



Special Education Needs Policy

1. Introduction

Coláiste Éinde is committed to creating a learning environment, which is inclusive and supportive to all students in line with its Mission Statement and within the principles of relevant legislation. At Coláiste Éinde we strive to meet the educational needs of all our students. Inclusion recognises every student's right to a broad, balanced, relevant, and challenging curriculum that is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents, and personal qualities.

The successful inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs requires effective collaboration between all school staff: Senior Leadership Team, Year Heads, Subject teachers, SET(Special Education Teachers) teachers, SNAs(Special Needs Assistants), alongside specialist teachers and teams – SEN Coordinator, Coordinator of An Réalt ASD(Autism Spectrum Disorder)Class and the Special Class for the Deaf and Hearing-Impaired students, Home School Community Liaison Coordinator, Chaplain, and the School Care Team.

This policy describes the aims and objectives, by which the school aims to identify, assess, and provide for students with special educational needs.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following documentation/legislation:

- Education Act 1998.
- The Equal Status Act 2000.
- Education Welfare Act 2000.
- The EPSEN (*Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs*) Act, 2004.
- Learning Support Guidelines 2000
- NCSE (*National Council for Special Educational Needs*) Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process 2006
- Guidelines for Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs 2007
- National Education Welfare Board Guidelines
- NCSE Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes 2016.
- NCSE & HSE Guidance Document for Health Professional Reports with Recommendations on School Placement and SEN 2019.
- Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools Indicators of Effective Practice
- Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools

2. Rationale & Aims

This document, which aims to reflect current practice, outlines the form that additional support for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) takes place in our school and the philosophy, which underpins our actions and decisions. This framework will facilitate the different members of the school community to work together to continue to develop the school and maintain its characteristic vision.

The school's SEN Policy is aspiring to:

- Provide an inclusive learning environment where all students are encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- Improve the general level of literacy and numeracy for each student with special educational needs.
- Promote best practice in teaching methods to support the diverse needs of our students.
- Encourage every student to develop their social, communication and personal skills, thus enhancing self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Prepare and identify those who need reasonable accommodation in State Examinations.

Aims

- We have high ambitions and aspirations for all students. We place great emphasis on building relationships with students, knowing each student has a unique contribution to make. We acknowledge their individuality, see their potential and value each student. In conjunction with the student, we implement strategies that will meet their individual learning needs.
- To ensure a whole school approach of meaningful inclusion by supporting students with learning difficulties, physical difficulties and social and emotional difficulties access all areas of school life.
- To ensure that students learn and interact in a caring, happy, safe and secure environment.
- To provide maximum opportunity to develop and reach individual potential academically, socially and personally.
- To make every effort to ensure equality of educational access and opportunity.
- To challenge students to become as independent as possible.
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents/guardians, to achieve maximum support at home and where necessary, involve parents/guardians in the planning of education, and decision-making for their children.
- Ensure that all members of staff are continually updated on the special educational needs of students and their responsibility to support these students.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with special educational needs.
- To ensure collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for these students.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with SEN.

3. Definition of Special Educational Needs

"Special educational needs mean, in relation to a person, a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without a condition...." (Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004)

Special educational needs include “students who are exceptionally able and talented” (Looking at our School 2022, A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools) as well as students who have English as a second language.

Coláiste Éinde, within the Continuum of Support, recognises students may not have a diagnosis or are awaiting diagnosis.

3.1 Categories of SEN

The SEN Department supports all students with additional educational needs as well as those with formal diagnoses.

- Specific Learning Difficulty—Dyslexia
- Physical disabilities—DCD (Developmental Coordination Disorder or Dyspraxia)
- Sensory Difficulties (hearing & visual impairments)
- Autism / Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder)
- ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) /ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- Physical Difficulties – Dyspraxia, Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida
- Developmental Language Disorders
- ESL students (English for students where English is not their first language)
- Emotional and Behavioural Disorders
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs
- Mild General Learning Difficulty
- Down Syndrome
- Exceptionally Able

Students who have a medical condition* or develop a medical condition that impacts on their educational needs during their time in Coláiste Éinde will be given access to SEN intervention as needed and as defined/supported by a medical report.

3.2 Identification of needs

The following criteria can be used to identify students who may benefit from extra supports:

- Educational Passports are gathered from all feeder primary schools. Standardised test results are examined and those students with Special Educational Needs are identified.
- Home School Liaison Coordinator and SEN Coordinator liaise with primary school class teachers, Special Educational Teachers, Special Class Teachers & SNAs.
- Information provided by parents in relation to their child can assist the school in identifying supports that may be put in place for their child. On accepting a place in the school, or while the student is in the school, parents are requested to furnish copies of relevant documentation related to a recognised learning difficulty including:
 - Updated psychological/ Occupational Therapist reports.
 - Medical reports
 - Irish exemption Certificates
 - Student Support Plan from primary school
 - Assistive Technology Provisions
 - SEN School Transport Passes

- Where necessary, the Home School Liaison teacher contacts the parents of SEN students, and a meeting is arranged with the SEN Coordinator.
- Some students may visit the school before September. For example, students who are anxious or have mobility difficulties.
- Students enrolling in An Réalt - Autism Special Class and the Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired students will have a programme of induction during the summer term. Many of these students will also have a transition plan in place from 5th/6th Class of primary school.
- Testing: CAT 4 tests, WRAT 5, WIAT III, PPAD-E, DASH.
- Analysis of class tests, term exams, mock exams, state exams and academic monitoring.
- Referrals from teachers/SNAs to SEN Coordinator.
- Referral from parents/guardians or student themselves.
- Professional reports presented to the SEN Coordinator, e.g.: Educational Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, CAMHS (Child and Adult Mental Health Services) NEPS (National Education Psychological Service), Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist or GP/Consultant.
- Meeting with NEPS, CAMHS, Visiting Teacher for Visually or Hearing-Impaired/Deaf students and other outside agencies.

4. Supporting Students with SEN

4.1 SEN Provision

We make every effort to ensure equality of educational access and opportunity for our students with SEN. Effective teaching and learning are critically important to all students, and especially to those with SEN. Meaningful inclusion implies that all students are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. The following is an outline of the school's SEN provision.

4.2 Continuum of Support

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support students with additional needs. (See Appendix 1) 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, students require diverse 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.

5. Organisation of SEN in Coláiste Éinde:

- At the start of the new academic term, the SEN Coordinator informs all teachers of incoming SEN students and their needs. This information is on *Compass* and is continually updated.
- There is a Student Support Plan in place for all students on the SEN register. This aids teachers in differentiating their lessons to meet the needs of the students.

- Some students who are exempt from the study of Irish and those who do not study a third language avail of extra learning support, if appropriate, when those subjects are timetabled.
- Parents/Guardians are informed of the implications of not having a third language and sign a letter to this effect. Where required, students are taught in small groups and receive help in numeracy and literacy, as well as the implementation of recommendations from psychological reports.
- Some SEN students may receive help on a 1:1 basis. Each individual case is judged on its own merits based on results of various testing, psychological reports, visiting teachers for hearing and visually impaired students, and outside agencies.
- SEN students who do not have an Irish or Language exemption receive intervention through in class support, team teaching or block intervention classes.
- The Coordinators of the School Completion Programme are proactive in assisting SEN students to stay in school and achieve their potential, e.g., mentoring, homework club, extra-curricular activities.
- Application is made to State Examinations Commission for Reasonable Accommodation in Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations. These applications are made in consultation with parents, subject teachers, and students.

5.1 Inclusive Curriculum

- The school is part of the JCSP(Junior Cert Schools Programme) programme.
- All first-year students are given the chance to 'sample' optional subjects, so they can make an informed decision on the options they choose.
- All first year and second year students have an ICT (Information and Communications Technology) class. This gives all students the opportunity to be digitally literate.
- Mixed ability classes allow students in our school to have equal opportunity to a broad and balanced curriculum commensurate with their ability.
- We make every effort to ensure equality of educational access and opportunity for our students with SEN.

5.2 Special Classes

5.2.1 An Réalt - Coláiste Éinde' s ASD Centre

- Coláiste Éinde' s ASD Centre is known to our staff and students as An Réalt. An Réalt caters specifically for students on the Autistic Spectrum, as per our Admissions Policy.
- These students have dual enrolment within their year group and An Réalt. An Réalt provides individualised support for autistic students to access appropriate areas of school life and the curriculum.
- Students enrolling in Coláiste Éinde, with a diagnosis of ASD, can apply to enrol in An Réalt as per Coláiste Éinde Admission's Policy. Enrolment to an ASD special class for any student must have a referral by a relevant professional or team of professionals and must also meet with the approval of the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser), in collaboration with the school authorities, who in turn provide the teaching, allocation and resources to the ASD Special Class.
- The An Réalt ASD Centre is a calm, nurturing and positive environment for students to access, which supports their daily organisation and the teaching of life and social skills. Students are fully integrated into the school community and are supported by an experienced core team of staff, to include specialist teachers and SNAs (Special Needs

Assistants). Staff working with these students provide individualised support to ensure students can access a broad and balanced curriculum.

- Each An Réalt student's bespoke timetable responds to their needs and adapts dynamically with those changing needs. All students in An Réalt have personalised timetables which will include lessons with their mainstream peers as much as possible, as well as, small group lessons, and 1:1 lesson where appropriate.
- There is a dedicated ASD teacher present in An Réalt, and students have access to SNA support where appropriate. There is communication between the An Réalt staff and mainstream teachers for each student, to ensure wrap around support. This fosters a positive learning experience for each student of An Réalt.
- An Réalt has developed a holistic approach, working in partnership with parents/guardians, outside agencies and other schools. Clear communication is fostered between the ASD coordinator and parents/guardians, to ensure that the academic, social, and emotional needs of their child are being identified and supported.
- The An Réalt Centre balances achievement for all with student well-being, whilst keeping the student's best interests at the heart of what we do.

5.2.2 Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Students

- The Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired students provide a specialist provision for students with hearing impairments. This class provides parents/guardians of Deaf children with several educational options for their profoundly Deaf child.
- The Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired students has a maximum capacity of 6 students and any student wishing to enrol in the Special Class for Deaf Students must meet the criteria of a severe/profound hearing loss, provide a referral report from a Visiting Teacher of the Deaf, and meet with the approval of the SENO, in collaboration with the school authorities. (As per Admissions Policy).
- Students in Coláiste Éinde's Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired have dual enrolment within their year group and in the Special Class. The specialist teachers and SNAs working with these students provide individualised support, and Irish Sign Language support, to ensure students can access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Clear communication is fostered between the Deaf and Hearing-Impaired class teachers and parents/guardians and students to ensure that the needs of the student are being identified and supported.
- There is communication between the Deaf and Hearing Impairment Class staff and mainstream teachers to ensure wrap around support which will foster a positive learning environment for each student in the Deaf Class.
- Student's timetables are planned, and reviewed, in consultation with parents/guardians and the students.

5.3 Exceptionally Able Students

The Report of the Special Education Review Committee (SERC 1993) defines students who are exceptionally gifted or talented as those who have demonstrated their:

- Capacity to achieve high performance in one or more of the following areas:
- General intellectual ability

- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership ability
- Visual and performing arts.
- Mechanical aptitude
- Psychomotor ability (e.g., athletics, gymnastics)

These students are provided for using strategies/resources such as:

- Differentiated teaching.
- Project based learning.
- Access to activities that enrich and extend them.
- Accelerated learning.
- Co-curricular activities.
- Use of information and communication technology.
- Co-operative learning.
- Supplementary reading on selected topics.
- Hearing Impaired class.
- Autism Spectrum Class

5.4 Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations

Students in 3rd year Junior Cycle and 6th year Senior Cycle can apply for reasonable accommodation in the State Examinations in accordance with yearly guidelines.

The school follows the criteria set down in “**Reasonable Accommodation.....Certificate Examinations, Instructions For Schools**” and applications are processed by the school when students meet these criteria.

The Visiting Teacher for Students with Visual Impairment and the parents/guardians of students who are Deaf/Hearing Impaired will support the school’s application with additional documentation.

The granted provision is provided as far as possible for in-house exams for 3rd and 6th year students.

6. Roles and Responsibilities in Coordinating Special Needs Provision

While it is acknowledged that the education of students with SEN is the responsibility of all staff at Coláiste Éinde, there are some clearly identifiable roles to ensure a structured programme of support.

6.1 The Board of Management

The Board of Management’s role is to:

- Ensure that the SEN policy is developed, supported, and evaluated.
- Consider reports from the School Principal on the implementation of the policy and to consider recommendations.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.
- Ensure adequate accommodation and supply of teaching resources.

6.2 The School Principal

Under current legislation, the principal of the school has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the needs of SEN students are met.

- The principal should work with the Board of Management, teachers and parents in the development, implementation, and review of whole-school policies that promote the inclusion of students with SEN.
- Ensure that all such policies are included in the school plan.
- Continuously monitor the implementation of whole-school policies and provision for SEN.
- To create and foster a school climate of inclusiveness.
- To oversee the planning of a learning support timetable.
- To keep abreast of all developments around SEN.
- Consults and liaises as required with the relevant external bodies and agencies such as Department of Education and Science, NEPS, NCSE, HSE and local agencies.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.
- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (subject teachers, special education teachers, guidance counsellors, special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.

6.3 Care Team and Year Head

Have general responsibility for monitoring the academic and social progress, as well as the general well-being of all students. Their specific responsibilities in terms of this policy are:

- Liaising with the SEN Coordinator
- Working with the Home School Liaison Coordinator/School Completion personnel.
- Monitoring and reviewing the progress of students with SEN.
- Help to identify students requiring learning support.
- To consult with parents and teachers.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.

6.4 Mainstream Teachers

- Section 22 (1) of the Education Act 1998 states the primacy of the teacher in the education and personal development of students in schools. The classroom teacher is responsible for educating all students in the classroom, including any student with SEN. The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in the classroom, including students with SEN.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for reporting on the progress and care of all students in the classroom, including students with SEN.
- This means subject teachers are responsible for the teaching and learning of all students in their classroom. Subject teachers need to gather relevant information on all students, engage with their Student Support Plans and plan accordingly to implement the support plan to ensure the student's needs are met.
- Subject teachers are supported in their planning through Croke Park hours, continuous professional development time and SEN updates on student needs.
- Teaching and learning will be informed and assisted by collaboration with colleagues, parents/guardians, and others such as the school NEPS psychologist, and the SEN Coordinator.

- The class teacher works in partnership with in-class support teachers, Special Education Teachers and SNAs.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.
- All subject teachers should implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of students with SEN. Each subject department will include in its plan how it caters for all students taking the subject. These methodologies could include:
 - Setting learning intentions for learning.
 - Team/Support teaching.
 - Collaborative problem-solving activities.
 - Varied group work.
 - Encouraging students to produce work in different forms.
 - Differentiation.
 - Interventions to promote social and emotional competence.
 - Embedding of ICT in teaching, learning and assessment.

6.5 The Special Education Teachers

Will ensure that they are fully involved in developing and monitoring the SEN Policy and that SEN provision is an integral part of the school's development plan. Special Education Teachers should:

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies, and resources to cater for all learning styles and to meet a variety of needs.
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school intervention strategies.
- Collaboratively develop a Student Support Plan for each student identified for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff.
- When appropriate, meet with class teachers, parents/guardians, and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and who require a Student Support Plan.
- When appropriate, meet with class teachers, relevant staff, and parents/guardians to review Student Support Plans.
- Update and maintain planning and progress 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 assessment and monitoring of student progress.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.
- Meet with parents/guardians regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- Offer advice and support to class teachers regarding students in their classes.
- Mentoring students as needed on a 1:1 basis as directed by the SEN Coordinator.

6.6 Special Class Teachers/Coordinators of ASD and, Deaf and Hearing Impairment Classes

In conjunction with the principal, the Special Class teachers:

- Meet with parents, class teachers, relevant staff, and students to develop and periodically review Student Support Plans for students in the Special Class.

- Update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in the Special Class.
- Resource teaching for literacy, numeracy, and mainstream class support on a withdrawal basis.
- Coordinate and plan a timetable for the Special Class, in cooperation with the SEN Coordinator, to ensure that both in-class support and resource classes are provided for students in the Special Class.
- Make applications for specialised assistive technology relevant to the Special Class student's needs.
- Management and maintenance of specialised assistive technology, relevant to the Special Class students.
- Provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis.
- Provide ISL (Irish Sign Language) support for all classes for students whose first language is ISL.
- Offer advice and support to staff on matters pertaining to the needs of the students in the Special Class.
- Oversee that all student data is securely stored.
- Oversee preparation and applications for RACE (Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Examinations), DARE (Disability Access Route to Education), Irish Exemptions, Assistive Technology, SNA applications.
- Communicate with parents/guardians as needed to support educational, social and emotional needs of the pupil and to plan for school outings and trips.

6.7 Special Education Needs Coordinator

In conjunction with the principal, the SEN Coordinator has overall responsibility for management of the framework for SEN support, for assessment and provision for students with special educational needs and for keeping the school management informed on special educational needs policy and provision.

The SEN Coordinator has oversight of all matters regarding day-to-day management of all aspects of special educational needs policy and provision, for leading the SEN team and co-ordinating the involvement of outside agencies.

The SEN Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the Special Needs Team in the school and for ensuring the provision of special needs support for all students identified as having special educational needs. In particular, the SEN Coordinator will:

- Communicate with the Principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis.
- Form a SEN team to coordinate the provision of special education in the school.
- Delegate specific responsibilities to staff members within the SEN team.
- Coordinate data gathering to facilitate the implementation of standardised tests, to collate the information and identify needs.

- Read, interpret, and disseminate information from psychological reports as appropriate.
- Allocate and organise additional teaching hours for students as appropriate.
- Organise the continued testing of students as needed.
- Liaise with parents and outside agencies like NEPS, SESS, NCSE and DES as appropriate.
- Source appropriate teaching resources for the SEN department.
- Oversee the planning, implementation, and review of Student Support Plans.
- Support all teachers in the provision of support for SEN students.
- Keep records regarding student progress.
- Oversee that student data is securely stored.
- Oversee preparation and applications for RACE, DARE, Irish Exemptions, Assistive Technology, SNA applications.
- Develop SNA timetables in conjunction with management.
- To work with and support the ASD Special Class – An Réalt and The Special Class for Deaf and Hearing-Impaired Students.

6.8 Parents/Guardians

There are many ways in which we meet and involve parents/guardians in their child's education, these include:

- Parent/guardian – teacher student meetings.
- Meetings as required with SEN Coordinator, Home School Liaison Officer, Year Head or School Management.
- Outside agency meetings.
- Correspondence home – telephone, email, Compass, text, letter, newsletter.
- Parents/ guardians because of their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning. Parents /guardians are encouraged to actively communicate with the school if they observe any learning difficulties or related difficulties in their child at home. In all cases where screening, assessment and profiling is being conducted, parents are consulted, and their permission sought.
- Parents/guardians need to inform the school of the results of any relevant assessments that have taken place.
- When parents are offered a place in Coláiste Éinde for their daughter/son, they are encouraged to contact the school to discuss their child's special educational needs so that the school can commence planning appropriate accommodation and support services.
- To meet with school management, teachers, learning support team or pastoral team where appropriate.
- To provide support for homework and learning.

6.9 Students

The involvement of students in the development, implementation and review of their own learning programmes is an important principle underlying effective supplementary teaching.

- Students should be familiar with the learning targets that have been set for them.
- Students are encouraged to engage with their learning plan, both at planning and review stage.
- To participate in their learning in a group, individual or class setting in a positive manner.
- To develop ownership of their skills and strategies taught in Learning Support.

- Student are encouraged to communicate with their subject teacher, SNAs and SETs about their needs and experiences.

6.10 Special Needs Assistants

SNAs help to facilitate the inclusion of our students during their mainstream lessons. Learning is supported in the mainstream classrooms and SEN classes by the SNAs who work with the subject teachers to enable the students to access the lesson by adding clarity, prompting students to stay on task and by indicating clear start and finish points.

The roles and responsibilities of SNAs are underpinned by ***Circular 0030/2014: Supporting and overseeing our students' care needs.***

- Supervising students at the start and end of the school day.
- Assisting the students in mainstream and SEN classes by providing in-class support so that they can access the learning.
- Offering the suggestion of taking a 'movement break' at appropriate times throughout the day.
- Escorting the students to and from the toilets where necessary.
- Supervising their homework diaries – especially when taking down homework tasks and essential information.
- Assisting at their lockers to help them with their personal organisation of books needed for class.
- Providing support and supervision at unstructured times of the school day, i.e., break time and lunch time.
- Offering input and feedback to teachers when setting targets for the Student Support Plan.
- Accompanying students on social and educational outings.
- Informing relevant subject teachers and the SEN Coordinator regarding the students in their care.
- Putting together a Care Plan for students in their care, in consultation with the SEN Coordinator
- Providing support and supervision at unstructured times of the school day i.e., break time and lunch time and facilitating inclusion by encouraging and organising group activities and games during those times.
- Daily monitoring of student progress which is recorded on a school iPad.

6.11 Links with Outside Agencies

Coláiste Éinde involves other bodies, including health and social care organisations, local authority (LA) support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting students' SEN and supporting their families. The nature of our student population means that we cannot work in isolation from other agencies.

7. Review and Implementation

- ☐ The Special Educational Needs Team will review this policy regularly.

☐ The following criteria shall be considered essential for the successful implementation of the policy:

a) The acceptance by the entire school community of the aims, objectives and principles as outlined in the policy.

b) The fulfilment of roles and responsibilities as outlined in the policy.

c) Compliance with identification, inclusion and provision measures as set out in the policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour and the school Admissions Policy.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Date: 23/02/23

Signed: Michael McE

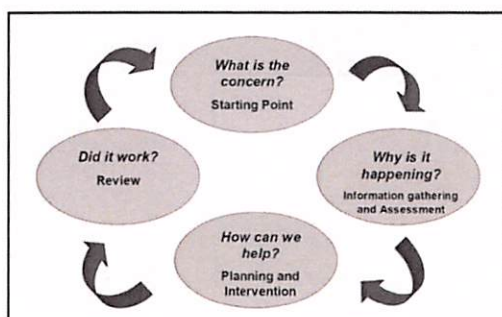
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Dennis Hite

Principal

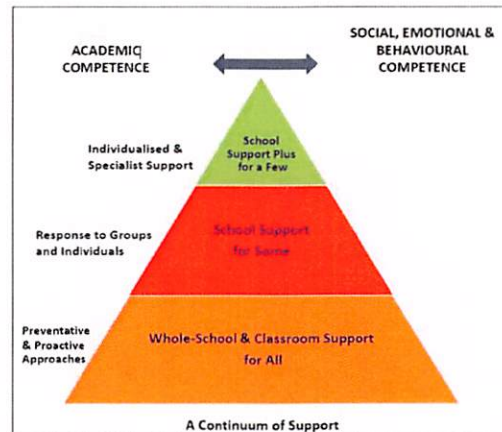
8. Appendix 1 The Continuum of Support.

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 individuals.



This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:

Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social, and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.



The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:

STAGE 1 Whole school and classroom support for all: Preventative and Proactive Approaches.

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically, the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for students 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 students in their class. Problem solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual student. The subject teacher, parents and Year Head care teams 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.

STAGE 2 School support for some: Responses to Groups and Individuals

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the student's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher involves the SEN Department in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves the systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a School Support Plan. At this point, students may undergo formal assessments such as WIAT III. This information can help parents' make judgements whether they feel further diagnostic testing may be required outside of the school.

Support at this level may include Team teaching, learning support classes, small group block intervention classes, 1:1 intervention class.

STAGE 3 School support plus for a few: Individualised and Specialist Support.

If a student'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. However, the information gathered from testing and observations will provide the starting point for problem solving at this level. Classroom support and school support will continue to be a principal element of his/her individual education plan.

Support at this level may include Special Class, SNA support, Team teaching, learning support classes, small group block intervention classes, 1:1 intervention class, reduced timetable, or curriculum.