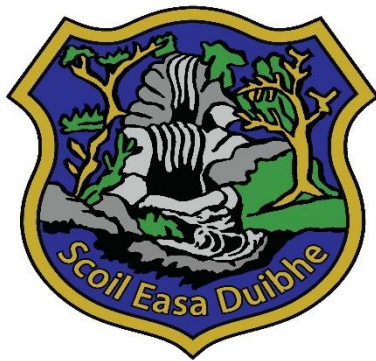


# **Asdee N.S.**



# **Special Educational Needs Policy**

**October 2025**

## **Introductory Statement**

This policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision is a statement in relation to the provision for special educational needs in Asdee N.S. This policy was formulated by teaching staff, in line with the Guidelines for Primary Schools Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (DES 2017), Learning Support Guidelines (DES 2000), Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers & Resource Pack for Teachers and Circular No 0013/2017.

## **Our School Context**

Asdee N.S. is a co-educational primary school, providing education to pupils from Junior Infants to sixth class in a multigrade classroom setting. Currently, our teaching staff consists of three Class Teachers, one Special Educational Needs Teacher (22.5 hours). Our SET is based five days per week in our school with the remaining 2.5 hours spent covering principal release days. Our school has one full-time and one part-time Special Needs Assistant. The allocation of both Special Education Support teachers and Special Needs Assistants is subject to review by the NCSE and DES. Over the last few year our SET hours have been reduced from 26.9 hrs to 25hrs and most recently our hours have been reduced again to 22.5hrs. (This is not a full time post)

## **Rationale**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
- outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
- comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
- fulfil DES circular 0013/17 -Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and new 2017 Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools).
- fulfil DES circular 0054/2022: Exemptions from the Study of Irish.

## **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 a valued part of our school community. We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and helping our pupils reach their full potential. The provision of a quality system of SEN support teaching is integral to this commitment.

This policy aims to enable children with Special Education Needs (SEN) 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 learning environment, activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them. Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines. Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support.

## **Aims of the Policy**

This policy aims to outline our procedures and practices of how we:

- support the inclusion of SEN pupils in primary schools.
- identify additional needs that our pupils may have.
- 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.
- communicate information between the SET, principal, staff and parents/guardians.

## **Aims of SEN Support**

SEN support aims to:

- support the inclusion of SEN pupils in primary schools.

- develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
- ensure that the Staged Approach / NEPS Continuum of Support is implemented.
- enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in Literacy and Numeracy before leaving primary school.
- provide supplementary additional support in English and / or Mathematics.
- enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum.
- encourage differentiation in the classroom.
- support attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning.
- enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- involve parents in supporting their children through consultation and co-operation.
- promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for pupils.
- establish early intervention and prevention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning.
- guard the self-esteem and self-image of the learner.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Board of Management***

The BOM will fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs.

### ***Principal Teacher***

As outlined in the DES circular 0013/17, the Principal has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school. She will work closely with the SEN teacher and will keep the BOM informed about the working of this policy.

The school Principal is required to:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on special needs.
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies.
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically.
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils' needs and provide them with appropriate supports.
- Oversee the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this provision is focused on the pupils with the highest level of need or lowest levels of achievement.
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
- Liaise regularly with support teacher, class teacher & SNA re. classroom needs and support programmes in place.
- Organise the funding and provision of appropriate classroom accommodations, assessment tests and SEN resources.
- Liaise with NEPS psychologist in collaboration with SET at the beginning of each school year to formulate a plan for SEN provision, including assessments of pupils and professional supports for teachers.
- To liaise with other outside agencies such as CAMHS to arrange assessments and special provisions for children with special education needs.
- Liaise with the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) and the Department of Education & Skills (DES) in relation to provision of services such as SNA and SET hours and complete relevant NCSE paperwork.
- Assume direct responsibility for co-ordinating SEN and special needs services.
- Advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services.
- Allocate co-ordination time for the Special Education Needs Teacher to plan and consult with teachers and parents.
- Co-ordinate and organise SNAs' work and timetabling.
- Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation.
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles.
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils.
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.

### ***The Class Teacher***

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class, including those selected for additional support. In supporting the development and implementation of the school policy on SEN, the class teacher should:

- Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- Create a positive learning environment within the classroom.
- Differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class.
- Administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in Literacy and Numeracy, following the school's guidelines.
- Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SET to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching.
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- Gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support.
- Open a Classroom Support File once additional needs have been identified and classroom support is required.
- Develop Classroom Support Plans for children in need of extra classroom support.
- Record a Log of Actions for children on Classroom Support Plans.
- Collaborate with the Special Education Teacher, parents/guardians and other staff members to develop School Support Plans or School Support Plus Plans by identifying priority learning needs and developing appropriate targets.
- Contribute relevant information about children with SEN to principal/SET when documents/forms need to be completed for outside professional agencies.
- Where applicable, collaborate with the SET regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching.
- 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 SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned.
- Liaise with and seek advice from the SET.

### ***The Special Education Teacher***

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level or through additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models. It will be the role of the SEN teacher to:

- SET collaborates with Principal, SENO & NEPS psychologist (SENCO)
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention.
- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy.
- Support the class teacher in optimising and enhancing teaching and learning opportunities.
- Collaboratively develop Student Support and Student Support Plus Plans for pupils selected for school support, identifying priority learning needs, with class teachers, relevant staff and parents/guardians.
- Update Log of Actions with class teachers.
- Review School Support Plans twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff members and parents/guardians.
- Update and maintain planning, progress and attendance records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support.
- Provide supplementary teaching for Literacy and Numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis.
- Support whole-school procedures for screening.
- Administer, interpret and record a range of formal and informal assessments and share results with teachers and parents.
- Organise and co-ordinate supplementary teaching provision for children requiring school support, collaboratively developing a timetable with principal and class teachers, reviewing on a termly basis.
- Store confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and share the same with principal, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.
- Select children for psychological assessment in consultation with principal, class teachers and NEPS psychologist.
- Liaise with external agencies and professionals such as NEPS, Speech & Language Therapists, OT, HSE agencies, SENO, Visiting Teacher etc. to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Make provisions for visits from external agencies and professionals, updating relevant staff members, children, parents/guardians on timings and arrangements, and co-ordinating meeting within the school.
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers as well as contributing to SEN in-service training of staff.

- Liaise with and advise SNA's with regards to supporting children with special needs.
- Liaise with parents of children with special needs with regards child's progress, programmes etc.
- Contribute at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of resource books, equipment and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the resource room
- Attend professional development courses that help support the role of SET.

The type of support offered by the SEN Teacher will depend on the child's individual needs and takes the form of:

- Curriculum support
- Life and/or social skills training
- Communication and/or language development
- Assistance with sensory regulation
- Fine & gross motor development
- A combination of some/all of the above

### ***Special Needs Assistant***

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 0030/2014). The SNA's role is to carry out:

- Primary Care Needs of the pupil which may include assistance with feeding, toileting and general hygiene, mobility and orientation, moving and lifting of pupils, operation of hoists and equipment, severe communication difficulties, assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds, administration of medicine, non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions, care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential.
- Secondary Care Associated Tasks which may be carried out include preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another, assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with Special Educational Needs, maintaining a daily checklist, planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, assistance with recommendations from outside agencies, assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities e.g. school tour, swimming etc.

It is important to contribute relevant information about children with SEN to principal/SET/class teacher when documents/forms need to be completed for outside professional agencies and for SEN reviews. It is deemed good practice to participate in relevant professional development courses when/if the opportunity arises.

See also SNA plan

### ***Parents/Guardians***

Collaboration and the 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 have much to contribute to their child's learning.

Parent/Guardian should:

- Share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage.
- Support the work of the school and keep the teachers informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning.
- Attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SEN Teacher.
- Support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities.
- Inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage.
- Optimise teaching and learning opportunities for their child at home.

### ***Pupils***

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

- Outline his/her interests and strengths.
- Become familiar with the targets that have been set for them.
- 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.

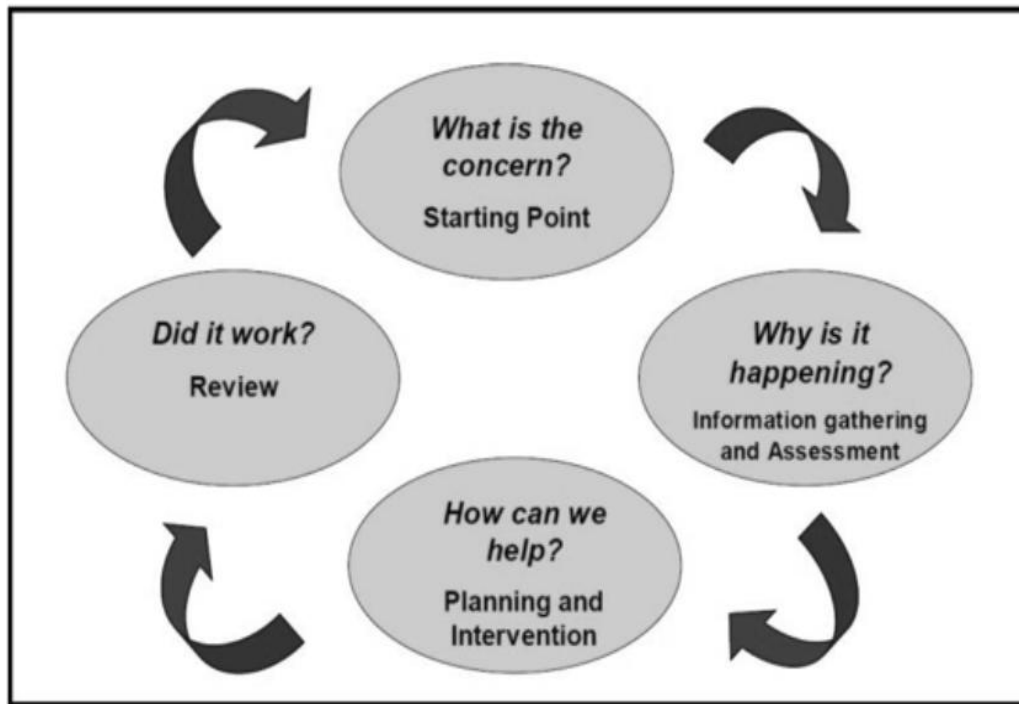
### ***External Professional Bodies & Agencies***

Our school liaises with external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Support Service, the HSE (Health Service Executive), Visiting Teachers for children with vision impairment, Visiting Teachers for children with hearing loss, and the Inspectorate. We acknowledge that the needs of many children span both health and education services. We therefore liaise with and contribute to health-led assessment and delivery of interventions and facilitate meetings between parents and various support services. We also endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support.

### **Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs**

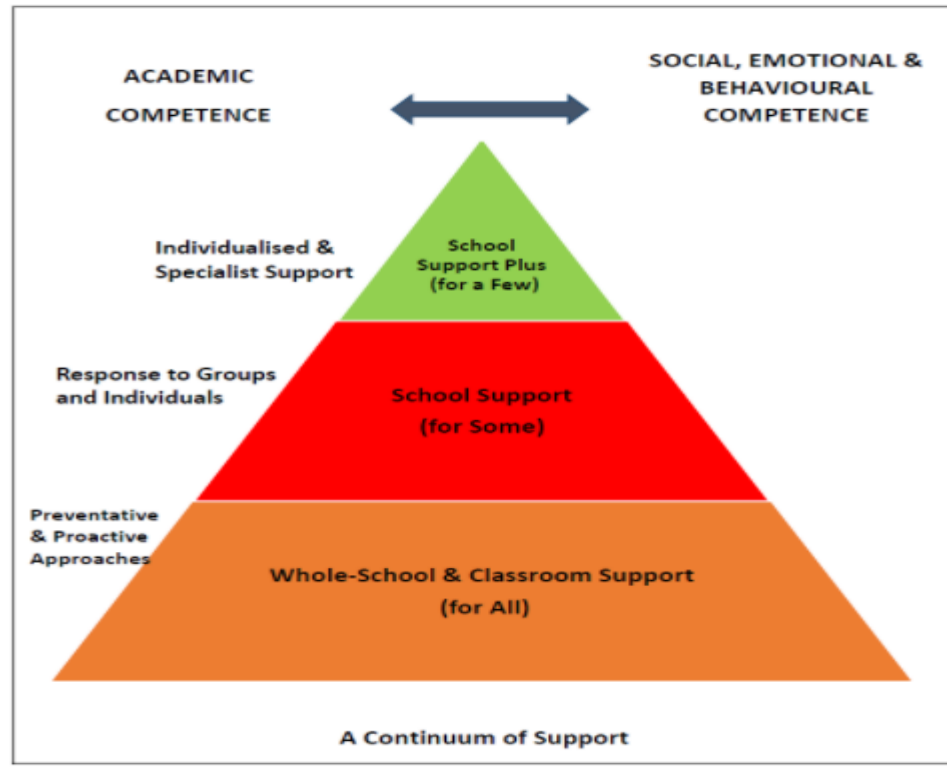
We use the **Continuum of Support Framework** set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs. Like this framework, we recognise that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs. This framework 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. The continuum of support encompasses a graduated problem solving model of assessment and intervention which 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:



Using the Continuum of Support framework, we identify pupils' educational needs including academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. Once needs have been identified the level of intervention and support provided is matched to those needs and their changing nature over time. We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible (See also More Able Children policy Appendix 2). The principle that pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support is of primary importance.

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



**STAGE 1: WHOLE SCHOOL/ CLASSROOM SUPPORT**

Classroom Support is 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 teacher and parents discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. A classroom plan is devised and put in place for a specific timeframe and then reviewed. If strategies are successful it may be decided to continue with supports in place or discontinue any supports in place. If strategies have not resolved the needs of the pupils, then pupils move to next stage of continuum.

<p><b>Stage 1 - Classroom Support</b></p>	<p>If a class teacher or parent has concerns about the academic, physical, social or emotional development of a child, the class teacher will construct a simple, Classroom Support Plan, to be implemented in the normal classroom setting. The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental consultation</li> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures/assessments</li> <li>• Basic needs checklist</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Pupil consultation</li> <li>• Literacy and Numeracy tests</li> <li>• Screening tests of language skills</li> </ul>
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**STAGE 2: SCHOOL SUPPORT**

When interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil’s special educational needs, school support may be required. The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education Teacher in the problem-solving process. Class teacher and SET gather information, develop and monitor a School Support Plan for a set period of time and then review. If the plan is working pupils may remain on plan or revert back to classroom support depending on needs. If needs are not resolved after a specific time frame, then it may be necessary to involve outside agencies such as NEPs or the HSE with parental

permission and pupils may move to School Support Plus Stage. Support in the classroom will continue to be an essential component of the School Support Plan devised for such children and primary responsibility for the child will remain with the class teacher in consultation with the Special Education Teacher.

<b>Stage 2 - School Support</b>	<p>The Special Education Teacher draws up a plan of appropriate learning targets for the child in consultation with the class teacher, parents &amp; pupil. A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition.</p> <p>At this level a School Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures/assessments</li> <li>• Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>• Pupil consultation</li> <li>• Standardised assessments</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments</li> <li>• Formal observation charts and checklists</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul>
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**STAGE 3: SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS**

If a pupil’s special educational needs are **severe and/or persistent**, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. The information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of his/her individual education plan.

<b>Stage 3 – School Support Plus</b>	<p>The Class Teacher, Special Education Teacher, parents, outside professionals (if available) and SNA (if applicable) will contribute to the development of a School Support Plus Plan for the child. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p> <p>At this level a School Support Plus Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures /assessments</li> <li>• Results and recommendations from reports from outside professionals</li> <li>• Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>• Pupil consultation</li> <li>• Standardised assessments in Literacy/Numeracy</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments</li> <li>• Formal observations charts and checklists</li> <li>• Functional assessments as appropriate, including results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc.</li> </ul> <p>In the case of children identified at an early age as having significant special educational needs, intervention at Stage 3 will be necessary on their entry to school.</p>
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A more comprehensive explanation of each stage can be in the Continuum of Support – Guidelines for teachers [https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps\\_special\\_needs\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf)

**Information Gathering & Assessment**

**Parental Permission**

Assessment is an integral part of a class teacher’s role on a daily basis for all children. Assessment of Learning and Assessment for learning enable teachers to gather information to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum and based on the needs of the pupils. Firstly, we look at all pupils in the school and identify any needs. In order to identify pupils who may require supplementary teaching, screening; including standardised testing, is

carried out in all classes annually and further diagnostic testing may need to take place. The information gathered from these formal assessments along with teacher observations are used to prioritise needs and set out pupil's learning targets.

## Initial Screening

Class Teachers carry out screening tests and standardised assessments. The SET will administer further screening tests, if deemed necessary.

In our school we carry out the following assessment procedures:

- Junior Infants: Observations, class-based Assessment.
- Senior Infants: Observations, class-based Assessment, MIST, Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy, Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy.
- 1st Class: Observations, class-based assessment, Micra-T/Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T
- 2nd Class: Observations, class-based assessment, Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T
- 3rd Class: Observations, class-based Assessment, Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T
- 4th Class: Observations, class based Assessment, Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T
- 5th Class: Observations, class-based Assessment, Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T
- 6th Class: Observations, class-based Assessment, Drumcondra Reading Test, Sigma-T

## Diagnostic Assessment

The SET discusses each class's recorded results with the Class Teacher, and carries out further screening tests and / or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests inform the caseload selection process. The Principal Teacher is kept informed at all times during this process.

## Inventory of Test Materials

### Screening Tests

- Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy and Numeracy: Screening
- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Sigma-T
- Drumcondra Primary Reading Test
- Micra-T
- Dyslexia Early Screening Test
- Bangor Dyslexia Test
- Primary School Assessment Kit (English language assessment)

The M.I.S.T. (Middle Infant Screening Test) is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants during the second term of the school year. Pupils who present with scores below a given point are selected to participate in the Forward Together Programme. The parents of these pupils are consulted by Class Teacher and/or SET. At the end of the Forward Together Programme every participating pupil is re-tested (using M.I.S.T.) to measure progress made as a result of this Early Intervention.

## Diagnostic Tests

- Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy: Diagnostic
- Sound Linkage/Test of Phonological Awareness
- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
- Single Word Reading Test (SWRT)
- Single Word Spelling Test (SWST)
- Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy: Diagnostic
- Maths Tracker Junior (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>)
- Maths Tracker Senior (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>)
- Basic Number Diagnostic Test
- Running Records
- Group Reading Test (D. Young)
- Toe by Toe Reading Age Test
- Schonell Graded Word Reading & Spellings Tests
- SPAR Spelling Test
- Literacy Profile (First School Years)
- Phonic Tests 1-10 (Kickstart Publications)

- Core Phonics Survey
- Ballard Westwood Timed Tables Test

## **Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies**

Intensive early intervention and prevention programmes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. Early intervention programmes may be provided by the Class Teacher and/or by the Support Teacher, in accordance with the Staged Approach (Appendix 1) and the NEPS Continuum.

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
- Provision of additional support & Early Intervention programmes in Literacy and Numeracy.
- Ongoing observation and assessment of Literacy and Numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Junior Room Teacher and the SET.
- Promotion of Literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, well-resourced school library, Intensive reading programme (November and May) , Buddy Reading, Story time, D.E.A.R. time, World Book Day, Novel study (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class), Rainbows Oral language Programme, Station teaching and Genre Writing.
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. Busy at Maths/Maths and Me Maths Programme, Hands-on approach, access to Numeracy games/apps/websites in school and at home, Station Teaching, STEM and Maths Week.
- Support for children experiencing social/emotional difficulties and problems with concentration - Zippy's Friends, Time to Talk, The Friendship Formula, Zones of Regulation, Starving the Anxiety/Anger Gremlin workbooks and sensory regulation breaks.
- The use of concrete materials as much as possible and as appropriate.
- Differentiation -adapting the learning curriculum & environment.
- In-class support/Team teaching from the SET.
- Withdrawing individuals/groups.

## **Meeting the Needs and Allocating Resources**

Once pupil needs have been identified, Special Education Teacher intervenes to address these needs as required. Additional support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). Importantly, the level and type of support reflects the child's needs and are informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. Following a period of intervention, some pupils may no longer require additional support, some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive supports.

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed effectively to address the identified needs of pupils. Importantly, those with **the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support**. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching.

In addition to Literacy and Numeracy Difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development, motor skills, sensory processing needs and application to learning.

Each year the SEN Teacher meets class teachers and discusses children's needs, the resources in place and progress made. We may cross-reference the needs of pupils at School Support and School Support Plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping, to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches.

## **Selection Process for Allocating Additional Teaching Support**

The following criteria will be used by our school to select children for supplementary teaching in line with the new model of Special Education Teaching (Circular 13/2107).

1. Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a:
  - Physical Disability
  - Hearing Impairment
  - Visual Impairment
  - Emotional Disturbance
  - Moderate General Learning Disability
  - Severe/Profound General Learning Disability
  - Autistic Spectrum Disorder

- Assessed Syndrome
  - Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment
2. Prevention and Early Intervention Programs (Team teaching in the Infant Classes, Team Teaching in Literacy & Numeracy, Zippy's Friends)
  3. Pupils scoring at or below the **19th** percentile on standardised assessments in Literacy.
  4. Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals, who are presenting with difficulties in class, who are not on or below the 19th percentile in Literacy such as:
    1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability
    2. Mild General Learning Disability
    3. Specific Learning Disability
    4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
  5. Pupils scoring at or below the **19th** percentile on standardised assessments in Numeracy.
  6. Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals, who are presenting with difficulties in class, who are not on or below the 19th percentile in numeracy such as:
    1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability
    2. Mild General Learning Disability
    3. Specific Learning Disability
    4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
  7. 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 less than two years, and whose English needs further support.
  8. Pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30th percentile) on standardised assessments in Literacy and 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 Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.
  9. Pupils experiencing serious difficulties with oral language /social interaction/ behaviour/emotional development, application to learning, despite interventions made at Stage 1 (NEPS Continuum of Support). The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.
  10. Children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and whose English needs further support.
  11. Transition to Post Primary
  12. Gifted Pupils (those scoring above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile in both English and Mathematics 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.

**N.B. Children with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest level of supports.**

## **Timetabling**

When drawing up timetables it is important to remember that:

- Children should not miss the same subject each time they are withdrawn, class teacher will help accommodate this 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.
- Co-teaching can operate during English and Maths times in class. If deemed more beneficial to the group being taught by the Support Teacher, they can be withdrawn to a quieter room.
- Timetables should be reviewed at the end of each term or instructional block.

## **Tracking, Recording and Reviewing Progress**

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process.

## **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 and needs over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Our Student Support File is based on the NEPS template. We use three different support plans for the three stages of support on the Continuum of Support.

## **Support Plans**

### **Stage 1 – Classroom Support Plan**

A Support Plan at stage 1 is a Classroom Support Plan. This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the class teacher in collaboration with parents 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 may also include home-based actions to be taken by the pupil's parents to support their child's development. The Classroom Support Plan should include a review date.

### **Stage 2 – School Support Plan**

A School Support Plan (Green) at stage 2 is a plan drawn up by the class teacher and SET teacher in collaboration with parents and students. 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 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. 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.

### **Stage 3 – School Support Plus Plan**

A Support Plus Plan at stage 3 (Red) is drawn up by the class teacher and Special Education Teachers, in consultation with the child's parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child based on the information gathered. These Student Support Plus plans includes a breakdown of the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that the child experiences success.

This plan includes:

- Progress to date/strengths
- Areas for improvement/presenting difficulties
- Present level of educational performance
- Special educational needs of the pupil
- Special educational provision including support required from an SNA, if appropriate
- Further information
- The pupil's priority learning needs, targets, strategies, resources and the monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place

## **Setting Targets**

Target setting is central to effective teaching for pupils with SEN. When setting targets, the following 4 guiding principles are adhered to:

Targets should be

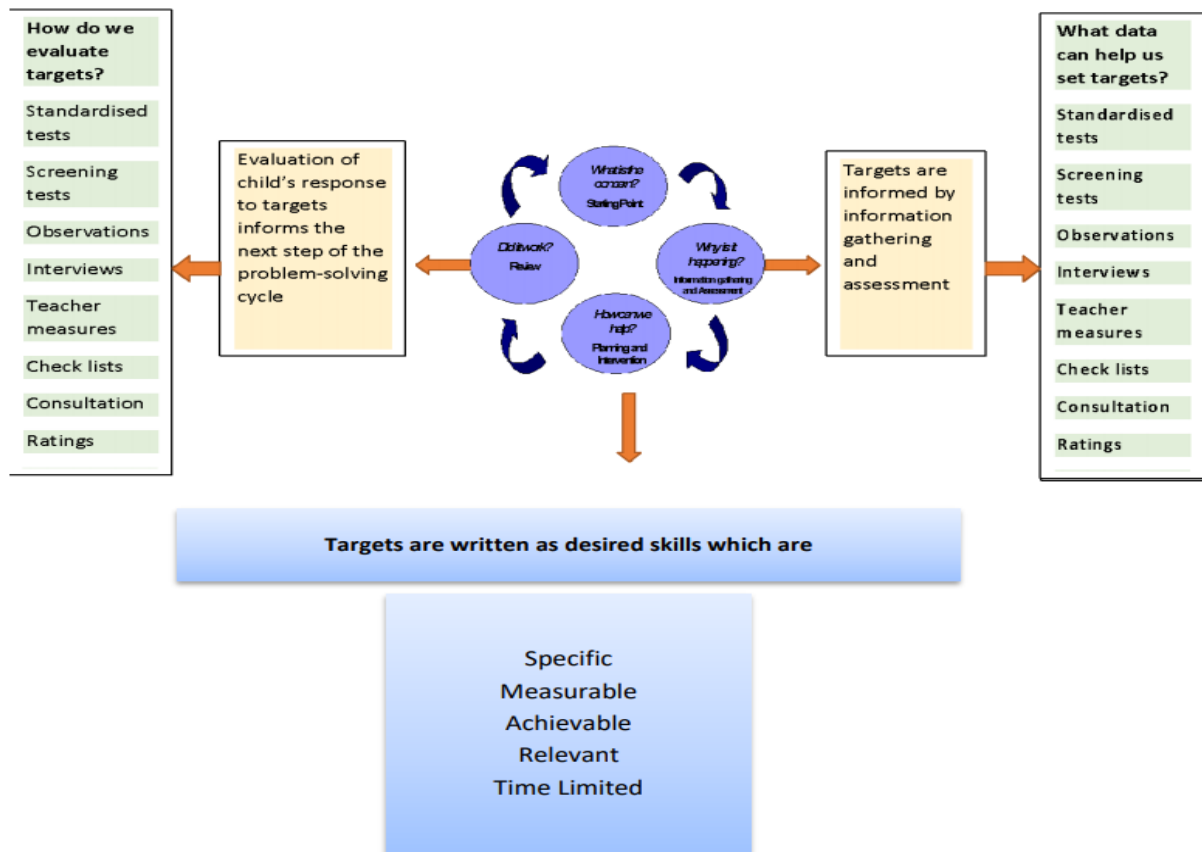
1. Linked to assessment
2. Strengths and needs based
3. Linked to interventions
4. Developed collaboratively (parents, teachers, pupils etc.) (Guidelines, p.16)

Targets should also be

- Few in number
- Informed by priority learning needs
- Supported by well thought out actions/interventions
- Based on evidence collected through both formal and informal assessment approaches
- SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed but also challenge and build on existing knowledge of the pupil
- Set for a block or term and reviewed in February / End of Summer term

The Flow Chart below illustrates how target-setting is an integral part of the problem-solving framework to support pupils with special educational needs.

**Appendix 1: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework**



**Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching**

- At the end of each instructional block or half term, the progress of each child who is in receipt of support teaching will be evaluated following consultation with the child's class teacher. A decision will be made regarding their continued level of support, targets revised and further actions communicated to parents
- Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently achieving targets over the stated time, a decision may be made to revert to Classroom Support.
- The school may decide to discontinue supplementary teaching with some children who are now performing above the percentile laid down in the selection criteria for receiving support; 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 if places are available in the appropriate group or if the timetable allows.
- The school may decide to discontinue supplementary teaching with some pupils (who have made satisfactory progress), for the Support Teacher to provide early intervention / prevention for Senior Infants, after for example the analysis of the MIST screening test results in February (pupils who have not responded to Stage One interventions by the class teacher, under the Staged Approach).
- Children with SEN or additional learning needs may alternate between Classroom Support Plans and School Support/School Support Plus Plans within the school year availing of blocks of intervention. Continued School Support will depend on the overall needs of the school and all of its pupils at any given time.

## SEN RECORDS

All pupils' SEN files are stored in paper copy and are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the SEN classroom. It is the responsibility of the SET to update and manage the files of the children on school support and school support plus that they support. It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to update a classroom support file. The following should be stored

- Student Support File – All student support plans
- Log of actions detailing support received, interventions, meetings with parents and other agencies, testing and reviews during the academic year
- Psychological Report
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies
- Copy of reports from outside agencies

## Liaising with Parents/Communicating Information

- Class teacher meets/communicates with parents/guardians initially to discuss concerns and outline supports – Classroom Support Plan.
- The Special Education Teacher/Class Teacher meet with parents to discuss concerns and outline supports - School Support & School Support Plus Plans.
- SET liaises with parents of children in receipt of supplementary teaching regularly to give an update on child's progress, to demonstrate methodologies that could be useful at home to further the child's learning etc.
- Parents are always encouraged to become involved in their child's learning. Activities for home outlined on support plans.
- Class Parent Teacher Meetings are held in November. Support Meetings are held in October.
- An end-of-year report goes home in June each year. Class teacher consults with SET. Opportunities to discuss this report are made available before the end of term. SET has support review meeting (in person/by telephone) with parents in June.

## Exemptions from the Study of Irish

The School Management is required to observe the prescribed protocols and procedures in relation to granting pupils exemptions from the study of Irish. These protocols and procedures are set out in DES Circular 0054/2022.

## Ratification and Communication

This revised policy was reviewed, in consultation with staff, by the Board of Management in October 2025. It will be reviewed as part of the school policy review schedule or as the need arises.

Chairperson B.O.M.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas Mulvihill

Secretary to B.O.M./Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Sheehy

## Resources

- Starter Stile Phonics & Spelling books
- Sounds Abound
- Reading Quest booklets
- Forward Together Programme
- The Newell Literacy Programme
- Bridging the Gap Programme
- P.A.T Programme
- Zones of Regulation
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Ready Set Remember
- SNIP Literacy Programme
- [www.typing.com](http://www.typing.com)
- Write from the Start. The Teodorescu Perceptuo – Motor Programme
- Speed Up! Programme
- A Time to Talk
- The Friendship Formula
- Zippy's Friends
- PM readers
- Oxford Reading Tree scheme
- Maths Zone books
- Dolch lists
- Toe by Toe
- Read Write Now Learner workbooks
- Time 4 Learning Learner workbook
- Starving the Anxiety/Anger Gremlin workbooks
- Jolly Phonics Programme