*Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir*

*Inclusive and Special Education Policy*

**Introduction**

This review of the Inclusive and Special Education Policy was carried out by the Special Education Team during the 2017/18 school year in collaboration with staff and the Board of Management in light of the revised Department of Education and Skills allocation for Special Education under Circular 13/17.

**1.0 Context**

Scoil an Fhraoich Mhoir, the Heath is a Mainstream Primary school under the patronage of the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin. Our school is dedicated to the implementation of an effective system for meeting the needs of all our pupils in accordance with our mission statement, the resources provided by the DES and the Board of Management. We believe that all our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to their individual needs. We recognise the uniqueness of each child in our care, and we strive to develop his/her full potential, in a nurturing and mutually respectful atmosphere. Our school motto ‘*Together We Learn*’ reflects this ethos.

This policy aims to enable children with Special Education Needs (SEN) 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 the environment, activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The purpose of this policy is to:

* To develop positive attitudes to school and learning.
* Provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
* To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in literacy and numeracy.
* To address social and emotional needs.
* To establish early intervention and prevention programmes designed to enhance children’s skillsets and learning.
* To support classroom teachers in dealing with complex needs.
* Comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
* 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 Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools).

**1.1 Guiding Principles**

The school recognises that the best outcomes for children will be achieved by:

* The development and implementation of whole school policies.
* Whole school/staff involvement in addressing special educational needs.
* Effective communication and collaboration amongst staff and between schools and parents/guardians.
* Emphasis on early intervention.
* Direction of resources towards pupils in the greatest need.

# 2.0 Inclusive Education in Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir

# Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir, has adopted a whole-school approach to inclusion. A positive ethos and learning environment is encouraged, whereby all students, including those with special educational and additional needs, feel welcome and experience a sense of community and belonging. The school community promotes the active engagement of each student in their learning and in the life of the school. There is a commitment to developing students’ academic, social, emotional and independent living skills coupled with a focus on high aspirations and improving outcomes for all.

**2.1 Inclusive Practice**

* Buddy System/ Yard Helpers: Yard helpers are on the infant yard each day. To enable the school to fulfil its policy with regard to the integration and inclusion of all pupils, a buddy system on yard will be operated according to the needs arising. This is to establish a welcoming and tolerant attitude towards difference within the school community.
* We recognise that the S.P.H.E. programme can play a valuable role in supporting inclusiveness when effectively delivered to all pupils. Circle time will be used to integrate and include all pupils with SEN.
* Celebrate achievements outside of academic performance – Wall of Fame, Kindness Board in school hall.
* Mindfulness and meditation are also practised in our school, with a focus on well being and the holistic development of the child.
* We operate a whole school system of movement breaks whereby pupils with a recognised need are provided with regular, active movement breaks in school hall.
* A sensory room is available within our school to address pupils who may have sensory needs.
* All pupils are entitled to their breaks and playtimes. Special Needs pupils are supported and monitored by the S.N.As and the Teacher on duty on the yard. Special arrangements and management programmes are supported by all staff.
* The Health and Safety Policy, available to all members of staff, is applicable to all school staff and pupils. Should the question of the administration of medication arise refer to the relevant policy.
* Special Needs pupils who have needs with regard to hygiene, toilet training and self-care issues are provided with a private toilet room and shower facility if required.

# 3.0 Aims of Special Education Support

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

* Promote inclusion of, and provide support to, students identified with special educational and additional needs by offering appropriate forms of education provision and the most efficient use of available resources.
* Identify pupils with special educational and additional needs as early and thoroughly as possible using a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
* Allocate resources, to effectively meet the needs of SEN pupils.
* Divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs.
* Track, monitor, review and report on the progress of pupils with additional needs.
* Communicate information between SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians.

**4.0 The Continuum of Support**

### In Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir we employ a staged approach to supporting students. The NEPS Continuum of Support provides a structure for this.

### http://s3.studylib.net/store/data/007219789_2-33049d9fad0dbe00e6eaf85335b468c9.png

### Stage 1: Classroom Support (Support for All)

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, or different from those required by other pupils in their class. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs. In order to proactively support students, a number of interventions are in place to address additional needs in the areas of numeracy, literacy, social and emotional learning and development.

Such interventions include:

* Differentiation by product, instruction, resource, support and time given to complete tasks.
* Co-teaching within the mainstream classrooms.
* Specific programmes such as Maths Re-enforcers, Forward Together, Friends for Life, Weaving Well Being.
* School designed initiatives focusing on areas such as oral language, writing genres, problem solving, handwriting etc.

Where a teacher/parent has specific concerns regarding a student’s learning or social development, following engagement with some of the above interventions, the classroom teacher with the SET will arrange to meet with parents/guardians. At this meeting, a Classroom Support Checklist will be completed. This will be used to inform the next stage of the process.

Depending on the need, an individualised Classroom Support Plan may be devised or, if appropriate, the student will move to Stage II (School Support) of the Continuum of Support.

Stage II: School Support (Support for Some)

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. At this stage, some diagnostic testing may be carried out by SET.

The parents and the classroom teacher will be involved with the SET in drawing up the Student Support Plan (formerly referred to as an Individual Education Plan), which will include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom and during support teaching. After an agreed period of time, the SET and the classroom teacher, in consultation with parents/guardians, will review the rate of progress of each student receiving support teaching. If significant concerns remain, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at Stage III.

In the case of students with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, in certain circumstances, more urgent action may be needed. In these cases the student’s needs will, with parents’ permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case will be referred to the clinical services of the Health Services Executive. This may lead to a more detailed behavioural management programme, to be implemented at home and in class, or to a referral for further specialist assessment (Stage III).

*Stage III: School Support Plus (Support for a few)*

Some students who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at Stage III. The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school in respect of students with learning difficulties or with mild and/or moderate behavioural problems who have failed to progress after support teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of students with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc. 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 Support Plan. (Sept 2018)

The SET and the class teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist(s) will then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. *The parents will be fully consulted throughout this process.* This programme will be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning programme and referral for specialist review, as necessary.

See NEPS Continuum of Support - Guidelines for teachers for further details.

## 5.0 Student Support File

When a teacher or parent expresses concern about a student, a Student Support File is opened at Stage I/II of the Continuum of Support. The Student Support File allows the school to track the student’s pathway through the Continuum of Support – right from the start of the support process, and onwards, if necessary, through to the School Support (for some) and School Support Plus (for a few) levels.

Contents of the Student Support File:

a. Student details

b. Log of actions

c. Support checklist

d. Student Support Plan (See section 5.1)

e. Support Review Record

## 5.1 Student Support Plan (SSP)

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. At the beginning of a term of support teaching, planning will be based on the individual needs of the students.

The SSP is used to record relevant information relating to a student’s learning attainments and his/her learning strengths and needs.

Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir adopts an inclusive approach to the education of children with special educational and additional needs. This means that the student, his/her classroom teacher, parents, the Special Education Teacher, the SNA (where appropriate) and the school principal along with any other relevant people such as guardians, educational psychologists, occupational and language therapists are included in the process, where practicable.

Our Student Support File is based on the NEPS template and should include:

1. Student details
2. Student’s strengths and interests
3. Checklists
4. Priority concerns and possible reasons for concerns
5. Targets for the student
6. Strategies to help student achieve the targets
7. Staff involved and resources needed
8. Signatures of parents/guardians and teachers

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

Stage 1 – Classroom Support

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

A Support Plan at stage 2 is a Student 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.

Stage 3 – School Support Plus

A Support Plan at stage 3 is a Student 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 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.

**6.0 Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

Supporting learning is the collaborative responsibility of all. It is envisaged that the Board of Management, principal teacher, classroom teachers, Special Education Teachers, parents and children will all contribute to the development and implementation of the school’s policy on Inclusive and Special Education.

**6.1 The Board of Management**

The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting and monitoring school policy on Inclusive and Special Education. The Board of Management will discharge this responsibility as per DES guidelines, Circular 13/17.

The Board of Management shall:

* Oversee the development, implementation and review of the Inclusive and Special Education Policy.
* Endeavour to ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the Special Education Teachers.
* Provide a secure facility for storage of records relating to students in receipt of Special Education Support.
* Endeavour to provide appropriate training as required by school staff in dealing with Special Educational needs.

## 6.2 The Principal

*‘The principal has overall responsibility for the school’s learning support programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs’.* (Learning Support Guidelines p. 38).

The Education Act (1998) and the EPSEN Act (2004) have all reiterated this responsibility.

In Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir the principal:

* Assumes overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school’s policy on Inclusive and Special Education in co-operation with the classroom teachers, SETs and post holders.
* Monitors the implementation of the school policy on Inclusive and Special Education on an ongoing basis.
* Assigns staff strategically to teaching roles including SET roles and co-ordinates teachers’ work to ensure continuity of provision for pupils.
* Ensures that whole school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professional agencies.
* Communicates with the SENO.
* Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify students with special educational and additional needs so that these students can be provided with the support they need.
* Encourages and facilitates continuous professional development of the staff to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of inclusive and special education.
* Informs teachers about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
* Allocates time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents.

## 6.3 The Special Education Co-ordinator

Linda O’ Connell fills the role of co-ordinating inclusive and special education in Scoil an Fhraoich Mhóir. The co-ordinator oversees the day-to-day operation of the support teaching programme, although final responsibility rests with the principal.

The co-ordinator of Special Education:

* Maintains a list of students who are in receipt of special education.
* Helps to co-ordinate the case loads and work schedules of the Special Education Teachers and SNAs.
* Liaises with parents and organises consultations and appointments with support agencies.
* Liaises specifically with NCSE in relation to the acquisition of assistive technology, SNA assistance, etc.
* Aids the completion of the process of application for exemption from Irish in accordance with Circular 12/96.
* Is responsible for the purchase of materials and resources used by SETs.
* Ensures that all members of staff are familiar with and adopt the staged approach to the Continuum of Support.
* Co-ordinates the whole school standardised testing at each class level.
* Co-ordinates the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests.
* Oversees the tracking system of test results on password-protected Aladdin software to monitor the progress of pupils.
* Supports the class teacher in writing of Support Plans/Files.
* Communicates with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis.
* Co-ordinates regular SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs.

**6.4 The Classroom Teacher**

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of all pupils in his/her class, and has a central role in identifying and responding to students with special educational and additional needs. They should:

* Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent 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, making specific accommodations for pupils within the class as a result of concerns about a student’s progress, application, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers.
* Gather information through formal and informal means, in line with Continuum of Support Guidelines, with a view to informing interventions.
* Administer standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines.
* Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Class Co-ordinators to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching.
* Liaise with external agencies, when relevant.
* Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
* Regularly meet with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff to review Support Files.

**Involvement in the planning process** -

-Open a Student Support File once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support.

-Collaborate with SET in developing classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support.

-Collaborate with SET to develop Student Support Plan (SSP) for each pupil in receipt of School Support and School Support Plus.

- Where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching.

- Adjust the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session.

**6.5 The Special Education Teacher (SET)**

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. Depending on the learning needs identified, a student with special educational and additional needs may be supported at classroom level through a variety of co-teaching approaches or, alternatively, through withdrawal support models. Withdrawal may be on an individual or small group basis. The SET will regularly consult with both the classroom teacher and parents throughout the Continuum of Support.

In implementing the School Support Plan, the SETs will:

* Collaboratively develop Student Support File from September 2018 for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other relevant staff.
* Collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop a Student Support Plan (from 2018/2019) for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus.
* Meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and who require a Student Support Plan.
* Maintain short term plans for each individual or group in receipt of support teaching.
* Provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in class support basis.
* Support whole-school procedures for screening.
* Co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload.
* Discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings.
* Consult with parents, in conjunction with the classroom teacher, and obtain written permission for inclusion in support teaching by withdrawal and for any diagnostic testing that may be required.
* Administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcome of those assessments which are used to inform planning.
* Contribute to the review and development of the policy for Inclusive and Special Education at whole school level.
* Contribute at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials. Responsibility for the purchase of materials rests with the Special Education Co-ordinator.
* 6th Class support teachers liaise with the staff of secondary schools in relation to transfer of documentation pertaining to students at transfer. Transition Plans will be devised for students with complex needs who transfer to a new school.
* Provide necessary information to a SEN pupil’s receiving school once a transfer letter has been received.

**6.6 Special Needs Assistants**

The duties of the SNA will be carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers. The SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned.

The SNA should:

•Support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum.

• Contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils.

• Support learning and teaching in the classroom.

• Attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM.

• Attend IEP meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary.

• Ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty.

• Maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil.

• Accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate.

**6.7 Parents**

*“Parents through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child’s learning programmes”*

(Learning Support Guidelines p. 52).

The role of parents is critical in children experiencing success in school. Parents contribute to the initial diagnostic assessment by sharing insights in to their child’s development and learning difficulties, by discussing the outcomes of the assessment and by contributing to the selection of learning targets and associated activities based on the child’s needs.

Where a child is in receipt of support teaching from a Special Education Teacher, the parents/guardians:

* Participate in the development of the child’s SSP,share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child’s development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage.
* Discuss their child’s progress with the classroom teacher and Special Education Teacher and in cases where support teaching is to be continued, discuss the revised learning targets and activities in their child’s SSP.
* Support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child’s learning
* Attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team.
* Inform the post-primary school of their child’s needs, at the transition stage.
* To enhance and preserve the self-esteem of the child.
* To ensure the child attends school and avoids any unnecessary absences.

## 6.8 Students with Special Educational and Additional Needs

A student in receipt of support teaching should, where appropriate:

* Be an active participant in developing his/her own Student Support Plan and become familiar with the learning targets that have been set for him/her.
* Contribute to the evaluation of his/her progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.
* Develop ‘ownership’ of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning.

**7.0 Procedure for Identifying Students Requiring Support**

The following identification procedure encompasses all current guidelines and general good practice, which are informed by Circular 0013/2017 and the *Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (2017).

Circular 0013/2017 states that additional teaching supports are allocated according to identified needs rather than being based on a diagnosis of disability. The level and type of support reflects the specific targets of individual students as set out in their Student Support Plan and is informed by careful monitoring and regular review of progress. Following a period of intervention, some students may no longer require additional teaching supports; some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive support.

The SET team will identify students in the following groups who require support teaching:

* Students with complex special educational and additional needs (e.g. students with ASD, dyspraxia, an assessed syndrome, etc.) where such support is deemed necessary.
* Students with a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.).
* Students with a physical impairment (visual, auditory, etc.).
* Students with social, emotional and/or behavioural needs, where such support is deemed necessary.
* Students identified as requiring support in literacy and numeracy, informed by standardised test results (below the 10th percentile), teacher observations and diagnostic tests, where appropriate.
* Students identified as exceptionally able, informed by standardised test results and teacher observations, where there are sufficient resources available to cater for this group
  1. **Enrolment**

Some children will have clearly identified needs prior to enrolment. Parents should inform the school of these needs as early as possible in order that resources may be sought and put in place. To facilitate this, the school’s application form contains a section regarding medical/educational needs and details any interventions to date. The application form also requests copies of any written professional reports regarding the child. When an offer of enrolment is made to a parent/guardian they are reminded of the importance of contacting the school with any concern they may have regarding their child.

No child will be denied enrolment due to a disability, unless in the opinion of the Board of Management the pupil has special needs such that, even with additional resources available from the DES, the school cannot meet such needs and/or provide the pupil with an appropriate education.

Every effort will be made by the Board of Management to ensure that any provisions deemed necessary for the education of a child, will be put in place, where possible in advance of the child starting school.

For further information on enrolment cf Enrolment Policy.

**7.2 Identification and Assessment**

Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs:

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education and Skills 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.

By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils’ educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, - sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL TEACHING SUPPORT

Stage 1 Classroom Support

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupils | Any pupil about whom there is a concern. |
| Planning requirements | Student Support File is opened |
| Type of support | Early identification and prevention programmes  Differentiation through support, task, time allowed etc.  Ability based groupings.  SET teacher present |
| Personnel | SET teacher  Class Teacher |

Stage 2 School Support

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupils | Children in JI & SI for whom English is an additional language or children for whom English is an additional language newly arrived in Ireland in 1st – 6th  Children on or under the 10th Percentile in Literacy Standardised Tests  Children on or under the 10th Percentile in SIGMA T  Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals who are not on or below the 10th percentile in Literacy or Numeracy such as  1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability  2. Mild General Learning Disability  3. Specific Learning Disability  4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  Children who have not made adequate progress after interventions at Stage 1 |
| Planning requirements | Group or Individual Profile and Learning Programme/ SSP 2018 |
| Types of support | In-Class Support  Team-Teaching  Group Withdrawal  Individual Withdrawal |
| Personnel | SET teacher  Class Teacher |

Stage 3 School Support Plus

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pupils | 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 |
| Planning requirements | Individual Education Plan/SSP 2018 |
| Type of Support | In-Class Support  Team-Teaching Group  Withdrawal  Individual Withdrawal |
| Personnel | SET teacher  Class Teacher  Outside Agencies |

Information Gathering 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 of work 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.

## 8.0 Support Teaching

Support teaching will be implemented in the most appropriate way, taking into account the needs of the student and/or group. This may include co-teaching or support through withdrawal. This decision will be made in consultation with the classroom teacher, the SET and the student’s parents/guardians.

There are 5 support teachers at present with a sixth shared position. Each class level/band of levels has a specific support teacher assigned to them for the year. Emphasis is placed on early intervention as we strongly believe the best outcomes are achieved this way. In this regard priority will be given to junior classes and when possible a member of the SET team will be allocated to junior classes as an effective response to meeting the needs of pupils’ /experiencing learning difficulties in the hope that it will avert greater difficulties at a later stage.

#### 8.1 School support through co-teaching

Several approaches to co-teaching are employed in order to support students. These include, but are not limited to:

* Team teaching
* Parallel teaching
* Station teaching
* Alternative teaching
* Aistear- JI/SI
* Guided Reading

Effective co-teaching requires the classroom teacher and the SET to co-plan, co-teach and co-assess. Regular professional conversations should take place between the classroom teacher and the SET to inform planning and teaching.

#### 8.2 School support through withdrawal

Where appropriate, students will be withdrawn to receive support teaching. Students will receive support in small groups. If deemed necessary, students may receive individual support.

**8.3 Referral for Assessment by other Agencies**

Within the Continuum of Support if support has been implemented and the pupil is not making progress, consideration will be given to recommending further assessment e.g. Speech and language, Occupational Therapy, Behavioural/Clinical Assessment.

Parents will be invited to discuss the matter with the class teacher and SET and will be required to give written permission for the assessment.

## 9.0 Tracking and Recording

DES Guidelines (2017) state that monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in Student Support Plans.

In Scoil an Fhraoich Mhoir there is ongoing monitoring of each student’s progress in relation to their learning targets using the student’s Support Review Record (contained in the Student Support File) so that class teaching and support teaching continue to be responsive to the student’s needs at all times.

**10.0 Record Keeping**

Records are maintained by the Special Education Team in respect of each student who is in receipt of support teaching. These include a Student Support File (2018), short and long term plans.

Other records that provide evidence of the student’s progress towards agreed learning targets include checklists, running records, samples of written work, etc. All records are stored in the SET’s classroom and overview folder in the principal’s office. Professional reports are stored securely in a filing cabinet. Access to such professional reports will be restricted to those who directly support the student.

## 11.0 Continuing/Discontinuing Support Teaching

Where support teaching is to be extended after the agreed period, an updated Student Support Plan will be developed. This is done in consultation with the Special Education Co-ordinator, classroom teacher, parents and SET and will reflect any changes that result from the Support Review Record.

Support teaching may be discontinued in the following circumstances:

* The student, on assessment, performs above the percentile specified in the procedure for identifying children who require support.
* Learning targets have been sufficiently met.
* It is considered to be in the student’s best interests.

Support will only be withdrawn after consultation with the parents, classroom teacher, SET and the principal.

**12.0 Parental Engagement**

Parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for students with special educational and additional needs. Parents are consulted in relation to their children’s needs and the strategies being developed to support them. They are also involved in reviewing their child’s progress. We recognise and respect the parent/guardian’s right to choose not to avail of the recommended support for their child. In such circumstances, parents will be requested to inform the principal in writing confirming their position.

**13.0 Timetabling**

When drawing up timetables it is important to remember that:

• Timetables should be continually reviewed.

• Children should not miss the same subject each time they are withdrawn, in so far as is practicible /

• If a pupil is unavailable for their supplementary session due to special circumstances, the Special Education Teacher will attempt to reschedule the session with the co-operation of another teacher.

• Interruptions to classes/classrooms should be kept to a minimum.

## Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

As all staff members have responsibility for supporting students with special educational and additional needs, it is important that all staff engage in appropriate CPD to develop the capacity of our school to meet the needs of all students.

The principal and BOM facilitate the attendance of the SETs at CPD courses and events.

## 15.0 Reviewing the Inclusive and Special Education Policy

A comprehensive review and revision of the elements of the Inclusive and Special Education policy will take place in 2019/20. This review will consider the views of the B.O.M., parents, the principal, the classroom teacher and the Special Education Team. This review will be initiated by the SETCO. Changes in specific practices will be made as deemed necessary. Modifications to practice may be made from time to time outside of the formal review.

**16.0 Resources**

Resource inventory will be reviewed annually by SETCO.

**17.0 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. Challenging behaviour and social and emotional disturbance may pose particular health and safety risks for both pupils and staff. Please see school’s Code of Behaviour and Physical Restraint policies.

Supervision/Child Protection

• Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SET teacher is responsible for ensuring that both themselves and the pupil are visible through the glass panel in the door.

• Where the there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.

• Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET teacher should collect and return children to their classrooms.

• 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.

## Implementation Date:

## This policy will take effect from the start of the 2018/’19 school year.

## Ratification and Communication

This review was ratified by BOM on 19th April 2018. The next review will take place in the 2019/’20 school year or sooner if deemed to be required.