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St. Patrick's S.N.S.
Roll Num.: 163320
Principal: Oisín McGinty
Deputy: Kim McGregor

Special Educational Needs Policy

Introduction

St. Patrick's S.N.S. is a co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. It is a mainstream primary school catering for children from mixed social and cultural backgrounds. This policy is drafted in line with the following legislation, circulars and relevant documentation: Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000, the Department of Education and skills circular 0013/17- circular to the Management Authorities to all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and new 2017 Guidelines for Primary School: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools, the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004, DES circular 02/05 and the Learning Support Guidelines 2000

Ethos

St. Patrick's S.N.S. is a co-educational primary school, which strives to provide a caring, happy, safe and secure learning environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured. While respect is paid to all religious and/or value systems, St. Patrick's S.N.S. is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is

- To give practical guidance to staff, parents and our partners in education on the provision of effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties.
- To outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
- To comply with legislation
- To engage and act in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills circulars and documentation

Aims

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

- To develop an inclusive school. A child with additional needs should be educated in an inclusive environment. This is viewed as a concerted effort by all staff to support children with additional needs in accessing all areas of the curriculum to the best of their ability.
- Identify any additional needs that our pupils may have
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of children with additional needs
- Provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Maths in appropriate areas of need

- Promote collaboration among teachers and special needs assistants in the implementation of whole school policies for additional supports for these pupils
- 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 team, principal, staff and parents/guardians
- Ensure that the staged approach/ NEPS teaching supports, the overriding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. Importantly, those with the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning.’ (2017 Guidelines:p.19)
- “Optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school” (Learning-Support Guidelines [LSG]: p. 15).
- Encourage differentiation in the classroom
- Develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils
- Develop early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.
- Support attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning
- Guard the self-esteem and self-image of the learner
- Enable these pupils to participate in the full curriculum at their level
- Enable these pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners
- Involve and support parents in their children’s learning

Guiding Principles

“The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differently through the continuum of support process” (Circular 13/17 p.16)

All of our children have the right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all of our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. As far as possible therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children with special educational needs may experience. We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with special educational needs, children from ethnic backgrounds 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 activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them. Effective learning programmes are based on the following principles for a more inclusive curriculum:

- Quality of teaching- “Research has consistently shown that the quality of teaching is the most critical factor in enhancing pupils’ learning and educational experiences” (2017 Guidelines, p.27)
- Effective whole-school policies
- Parental involvement
- Collaboration between Teachers
- Maintenance of Support Plans by Class Teachers and Support Teachers at Class

Support / School Support / School Support Plus

- Thorough assessment procedures
- Regular contact with SEN pupils
- Provision of timetables
- Prevention of failure
- Provision of intensive early intervention
- Support from Outside Agencies
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers and special needs assistants
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need
- Implementation of a staged approach to support provision at Class Support / School Support / School Support Plus
- Provision of the Model of intervention appropriate for the pupil and the difficulty they are experiencing:

❖ *Withdrawal Model:*

- a) 1:1 interventions (vital when e.g. difficulties are very significant; when pupil needs do not match the formation of a small group)
- b) Small group interventions

❖ *In-Class Support Model:*

- a) Team Teaching Models

Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

Classroom Support	The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme. This is 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 ● Screening tests of language skills A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.
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School Support	At this level a support plan is devised and informed by: • Teacher observation records • Teacher-designed measures/assessments • Parent and pupil interviews • Learning environment checklist • Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy • Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures • Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition. A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.
School Support Plus	This level of the continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include: • Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures • Parent and pupil interviews • Functional assessment • Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc. Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Primary Guidelines, p. 19-20)

Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests). Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
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Action 2: Setting targets	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	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. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place. Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored: • At whole-school and classroom support level by all teachers • At the school support and school support plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Supporting pupils with special educational needs is a collaborative responsibility shared by our school community. It is imperative that everyone contributes to the implementation of our policy on the provision of special educational needs.

Board of Management

The BOM will fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be knowledgeable about the school's SEN provision – funding, equipment and personnel. The BoM:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on support for children with additional needs
- Provides adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provides a secure facility for storage of records.

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. He will work closely with the SEN co-ordinator and will keep the BOM informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal in collaboration with the SEN co-ordinator to:

- 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 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
- 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
- Communicate with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO)
- Oversee a whole school assessment and screening programme
- Allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents
- Inform staff about external agencies and provide information in continuing professional development in the area of special education
- Co-ordinate and organise special needs assistants access to pupils assigned access
- Review/monitor and apply for additional teaching and learning resources for SEN children, e.g. Assistive Technology.

Special Needs Co-ordinator: Deputy Principal Mrs McGregor

The deputy principal is the special needs co-ordinator and has the role and responsible to:

- Works on the development of the school plan for Special Educational Needs.
- Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening program to identify pupils with very low achievement/ or learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need. (See Assessment Policy)
- Collaborates with Principal, SET Team, Class Teachers, SNAs, External Agencies and Parents/Guardians of SEN children.
- Keeps SEN Teachers/Class Teachers/SNAs and Parents informed about relevant external assessment and Special Needs services that are available.
- Maintains a list of students receiving SEN support.
- Helps to coordinate the caseloads/work schedules of the SET Team.
- Liaises with external agencies such as Psychologists/Family Doctors/Speech and Language Therapists/NEPs/SENO to arrange assessments and special provisions for pupils with special needs.

- Collaborates with SET Team/Class Teachers in the identification, screening and referral procedures.
- Maintains records and disseminates information to relevant school personnel.
- Orders, purchases, distributes and informs staff on class screening materials and procedures. (See Assessment Policy)
- Ensures that all documentation relating to children who receive Special Education Teaching is properly filed and secured.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with special educational needs (SNA access, Assistive Technology)
- Liaise with and advise SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Participate in and or oversees the drafting of IEPs, PPPs, behavioural plans, IPLPs and classroom support plans
- Arrange for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.
- Co-ordinate early intervention initiatives
- Communicate at staff meetings on matters regarding special education in our school
- Organise, meet with class teachers and SET teachers twice a year to discuss pupil progress, discuss and evaluate supports
- Discuss and review initiatives and interventions at termly meetings

The Role of the Class Teacher

“Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes” (Guidelines 2017 p.12).

Accordingly, classroom teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom. A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to create a classroom environment in which “learning difficulties can be prevented or at least alleviated” (Learning Support Guidelines 2000 p.42). This will include adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern. This may require targeted interventions to develop relevant adaptive skills related to these needs. All mainstream class teachers will implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.

These teaching approaches and methodologies include:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Heterogeneous group work
- Differentiation
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Embedding Information and communications technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment

Every pupil needs to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level. To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, mainstream class teachers will regularly need to differentiate their lessons. This can be achieved by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly
- Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties
- Administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN team 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, log actions on the school's administration system\ Aladdin
- Open a Pupil Support File once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support
- Develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support
- Collaborate with staff to develop Individual Profile and Learning Programmes (IPLP) for each pupil in receipt of School Support
- Meet with Special Education Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and who require an Individual Education Plan
- Collaborate with Special Education Teachers and relevant staff to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- Meet regularly with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff and parents to review IEP
- Where applicable, collaborate with the SET team 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 their support teacher at their class level

The Role of the Special Education Teacher (SET)

The role of the SET teacher should:

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of need
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- Collaboratively develop Individual Profile and Learning Programmes (IPLP) for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- Meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support and who require an Individual Profile and Learning Programmes (IPLP)
- Collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop an IPLP for each pupil in receipt of School Support

- Regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review IPLP
- Meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review IPLP
- 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 an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop an Individual Education Plan for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- Regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review IEPs
- Meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review IEP
- 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 screening
- Administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers of the outcomes
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- Co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- Discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- Provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received

Some pupils with more complex and enduring needs may require specific methodologies, teaching approaches and/or learning activities. Such interventions should be based on careful identification of strengths and needs, including multi-disciplinary assessment where necessary.

The type of support offered depends on the child's individual needs and takes the form of:

- Curriculum support
- Life and/or social skills training
- Physical training/gross motor development
- Communication and/or language development
- Behaviour modification programmes
- Assistance with sensory modulation
- Development of anger management strategies
- A combination of some/all of the above

Special Needs Assistants:

The duties of the SNA (according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers), are comprised of meeting the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 10/76).

Primary care needs duties may include:

- Assistance with feeding
- Administration of medicine
- Toileting and general hygiene
- Mobility and orientation

- Supervision
- Communication
- Non-nursing care needs.

Secondary care needs duties may include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil to do so
- Assistance with the development of PPPs for SEN pupils
- Planning and preparing for activities where there may be additional care requirements

The SNA should:

- Support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum
- 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 IEP meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- 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
- Maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil
- Be involved in the completion of Personal Pupil Plans (PPP)
- Accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate

Parental Involvement

“Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs” (Guidelines 2017, p.23)

Parental Involvement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children’s needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress. The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support File provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of our school can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework.
- Reading and telling stories to their child/children.
- Listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading.
- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities and discussing the outcomes with the child’s teachers.
- Attending support meetings to draft up classroom support, IPLP and IEP plans. Talking positively about school and school work.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any information reports or reports pending from outside agencies (CDNT, Primary Care, CAMHS). Copies should be provided to the school which may be affecting their child’s progress.
- Participating in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children’s learning.
- Helping children to develop their organisational skills.

- Helping children to look after school books and other resources which are loaned to the children for use at home.
- Supporting programmes and initiatives implemented by the school.

Pupils:

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

- Outline his/her interests, aspirations and strengths.
- Be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets
- 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 Agencies and Bodies:

Support and guidance is available to teachers from external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate and allied health professionals.

The school has established procedures for liaising with these services and bodies to optimise the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs at the individual, small group or whole-school level.

The needs of many pupils’ span both health and education services. Health services (HSE and HSE-funded services) will continue to play an important role in early identification , assessment and diagnosis, intervention , and review for pupils with special educational needs. The school is familiar with the range of health services in our locality, including referral pathways. The school will endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support. (2017 Guidelines: p.25)

Prevention Strategies/Models of Support

Within the school there are a number of successful prevention strategies/models of support in operation. The school will implement various models of support in order to assist in the prevention of various learning difficulties.

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of English and Mathematics in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class
- The use of concrete materials
- Collaboration between class teachers and SET teachers including the deputy regarding literacy and numeracy to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties
- Assessment of learning and assessment for learning
- Additional support for EAL pupils

Proactive Strategies to the promotion of literacy

- Whole-School Spelling and Morphology Programme
- In-class support
- Differentiation
- Withdrawal if necessary
- Writing competitions
- Print rich environment
- Story time, Library time, DEAR time, Book Fair, Class library, visiting authors
- Access to Literacy apps on school devices

Proactive Strategies to the Promotion of Numeracy

- Maths week
- In-class support
- Differentiation
- Withdrawal if necessary
- Print rich environment
- Access to apps on school devices

Proactive Strategies to the Promotion of wellbeing

- Weaving Wellbeing Programme
- A Lust for Life Schools Programme
- Friends for Life programme 5th class
- Transition To secondary School Programme for 6th class
- Wellbeing week
- Friendship Week
- RSE weeks
- Anti Bullying week
- Buddy benches on the yard
- End of Term SEN pupil wellbeing activity sessions
- Withdrawal if necessary

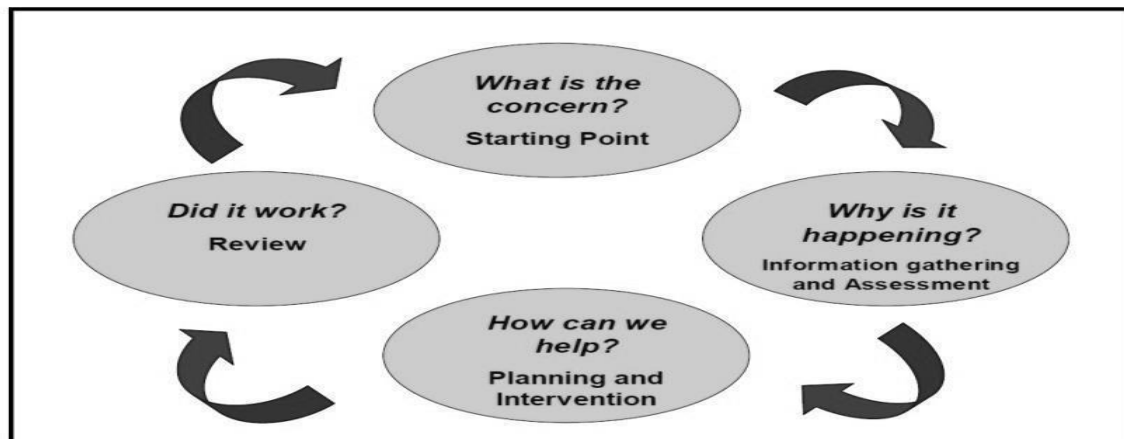
Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs

Continuum of Support

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs. With this framework, it is recognised 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.

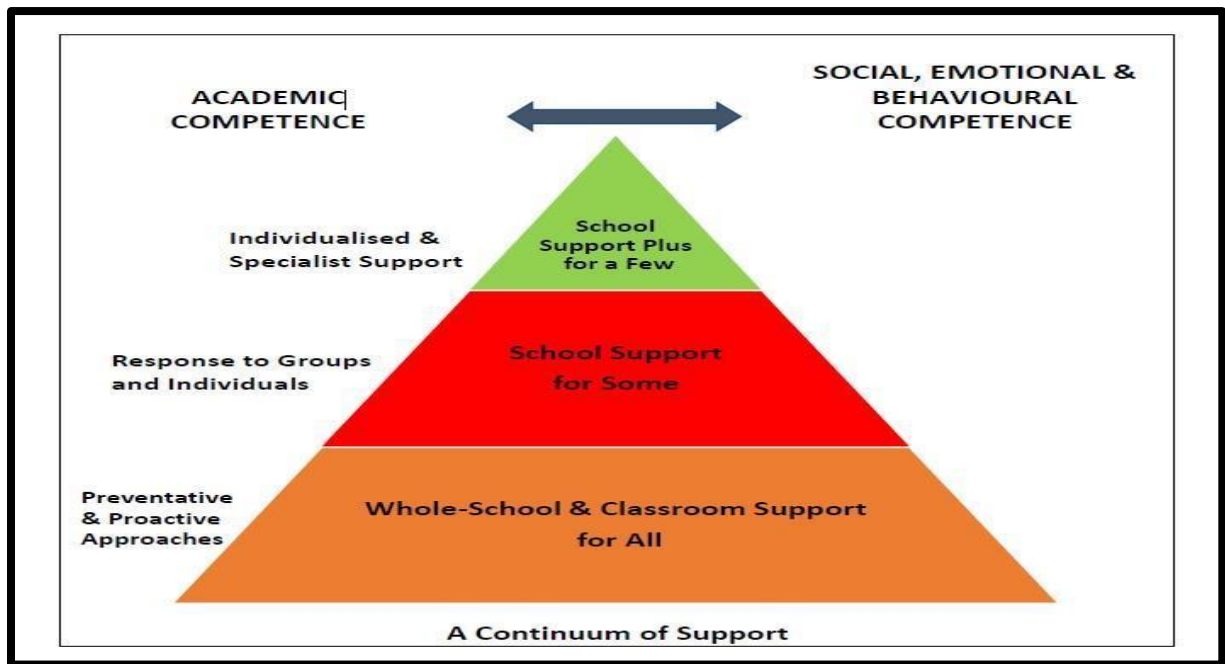
By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental; moving from class- based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and is informed by careful monitoring of progress.

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:



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' 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 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 teacher, support teacher and parents discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies that may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs.

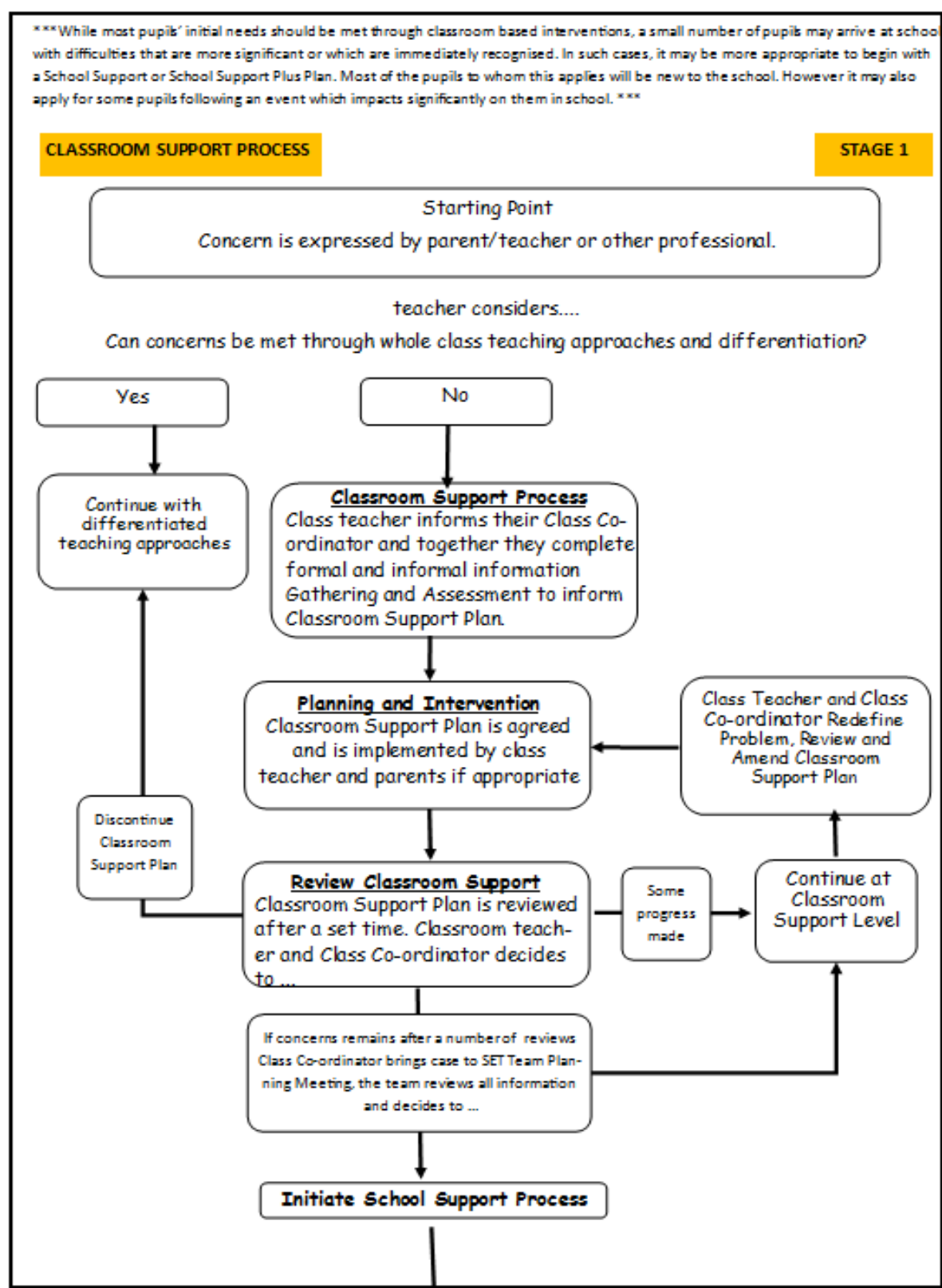
STAGE 2 SCHOOL SUPPORT

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education Teacher Team (SET Team) in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a School Support Plan.

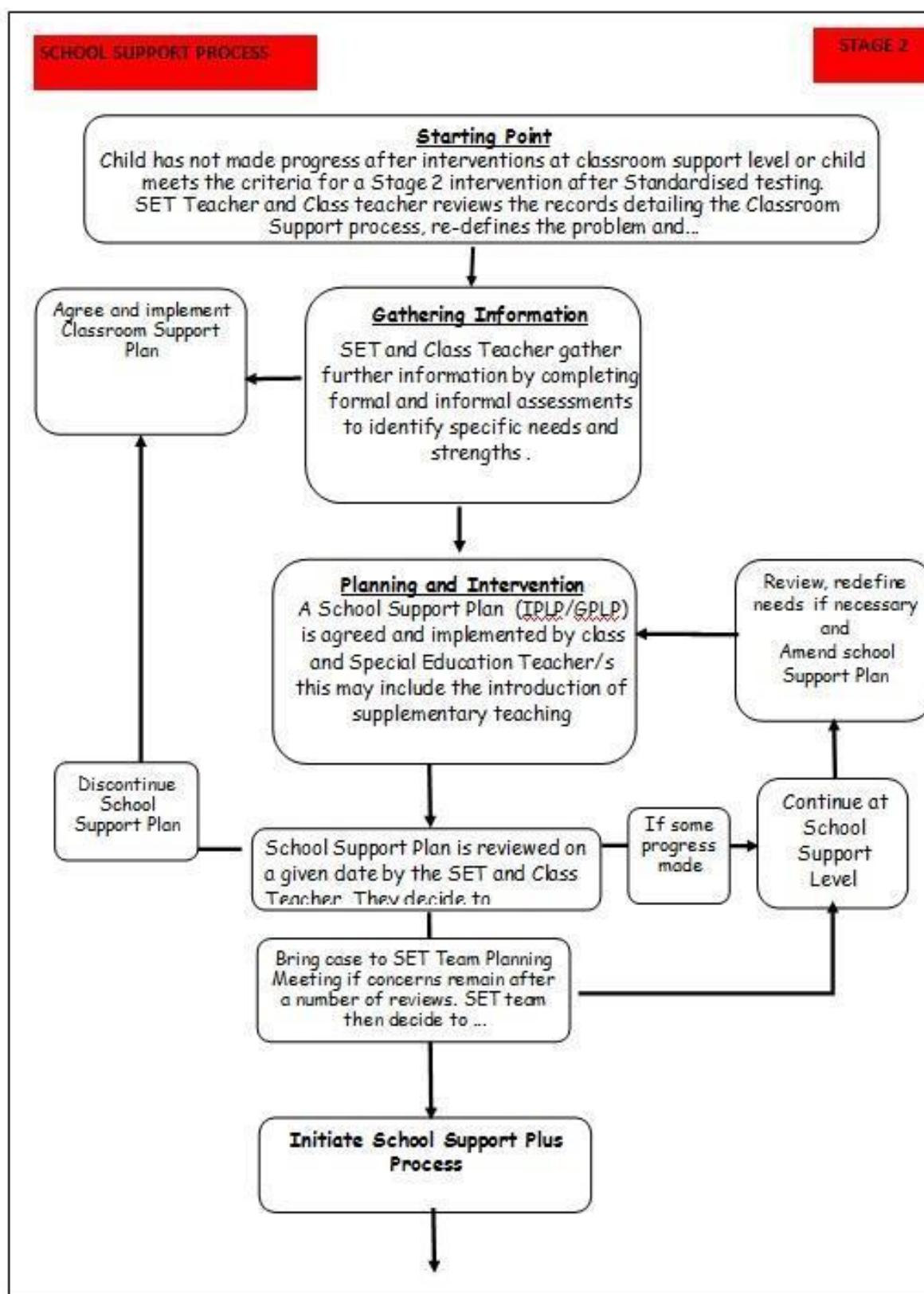
STAGE 3 SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

If a pupil's special educational needs are severe and/or persistent, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will 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. Classroom Support and School Support will continue to be an important element of his/her individual education plan.

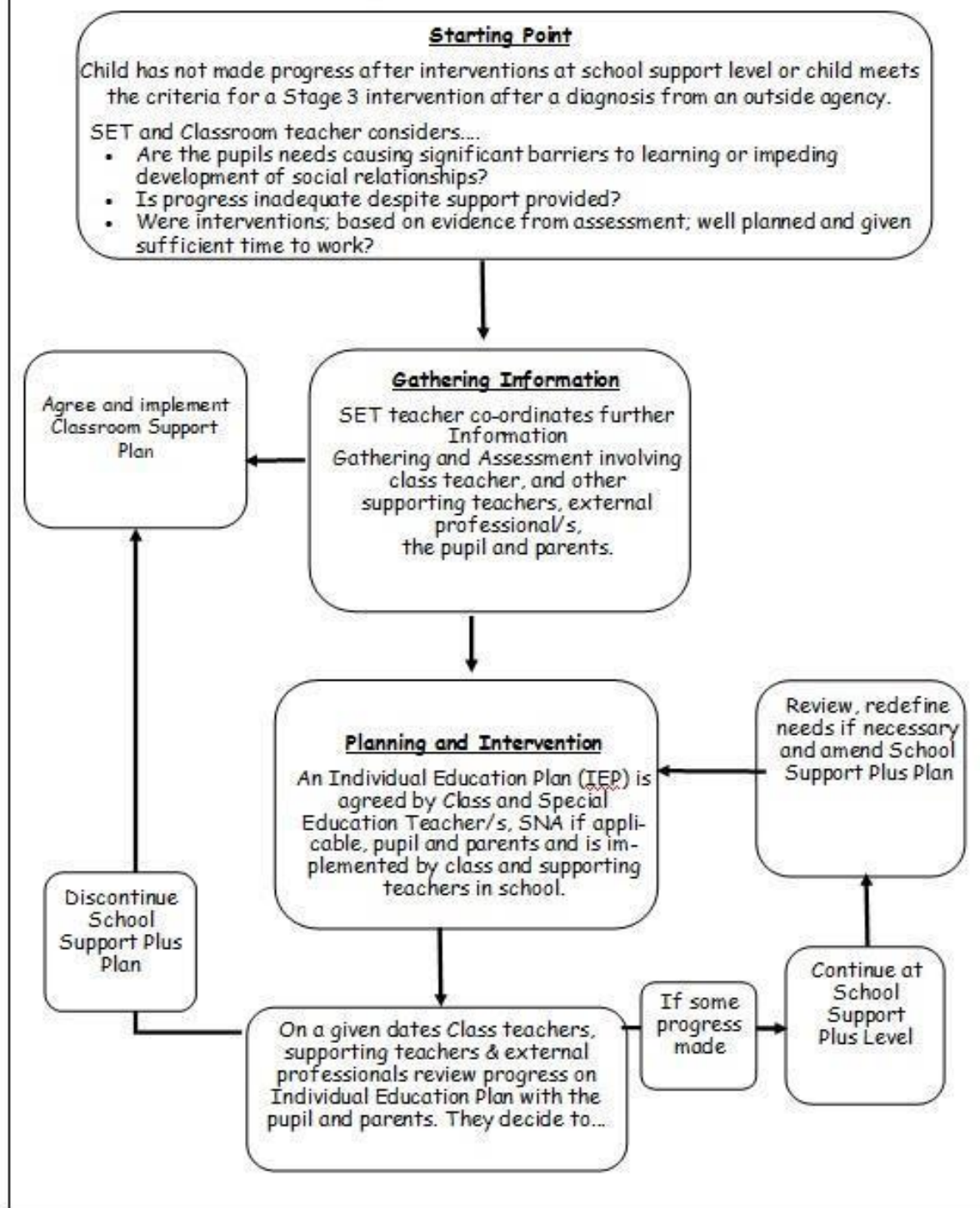
The flow diagrams outlines how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs.



* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 12 - 15 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers



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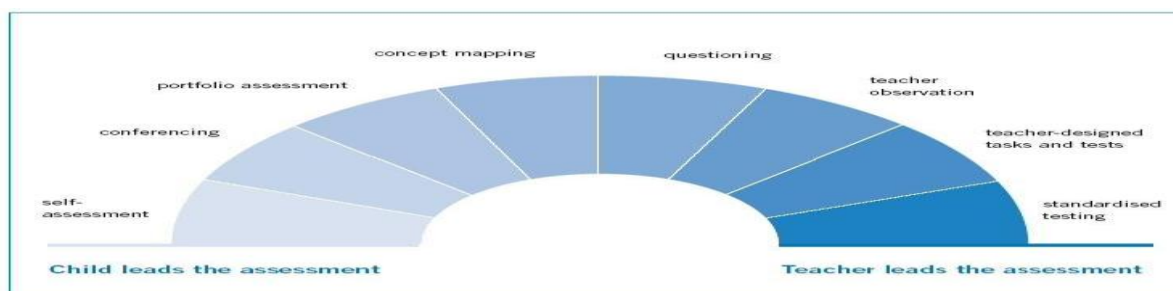
Adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 12 - 15 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

Parental Permission

Letters outlining the nature of support their child will be receiving are sent home annually. Parental permission is requested regarding school supports for their child.

Information Gathering and Assessment

Assessment is part of what a class teacher does on a daily basis for all children. The diagram below lists the many assessment techniques a teacher can use.



*NCCA assessment 2007 document

The information gathered enables the teacher to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum.

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 is then used to inform decisions for support and pupil's support plans (CSP, IPLP and IEP).

Assessment and Screening Tests

Class teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessment. The SETs will administer further screening tests, if deemed necessary. The deputy principal will discuss each class's recorded results with the class teacher, and organise further screening tests and/or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the caseload selection process.

In our school we carry out the following Standardised assessment procedures: for all pupils

- 3rd class: Drumcondra English, Spelling and Maths and NNRIT 2
- 4th class Drumcondra English, Spelling and Maths
- 5th class: Drumcondra English, Spelling and Maths and NNRIT 3
- 6th class: Drumcondra English, Spelling and Maths

Diagnostic Tests

The following tests are available for administration:

- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension(YARC)
- PM Benchmarking KIT (Reading Running Records)
- Dyslexia Portfolio
- WIAT-III for Teachers

Allocation of Resources

- Once pupils' needs have been identified, Special Education Teachers (SETs) are deployed to address these needs as required. We deploy SETs in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet pupils' needs.

- The aim is to strike a balance between in-class support, group and individual support while ensuring that the needs of children with additional needs are met inclusively.
- Importantly, the level and type of support reflect the specific targets of individual pupils as set out in their support plans and are informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. In this way, following a period of intervention, some pupils may no longer require additional teaching supports; 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 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, 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 and motor skills.
- At the end of each term, the deputy principal meets the support teacher, class teachers and review children's needs, the resources in place and progress made using the Continuum of Support problem-solving model of assessment and stage approach flow charts.
- As a SEN team, we 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.

Allocating Additional Teaching Supports

The 6 Steps from Circular 02/05. This approach is in use as there are pupils in the school in receipt of hours from the 02/05 model.

- a) Step 1 Circular 02/05, p. 7. A list of every pupil in the school, who has been highlighted as being in need of support, will be compiled.
- b) Step 2 Circular 02/05, p. 7. This list will be examined in consultation with Circular 02/05, and each child will be allocated support, as appropriate, under the terms of the Staged Approach.
- c) Step 3 Circular 02/05, p. 7. A list of members of the teaching staff will be compiled.
- d) Step 4 Circular 02/05, p. 8. A member of staff will be allocated to support the learning of each pupil identified, taking into account: the Staged Approach; the needs of the pupils; the expertise and experience of the teacher; and practical considerations.
- e) Step 5 Circular 02/05, p. 8. Pupils with similar needs may be grouped for support.
- f) Step 6 Circular 02/05, p. 8. A tracking and recording system will be established. All teachers will actively monitor the progress of their pupils.

Selection Criteria for Providing Pupils with Additional Teaching Support

The following selection criteria include current DES Circulars, Guidelines and general good practice. The school will select pupils in accordance with these criteria, starting at point (1) and continuing on through the selection criteria until caseloads / timetables are full.

"Those with the highest level of need should have the greatest level of support" (2017 Guidelines: p. 19).

1. Pupils previously in receipt of "Resource hours" who continue to experience significant learning difficulties. (Pupils are no longer guaranteed a certain number of hours of SEN provision as was the case under the previous model)
2. Pupils previously in receipt of "Learning-Support" who continue to experience significant learning difficulties (scoring below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments).
3. Pupils diagnosed, or, after screening, display indications of having "Low Incidence Learning Disabilities" / complex needs.
4. Pupils diagnosed, or, after screening, display indications of having "High Incidence Learning Disabilities".
5. 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.
6. Pupils scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy.
7. Pupils scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in Mathematics.
8. Pupils experiencing serious difficulties with oral language / social interaction / behaviour / emotional development / application to learning, 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.

Timetabling

When drawing up timetables it is important to remember that:

- timetables should be continually reviewed
- insofar as possible children should not miss the same subject each time they are withdrawn
- Interruptions to classes/classrooms should be kept to a minimum.

Parent-Teacher Meetings.

The nature of SEN support means that meetings with parents are on-going and regular. The Support Teachers will fulfil the 'out of school' requirement of parent-teacher meetings.

Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching.

An instructional term is generally taken to mean 10-20 weeks of instruction. Special Education Support Terms in our school are outlined as: Term 1 September to January, Term 2

February to June. If appropriate, a meeting may be held at the end of each instructional term with the parents in cases where supplementary teaching is to be continued, to discuss the revised learning targets and activities in the pupil's Support Plan. Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the targets have been met and the pupil (on assessment) is performing above the percentile laid down in the selection criteria for receiving support.

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. This 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 and these files are recorded on our school administrative system Aladdin. All support files should include:

- a tab identifying pupil's section of information
- A timeline of actions
- Support plans (See below)
- Checklists

A class teacher should open a Student Support File once a child is placed on Stage 1 – Classroom Support on the continuum. This is stored digitally on Aladdin.

If, after a number of reviews, the child's case is moved to School Support, it is the responsibility of the class teacher and the allocated SET to access and update the information in the Student Support File. The same system is in place for children on School Support Plus.

Support Plans

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

Stage 1 – Classroom Support

A Support Plan at stage 1 is a **Classroom Support Plan**. (CSP) This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the Class Teacher in consultation with SET 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

A Support Plan at stage 2 is an **Individual Profile and Learning Programme (IPLP)**. This plan is drawn up by allocated SET teacher in consultation 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. 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

A Support Plan at stage 3 is an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**. This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and allocated Special Education Teacher(s), in consultation with the child's parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child based on the information gathered. It will set out:

- The nature and degree of the pupil's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the pupil's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the pupil
- The special educational needs of the pupil
- The special education and related support services to be provided to the pupil to enable the pupil to benefit from including:
 - Strategies for supporting the pupil's progress and inclusion in the classroom setting
 - Individual and/or small group/special class interventions/programmes
 - Specific methodologies/programmes to be implemented
 - Specific equipment/materials and/or IT supports, if required to support learning and access curriculum
 - Support required from a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if appropriate
 - The goals which the pupil is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months
 - The pupil's priority learning needs, long and short term targets to be achieved, the monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place
- SET coordinate IEP meetings. Parents will be invited to meetings.

	Overview of the Year
September	● SEN Team administer additional assessments based on standardised test results, teacher/parental concerns and information provided in reports ● SEN Team updating SEN Register and devising timetables ● SENCO and Principal meet with NEPS Psychologist
October	● Administer NNRIT 3rd and 5th Classes ● School Support Plans devised (Staff, Parent/Guardians) liaison with external agencies where relevant.
November	● Parent Teacher Meetings with Class Teacher, relevant SET team member may join some of these meetings where relevant.
February	● School Support Plans Reviewed
May	● Standardised Testing (3rd to 6th Class inclusive) ● Handover Meeting with Secondary School
June	● SEN team analyse standardised test results ● School Support Plans reviewed ● Communication with parents before end of year reports if necessary ● Handover Meeting with the Junior School of any incoming students with additional needs ahead of the next academic year.

SEN Records

All pupils' SEN hardcopy document files are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Deputy Principal's Office. It is the responsibility of SETs to update and manage the files of the children on school support and school support plus that they support.

Digital Records

Our school administrative system Aladdin digitally records the following information under the pupil name:

- Standardised Tests
- Class end of term reports
- IPLP's/ IEP's
- Classroom Support Plans
- Log of Actions

Health and Safety Issues

Every staff member and pupil is entitled to a safe, secure environment and to be treated with due respect. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of each pupil with SEN. When a place is offered to a child with SEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the child is entitled are in place as soon as possible. Staff members will be informed of any potential risks and, where necessary, individual plans will be drawn up and implemented.

Supervision/Child Protection

- Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SET 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. However, if pupils are considered to be mature enough, they may be allowed to go to and return from SEN provision by themselves in order to encourage independence.
- 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.

Enrolment

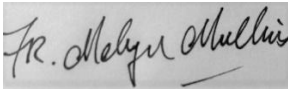
The school aims to meet the needs of any child whom the parent wishes to register at the school as long as a place is available and the admission criteria are fulfilled. The Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that 'A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs'.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's special needs in advance of enrolment. The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child will be refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

Ratification and Communication

A copy of the draft of this Policy was made available to all members of staff and to the Board of Management. The suggestions/proposals arising were considered by the Policy Committee in finalizing this policy.

Subsequent to BOM ratification, the policy was made available on the shared teacher drive on the school IT network to all teaching staff members. This policy is also included on the St. Patrick's Senior National School website at www.stpatssns.ie

Signed: 

Chairperson of the Board of Management

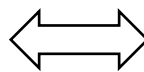
Date: 18.06.24



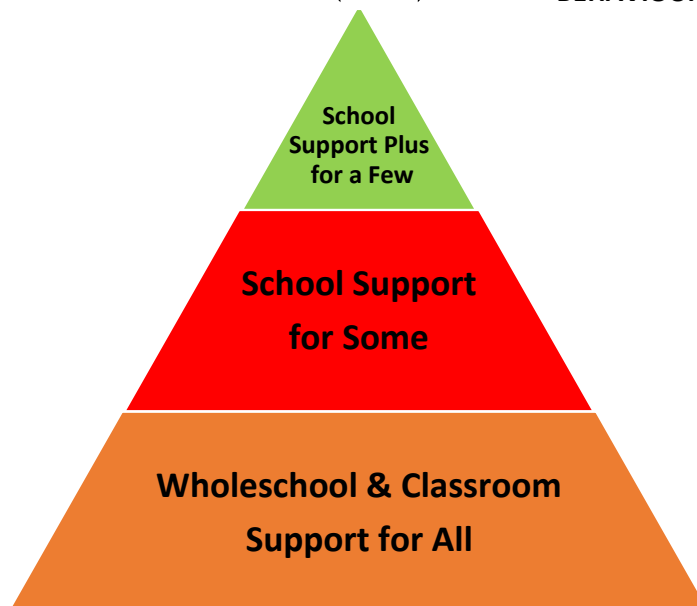
STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	

A Continuum of Support

ACADEMIC SUCCESS



SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL &
BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

Student Support File, Log of Actions

[illegible]

Support Checklist		
Name:	Age:	Class:
General Information	Date Checked	Comments
1. Parents/ Guardians Consulted		
2. Information from previous school/preschool gathered		
3. Hearing		
4. Vision		
5. Medical Needs		
6. Basic Needs Checklist completed		
7. Assessment of learning- screening		
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning		
9. Observation of behaviour		
10. Interview with pupil		
11. Classroom work differentiated?		
12. Learning environment adapted?		
13. Yard/school environments adapted?		
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
16. Other interventions put in place in school?		
Action needed		
<i>Helpful references: SEN: A Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 13-16, 18 to 20; BESD: A Continuum of Support, p 7; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp32-36; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools, pp20</i>		

Classroom Support Plan	
STUDENT'S NAME	CLASS/TEACHER
START DATE OF PLAN	REVIEW DATE OF PLAN
TEACHER CONCERN	
TARGETS Achieved  Ongoing  Not Achieved  1. 2.	
STRATEGIES 1. 2.	
SIGNATURE OF PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)	

REVIEW DATE			
ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN			
	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support		Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
	Continue at Current Level of Support		Request consultation with other professionals

School Support Plan

Strengths and Interests

Targets we want to achieve :

Literacy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Numeracy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

General Wellbeing

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Strategies:

- ☐ Individual/group session ☐ In class support ☐ Multi-sensory approach ☐ Games & Activities
- ☐ Social Programmes ☐ Use of IT ☐ Use of concrete materials ☐ Fine/gross motor activities
- ☐ Phonics/spellings programmes ☐ Reading material ☐ Modelling
- ☐ Auditory Processing ☐ Assessment for Learning ☐ Assessment of Learning

Outcome of review (tick as appropriate)

☐	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support	☐	Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
☐	Continue at Current Level of Support	☐	Request consultation with other professionals

School Support Plus

Student's name		Assessments		
SET Teacher(s)		R.A.	D.P.R.T.	YARC
Date of Birth		S.A.	D.P.S.T.	D.P.
Class/Teacher		P.A.	D.P.M.T.	Nessy
Start date of plan		M.T.	4 R. of N.	S. M.
Review date of plan		F. at Your F.	PM B. K. Level	Other

Student's strengths and interests

Priority concerns

Targets Achieved  Ongoing  Not Achieved 

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Strategies to help the student achieve the targets

-
-
-
-

Signature of parent(s)/
guardian(s)

Outcome of review (tick as appropriate)

	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support		Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
	Continue at Current Level of Support		Request consultation with other professionals

PERSONAL PUPIL PLAN (PPP)		
Pupil:	Age: DOB:	Start Date:
Category:	Class:	Review Date:
Class Teacher:	SNA:	SET:
Primary Care Needs (in line with Circular 0030/2014)		
● Assistance with feeding: where a child with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time ● Administration of medicine: where a child requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time ● Assistance with toileting and general hygiene: (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so ● Assistance with mobility and orientation: on an ongoing basis including assisting a child or children to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a child to access school transport), or helping a child to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.) ● Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision ● Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health. ● Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a child may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis. ● Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment. ● Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs (See also section 9) and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.		
Secondary Care Needs (in line with circular 0030/2014)		
● Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a child 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. To assist with cleaning of materials. ● Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for children with special educational needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.		

- Assist teachers and/or Principal in maintaining a journal or care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with class teachers and other teachers such as the resource teacher and school principal, attending meetings with parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of class teacher/principal
- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including class teachers or support teachers.
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

Priority Concerns

**List should include only the concerns that relate to the care duties of the SNA.*

●

Priority Targets

Priority Targets 1:

●

Strategies:

●

Who:

Priority Targets 2:

●

Strategies:

●

Who:

Priority Targets 3:

●

Strategies:

●

Who:

Priority Targets 4:

●

Strategies:

●

Who:

Priority Targets 5:

●

Strategies:

●

Who:

Principal: _____ Date:

Resource Teacher: _____ Date:

Class Teacher: _____ Date:

SNA: _____ Date:

Parents: _____ Date: