



Special Educational Needs Policy

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This is a continuous working document.

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Glossary

BIAP: Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
BOM: Board of Management

SEN: Special Educational Needs
SESS: Special Ed Support Service

CPD: Continued Professional Development
DES: Department of Education and Skills
DOC: Daughters of Charity
IEP: Individual Education Plan
IPLP: Individual Profile and Learning Programme
LITH: Low incidence teaching hours
MIST: Middle Infant Screening Test
NCSE: National Council for Special Education
NEPS: National Educational Psychological service
NRIT: Non-reading intelligence test
NVRT: Non-verbal reasoning test

SET: Special Education Teacher
SLD: Specific Learning Difficulty
SNA: Special Needs Assistant

Guiding Principles:

- All our children have a right to an education which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want them to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.
- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, are used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school.
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs, are based on identified needs and are informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines (2007).
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs.
- **Pupils with the greatest levels of need have access to the greatest level of support**, and whenever possible, these pupils are supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support, in accordance with Circular 13/17 and the accompanying Guidelines.

As far as possible, therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting **three principles** that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum.

1. Inclusion:

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 SEN and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This is 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.

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. In order to do this, St. Patrick's uses the 'Continuum of Support Process' as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our pupils with SEN. Using the continuum of support framework, our school identifies pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at a pupil's needs in context, and to

use our resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports).

2. Meeting Children’s Diverse Learning Needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn, when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning our support, the 'Planning Template' outlining the 6 point action plan below is utilised.

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

<p>Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>We review existing information on pupils’ needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals.</p> <p>We 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).</p> <p>We identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school and match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
<p>Action 2: Setting targets</p>	<p>Based on individual needs, we set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.</p>
<p>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</p>	<p>We identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. We are mindful that the interventions and supports that we are using are evidence-informed.</p>
<p>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</p>	<p>Based on identified needs, school management in consultation with support team and class teachers, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. We identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>

<p>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources</p>	<p>We cross-reference the needs of pupils at school support and school support plus levels (see p.13-14) and consider common needs that can be met by grouping, to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. We agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place.</p> <p>We are mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.</p>
<p>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</p>	<p>We have established a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At classroom-support level by class teachers • At the school-support and school-support-plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers. <p>This tracking and recording is through the Continuum of Support. Documents are saved on pupil profile on Aladdin under 'Pupil Profile'</p>

Order of priority in which additional supports are allocated:

1. Children who formerly had Low Incidence Teaching Hours (LITH) and/or pupils who present with high level of complex needs.
2. Early intervention programme- Literacy Lift-Off (Term 1, senior infants)
3. Children struggling at early stages of reading, as shown in Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) assessment and/or Benchmarking levels and/or teacher concerns (senior infants/1st class)
4. Children falling at or below 13 percentile in reading (from 2nd)/spelling (from 4th)
5. Children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD), who present with high level of need (senior infants- 4th class)
6. In-Class support for guided reading/genre writing programmes
7. In-class support for maths (infants- 4th)
8. Well-being programmes- Fun Friends (1st Class), Friends for Life (5th Class), Get Up Stand UP (6th class)- Term 1
9. Transition to 2nd level block for SEN pupils in 6th class
10. In-Class support for Building Bridges of Comprehension/ TSI (5th/6th)

3. Timetabling

The support timetable is the responsibility of the SEN co-ordinator and is devised in consultation with class teachers, the support team and the principal.

- The timetable runs for 3 blocks of approximately 10-12 weeks. Much of the support takes place within the class, in order to reach a wide range of pupils and needs. This support is weighted to the junior end of the school, as early intervention is most effective. Children at stage 2 and sometimes those at stage 3 are offered an initial block of support by withdrawal. Pending review, support may be discontinued after a block or continued based on a) progress on targets

as outlined in support plan and/or SET testing or b) needs of other children awaiting support. Only children with the most complex need (or former LITH) receive continuous support by withdrawal.

Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

1. Promotion of Literacy:

- Whole school promotion of Reading for Pleasure: Reading log in journals, summer reading club
- Building Bridges Comprehension Strategies
- Genre Writing
- Literacy Lift-off in senior infants
- 3rd Class Reading Fluency programme
- Guided Reading from Senior Infants to 4th class
- Transactional Strategies Instruction (TSI)- an independent group comprehension focused reading programme for 5th and 6th classes
- Print rich environment
- Shared/paired reading
- Story time, Library time, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR time), Book Week, Book Fair, Reading buddies (1st-4th class), games, Class library, visiting author (5th class) Fighting Words Workshops (5th class)
- Write a Book Project for children in 4th class
- Access to Literacy apps, such as Reading Eggs on school i-pads and at home

2. Early Intervention

We believe it is very important to identify and assess children with special needs as early as possible so that effective interventions can be put in place. The Literacy Lift-Off 6 week programme, takes place in all senior infants classes in first term. Children are benchmarked before and after. Children who have not made satisfactory progress are (when possible) offered support at stage 2. The M.I.S.T. (Middle Infants Screening Test) is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants during the second term of the school year. Pupils who present with scores which concur with teacher's concerns are invited to join a learning support withdrawal group, focusing on deficits in phonics, sight words and reading strategies.

3. Developing Listening Skills:

Promoting a classroom environment where children listen to others, do not interrupt the speaker and wait their turn; Circle time, Listening games/activities; Listening Programmes; Listening to music.

4. Observation and/or assessment:

Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, a record sheet for each child, shared observation (2nd opinion- usually Special Education Teacher- SET), listening to reading, general correction of homework.

Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, teacher's own observation.

Share concerns with: Last year's/ next year's teacher, similar level teacher, parents, SET, SEN co-ordinator.

Overcoming Potential Barriers to Learning and Assessment for Individuals and Groups of Children

We recognise that a minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning, if they are not addressed through

special arrangements. Our SEN policy envisages a whole school approach that takes into account the roles of the Board of Management, the principal, class teacher, special education teacher and the parents.

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the BoM, principal and staff take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

Roles:

Board of Management

The BoM fulfils its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. It ensures that the provision provided is an integral part of the school development plan. Members are 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 extra needs
- provides adequate class accommodation and teaching resources.
- provides a secure facility for storage of records.

The BoM evaluates the effectiveness and success of this policy by monitoring:

- the standards obtained by children with special needs
- the number of children at each of the three stages: Stage 1- Classroom Support, Stage 2- School Support and Stage 3- School Support Plus
- the level and pattern of help (i.e. average time allocated and the balance of in-class and withdrawal support)
- views of parents
- visits from specialist teachers
- staff views on in-service
- children's views

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. She works closely with the SEN co-ordinator and keeps the BoM informed about the working of this policy. It is 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
- coordinate 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 the 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.

Special Needs Co-ordinator (Deputy Principal)

The Special Needs Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- coordinating provision for children with special educational needs

- organising the timetable for support teaching
 - liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
 - liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
 - liaising with parents of children with special needs
 - monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
 - keeping a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
 - facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
 - supporting the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
 - keeping teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
 - advising parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
 - selecting children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with the school's National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) psychologist.
 - liaising with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
 - liaising with Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) regarding all aspects of special education provision
 - storing confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports, etc.) regarding SEN children in Red Office, maintaining list of such, and sharing same with principal, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs and other agencies where appropriate.
 - participating in and /or overseeing the drafting of support plans
 - making applications for SNAs where appropriate
 - Attending meetings with external agencies such as School Age Disability Team (SADT) and Daughters of Charity (DOC) for children with complex needs
 - attending, when possible, Support-Plan meetings with parents and teachers, especially for first Support Plan plus (stage 3)
 - arranging and - where possible - attending planning meetings, to set up yearly Pupil Personal Plans (PPP) for pupils with SNA access, with teachers and SNA
 - applying for Assistive Technology grants, where recommended by relevant professional reports
 - arranging for exemptions from the study of Irish, for pupils for whom this is recommended
 - bringing courses, workshops and other CPD events to the attention of relevant staff
- organising whole staff/ selected staff training/ CPD.

Class Teacher

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in a stimulating and supportive classroom environment, (where) one in which they are respected and valued. Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes. Accordingly, classroom teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully, to address the diverse needs within the classroom. This includes 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 implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. These 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. Pupils' levels of interest, attention, concentration and persistence are gradually developed, extended and rewarded, using appropriate teaching strategies. To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, mainstream class teachers 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

Teachers can make lessons accessible to a broad range of pupils through the use of a variety of appropriate teaching approaches and methodologies, including active learning, small-group tuition, individual teaching and scaffolded instruction. This may also require environmental adaptations to promote curricular access, including the use of ICT/Assistive Technology.

In a small number of cases, children may be working at a different level to their class and differentiated programmes are put in place by class teacher, in conjunction with SET.

Special Education Teacher (SET)

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

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

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

- Curriculum support
- Well-being and/or social skills training
- Physical training/gross motor development
- Speech training/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 education teachers, in consultation with class teachers, plan their interventions carefully to address pupils' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant continuum of support plan. Long term plans are in the format of Support plans (formally Individual Education Profile (IEP)/Individual Pupil Learning Profile (IPLP)).

Short-term planning reflects the support plan targets and breaks down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps, to address each pupil's specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for pupils are routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes are used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school consults with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understanding the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

In St. Patrick's, Special Education Teachers are encouraged and supported where possible, to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD), such as courses run by Special Education Support Service (SESS), to help them meet the needs of the pupils on their caseload.

Parents

Parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement 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. There may also be opportunities for parents to work collaboratively with the school through initiatives such as paired reading, Literacy Lift-off and Guided Reading.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of St. Patrick's can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework
- Participating in shared reading programmes with their child/children, from junior infants to third class
- 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 their child's teachers
- Signing and returning consent forms to the school, regarding withdrawal for support teaching.
- Talking positively about school and school work
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors 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

Communication with parents

- Parents are informally made aware when difficulties are first noted.
- If a teacher decides to place a child on a Stage 1 (Classroom Support) plan, parents are informed via a phone call, an arranged meeting or during scheduled PT meetings in November. The Plan is then shared with parents and they are invited to sign this plan and return it to the class teacher.
- If a pupil is moving to Stage 2, parents are informed as per Stage 1 and the Plan is sent home with an invitation to sign and return as above.
- Parents of children continuing at Stage 2 are given a copy of the Support Plan **to be signed and returned**. This Plan can be discussed at parent-teacher meetings or at another time, if requested.
- Parents of children at stage 2 are sent a letter of permission, at the start of support and a letter of discontinuation, when a block of support ends.
- Parents are invited to a 'Support Plan' meeting at stage 3 of the continuum when a) it is their first Support Plan or b) new agencies become involved with the child, e.g. SADT team or c) new reports/information/needs come to light. All parents of children at Stage 3 are given a copy of the Support Plan, **to be signed and returned**.
- Parents of children continuing at Stage 3 are also given a copy of the support plan **to be signed and returned** which can be discussed at parent-teacher meetings or at another time, if requested.
- An initial letter is sent to parents of children at Stage 3 when beginning support-by-withdrawal for the first time, a letter of discontinuation, if this support is ending and a letter/e-mail explaining changes to support, e.g. change of teacher, frequency of support, nature of support.

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. Failure to do so will impede/delay the necessary supports being put in place for this pupil and will impact on his/her overall school experience and potential for learning. The Board of Management requests a copy of the child's medical or psychological or other reports. No child is refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN, except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

Resources

St. Patrick's is a well-resourced school, that constantly monitors and updates its resources. I.T. provision is good and is updated regularly. A number of programmes suitable for SET are available on the server.

8 i-Pads, with apps relevant for the cohort of children accessing SET, are available to borrow by SET/SNA from the Red Office. They are returned to their charging box by 4 pm each afternoon.

A library of books relating to SEN is maintained in the cabinet in the Red Office and the catalogue is saved in the support file on the school server.

A selection of games, books, activities and tests are available in the English Resource Room, adjacent to Red Room 5.

Assessments:

Standardised Testing resources are organised and maintained by the member of the In-School Management team with responsibility for assessment (see Assessment Policy).

A selection of assessments for SEN teaching is available from the back of the Red Office. These include: PM Benchmarking kits, QUEST kits, Neale Analysis, ABLLS, VBMAPP, SESS Functional Language Assessment.

Allocation of Special Education Teachers (SETs)

Under the model introduced to schools in September 2017, every school is allocated a specific number of SETs for a two year period. If the school is allocated more class teachers than it has classrooms, these teachers transfer to the support team. These teachers work predominantly (but not exclusively) in class. If at times of extreme teacher shortages, no suitably qualified substitute teacher can be found to cover a teacher on long-term leave, one of these teachers may move into a classroom teacher role. SET will not be used to cover occasional short-term absence, except in the case where more than 1 classroom teacher is absent on the same floor on the same day. In this case, a rota of SET may be put in place, with the least possible impact on the Support Timetable, prioritising as always the pupils with most needs.

The SEN co-ordinator, where possible, matches SETs with specific skills, to pupils whose needs they can best meet.

Stages of Assessment and Provision

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children, by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher identifies a child with SEN, the class teacher consults with the SEN coordinator and provides interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher. However, as most of our support is in-class, the stages are less defined than in situations where learning support is delivered by withdrawal.

Standardised Assessments

A small number of pupils with SEN may be exempted from participation in annual standardised testing. The decision to exempt will rest with the school principal and be in accordance with Circular 0056/2011 (Section 6.4).

A list of pupils exempted from standardised testing is kept by the SEN co-ordinator. In exceptional cases, where a child is able to attempt a test but would struggle to do so in the classroom environment, arrangements may be made for the test to be carried out in a support room under the supervision of support teacher.

Pupils in 1st and 4th class complete the NRIT (Non-Reading Intelligence Test). This is used to highlight pupils who are not achieving their potential (as compared to standardised testing/teacher testing/observations), which may possibly lead to investigation of underlying causes, e.g SLD (Specific Learning Difficulties). In cases where the results of NRIT are unexpected and/or language may have inhibited the

pupil, an NVRT (Non Verbal Reasoning Test) may be carried out by a member of SET team.

Differentiated booklists

A small number of the children in the school, working on a highly differentiated programme in class, are given a Personal Booklist appropriate to their level, in the final term of the school year for the following school year. The SEN co-ordinator is informed. The class teacher, in conjunction with SET prepares this list and links with the child's parents. Differentiated book lists are saved in the relevant file on the pupil's Aladdin profile.

Record of Differentiated Support

A record of differentiated support (Statement of Need) is created at the beginning of each school year. The SEN co-ordinator meets with class teachers and SET/(s) assigned to each year group, to analyse SEN, professional reports and recommendations, standardised test results, NRIT results, the previous teacher's observation and learning support to date. A list is then created of children considered to be in need of support at levels 1, 2 and 3 of the continuum at each class level. These lists are maintained by the SEN co-ordinator and shared with the relevant class teacher and SET/(s). Lists are updated and shared during the year by SET. In addition to this, any child in receipt of support by withdrawal has this noted in his/her Aladdin file, under the resource teacher's tab. This again is maintained by the SEN co-ordinator. A master list of all pupils in the school on a continuum of support in a given year is maintained by the SEN co-ordinator.

Class teacher and/or SET consult with SEN co-ordinator when placing any child on a continuum of support.

Sample Statement of Need

Name	Complex Needs	Learning Needs	Sensory Needs	Emotional / Social Needs	Behaviour Needs	COS Stage	Plan
	Yes Down's Syndrome SNA support	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	3 File	SUPPORT PLAN / Transition Programme Peer Support in class /Get up Stand up Small group withdrawal all year 1:1 teaching Withdrawal BC from 09/17, Motor skills GR from 09/17
	Yes ... EBD	No Maths 4,25	Yes	Yes	Yes	3 File	SUPPORT PLAN / Transition Programme Get up Stand up / Maths ? Withdrawal by AB from 20/2

	No	SLD S 4,25	No	No	No	2 Report	Stage 2 Plan Get up Stand up/ Transition Programme Spelling block in 1 st term + target in class Withdrawal CD 2 sessions from 09/17-11/17
	No	No	No	No	No	2	Stage 2 Plan Reading support in class + withdrawal for 1 block + Maths for 1 Block Withdrawal for maths EK from 12/17

See Appendix 2 for Table describing identification of educational needs through the Continuum of Support Process

Stage One (Classroom support)

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents.

The triggers for this intervention could be:

- The child makes little or no progress, even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties, which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school
- Has sensory or physical difficulties
- Has communication and/or relationship difficulties

The **class teacher** completes a Stage One Classroom Support Plan and monitors the progress for half a term. If this strategy does not work then the teacher will continue to the next stage, School Support. Teachers inform Parents that their children's needs would be better served in a small group with a support teacher. Parents must sign their consent before withdrawal can commence. Parents are also asked to sign their refusal, should they so wish.

Stage Two (School support)

In cases where the Record of Differentiated Support indicates that progress has not been made or if the results of tests (M.I.S.T., Drumcondra Primary Reading Test, Belfield Infant Assessment Programme) and teacher observation indicate this to be the case, intervention by a SET is accessed. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken are as follows:

- The class teacher and support teacher differentiate the curriculum in specific areas, with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support teacher.
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, then a group educational plan is implemented.
- While every effort is made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in a SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal is time limited and for specific purposes only.

- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

The class teacher in conjunction with the SET completes a Stage Two Support Plan and monitors progress. Where progress is not made, this is reported to the SEN co-ordinator and consideration is made whether outside support/further assessment is needed or not.

The strategies set out in the Support Plan are, as far as possible, implemented in the normal classroom setting.

The management of the Support Plan strategies are the responsibility of the class teacher, the support teacher and the SEN coordinator.

Stage Three

The support or class teacher performs diagnostic tests on these children, usually at the beginning and end of the school year, where relevant, e.g Neale Analysis Reading Test, QUEST, BIAP, Marino Spelling, etc.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling and performing below the thirteenth percentile, despite intervention at Stage One and/or Stage Two, the class teacher, with the support teacher and SEN coordinators and in consultation with the child's parents, may consider some/all of the following actions:

1. A psychological assessment is arranged (cf. Education for Persons with Disability Act, 2004)
2. Other outside agencies who will advise on a range of provisions, (including Support Plan targets and strategies), may need to be contacted.
3. The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme, the child:
 - Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
 - Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age
 - Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties
 - Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with his/her learning or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and Support Plan
 - Has sensory and/or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service
 - Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development and acts as a barrier to learning.
 - If it is felt by the psychologist that a child has care needs, application may be made for the support of a Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
 - In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants are required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used to at least two SNAs and to either the class or the support teacher. The SEN co-ordinator should also be present.
 - The use of specialised yard equipment may also need to be demonstrated to these staff members. Courses are provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
 - If parents submit a written request for an exemption from Irish, the Principal puts it in place, once the pupil qualifies under most up to date DES guidelines.

Children with complex needs and/or sustained interventions from outside agencies, e.g. DOC, SADT, are placed at Stage 3 (School Support Plus) of the continuum, in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator.

The SET completes a Stage Three Support Plan, in consultation with the class teacher and the parents and maintains a progress report.

Review of Support Plans

The SEN coordinator ensures that the review is conducted at least once in the school year.

Class teachers review Stage 1 plans at the end of their stated timeframe. In class Stage 2 plans (where support takes place exclusively in class) are also reviewed by the class teacher.

The SET consults with the class teacher to complete a review of Stage 2 (if withdrawing pupil) and Stage 3 plans. Parental input may be sought. Again, outside agencies such as SADT, DOC, a speech therapist, etc. may play a part in formulating the final copy. The review is recorded on the Support Plan Review form (part of Continuum of Support (revised 2017) or in a different colour font on the Support Plan.

Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory and where the child is consistently achieving targets over the stated time, a decision may be made to a lower stage or to remove the child from the Continuum of Support.

Record Keeping

The SEN co-ordinator maintains all professional reports related to children currently in the school, (in the back office of red office, in SEN filing cabinet). These can only be accessed through the SEN co-ordinator by school personnel working with a particular child. Files must be signed in and out and may not leave the school premises. If a class teacher is given a report by a parent or therapist, he/she must ensure it is passed on to the SEN co-ordinator for filing. Reports received electronically are saved under the child's profile on Aladdin, accessible only to staff working with the child in the current school year. A list of children along with their reports is maintained by the SEN co-ordinator (see page 5).

As per 'Record of Differentiated Support' above, all children on Stages one, two or three must have a Plan. This Plan is saved on Aladdin and reviewed at the end of a block and/or at least once a year.

SETs are expected to maintain their own weekly/fortnightly plans and daily plans. Monthly progress reports are to be sent to the principal via e-mail to planning@stpatricksns.ie. Long term plans are in the format of a Support Plan (cf Appendix 1 for further details of relevant documents).

All documents related to a pupil's SEN needs, e.g. Special Education Needs' files, reviews, correspondence and Individual Education Plans must be kept by the school **indefinitely** under Data Protection Laws (Records Retention Schedule).

Complaints

If parents have a complaint about the Special Education provision, they should in the first instance make an appointment to speak to the SEN coordinator and then to the principal.

The complaint is investigated and dealt with as early as possible. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction, then it proceeds to the BoM.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets is monitored by the class teacher, the SET and the SEN co-ordinator. This stage of the process is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (eg. teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation benchmarking) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. Progress will also be reviewed through discussions between class teachers and SETs, identifying progress and future areas of focus .

This policy will be reviewed every three years. (Next review due 2022-23)

Ratified by the Board of Management on 30/09/19

Signature:

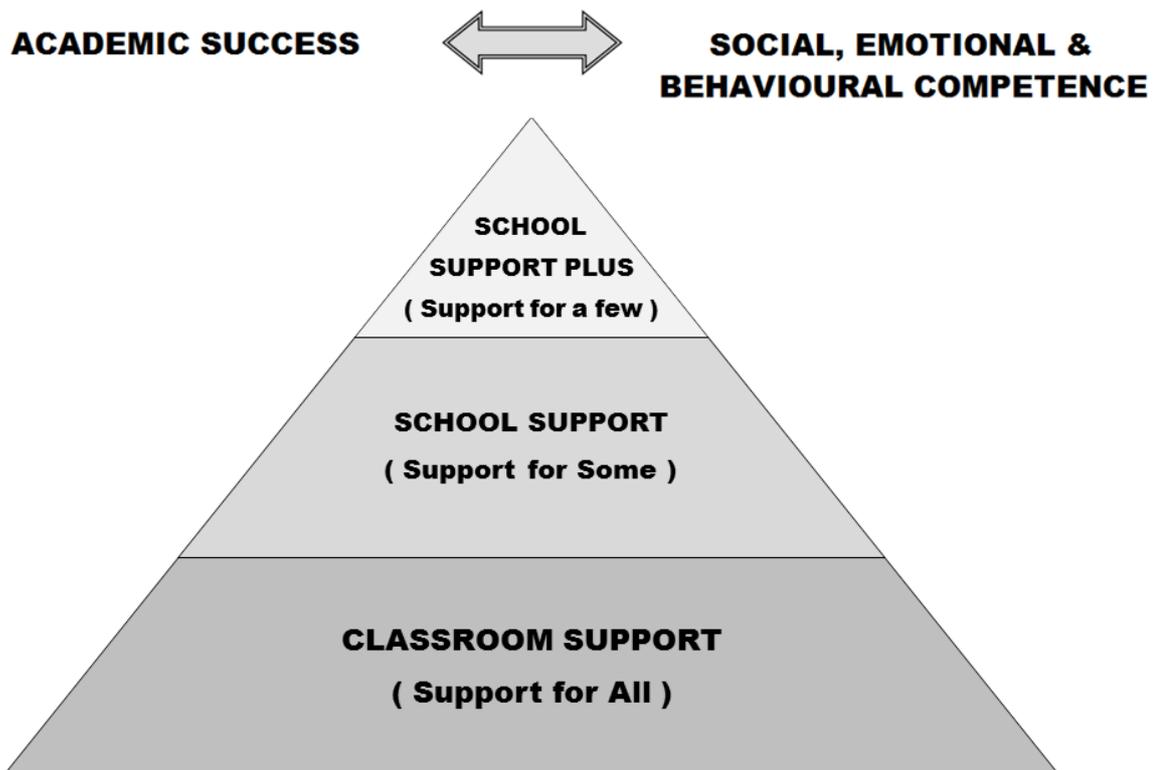


Chairperson BoM

Date: 30/09/19

Appendix 1

A Continuum of Support



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 concern. We gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

The following documents are used to plan and record for SETs in St. Patrick's. All documents are available as templates on Aladdin and are taken from *Special Education Needs: A Continuum of Support- Resource Pack for Teachers* (2007) and *Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (2017).

1. Continuum of Support file (2017 revised). Student support file (opened when child begins on continuum of support **from stage 2**). This file contains an opening page, an actions log*, a support checklist, a support plan and a support review.
2. Subsequent plans are saved separately as SUPPORT FILE documents.
3. When a child finishes accessing SETs, the file is closed. This information is dated on the opening page.

*An Action log is used to record meetings and steps taken.

Other documents which are available and may be used for some children:

- My Thoughts About School (SEN-COS, p.11/12)
- **Appendix 2**

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

<p>Classroom Support</p>	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively, to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 <p>A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p> <p>*Documents available on Aladdin</p>
<p>School Support</p>	<p>At this level, a support plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 <p>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.</p>
<p>School Support Plus</p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p>

References:**2017**

DES Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools-
Special Education Teaching Allocation (0013/2017)
DES Guidelines for Primary Schools- Supporting Pupils with Special Educational
Needs in Mainstream Schools

2006

NCSE Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process

2007

DES Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support- Guidelines for Teachers
DES Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support - Resource Pack for
Teachers

2005

Circular 02/05
To Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and all Teaching Staff in Primary
Schools Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in
Mainstream Primary Schools

2004

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN)

2000

DES Learning Support Guidelines

1998

The Education Act