Special Educational Needs Policy



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**Introductory Statement**

Our SEN Policy was coordinated by the Principal, SEN co-ordinator and SET team, in consultation with all relevant Stakeholders. The review of this policy was carried out in Term 1 of 2018 following on from the introduction of the New Special Education Teaching Allocation Model. The SEN policy was reviewed in accordance with Circular 0013/2017. It was circulated to staff and families in January 2019 and is being fully implemented from February 2019.

**School Information**

Scoil Naomh Iosef is a co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Diocese of Limerick. It is an ‘ordinary’ vertical mainstream primary school, catering for a full cross section of children. In line with mission our statement – Scoil Naomh Iosef promotes the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual.

**Rationale**

The purpose of this policy is to;

* Outline the school’s provision of additional educational support​ ​for​ ​students​ ​with​ ​SEN and our current practice
* provide practical guidance to staff and parents about our SEN procedures and practices
* comply with​ ​the​ ​various​ ​pieces​ ​of​ ​legislation​ ​listed​ ​below
* fulfil DES circular 0013/17 - Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation and new 2017 Guidelines for Primary Schools; Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools.

**Legal​ ​Framework**

Scoil Naomh Iosef sets out to provide education for all its students, with reference to legislation regarding students with SEN as listed below:

* The Education Act (1998)
* The Education Welfare Act (2000)
* The Equal Status Act (2000)
* The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)
* The Equality Act (2004)
* The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
* The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
* The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

This policy is drafted in the context of:

* DES Circular Letters
* The guidelines published by the NCSE
* The guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process 2006
* The Guidelines on the Continuum of Support for Primary Schools (NEPS).
* The guidelines published by the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SESS)

**AIMS OF THE POLICY**

The principal aim of Special Education Teaching in Scoil Naomh Iosef is to provide a positive learning environment, which will foster the academic, social and emotional development of students with learning difficulties and to enable each to realise their individual potential.

Special Education provision also seeks to:

* Enable pupils of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education.
* Provide students with consistent opportunities to experience success.
* Provide supplementary teaching and additional support in literacy and numeracy.
* Involve parents in the support of their child’s education.
* Promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of a whole school policy on learning support for pupils.
* Protect and enhance the self-esteem of the learner.

The school hopes to achieve the following by updating the SEN policy:

* To include the most recent best practice in SEN.
* To reflect the most recent recommendations, most particularly the Continuum of Support at Primary Schools (NEPS).
* To outline our whole school approach to teaching/ learning in relation to pupils with SEN.
* To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school.
* Ensure that students with SEN are educated in an inclusive environment.
* Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the specific needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area.
* Ensure that SEN is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
* Ensure that students with SEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
* Set high standards for students with SEN and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging​ ​them​ ​to​ ​achieve​ ​to​ ​their​ ​full​ ​potential.
* Develop​ ​staff​ ​expertise​ ​in​ ​supporting​ ​students​ ​with​ ​SEN.
* Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support​ ​at​ ​home​
* To outline procedures and practices which will be followed in relation to supporting the learning​ ​of​ ​pupils​ ​with​ ​SEN.

**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 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.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**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. She will work closely with the SEN team 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 team to:

* Develop in conjunction with staff 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
* In conjunction with SETs, 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
* Arranges for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.
* Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with NEPS psychologist
* Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
* Liaises with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision
* Stores confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and shares same with, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.

**Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, in conjunction with the Principal will be responsible for:

* Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
* Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
* Organises 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
* Keeps a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
* Facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
* Supports the implementation of the Student Support Files and reviews at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
* Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
* Advises parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
* Ensures Student Support Files are stored in a locked drawer
* Ensures Psychological Reports are locked in filing cabinet in office

**The Role of the Class Teacher**

Class teaches have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class, including those selected for additional support. They should

* Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible minimise the emergence of learning difficulties
* Create a positive learning environment within the classroom
* Differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
* Administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the schools guidelines
* Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Team to assist the selection of children for supplementary teaching
* Meet with parents regarding any concerns they may have for their child and update them regarding their progress
* Gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the continuum of support
* Open a student support file once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support
* Develop classroom support plans for children in need of classroom support
* Collaborate with Special Education teachers to develop school support plans for children in receipt of school support
* Collaborate with Special Education teachers to develop School Support Plus plans for each pupil in receipt of school support plus
* Meet regularly with all relevant stakeholders in reviewing relevant education plans
* Where applicable, collaborate with 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 and SNA access in their class

**The Role of the Special Education Teacher**

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level, or through 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 should be 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
* life 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, should plan their interventions carefully to address pupils’ priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant continuum of support plan. Short-term planning should reflect the support plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each pupil’s specific needs on a fortnightly basis. Outcomes for pupils should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.

**The SEN teachers are responsible for;**

* Liaising with class teacher and organising timetable for support teaching
* Liaising with parents of pupils with special needs
* Supports the implementation of Student Support files at whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
* Carrying out Termly Reviews of the Student Support Files
* Participates in and or oversees the drafting of classroom support plans, school support plans and school support plus plans.

**Parental Involvement**

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consultedin 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.

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 will consult with parents when developing and reviewing polices relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school’s approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of Scoil Naomh Iosef 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.
* 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.

**Special Needs Assistants**

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

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 or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
* Ensure safety of SEN pupils in the school yard, and will 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
* Accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons where appropriate

**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 Ed. 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.

**Change in Allocating Special teaching supports**

The revised allocation model for all mainstream schools came into effect from September 2017.

Special Education Circular 0013/2017 provides full details on the revised Special Education Teaching Allocation.

**The main features of the revised model for allocating special education teaching supports**

Under the revised model, the Department provides special education teaching supports directly to schools based on their educational profiles (including a baseline component). A key principle underpinning this revised model is that all pupils, irrespective of special educational needs, are welcomed and enabled to enrol in their local schools. In addition, a fundamental objective is that special education teaching resources are utilised in the optimum manner to improve learning experiences and educational outcomes for pupils with special educational needs.

**Implementation​ ​of​ ​the​ ​Revised​ ​Allocation​ ​Model**

The following principles are used by Scoil Naomh Iosef to guide the implementation of the revised model for​ ​allocating​ ​special​ ​education​ ​teaching​ ​supports. They form a whole-school approach to provision​ ​for​ ​pupils​ ​with​ ​special​ ​educational​ ​needs​ ​in​ ​our​ ​school

Principles​ ​to​ ​guide​ ​the​ ​Implementation​ ​Process

* Resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs are used to facilitate the​ ​development​ ​of​ ​truly​ ​inclusive​ ​schools.
* 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.
* The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom,​ ​including​ ​pupils​ ​with​ ​special​ ​educational​ ​needs.
* Special education teaching supports provided to schools are used solely for the support of pupils with identified special educational needs, including those pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). The special education teaching supports are not used to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio in mainstream classes. Neither are they used to allow any special education teacher sole responsibility for the delivery of any curriculum subject to any particular​ ​class.
* 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.
* All appointed SET’s have the necessary experience and access to continuing professional development to support the diverse needs of pupils with special educational​ ​needs.

**Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties and Early Intervention**

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

* Development of agreed approaches to teaching Literacy and numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
* Provision of additional support in Language Development and any relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to those who need it.
* Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
* Close collaboration and consultation between the Infant Teacher and SET Team.
* Promotion of Literacy e.g print rich environment, DEAR, structured whole school approach to writing genre instruction (S.I.P), structured whole school approach to explicit teaching of comprehension strategies (Building Bridges), world book day, book fair, explicit oral language lessons, Aistear.
* Ready Set Go Maths, hands on approach, use of concrete materials, whole school approach to problem solving.
* Numeracy support through use of Numicon
* Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g homework policy, guidelines for parents
* Differentiation – adapting the learning environment.
* In-class support from the SET team
* Team teaching/Station Teaching
* Withdrawing individuals and groups
* Guided reading structured approach with class teacher and SEN teacher – 1st to 6th class
* Maths games – 1st & 2nd class – with class teacher and SEN teacher

**A Three Step Process to support Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

In Scoil Naomh Iosef, a three step process is in place to guide identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes for pupils with special educational needs.

* **Step 1 – 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. 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.

Stage One – Classroom Support

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

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| 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   This is informed by;  - Parental consultation  - Teacher Observation  - Teacher designed tasks  - Basic Needs Checklist  - Pupil Consultation – My Thoughts about School Checklist  - Language Screening Tests |

The class teacher opens a file for the child and completes a Stage One Classroom Support Plan. Class teacher will implement changes/differentiation as per the targets and monitor the child’s progress for an agreed period of time, up to 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 child’s needs would be better served in a small group or individually with a support teacher. Parents will need to sign their consent for School Support.

**Stage Two – School Support**

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| **Selection Process** | **Type of Support** |
| * Prevention and Early Intervention Programs (Ready Set Go Maths, Numicon, station teaching, Friends for Life) * Children in JI & SI whom English is an additional Language or newly arrived EAL students from 1st – 6th classes * Children on or below the 12th percentile in MICRA-T * Children with an identified need assessed by an external professional in literacy who are not on or below the 12th percentile such as; Borderline Mild General Learning Disability, mild general learning disability, specific learning disability, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. * Children on or below the 12th percentile in SIGMA-T * Children with an identified need assessed by an external professional in numeracy who are not on or below the 12th percentile such as; Borderline Mild General Learning Disability, mild general learning disability, specific learning disability, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. * Children who have not made adequate progress after interventions at stage 1 * Children in stage 1 that have not made adequate progress after EAL interventions | In - class support  Team teaching  Group withdrawal  Individual withdrawal  **Personnel**  SET Teacher  Class Teacher |

**A​ ​School​ ​Support​ ​Plan​ ​operates​ ​for​ ​an​ ​agreed​ ​period​ ​of​ ​time​ ​and​ ​is​ ​subject​ ​to​ ​review.**

**Stage 3 – School Support Plus**

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| **Selection Process** | **Type of Support** |
| Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a;   * Physical Disability * Hearing Impairment * Visual Impairment * Emotional Disturbance * Moderate General Learning Disability * Severe/profound General Learning Disability * Autistic Spectrum Disorder * Assessed Syndrome * Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment | In - class support  Team teaching  Group withdrawal  Individual withdrawal  **Personnel**  SET Teacher  Class Teacher |

**A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer​ ​term​ ​planning​ ​and​ ​consultation.**

**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, SET 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.

***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.

In some exceptional cases where a need arises ( e.g. bereavement, extreme behaviours), a child may move straight to school support plus.

* **Step 2 - Meeting The Needs and Allocating Resources**

Once pupil’s 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. We aim 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, 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.

At the end of each term, the SET team meet class teachers and review children’s needs, the resources in place and progress made using the Continuum of Support model and stage approach. The SET team then review this information termly. The SET team along with the principal and other staff members review all support and allocate resources for the subsequent term. 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.

* **Step 3 – Monitoring and Recording Outcomes for pupils with Special Educational Needs**

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 (teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This leads​ ​to​ ​the​ ​establishment​ ​of​ ​specific​ ​targets​ ​to​ ​be​ ​achieved​ ​within​ ​a​ ​defined​ ​timeframe.

Monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn leads to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File provides the teachers with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils.

In addition to monitoring outcomes at the individual level, we believe that it is also important to review outcomes at group, class and whole-school level. This review includes measures of attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being for​ ​pupils​ ​with​ ​special​ ​educational​ ​needs.

**Planning​ ​the​ ​allocation​ ​of​ ​special​ ​education​ ​teaching​ ​supports**

*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.

*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.
* Consideration will be given to methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group​ ​teaching.

*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.

*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

**Setting Targets**

Best Practice indicates that targets should be;

**S** - Specific

**M** - Measurable

**A** - Attainable

**R** – Relevant

**T** – Time Based

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. Identification of needs, planning, target setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem solving process. In Scoil Naomh Iosef, the process involves the class teacher, special education teachers, parents, the pupil and other relevant professionals. Interventions draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers. These interventions reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests.

Support plans set out;

- The agreed targets

- The resources required

- The strategies for implementation

- Time-frame for review

**Student Support File**

A Student Support File Template (Appendix 1) is used by the staff to enable the school to plan interventions and to track a pupil’s pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.

As special educational needs can vary from mild to transient to significant and enduring, educational planning reflects the level of need of the individual pupil. In this regard, the Student Support File facilitates a graduated response across the different levels of the Continuum: Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. For pupils with significant, enduring and complex needs, collaboration with external professionals, including multi-disciplinary teams, will be engaged to work with the child (for example, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and psychologist).

**Student Support File**

We use a Student Support File to plan interventions and to track a pupil’s pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates us in documenting progress and needs over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Our Student Support File is based on the NEPS template. All support files should include:

* Cover sheet with pupil’s details
* A timeline of actions
* Record of support received
* Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores
* Support plans (See Attached)
* Checklist

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 in a folder in a locked drawer in the SENCO’s classroom. Class teachers also have a copy in their assessment folder. If a child is discharged from support or support is no longer required, their file is moved to the locked filing cabinet in the office.

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.

A copy of all support plans are to be filed in a folder in a locked drawer in the SENCO’s classroom.

**Support Plans**

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

***Stage 1 – Classroom Support***

**Classroom Support Plan**. (CSP) This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the Class Teacher in collaboration with the 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. This could be at the end of a school term.

***Stage 2 – School Support***

**Group or Individual School Support Plan** **(SSP).** This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed SET 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. The plan should, for the most part, be implemented within the normal classroom setting and complimented by focused school based intervention programmes. Depending on the nature of the needs and on the school context, additional teaching might be within a small group or individual or a combination of both either in class or on a withdrawal basis. Home-based actions may also be included. After the plan has been drawn up, it should become a working document through the careful monitoring of the pupil’s response to the actions taken. The plan should include a review date.

***Stage 3 – School Support Plus***

**A School Support Plan Plus (SSPP).** This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed Special Education Teachers, in consultation with the child’s parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child based on the information gathered. 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 to the 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

IEP meetings are coordinated by an appointed IEP coordinator. This is usually one of the child’s Special Education Teachers. Parents will be invited to at least two out of three meetings depending on the needs of the child.

**SEN Records**

***Individual SEN Files***

All psychological reports are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office. NO **psychological reports should be saved to teachers laptops or removed from the school building.** 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. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to update and manage the SEN files of children on classroom support. The following should be stored

* Student Support File – in folder in locked drawer in SENCO’s classroom
* Psychological Report – in locked filing cabinet in office
* Copy of referrals made to outside agencies - in locked filing cabinet in office
* Copy of reports from outside agencies - in locked filing cabinet in office
* Record of SEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter- school meetings - in locked filing cabinet in office
* Record of SEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff - in locked filing cabinet in office

***Whole Class SEN Files***

Whole class SEN records such as results of Micra-T, Sigma-T, NNRIT are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office.

**Gathering Information and Assessment**

Assessment is part of what a class teacher does on a daily basis for all children. Some methods include self-assessment, questioning, teacher observation, portfolios and teacher designed tasks and tests. 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

**Assessment and Screening Tests**

In Scoil Naomh Iosef, we carry out a range of assessment procedures on **all** children

Please refer to School’s Assessment Policy for list of same.

We continually review the assessment and screening tests that we use in order to balance the needs of our pupils and the need to provide information for appropriate support.

**Inventory of Test Materials Used**

There are a variety of Screening Tests and Diagnostic Tests available and used in Scoil Naomh Iosef.

Please refer to School’s Assessment Policy for list of same.

**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, SEN teaching takes place in a room with a glass panel
* Where the there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.
* Parental Permission will be sought for one-to-one teaching
* Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET should collect and return children to their classrooms.
* 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.

**This policy will be reviewed every three years.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Date |
| Staff Consultation | 22/01/2019 |
| Parental Consultation | 23/01/2019 – 28/01/2019 |
| Ratified by BoM |  |



**APPENDIX 1**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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**

Date Actions

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Support Checklist** | | |
| **Name:** | **Age:** | **Class:** |
| **General Information** | **Date Checked** | **Comments** |
| 1. Parents/ Guardians Consulted |  |  |
| 1. Information from previous school/preschool gathered |  |  |
| 1. Hearing |  |  |
| 1. Vision |  |  |
| 1. Medical Needs |  |  |
| 1. Basic Needs Checklist completed |  |  |
| 1. Assessment of learning- screening |  |  |
| 1. Observation of learning style/approach to learning |  |  |
| 1. Observation of behaviour |  |  |
| 1. Interview with pupil |  |  |
| 1. Classroom work differentiated? |  |  |
| 1. Learning environment adapted? |  |  |
| 1. Yard/school environments adapted? |  |  |
| 1. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals? |  |  |
| 1. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff? |  |  |
| 1. Other interventions put in place in school? |  |  |
| **Action needed** |  |  |
| *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* | | |

|  |
| --- |
| **SUPPORT PLAN\*** *Classroom Support   School Support (Support for Some)   School Support Plus (Support for A Few)* |

**To be completed by the teacher(s).**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s name |  | | Age |  |
| Lead teacher |  | | Class/year |  |
| Start date of plan |  | |  |  |
| Review date of plan |  | |  |  |
| Student’s strengths and interests | | | | |
| Priority concerns | | | | |
| Possible reasons for concerns | | | | |
| Targets for the student | | | | |
| Strategies to help the student achieve the targets | | | | |
| Staff involved and resources needed | | | | |
| Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s) | |  | | |
| Signature of teacher | |  | | |

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this plan.

|  |
| --- |
| **SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD\***   *Classroom Support  School Support (Support for Some)   School Support Plus (Support for A Few)* |

**APPENDIX 2**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s name | | Class/ Year |  |
| Names of those present at review | | Date of Review | |
| What areas of the plan have been most successful and why? | | | |
| Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them? | | | |
| Have the student’s needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how? | | | |
| Recommended future actions – *what, how, who, when?* | | | |
| Any comments from the student? | | | |
| Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s comment? | | | |
| Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s) |  | | |
| Signature of teacher(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 |

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

**APPENDIX 3**

**Exceptional Ability & Giftedness Policy**

Definition and Background:

‘An able child is one that achieves or has the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of their peer group. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range’. (Eyre, 1999)

* Children who are considered gifted may have been assessed by a psychologist and found to have a high level of intelligence (an IQ score of 130+, 98th Percentile)
* Giftedness is recognised as a ‘disability’ or special education condition in the Education Act (1998).

**School Ethos:**

We, the teaching staff at Scoil Naomh Iosef have agreed to cater for those pupils who are exceptionally able in **academic** areas through activities such as Guided Reading, Station Teaching etc.

Those pupils who show exceptional talent in **non-academic** areas e.g. psychomotor ability, mechanical aptitude, visual and performing arts ability, will be given information regarding the relevant outside agencies.

**Procedure for identification of pupils with Exceptional Ability**

**Criteria for Assessment:**

1. A range of strategies may be used to identify exceptionally able pupils:

* Annual standardised tests
* NRIT
* Psychological Assessments
* Teacher observation
* Parental requests
* Referral by other individuals, schools or organisations.

2. Where a teacher observes children displaying exceptional ability in a specific academic area, then further assessment may be carried out to establish giftedness. Where it is a non-academic area, the parent will be informed of outside agencies more suited to the development of the pupil’s giftedness.

**Catering for Pupils with Exceptional Ability:**

Pupils who meet the criteria for exceptionally able (IQ of 130+) will be catered for within the classroom based on a differentiated programme of work **or** if deemed possible by the Principal may be offered extension classes on a withdrawal basis, subject to the approval of the pupil and their parents. These classes will form part of each SET’s timetable where feasible.

**Responsibility and Management:**

1. The class teacher is responsible for differentiation within the classroom, including acquisition and distribution of teaching resources for differentiation.

2. The SET team will be responsible for the assessment stage of this process, organisation of extension classes including timetabling (where applicable), acquisition and distribution of information regarding referral and assessment by outside agencies.

3. The Principal will liaise with parents, SETs and class teachers throughout the process.

4. According to guidelines for professional development, costs will be paid by the BoM to teaching staff who attend in-service training and courses about giftedness.

This policy is subject to review following the issue of NCCA Guidelines or at least every 3 years.