

St. Eunan's N.S. Special Educational Needs Policy

Introduction

St. Eunan's N.S. is a co-educational mainstream primary school with five classroom teachers, two full time Special Education Teachers, a part time EAL teacher and five SNA's.

The purpose of this policy is to provide effective learning support to pupils experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties, as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998.

Our SEN Policy was coordinated by the staff, parents and Board of Management. The policy is in accordance with Circular No. 0064/2024 and "Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools."

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
- outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
- comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
- fulfil DES Circular 0064/2024 and the new 2024 'Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools'.

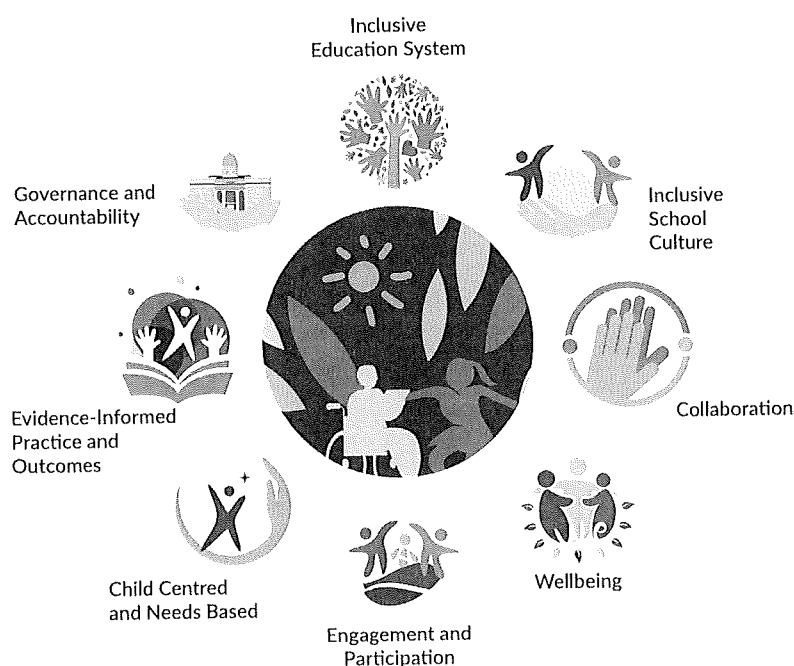
Aims of the Policy

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

- identify additional needs that our pupils may have
- allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of children with additional needs
- divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs
- track, monitor, review and report on the progress of children with additional needs in order to achieve their full potential
- communicate information between the SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians

Principles Underpinning the Special Education Teaching Model

The following principles provide the basis for our school to guide the implementation and ongoing development of our systems, structure, practices and policies to support the inclusion of all children, including those identified with special educational needs.



Roles and Responsibilities

Effective SEN teaching requires a high level of collaboration and consultation involving the Principal, class teachers, SETs, parents, Board of Management (where appropriate), relevant professionals and pupils. It is important that everybody contributes in the planning and implementation of the school plan on Special Education.

Principal Teacher

- The principal has overall responsibility for the school's SEN programme and for the operation of services of children with special educational needs.
- Monitors the implementation of the school plan on SEN on an ongoing basis.
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
- Arranges for classroom accommodation and resources as appropriate.
- Monitors screening processes and the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that the pupils with very low achievement, high incidence and low incidence disabilities get priority.
- Encourage and support staff members to engage effectively with parents/guardians.
- To ensure that the children with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest level of support.
- To ensure the deployment of Special Education Teaching Supports is recorded and monitored.

Role of Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class including those selected for supplementary teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of the school plan on SEN the class teacher should:

- Notify parents at an early stage of any concerns they may have.
- Inform parents of further concerns if necessary.
- Complete Level 1, the Classroom Support Plan on the Continuum of Support (appendix 1 and on the shared drive under Teachers - Special Ed) for any pupils that are displaying difficulties in English or Mathematics. A basic needs checklist must be completed and a School Support File opened and maintained before a Classroom Support Plan is put in place (appendix 2 and on the shared drive under Teachers - Special Ed) Parents will be involved in this process and will sign the Classroom Support Plan. A Classroom Support Plan should be in place for a minimum of ten weeks before moving to the next stage. This time frame may be

changed at the discretion of the Principal depending on individual children's needs. Then, the class teacher should implement the school policy on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and Mathematics if necessary. Support is allocated on needs basis, not diagnosis led.

- The log of actions in each child's Support File must be updated regularly by the class teacher, as well as the SET teacher. This log can be accessed via the google drive.
- Notify Mrs. Mc Daid of any child/ren in your class who are on a Classroom Support Plan to ensure the SEN register is up to date at all times.
- Ensure there is a copy of the agreed targets in your file for all children receiving support in your class. Ensure you have an updated copy of relevant SET/EAL timetables.
- Communicate with parents when the need arises to highlight positive work and progress as well as lack of progress.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, collaborate with SET in the development of a School Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets.
- Pupil Care Support Plans as well as intimate care plans / other relevant plans to be developed for all pupils, where necessary. Parents will sign all plans involving their child and a copy to be given to the SET and the school secretary for their files.
- Maximise the time when SNA's are allocated to your classroom. Devise class timetables appropriately so that the children gain as much support as possible.
- In the absence of a child allocated to an SNA, the SNA must be allocated to work with another child/ren who have needs but may not qualify for an SNA.
- The promotion of wellbeing is central to the positive development of all children to enable them to achieve their full potential. The class teacher will develop each child's self esteem by promoting wellbeing in the classroom.
- Monitor SEN children in the yard to ensure inclusion.
- Treat all information confidentiality and only share information with those who need to know.
- The Physical Environment plays an important role for all children with needs. Sit in the child seat to get an understanding of the environment for them. Refer to the following documents: The Physical Classroom Environment, Classroom Sensory Screening Tool, Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment.
- Ensure SNA support is available to those who need it in a class situation and identify the appropriate tasks to be completed by the SNAs.
- Share information with the SNA about the 'child/ren' with access to SNA support that is relevant to the performance of his/her duties.
- Consult and collaborate with the SNA with regard to planning, review and timetabling. The SNA will have insights into the 'child's' strengths and learning needs which may inform teacher decisions. Planning together is recommended and will inform better professional practice.
- Communicate effectively with the SNA to ensure that the SNA is clear about where help is needed, the tasks to be undertaken and the timetable.

- Inform the SNA/'s of all information/activities pertaining to their classroom.
- Treat all information relating to pupils with access to SNA support confidentially and to share such information only with those who need to know.
- To upskill/attend courses and training where necessary
- Differentiate the class curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. With regard to teaching pupils with low achievement, the following general methods are recommended:
 - ✓ Group teaching
 - ✓ Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of all pupils in the class
 - ✓ Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
 - ✓ Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and achievement

Role of The Special Education Teacher (SET)

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 needs
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop with class teachers, other staff, parents (where necessary):
 - the Level 2 Support Plan (see appendix 3) for each pupil experiencing difficulties in English and Mathematics.
 - the Level 3 School Support Plus Plan (see appendix 4) for each pupil at that level of need.
- regularly meet with class teachers and relevant staff to discuss pupil progress and amend targets between the Level 2 School Support Plan and Level 3 School Support Plus Plan
- formally meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review Level 2 School Support Plans and Level 3 School Support Plus Plans. SET, class teacher and parents

to sign the review (appendix 5). New targets to be discussed and agreed for the term ahead.

- a signed copy of each child's School Support / Plus Plans must be uploaded to the schools shared drive and a copy given to the relevant class teacher along with updated SET timetables.
- Ensure there is a copy of all Pupil Care Plans/intimate care plans filed in the relevant children's SET file.
- provide weekly plans, highlighting the new focus of learning using the school template (see appendix 6). A copy of this plan, outlining the new focus of learning achieved to be uploaded onto the shared drive at the end of each month. A hard copy to be kept on file.
- provide supplementary/team teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- where necessary, administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received
- the SET teacher is responsible for filing and securing all documentation relating to children in receipt of SET support. All children receiving SET will have a yearly and a long-term folder that is split into two sections: 1) School Support Plans and 2) Assessment. Each year, all documents from the yearly folder should be transferred into the long-term folder to keep a record of all documents relating to the children for their duration in SET. Where relevant, ensure classroom support plans and pupil care plans / intimate care plans are received from the class teacher and filed. Documents must be filed in order of year. SET to ensure these documents are locked away and secured.

- when necessary, support the class teacher with setting homework and providing suitable materials to achieve targets which can be completed in the classroom. This work will complement the work covered in SET
- the SET may meet parents on request through an arranged appointment where necessary
- carry out standardised testing with any SEN child who requires one to one assistance (in consultation with the class teacher and parents)
- correct and upload all detailed Standardised Testing results in both English and Maths.
- Promote wellbeing to develop self-esteem by encouraging learning through their interests.
- Treat all information relating to pupils with access to SNA support confidentially and to share such information only with those who need to know.
- To upskill/attend courses and training where necessary.

Importantly, the level and type of support reflects 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 support; some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive support. Children can move from the different levels on the Continuum of Support, depending on their progress/lack of progress.

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. Support is allocated on a needs basis and it's not diagnosis led. Importantly, those with **the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support**. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development, motor skills and application to learning. Social skills are best taught in class along with their peers, except for exceptional circumstances.

Special Needs Assistants

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers,

the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 0030/2014). See appendix 7 for SNA Guidelines.

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
- where necessary, attend School Support Plan meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals to contribute to the identification of priority learning targets for the child with access to SNA support.
- assume responsibility, in collaboration with the class teacher, for developing and updating a care plan for the children with access to SNA support.
- the SNA always works under the direction of the class teacher
- ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- accompany SEN pupil to SET lessons when appropriate
- if allocated child is absent the class teacher/Principal will deploy the SNA to work with another child/ren who requires support
- log incidences/accidents/other necessary information pertaining to the child/ren, where necessary
- inform the class teacher if you have any concerns about the SEN child/ren in your care or if you have any concerns about another child in the class. Request a meeting with the relevant class teacher at an appropriate time eg before /after school to discuss.
- accompany SEN pupil to/from main entrance on arrival/departure of the school, communicating necessary information, agreed by the class teacher to parents/bus escort
- ensure wheelchair users have all necessary safety equipment in place, where necessary

- to communicate with parents if sanitary/other items are required in the school
- The SNA should be familiar with all relevant school policy, in particular the school Code of Behaviour, Health & Safety and Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Treat all information gathered in the course of their duties confidentially and to share such information only with those who need to know.

Role of Parent

- to support and participate in their child's learning
- to meet with class teacher and / or SET and participate in the setting of educational targets for classroom support/school support/school support plus plans
- to inform the class teacher of any difficulties/changes the child is experiencing at home
- to inform the class teacher if they feel special arrangements need to be put in place for standardised testing.
- contact or seek advice/support from outside agencies and services as recommended by the school/other professionals eg psychologist.
- attend relevant courses to develop more of an understanding of a particular need
- to update relevant staff members on any changes to medical/other needs

Role of Pupil

It is important for the students to have an input into the development, implementation and review of their own learning. By doing so they can:

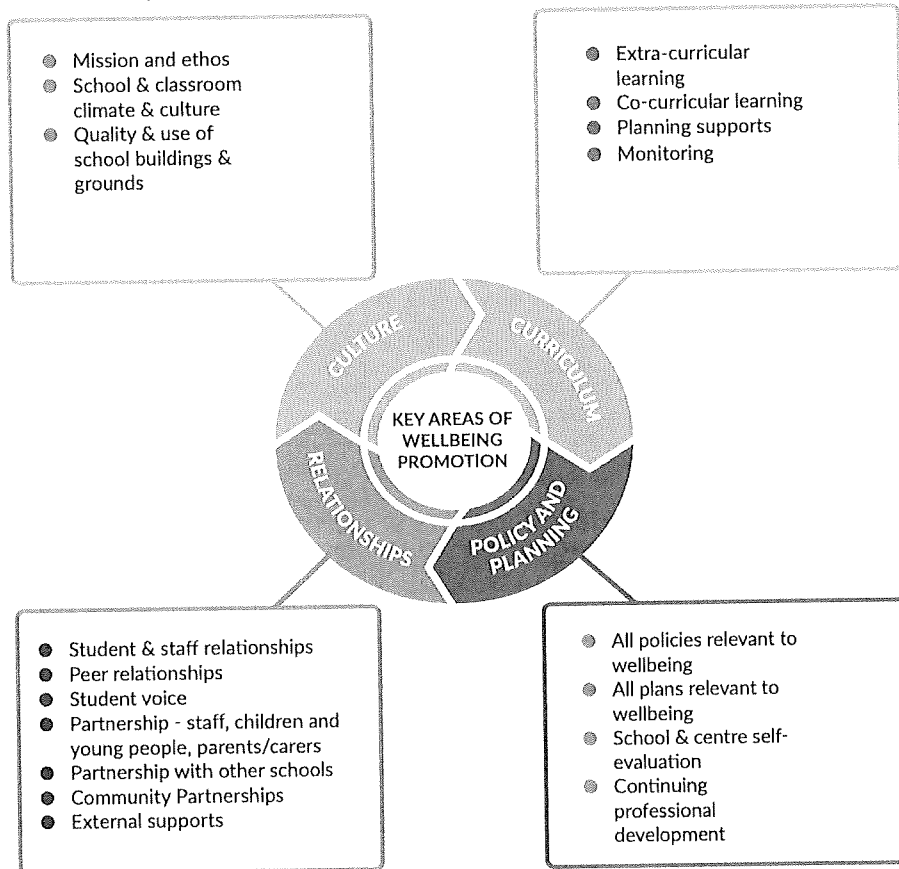
- become more independent as learners
- become aware of different learning styles
- become aware of their own strengths, weaknesses or needs
- enjoy success and evaluate their progress
- excel at and enjoy many curricular and extra curricular activities which would not be practical in the mainstream class due to class size
- develop ownership of the skills and strategies taught during supplementary teaching and apply these strategies and skills in their mainstream class situation

Role of the Board of Management

- To oversee the implementation and review of the school policy on SEN.
- To provide adequate resources, accommodation and storage.
- To ensure that special education teaching resources are used for their intended purpose, only to support children with special educational needs.
- To oversee the school's engagement in the School Self Evaluation process.
- To provide necessary training for all staff, where necessary.

Wellbeing

Encouraging and promoting wellbeing is an essential part of children's development. The experience of all children at school contributes directly to their physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing and resilience. Learning and participation take place in a culture focused on collective wellbeing of the school community. See diagram below for the four key areas of wellbeing promotion. The child's voice plays a big role in the development of all support plans.



Prevention Strategies and Parental Involvement

St. Eunan's N. S. recognises the importance of having appropriate prevention strategies and as a result of this we have implemented the following strategies are in use:

- Identifying information from enrolment forms which may indicate difficulties.
- Noting observations and possible concerns of parents at parent teacher meetings.
- Implementing appropriate whole school programmes in English and Mathematics.
- Development of agreed approaches to language development and to teaching other aspects of English in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
- Provision of additional support in language development and in early literacy skills.
- Ongoing observations and assessment of the literacy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Providing support for all Senior Infants during the school year, in the form of group teaching provided by SET, where possible.
- Inclusion of Middle Infant Screening Test to highlight difficulties for senior infants and providing intervention to those who require it.
- Ongoing consultation between senior infant class teacher /SETs and principal regarding individual needs of pupils.
- Monitoring and reviewing standardised test results each year to identify any children who may require support.

The provision of special educational teaching support is a collaborative and holistic process involving parents, guardians, children, teachers and other professionals where appropriate.

The views and wishes of children are central to planning and decision making in relation to special education provision.

Early Intervention Programme

Below is a summary of course content that may be included in the intervention programme.

Prevention Programme for Senior Infants
<p>Phonemic awareness Letter recognition Sequencing of alphabet / days of the week Sight vocabulary Supporting class reading Handwriting skills Seven aspects oral language development through use of Big Books Listening Naming Categorising Describing Denoting position Sequencing Reasoning and planning Retelling a story Jolly Phonics</p> <p>Other areas as recommended by the class teacher, depending on the individual needs of a particular group.</p>

Following implementation of prevention strategies, pupils may be selected by the class teacher and SET to receive intensive small group teaching, especially if the children are in a mixed class setting.

Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs

1. Standardised Tests (Micra/Sigma/Drumcondra) will be used to screen and identify pupil's progress in English and Maths. Those pupils performing below the 12th percentile or pupils who are under achieving in relation to the class peers, should be prioritised for support in Literacy and Numeracy. Pupils below the 20th percentile may then be considered for support.
2. Pupils identified as having significant needs based on ongoing assessments and intervention through the Continuum Support Process. Professional reports may be used to inform teaching strategies for these pupils.
3. Pupils with mild or transient (short term) educational needs associated with speech and language difficulties, social and emotional needs, co-ordination or attention control

difficulties, pupils with a Specific Learning Disability (E.g. Dyslexia, dyscalculia etc.) and pupils who have English as an additional language.

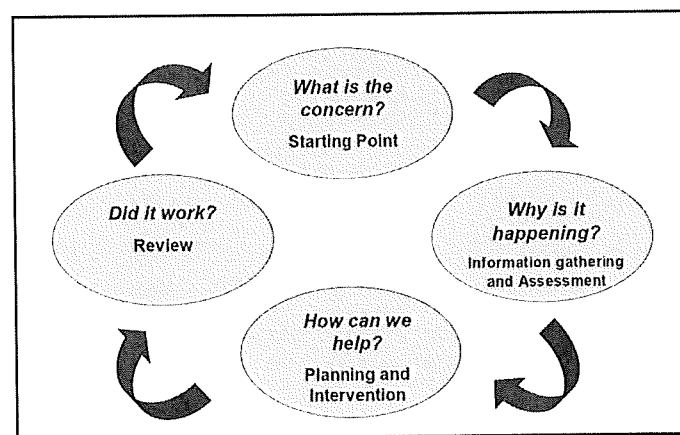
*** The degree of additional support that is provided for pupils with SEN will be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the Continuum of Support Process.

Continuum of Support

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

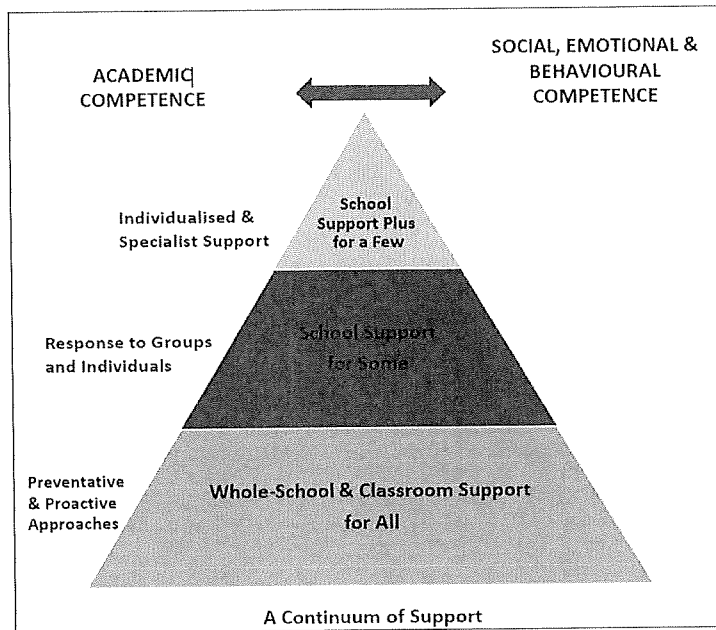
The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention, that enables us to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual pupils.

This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy. 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 and parents 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. The class teacher and parents will complete a basic needs checklist, open a School Support File, keep a log of all actions and develop the Level 1 Classroom Support Plan. The Classroom Support Plan will be agreed and signed by the parents. This plan will be in place for a minimum of ten weeks - this time frame may change at the discretion of the Principal depending on individual needs. Mrs Mc Daid must be informed of all children on a Classroom Support Plan.

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 our Level 2 School Support Plan. The class teacher will pass on all relevant documentation relating to the Continuum of Support, to the SET at this stage. If or when a child no longer

requires support at this level, they will revert back to a Classroom Support Plan, where necessary. The SET and classroom teachers are responsible for logging all actions for individual children receiving SET.

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 School Support Plan. The SET will complete the Level 3 School Support Plus Plan. The SET and classroom teachers are responsible for logging all actions for individual children receiving SET.

Assessment & Reporting

Diagnostic Assessment Resources
Dyslexia Screening Test YARC - York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension NRIT - Non Reading Intelligent Test WIATT-III - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test MIST-middle infant screening test Dolch Sight Vocabulary 220 words 100 most frequently used words in reading 100 most frequently used words in spelling

Types of Teaching Support Provided:

A variety of supports will be provided to the pupils. Pupils may be taught individually, in groups or supported in class depending on the needs and on available resources. All learning that takes place in SET must be brought back and used in the classroom. The SET teacher may teach certain skills in the classroom as part of SET time.

Concerns regarding the inclusion of pupils for additional support may be made to the principal/B.O.M.

On the request of a parent or if a class teacher feels it's necessary, accommodations may be made for a pupil with SEN to complete their standardised testing on a one to one basis with the SET teacher.

Teaching of the sensitive issues in the RSE Programme in 5th & 6th class may be a challenging area for some children. Where the class teacher or parents feels it's necessary, a discussion between the parents and class teacher will take place before any teaching begins and a plan put in place to best support the pupil.

The official SET timetable will end once standardised testing begins.

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. Note: targets are not achieved if they have not been achieved in the classroom.

Student Support Plans

We use a Student Support File to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates us in documenting progress and needs over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need.

Liaising with Parents/Guardians

Upon enrolment, parents may give consent for diagnostic assessments throughout the pupils duration in the school. If not, permission is sought prior to any diagnostic assessments. Further discussions regarding the results are necessary to ascertain the areas needing attention and implementation of the Level 2/3 School Support Plan.

Links with Outside Agencies

The school will liaise with any outside agencies (in agreement with parents) that will support and assist the learning of pupils. A record should be kept of all school visits, communications etc. in the pupils log of actions.

Referral to Out-of-school Agencies

- The Principal/Class Teacher co-ordinates the referral of pupils to outside agencies, e.g. Educational Psychologist.
- The Class Teacher meets with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.
- The class teacher completes the necessary referral form in consultation with the appropriate

school personnel.

- The external professional visits the school to meet with the pupil, parents, principal, class teacher and the SET as appropriate and the assessment is conducted.
- A report is forwarded, recommendations are considered and an appropriate response is agreed.
- Where concern arises regarding the manner or speed of the follow-through post assessment, such concern is pursued by the Principal with the out-of-school agency.
- Parents may consider a private assessment if the school is not in a position to provide an assessment.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an on-going and/or when the need arises. This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 10th June 2025.

Chairperson: John J. Sattam
o/c Mr. Ganga

Date: 10/6/25