
- ✚ To Support communication between stakeholders.
- ✚ To guard the self-esteem and image of the learner at all times.
- ✚ Assist parents/guardians in making informed decisions in relation to enrolling their child in the school.
- ✚ To ensure all children are taught in a positive learning environment where our school's code of behaviour, DFL (Discipline for learning) is being implemented.
- ✚ Focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for all pupils.

Roles & Responsibilities

The role of Special Educational Needs is a collaborative responsibility shared by all. All stakeholders have a contribution to ensuring the successful implementation of SEN provision in our school community.

In attempting to achieve the above aims the BOM, Principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy while always ensuring that the child with the greatest need receives the greatest level of support.

Role of the Board of Management:

The Board of Management oversees the development, implementation and review of our school policy on special educational needs.

The Board of Management should

- ✚ Ensure that adequate accommodation and effective teaching resources are provided for the Special Education team.
- ✚ Provide a secure facility for storage of records and reports relating to children in receipt of support.
- ✚ Provide financial assistance for assessments when necessary.

Role of the Principal:

The new allocation model states that the principal's leadership role has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school.

The Principal should

- ✚ Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of this policy in conjunction with staff.
- ✚ Ensure all whole-school policies being implemented are inclusive.
- ✚ Oversee the application process to secure appropriate supports for new pupils to the school with diagnosed/non-diagnosed needs.
- ✚ Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies.
- ✚ Liaise directly with the SENO and in conjunction with the SEN co-ordinator consult with other outside agencies such as NEPS/City Connects/CAMHS/ Primary Care/ Assessment of Need/ Early Intervention and School Based Disability Team /Speech and Language team/Occupational Therapy/ Physiotherapy/counselling services and with any other relevant agencies/professionals required.
- ✚ Inform staff and parents of external services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referral. Invite external agencies to speak at staff meetings where possible. Provide a space for an external service to work with a student within the school when required and following parental permission.
- ✚ Ensure reports from external agencies are properly read and recommendations are being implemented.
- ✚ Meets with the parents/guardians of children with diagnosed needs on registration to discuss appropriate supports regarding integration into mainstream school.
- ✚ Ensures that all documentation on children with additional needs is transferred to the SENO in a timely manner in conjunction with completed applications for SNA access as required.
- ✚ Monitors allocation/distribution/sharing of resources and staffing as granted by the Department of Education and skills.
- ✚ Arrange for the provision of SEN funding when required.

- ✚ Monitors the selection process of students for supplementary teaching through whole school assessments and screening programmes.
- ✚ Hosts SNA meetings regularly.
- ✚ Allocate time within the school timetable to allow the SET Team to meet monthly, to review practice and students receiving support. Liaise closely with SET team.
- ✚ Facilitate communication between Class Teachers, SET teachers, parents and external agencies.
- ✚ Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles.
- ✚ Arrange suitable classroom accommodation for SEN teachers.
- ✚ Oversee that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils needs and that progress is monitored methodically.
- ✚ Allocate a planning week in September for the SET team to complete assessments and draft support files, and a planning week for the SET team in January to complete support file reviews with staff and parents and draft new support files for term 2.
- ✚ Oversee the drafting and implementation of Classroom support plans, School support plans and School support plus plans.
- ✚ Oversee the drafting and implementation of Personal Pupil profiles and make these available to the SENO when requested.
- ✚ Maintain supporting documentation on students, those receiving supplementary teaching or accessing external services
- ✚ Ensure secure storing of reports such as psychological reports in line with the schools GDPR policy
- ✚ Compile and maintain records of all standardised tests administered in the school.
- ✚ Facilitate the Continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- ✚ Maintain effective links with feeder secondary schools/junior schools and where appropriate, arrange transition, handovers and follow up meetings to facilitate the transition of pupils with special educational needs.

Role of the SEN Coordinator (SENCO):

The SENCO should

- ✚ Communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis.
- ✚ Manage a tracking system at whole-school level to identify and monitor SEN provision for each of the three levels of the continuum.
- ✚ Liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs.
- ✚ Ensure reports from external agencies are properly read and recommendations are being implemented.
- ✚ Liaise with our City Connects psychologist the NEPS psychologist, the SET team and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments.
- ✚ Liaise with SET Team to identify, support and monitor children with additional needs

- ✚ Co-ordinate monthly SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs.
- ✚ Collaborate with the SET team in creating timetables for additional support.
- ✚ Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress.
- ✚ Meet with the staff of the student's previous school to discuss supports and interventions that should be in place for successful transition process.
- ✚ Oversee the drafting and collection of Personal Pupil Profiles.
- ✚ Co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- ✚ Discuss with the support team the provision of supplementary support for more able students subject to the availability of time and personnel. Prioritise these children using standardised test results and in consultation with the support teams and the class teachers.
- ✚ Monitor the progress of children when additional support ceases to be required, in order to see that progress is being maintained.
- ✚ Assist the principal with the transition of children with special education needs to Secondary School, the transition of students to second class or any other school transfers throughout the year.
- ✚ Provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received
- ✚ Ensure student assessments are update to ease their transfer to secondary school.
- ✚ Oversee the regular updating and record keeping of support files and ensure log of actions on support files are updated regularly.
- ✚ Update the Support file collection record document throughout the year and ensure its competition at the end of each school year.

Role of the SET team members:

The Support teachers should

- ✚ Research and become familiar with any additional needs students may have.
- ✚ Offer practical support and advice to class teachers or other members of staff in relation to differentiated teaching methods and resources used to teach children with special educational needs.
- ✚ Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs.
- ✚ Ensure reports from external agencies are properly read and recommendations are being implemented.
- ✚ Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention.
- ✚ Collaboratively draft, implement and review Student Support Files for any pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff, identifying appropriate

learning targets and organising appropriate teaching interventions to help achieve those targets.

- ✚ Work collaboratively with another teacher on a support file if two support teachers are supporting the student.
- ✚ Meet with Class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning targets for each pupil in receipt of Student Support file and who require a School Support Plan or School Support Plus plan.
- ✚ Complete Personal pupil profiles where a student is accessing the support of an SNA.
- ✚ Regularly meet with class teachers and relevant staff to review the pupils in their class, (monitor progress if anyone needs to be on a support file) students on Student Support Plan or Support plus plan or discuss movement between support files. Meet with class teachers during official school planning time each month.
- ✚ Meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review Student Support Plans
- ✚ Maintain a record of meetings and decisions made and where possible record on the log of actions page of the students support files.
- ✚ Update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support. Fortnightly planning records for individual teaching, group teaching and in-class support teaching are required. Meet with SEN team regularly to discuss effective teaching models and modes of assessment.
- ✚ Share good practice at staff meetings or SET team meeting when required.
- ✚ Provide a timetable to the principal and relevant mainstream teachers at the start of the academic year. This timetable will outline where and when supplementary teaching will occur. This timetable can be changed throughout the year when required.
- ✚ Administer and interpret diagnostic tests where necessary and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes.
- ✚ Support the class teacher in administering and correcting standardised tests.
- ✚ Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- ✚ Discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at SET team meetings. Inform principal/SENCO if when they feel the level of support the student is receiving is not adequately meeting the needs of the pupil.
- ✚ Provide feedback to mainstream teachers regarding the progress of individual pupils where required.
- ✚ Discuss with the SENCO if a student needs to avail of an additional external service and coordinate that referral with the SENCO.
- ✚ Provide necessary information to SENCO or principal about an SEN pupil preparing for school transfer or transition.
- ✚ Provides completed student support files and test results to the Principal or the SEN co-ordinator at a meeting in June of each year.
- ✚ Collaborate with the class teacher to ensure an effective model of in class support is implemented, to ensure all teachers are effectively supporting students on support files, during the allocated in-class support time.
- ✚ An attendance record of children who attend who are withdrawn to the SEN rooms will be kept by each teacher.

- ✚ Maintain an up to date assessment folder and store it in a locked cupboard in their room.
- ✚ Support applications to the SENO/NCSE when required for assistive technology, school transport etc.
- ✚ Organise Intercultural activities throughout the year to support the inclusion of our EAL community with the behavioural support teacher.

Role of the classroom teacher

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of all pupils in his/ her class, including those selected for additional support. They also play an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have a need of additional support or may be displaying a special educational need.

The class teacher should

- ✚ Research and become familiar with any additional needs students in their classroom may have.
- ✚ Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- ✚ Ensure reports from external agencies are properly read and recommendations are being implemented.
- ✚ Create a positive learning environment within the classroom which is stimulating, supportive and inclusive.
- ✚ Adapt lessons to take account of pupil's interests and vary the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs.
- ✚ Match tasks to pupils abilities and needs
- ✚ Adapt and utilise resources available including the use of technology.
- ✚ Aspire towards suitable challenging learning outcomes and assess accordingly.
- ✚ Administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, as well as the NRIT test in 2nd and 5th, following the school's guidelines.
- ✚ Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with the support team member linked to their class to assist in the selection of children that a student support file will be opened for.
- ✚ Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- ✚ Open a Student Support File for a student if additional needs have been identified and require classroom support. This can be done with the support teacher.
- ✚ Develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support.
- ✚ Inform and collaborate with the SET team when it is felt that classroom support level is not adequately meeting the needs of the pupil.
- ✚ Meet and collaborate with the Special Education Teacher, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning targets for each pupil in receipt of a School Support or a School Support Plus Plan.

- ✚ Meet with parents to discuss targets for support files together with the SEN teacher and SNA (if applicable) when possible.
- ✚ Collaborate with the SET team to ensure effective models of in class support.
- ✚ Adjust the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session.
- ✚ Co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with special educational needs within the class to which they are assigned.
- ✚ Ensure all children in the class feel equal and valued.
- ✚ Complete 'A learning environment checklist', 'A basic needs checklist' for the students in their class.
- ✚ Complete a 'My thoughts about school checklist' to promote ongoing reflection with the students and hear the student voice.
- ✚ Maintain an up to date assessment folder and store it in a locked cupboard in their room.

Role of the Behaviour Support Teacher:

A behavioural support teacher allows us as a school to be 'Proactive before reactive'.

In line with the NCSE guidelines, it allows our behavioural support teacher to... "Effectively implement and coordinate a proactive, behaviour improvement plan with the view to creating sustainable positive teaching and learning environments within the school community"

Having a behavioural support teacher available to pupils limits disruptions and allows for higher quality teaching and learning in all classrooms. Our behavioural support teacher promotes our positive discipline policy DFL, which includes a reward system for good behaviour and making good choices.

With fewer disruptions in mainstream classes it allows the teaching and learning to be of a high standard in each classroom. The behavioural support teacher ensures that positive yard experiences are promoted, a calmer school environment is created and student motivation levels are increased.

Aims of the Role:

- ✚ To improve general behaviour within O'Connells school.
- ✚ To support mainstream classroom teachers in implementing our Code of Behaviour – Discipline for Learning.
- ✚ To promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- ✚ To up skill all staff in effective strategies, ideas and techniques when dealing with behavioural, social and emotional issues with our students.
- ✚ To collaborate with the classroom teacher and SNA (when appropriate) in drafting and implementing School support plans or School support plus plans for children struggling with behavioural or social and emotional issues.
- ✚ Ensure reports from external agencies are properly read and recommendations are being implemented.

- ✚ To engage in positive learning experiences in all classrooms and implement and promote programmes to help friendships, remove bullying or anti – racism initiatives.
- ✚ To create an atmosphere of positivity and celebrating success in O’Connells School.
- ✚ To identify and work with target children to build a positive relationship and positive attitude towards school.
- ✚ To work with target groups to build emotional and coping strategies
- ✚ To facilitate self-regulation and resilience amongst target children
- ✚ To create and foster our school as a safe space for all children
- ✚ To co-ordinate and implement school-wide positive behaviour initiatives for all students, organising and implement the lucky dip reward system, organising rewards and trips to encourage good behaviour and positive attitudes.
- ✚ Facilitate and attend care team meetings when required.
- ✚ Share good practice of DFL and positive behavioural management at staff meeting and with new members of staff.
- ✚ Complete Personal pupil profile where student is accessing the support of an SNA.
- ✚ Co-ordinate the end of year awards ceremony.
- ✚ Ensure staff and students are engaged and aware of the yearly targets to achieve a gold, silver or bronze medal at the end of year awards ceremony.
- ✚ Create strong links with outside agencies involved with students who have been placed on a School Support Plus plan.
- ✚ To be a consistent positive role model for all children and staff in O’Connells School
- ✚ To participate in, facilitate and encourage CPD to enhance behaviour management and dealing with challenging behaviours in O’Connells School.
- ✚ Liaise regularly with the School Completion Officer and the Home-School Liaison teacher to ensure successful communication.
- ✚ Organise Intercultural activities throughout the year to support the inclusion of our EAL community with the support of the SET team.

Children are identified to access the support of the Behavioural support teacher through informal discussion with class teachers, or regular incidences that occur in the classroom or in the yard. Classroom consultation will be held during the year where teachers will be given the opportunity to meet with the principal and the behavioural support teacher to discuss the needs within their classrooms and target children may be identified through this. Feedback from care-team meetings may also help identify children who need to be targeted for support. Awareness of home life/situations and information gathered when liaising with parents/ guardians may also be used. Referrals from outside agencies will also be a reason to choose students to work with the behavioural support teacher.

Role of the Special Needs Assistant:

The role of the SNA is carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal; the SNA will meet the additional care needs of SEN pupils.

The SNA should

- ✚ Contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils.
- ✚ Support learning and teaching in the classroom.
- ✚ Attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM.
- ✚ Attend Student Support Plan meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when required.
- ✚ Ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty.
- ✚ Accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate.
- ✚ Support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum.
- ✚ Maintain a record in diary form of support provided to their SEN pupil. It is the responsibility of the SNA to ensure this diary will be locked away daily.
- ✚ Support the SEN teacher in completing a Personal Pupil Profile listing main care needs of the students and reviewing these throughout the year.
- ✚ The SNA is responsible for assisting the student with any primary or secondary care need as listed in circular 0030/2014 issued by the Department of Education and Skills.

Role of the Parents/Guardians:

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children are the primary educators of their child.

The Parent/Guardian should:

- ✚ Share any information, reports or assessments from health professionals or any other external agencies regarding their child. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage.
- ✚ Foster positive attitudes about school and learning to their child.
- ✚ Inform the school if their child is attending any outside agencies for support/therapy.
- ✚ Support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning.
- ✚ Inform the school of any learning difficulties or concerns they observe in their child at home.
- ✚ Attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team throughout the year and attend Student support file planning meetings in September and review meetings in January and June. At these meetings they will give their opinion on their child's progress and needs and these will be recorded on the support file by the teacher.
- ✚ Support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested homebased activities.
- ✚ Inform the secondary school of their child's needs at the transition stage.

Pupils

We as a school recognise the importance of pupil input into the development, implementation and review of their own learning. Engagement is enhanced when a student's strengths, aspirations and interests are built on when developing educational interventions.

Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should, as appropriate:

- ✚ Be given, if possible, the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the targets on their student support file and become familiar with those targets where possible.
- ✚ Share if possible, their interests, aspirations, strengths, weaknesses and needs.
- ✚ Develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning.
- ✚ Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.
- ✚ Be encouraged to recognise and celebrate success in both curricular and non-curricular areas.
- ✚ Complete the 'My thoughts about school checklist' if they have the ability to do so.

Identifying pupils with additional needs

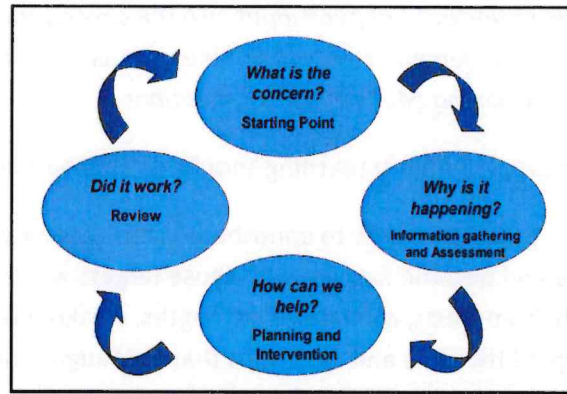
Continuum of Support

The continuum of support framework enables teachers to identify and respond appropriately to a pupil emerging special educational learning needs and implement a plan to support those students. These needs range across the cognitive, the social, the emotional and the behavioural and they include physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.

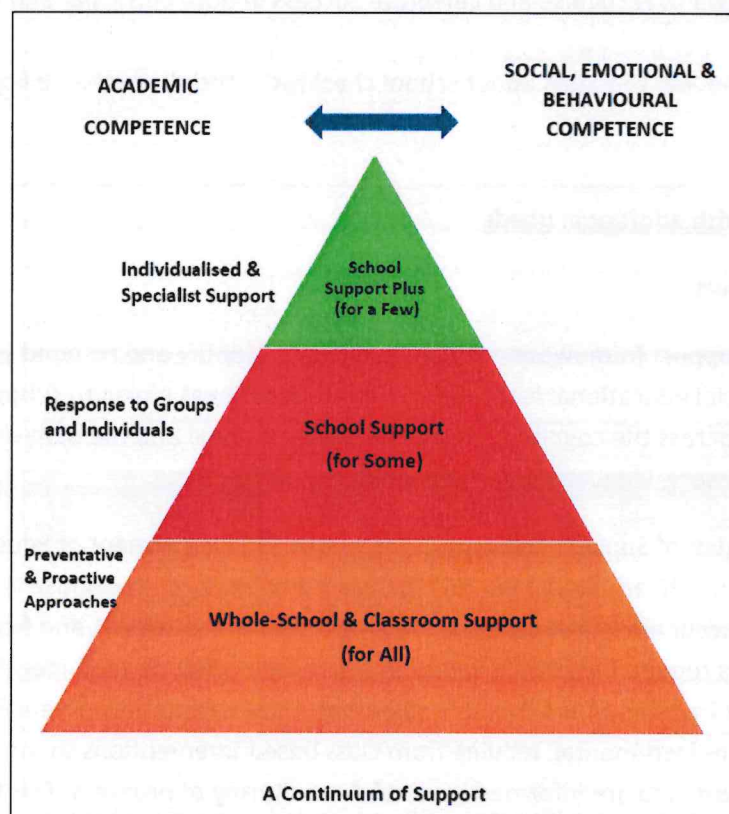
We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs. Like this framework, we recognise that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs. By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental; moving from class based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of progress. This framework allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables us to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual pupils.

This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows



The continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support









Student Support File

We use a Student Support File to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates us in documenting progress, needs and developments over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention, observations and a review of progress a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. Our Student Support File is based on the template from the NCSE – Continuum of support – A guideline for Teachers, and is stored on Google drive. A class teacher or class coordinator should open a Student Support File once a child is placed

on any stage of the Continuum. These Student support files will be stored in the child's file in the SEN teacher's locked cupboard.

The students' progress will be reviewed throughout the year and during the review a decision to discontinue support, to continue at the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.

All support files should include:

-  Cover sheet with pupil's details
-  A timeline /log of actions
-  Record of support
-  Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores where possible
-  Support plans
-  Any other relevant information

Target Setting

Good target-setting is central to effective teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs. There are four guiding principles when devising targets for pupils. Targets should be linked to assessments, strengths based, linked to interventions and developed collaboratively. Targets should also be few in number and informed by priority learning needs. They should be supported by well thought out actions and interventions. Targets should be based on the evidence collected through formal and informal assessment approaches. Targets should be developed collaboratively, with teachers, parents and pupils when possible. The student should have direct involvement in the discussion (if appropriate) or could be included by gathering their views in advance of the process. This collaboration will help ensure that targets are relevant, meaningful, realistic, and that they draw on the strengths and interests of pupils.

Targets should be SMART, by including a clear behaviour, condition and criterion. Every target will be SMART– Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timed. They should also challenge and build on existing knowledge and address pupil's holistic needs.

We use three different support plans for the three stages of support on the Continuum of Support.

STAGE 1 - CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are additional to or different from those required by other pupils in their class.

Problem-solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The class teacher and parents, with support from the Special Education Teacher when necessary, will discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches

commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs. Classroom support is an intervention process coordinated by the class teacher and carried out within the regular classroom.

This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the Class Teacher in collaboration with the SEN teacher linked with the class, which outlines the pupil's additional educational needs and the actions, including individualised teaching and management approaches, which will be taken to meet the pupil's needs. The plan will be informed by parental consultation, teacher observation records, teacher designed measures/assessments, basic needs checklist, learning environment checklist, pupil consultation 'My thoughts about school checklist', literacy and numeracy tests and screening tests of language skills. The plan may also include home-based actions to be taken by the pupil's parents to support their child's development. The Classroom Support Plan must include a review date.

Class teachers are required to follow the guidelines from the NCSE – A Continuum of Support document – Guidelines for teachers', when drafting, implementing and reviewing a classroom support plan and deciding whether or not the student may need to move to the next stage of the continuum or has achieved their targets and the support file may be closed.

STAGE 2 - SCHOOL SUPPORT

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs and sufficient progress is not made. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher needs to involve the SEN teacher linked to their year group in the problem-solving process at this point. It involves more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a School Support Plan to meet the needs of the student.

This process will be coordinated by the SEN teacher working alongside the classroom teacher. Interventions at this level will be additional to those provided by classroom support. The student will be supported by the SEN teacher by individual withdrawal, withdrawal in small groups or by in-class support.

This plan is drawn up by the SEN teacher in conjunction with the class teacher. It will set out the nature of the pupil's learning difficulties, define specific teaching, learning and behavioural targets and set a timescale for review. The plan should, for the most part, be implemented within the normal classroom setting where possible and complimented by focused school based intervention programmes. Depending on the nature of the needs and on the school context, additional teaching might be within a small group or individual or a combination of both either in class or on a withdrawal basis. The plan will be informed by teacher observation records, teacher designed measures/assessments, parent/pupil interviews, learning environment checklist, diagnostic assessments in literacy and numeracy, formal observation of behaviour including frequency measures or other assessments as appropriate. Home-based actions may also be included. After the plan has been drawn up, it should become a working document through the careful monitoring of the pupil's response to the actions taken.

SEN teachers are required to follow the guidelines from the NCSE – A Continuum of Support document – Guidelines for teachers', when drafting, implementing and reviewing a School support

plan and deciding whether or not the student may need to move to the next stage of the continuum or has achieved their targets and may return to a classroom support Plan.

STAGE 3 - SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

If a pupil's additional educational needs are severe, complex and/or persistent, they are likely to need intensive support. A student may also be moved to a school support plus plan if their progress is considered inadequate, despite carefully planned and reviewed interventions detailed in classroom or school support plans. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. This support may take the form of small group withdrawal or individual teaching.

This plan is drawn up by the SEN teacher, in consultation with the class teacher, child's parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child. There will be at least two meetings per year which will be attended by the Class Teacher, the SET involved and the parents. The plan will be informed by teacher by teacher observation and teacher designed measures, parent and pupil interviews, relevant assessments and results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc.

SEN teachers are required to follow the guidelines from the NCSE – A Continuum of Support document – Guidelines for teachers', when drafting, implementing and reviewing a School support Plus plan and deciding whether or not the student has achieved their targets and may return to school support or will continue with this level of support.

A more comprehensive explanation of each stage may be found in the NCSE Guidelines – A Continuum of support – Guidelines for teachers.

Record Keeping and Storage

Individual SEN Files It is the responsibility of SETs and Class Teachers to update and manage the files of the children on Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. The following should be stored

- ✚ Psychological Reports will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- ✚ Reports from outside agencies will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- ✚ Copy of referrals made to outside agencies will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- ✚ Classroom support files will be stored in the students file in a locked cupboard in the class teacher's room.
- ✚ School support files will be stored in the students file in a locked cupboard in the SEN teacher's room.
- ✚ School support Plus files will be stored in the students file in a locked cupboard in the SEN teachers room.

- ✚ A Log of Actions will be kept by each teacher leading the support file, and on this a record of any meetings with parents, outside agencies, referrals, assessments or any other relevant information will be logged. This log of actions will be added to their file in the locked cabinet in the principal's office at the end of each year.
- ✚ Record of SEN meetings with outside agencies and inter- school meetings will be kept in a locked cupboard in the SEN Coordinators room.
- ✚ Assessment folders are kept by all teachers and are stored in locked cupboards in the class teacher's room. Each assessments folder will have a section for each student in it. Class lists, Samples of work for each student, teacher designed tests, end of term tests, checklists and results of other tests, informal and standardised assessments will be stored in their assessment folders. Class teachers will also keep an assessment folder and this may be used/referred to, when deciding on students for support.
- ✚ Results of completed standardised tests will also be stored on Aladdin.
- ✚ Assessments or required record keeping for EAL students using the Primary School Assessment kit will be stored during the year in the students support file SEN teachers locked cupboard.
- ✚ Personal pupil profiles will be stored during the year in the students support file SEN teachers locked cupboard.
- ✚ SNA records/diaries are kept in a locked cupboard in the SNA's classroom.
- ✚ List of students excluded from tests and the reason for exclusion will be kept and stored in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- ✚ At the end of the year all student support files from the year will be collected will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- ✚ The school will store the information, files, assessments and records listed above for a minimum of seven years or until the students has reached the age of 21.

School Support Cycle

September

- SEN Planning week will take place.
- Handover meeting will take place with previous staff that worked with the students. If the student is enrolling or leaving the school these meeting will happen in the previous June. The SEN teacher and Class Teacher will gather further information by completing formal and informal assessments.
- Students will be identified for support, some support files will be carried on from the previous year.
- Meetings will take place with SEN teacher, class teacher, parent/guardian, behavioural support teacher (if applicable), SNA (if applicable) and student (if applicable) to draft a support file and prioritise learning targets.
- SEN teacher provide timetables to the classes they will be working with and to the principal.
- Student supports files are opened/continued and implementation begins.

January

- At the end of January SEN planning week takes place
- At the end of January the support file is reviewed by all staff who worked with the student and a review of progress is completed with their parent/guardian.
- If a student is continuing at the same level of support new targets are created and a student support file for Term 2 is created.
- It may be decided that a student is moving to a different stage of the continuum or enough progress has been made that he does not require additional support at that time.
- During SEN planning week, all SEN support reviewed and resources allocated for subsequent term.
- The NCSE checklist to review the inclusion of children with special educational needs will be completed by the whole staff and will then be reviewed at the staff meeting.
- We will also examine current provision for students with special educational needs using the 'LAOS', Looking at our schools document, a quality framework for schools. This will be done as reflective practice as a whole staff.

February

- The new support plan for term 2 is implemented.

May

- Formal and informal assessments will be completed and reviewed.

June

- Reviews of support files for Term 2 are completed with all staff working with the student together with their parents.
- SEN staff meet with the class teachers to discuss the level of support that will be required for that year group the following September.
- The SEN team meet to make a list of children who will require support the following September and the level of support those students will require. This is based on such factors as assessment, number of children with low incidence & high incidence needs and staffing. Supports are then allocated for the following September.
- The staff will complete the Department of Education's self-reflective questionnaire/school reflection questionnaire for special educational needs and this will be reviewed as a staff.
- All completed and reviewed student support files will be locked in the students file in the cabinet in the principal's office.
- All Log of Actions documents should be stored in the students file in the locked filing cabinet in the principal's office.

The SET team will meet on the last Friday of each month for a review meeting to review needs in their settings and ensure the children with the greatest level of need are accessing the greatest level of support.

Information Gathering and Assessment

In order to identify pupils who may require supplementary teaching and may need to be placed on the Continuum of support, screening; including standardised testing will be carried out. Standardised tests will be carried out in all classes annually and further diagnostic testing may need to take place. The information gathered from these formal assessments is then used to inform decisions in ensuring students are receiving the correct level of support. All classes will complete the Drumcondra Reading and Spelling tests and the Sigma T test. Second and Fifth class will complete the NRIT. Student's results from their standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy will be compared to their NRIT and discrepancies will be noted and acted upon.

Other assessment procedures will also inform staff, such as self-assessment, questioning, teacher observations, checklists, weekly tests, analysis of homework and classwork, maths recovery screening tests, running records, rubrics, portfolios of work and teacher-designed tasks and tests. The information gathered enables the teachers to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum.

The SEN teacher will discuss each class's recorded results with the class teacher and carry out further screening tests and or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the caseload selection process. The principal will be kept informed at all times during this process.

We continually review the assessment and screening tests that we use in order to balance the needs of our pupils and the need to provide information for appropriate support. Therefore we may deviate from the above list prior to the review date.


EAL students complete the PSAK assessment on arrival in the school and every March thereafter to assess their progress and language level to ensure the student is placed on the correct level of the continuum.

Common needs are considered, students will receive supplementary teaching in small groups when needs can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches.

Selection for SEN support criteria

The selection criteria for additional teaching support has been drawn up in accordance with the NEPS continuum of support guidelines and the guidelines issued by the Department of Education to accompany SEN circular 13/2017.

Following a recent SEN inspection we were advised to place students below the 12th percentile on a school support or school support plus file. The school will select pupils in accordance with these criteria,

-  Pupils with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a physical disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, emotional disturbance, moderate general learning disability, sever/profound general learning disability, Autism spectrum disorder, assessed syndrome or a specific speech and language disorder/impairment.

- ✚ Other students with identified needs assessed by external professionals such as borderline mild general learning difficulties, mild general learning disability, specific learning disability, attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- ✚ Pupils scoring at/below the 12th percentile on standardised tests in literacy.
- ✚ Pupils scoring at/below the 12th percentile on standardised tests in Mathematics.
- ✚ Pupils scoring between the 12th and the 16th percentile on standardised tests will be considered for a classroom support file. A student within these percentiles may be placed on a different level of support if the teacher feels it is in the best interests of the student.
- ✚ Pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) i.e. (a) pupils who arrive to our school without any English (b) pupils who have lived in Ireland for less than two years and whose English needs further support.
- ✚ Pupils with significant special educational needs. For example, pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs or those who require support with oral language, social interaction, or struggle with application to learning.
- ✚ Pupils scoring at or below 16th percentile on standardised tests in literacy or numeracy who continue to experience difficulty, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a classroom Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.
- ✚ Gifted Pupils (those scoring above the 97th%ile in both Literacy and Numeracy on Standardised Assessments and / or have been diagnosed by a NEPS Educational Psychologist as having a "superior IQ"). Interventions will be made in the first instance by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it. Support from Centre for Talented youth Ireland (CTYI) is accessed as appropriate.
- ✚ Students showing evidence of general ability but are not receiving the expected results will also be considered. Children may require support for self-esteem, attendance, attitude to learning, attitude to school and general behaviour. These will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Parents/guardians are required to sign a support file (where possible) if children are moving to a school support file or support plus file and will be accessing the support of a member of the SET team.

Through following the steps outlined in this document, those children with the highest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support.

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:




- ✚ Extra SEN support is allocated to second class to ensure early intervention.
- ✚ The development of agreed whole-school approaches to the teaching of Literacy and to ensure progression and continuity from class to class. This is done using the 'Write to read programme', 'spelling city', 'Raz kids' reading programme, completion of running records, rubric assessments and the 'Jolly phonics' programme. Promotion of literacy through print-rich environments will also be encouraged. The 'Time to Read' programme is available for second class students as well as Buddy Reading programmes. Literacy week activities also promote positive attitudes to Literacy throughout the school. The extra SEN support for 2nd

class will also help to implement the New Primary Language Curriculum. Intensive station teaching is used throughout the school.

- ✚ The development of agreed whole-school approaches to the teaching of Numeracy to ensure progression and continuity from class to class. This is done using the Maths recovery programme and the use of the 'Mathletics' website in each class. Maths week also promotes positive attitudes to Numeracy throughout the school. Intensive station teaching used throughout the school.
- ✚ Promotion of parental involvement and understanding through attendance at induction meetings before their child starts school. Formal and informal meetings are arranged.
- ✚ Strong links before enrolments are formed with the HSCL teacher as our HSCL teacher is shared with the junior school where most of our students transition from.
- ✚ Provision of additional support in language development and any relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to pupils who require support in this area.
- ✚ Ongoing structured observation and assessment are carried out both by the class teacher and the SEN teacher of student's literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in second classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties. Students will be placed on the Continuum of Support when required.
- ✚ Close collaboration and regular consultation between the class teachers and the SET team.
- ✚ Programmes to support behavioural and emotional needs are implemented immediately on arrival to second class, such as Discipline for learning (DFL), Friends for Life, fun friends etc
- ✚ Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy, parents invited to join the class for programmes such as Maths for Fun and activities during Literacy week and Maths week.
- ✚ Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents is provided.
- ✚ Learning environments are differentiated for students when required.
- ✚ In-class support from the SET team for literacy and numeracy and for support for SEN pupils to support access to the curriculum where needed. This in-class support from SEN teachers during literacy and numeracy allows for significant differentiation opportunities to occur.
- ✚ Withdrawal of individuals or small groups for intensive teaching when required.
- ✚ Annual training of staff as trained Maths recovery teachers. This teacher will be trained to deliver the Maths recovery programme to our students and provide intensive, individualised, group or class teaching of low-attaining pupils.
- ✚ Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils by the class teacher and the implementation of the NEPS staged model of support where needed.
- ✚ Transfer meetings held with particular focus and planning and intervention strategies given to children who are already at School Support stage when arriving into second class.
- ✚ The Behavioural Support teacher gives particular focus in second class to familiarising the second class with the rules and reward systems of DFL, to promote positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- ✚ Administration of NRIT TESTS at the beginning of third class and results compared with current standardised tests results and discrepancies noted.
- ✚ Provision of assistive technology where appropriate and necessary.
- ✚ If required the SEN/classroom teacher will visit a student in their previous school if their needs are complex. This will help the staff to better understand their needs.

Children with English as An Additional Language

All children with English as An Additional Language are assessed using the PSAK (Primary school assessment kit) on arrival into the school. The children will be placed onto one of the following levels:

-  A1 Breakthrough level, lowest level – for pupils entering with no English, this represents the first learning targets
-  A2 Waystage level – Pupils progress into this level
-  B1 Threshold level – Pupils able to carry out activities in this level without any help should be capable of full integration into the mainstream class.

The students will then be placed onto the appropriate level of the continuum.

The EAL students will be retested in March each year in order to ascertain their level of attainment and decide if movement within the continuum of support is necessary, as well as what level they are working at within the Up, up and away programme.

These results and figures will guide us each year on the possibility of applying for a dedicated EAL teacher. The EAL students are currently being catered for by the SEN team.

The Up, up and away programme provides a programme where EAL students are taught language proficiency in the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. When a pupil has achieved level B1.3 in all language skills i.e. the receptive language skills of listening and reading and the productive skills of spoken interaction, spoken production and writing (Up and Away p. 36), then he has achieved the minimum proficiency to access the curriculum in the mainstream classroom. Our school is following a yearly plan of work based on the up, up and away programme and Packs of resources to support the thirteen units of work in the programme for each level are stored on the google drive.

Priority for EAL language support will be given to the children who have the greatest level of need. The principal objective of language support is to integrate the student as quickly as possible into all mainstream learning and activities of the school. SEN teacher provides this support however the EAL student remains the responsibility of the mainstream teacher. Packs of levelled work to promote the learning of literacy and numeracy are also stored on the google drive. These packs are levelled and also include the teaching of letter sounds and blends from the Jolly phonics programme, as often EAL students have not attended school before. SEN teachers will provide the appropriate level pack for the student.

An individual file for each pupil is maintained by their SEN teacher. The file includes all assessments from the PSAK, scoring sheets and pupil assessment profiles. Samples of pupil's written work should also be maintained on the files and dated accordingly.

We recognise the importance of the engagement with parents of EAL children. When required we will engage the services of a translator and translate messages of communication where possible.

Exclusion from Standardised Testing

Following department Guidelines a pupil may be excluded from a test if:

- ✚ The pupil has a moderate to severe physical disability such that he cannot participate in the testing situation.
- ✚ The pupil has a moderate or severe general learning disability or a behavioural or emotional disability such that, in the opinion of the school principal or other qualified staff member, he cannot participate in the testing situation. This includes pupils who are cognitively, behaviourally, or emotionally unable to follow even the general instructions of the test.
- ✚ The pupil meets ALL of the following three criteria:
 - 1) Is not a native speaker in English; 2) Has limited proficiency in English; and 3) Has received less than one year of instruction in English
- ✚ The pupil is considered in the professional opinion of the school principal or other qualified staff member to have severe dyslexic difficulties or has been identified as having such difficulties following an appropriate psychological assessment.

Lists of pupils who are excluded from tests, together with the reason for exclusion will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the principal's office.

Timetabling

When drawing up timetables it is important to remember that:

- ✚ Timetables should be continually reviewed and may change throughout the year as emerging needs occur.
- ✚ Children should not miss the same subject each time they are withdrawn where possible.
- ✚ If a pupil is unavailable for their supplementary session due to special circumstances, the Special Education Teacher will attempt to reschedule the session with the co-operation of another teacher.
- ✚ Interruptions to classes/classrooms should be kept to a minimum.
- ✚ Timetables may be subject to change as needs arise.

Procedures for Continuing/Discontinuing Support Teaching

At the end of an instructional term a decision is made to continue/discontinue the provision of supplementary teaching. The progress of each child receiving support will be evaluated. The criteria on which the decision is based include:

- ✚ Has the pupil achieved the learning targets outlined in the plan?
- ✚ Will the pupil be able to function adequately without further support?

In consultation with the class teacher and the parents/guardians a decision is made about the need for future support. A decision to continue the provision of supplementary teaching will result in the revision of the individual/group plan to reflect any changes in emphasis resulting from the review. Where support is discontinued the child's subsequent progress is monitored. Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the targets have been met, satisfactory progress has been made and/or the pupil on assessment is performing above the percentile laid down in the selection criteria for receiving support. Additional support teaching may be discontinued if a pupil with greater need becomes apparent. In the case of discontinuance of supplementary teaching the

child may or may not be placed on a classroom support file, the class teacher will closely monitor the pupil. However if both the class teacher and support teacher feel such a child needs scaffolding to maintain this standard then continued supplementary teaching may be offered.

Self-reflection from the child will also be considered where appropriate.

Supervision/Child Protection/Health and safety:

- ✚ Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SEN teacher is responsible for ensuring that both they and the pupil are visible through the glass panel in the door.
- ✚ Where there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.
- ✚ Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET teacher should collect and return children to their classrooms.
- ✚ Where a child has access to an SNA, they may withdraw the child from the class if a plan is in place with the class teacher.
- ✚ Staff members will be informed if an SEN pupil displays a behaviour that imposes a health and safety risk to another person. Individual plans will be drawn up and implemented if this situation occurs.

External Bodies

The school acknowledges that they can avail of support from external professionals such as NEPS psychologists, City Connects, the SENO, NCSE support services, the inspectorate and other allied health professionals. The school will endeavour to keep abreast of local services available to them through consultation with the Home School Liaison Co-ordinator (HSLC) and yearly planning meetings with the designated NEPS psychologist.

Referral to Out of School Agencies

Referral for assessment can come from the class teacher, the SEN teacher, the principal, recommendation set out in professional report or at parental request. The SET teacher co-ordinates the referral of pupils to a number of outside agencies in order to maximise support for pupils with special educational needs.

These agencies include:

- ✚ NEPS
- ✚ HSE – Assessment of Need, Multi-disciplinary agencies, School age teams, CAMHS
- ✚ Central Remedial Clinic (CRC)
- ✚ Special Education section of the Department of Education and Skills (DES)
- ✚ Inspectorate of the DES
- ✚ Counselling/therapy services

Among the reasons for referring a child are the following:

- ✚ Discrepancies between ability and attainment in relation to literacy and/or numeracy
- ✚ Speech and language issues
- ✚ Issues around social skills
- ✚ Issues with concentration and attention

- ✚ Behavioural problems
- ✚ Fine/ Gross motor co-ordination concerns
- ✚ Pupil well-being and anxiety concerns

The procedures for referral are as follows:

- ✚ A list of concerns is drawn up by the SEN teacher in collaboration with mainstream class teachers, early in the school year. These concerns are brought to the principal and the SEN Coordinator.
- ✚ When a child is prioritised for assessment, the SEN post holders/ SEN teacher/ Class teacher or HSCL teacher meet with parents/ guardians to discuss the need for referral and seek consent.
- ✚ This is discussed with the school's NEPS psychologist or city connects psychologist as soon as possible. At this meeting, pupils for psychological assessment are prioritised as well as recommendations made for involvement by other external agencies.
- ✚ The class teacher/ SEN teacher fills out necessary referral form in consultation with appropriate school personnel.
- ✚ The external professional meets with all relevant stakeholders in advance of the assessment.
- ✚ Following the assessment, an additional meeting is scheduled where findings are discussed, recommendations are considered and appropriate response is agreed.
- ✚ The final copy of the report is issued to the school and the child's parents/ guardians. The report is retained in the child's file, which is stored in a locked filing cabinet in the principal's office.

Exemption from the Study of Irish (Circular 52/19)

The primary school programme in Irish is designed to meet the learning needs of a wide variety of pupils. Therefore, the request to grant exemption from the learning of Irish should only arise in rare and exceptional circumstances.

The grounds for making an application for the exemption from the study of Irish (section 2.2 of Circular 0052/2019) sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a pupil an exemption from the study of Irish.

The procedures for granting an exemption from the study of Irish are as follows:

- ✚ In the case of the exceptional circumstances set out in section 2.2 of circular 52/19, the parents/ guardians, on behalf of the pupil, must make a formal written application to the school for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish.
- ✚ In deciding whether to grant or refuse an exemption, the Principal will consult with all relevant stakeholders to establish that all key evidence is available to support this decision.
- ✚ Parent/guardians will be made aware of the possible future consequences (e.g. employment prospects) of any exemption from the study of Irish.
- ✚ In the case where an exemption is granted, the parents are issued with a Certificate of Exemption, a copy of which is retained in the student's file.
- ✚ It is the responsibility of the parents/ guardians to inform secondary schools of the granting of this exemption.
- ✚ Pupils with an exemption from the study of Irish remain in class during the Irish lesson so that they may have an opportunity to gain knowledge of spoken Irish and participate in the learning activities therein; otherwise they complete other work during the Irish lesson within the class.

Monitoring and Reviewing and Implementing this Policy

To assist in reflecting on our provision for pupils with special educational needs, the school utilises a self-reflective questionnaire available on the department of education website. School reflection questionnaire template is used at the end of every school year to support the need for review of the policy and practice by the SEN team and principal. The reflection outcomes are then shared with the whole staff for discussion and input. Each year the staff will also complete the NCSE checklist – Inclusion of children with special educational needs. The results of this checklist will allow us to prioritise areas for development as a staff.

The school also utilises the publication 'LAOS' The 'Looking at our schools document, a quality framework for primary schools' to help examine the schools provision for pupils with special educational needs. The domains and statements of practice are utilised to enable the teachers and school leaders in our school to review their practices, to identify what we are doing well and to recognise aspects of the schools work that could be further developed to improve learning experiences and outcomes for these pupils.

The principal in conjunction with the SEN Coordinator have overall responsibility for monitoring and reviewing this SEN Policy. It is an ongoing and developmental process. The whole staff and Board of Management will engage in the developmental process, and the policy will be reviewed as necessary. This policy will be implemented immediately.

Ratification:

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management in ^{April} June 2022

Signed: Michael Regan Date: 28-4-22

Signed: Chris Russell Date: 28/04/22

(Chairperson)

