



Special Education Needs Policy

Scoil Mhuire, Clontibret

Introductory Statement:

Our Special Education Needs Policy was coordinated by the support team, in consultation with staff in September 2019. The development of our SEN policy was identified as one of our priorities during a whole school development planning day in June 2017 and reviewed in June 2022. This policy is drawn up in accordance with Circular No 0013/2017.

School Details:

Scoil Mhuire is a Catholic School under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher. It is managed by a Board of Management, elected according to the procedures agreed by the Partners in Education. The school has a Catholic ethos and this ethos acknowledges the cultural and religious values of all pupils attending the school. The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and we support that role.

Scoil Mhuire is a mixed rural primary school in Clontibret, Co. Monaghan. The school has seven mainstream classes and three special classes for children on the autistic spectrum.

Scoil Mhuire strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
- outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school. Comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
- fulfil DES Circular 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 (See Appendix 1)

Aims of the Policy

- This policy aims to outline our procedures and practices in:
- identifying additional needs that our pupils may have
- allocating resources to effectively meet the needs of children with additional needs
- dividing the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs
- tracking, monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the progress of children with additional needs
- communicating information between the SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians
- supporting and promoting a policy of inclusion throughout our school

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management:

The BOM oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on Special Educational Needs. They also ensure that adequate classroom accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided.

Principal:

The *Learning Support Guidelines (2000, P.39)* outline that the principal has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school. The new allocation model states the principal's leadership role is central and includes the following;

The school principal should:

- implement and monitor the school's Additional Needs policy on an on-going basis.
- assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles.
- co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils.
- assign SNAs appropriately and as necessary as recommended in the New Frontloading Model, in accordance with Circular 0030/2014.
- ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies.
- ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically.
- facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- assign responsibility for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher (i.e. SENCO).
- communicate with the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser).
- oversee a whole school assessment and screening programme.
- allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents.
- inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SET.
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress

SEN Co-ordinator:

SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) should:

- communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis
- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the SET team and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments (NEPS)
- liaise with SEN Team to identify, support and monitor children with additional needs
- co-ordinate regular SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication

and support for children with additional needs

- collaborate with the SET team in creating timetables for additional support
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate the whole-school standardised testing at each class level
- co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- select children for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted
- maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support

Special Education Team:

As part of their responsibilities, Special Education Teachers work with staff throughout the school to help support and promote access to additional supports available for those children who require them.

They should:

- regularly consult/meet with class teachers to discuss the needs of the pupils in their class
- advise the class teacher, when required, of possible interventions to meet the needs of their pupils
- advise class teacher on procedures for availing of external special needs services
- support the class teacher in creating a Student Support File once additional support is implemented
- in collaboration with the class teacher draw up School Support plans
- In collaboration with the class teacher and outside agencies draw up School Support Plus plans
- where requested by the class teacher, meet parents to discuss moving a child from classroom support to school support or when referring to an outside agency
- in collaboration with the SENCO, screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- communicate with the SENCO and the SET team regarding any concerns raised by class teachers at SET team planning meetings
- update and maintain class SEN records and test results
- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs

Class Teacher:

Class teachers 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, 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
- liaise with the Special Class Teacher in order to sufficiently plan and prepare for successful integration as appropriate
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines

- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Team to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- contact/meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- open a Pupil Support File once additional needs have been identified that require implementation of a Classroom Support Plan
- devise and implement the classroom support plan, monitor pupil progress and review after a period of 6 weeks. Determine if another support plan should be devised, or file closed (may be opened again at any time)
- in the case of a child not having reached their specified targets after the implementation of 2-3 Classroom Support Plans, consult with parents and collaborate with SEN TEAM to develop a School Support plan for the child
- meet with Special Education Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support and School Support Plus Plans.
- regularly liaise with Special Education Teachers and relevant staff to review School Support and School Support Plus plans
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- adjust the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned
- liaise with and seek advice from the SEN Team

Special Class Teacher:

Special class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class. They should:

- implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils
- create a positive learning environment within the classroom
- promote skills development across all areas and a variety of settings, as far as is possible
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- in consultation with parents, outside agencies and the child (where appropriate) draw up a school support plus plan (initial review) in October and review in February, and monitor targets throughout the year
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to both the care and academic needs of pupils in the class
- provide for meaningful integration of children into mainstream as appropriate- see Integration Policy
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines, as appropriate

- liaise with and seek advice from the SEN Team as needed

Special Education Teacher (SET)

The SET teacher should:

- familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop School Support Plans for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- open, in conjunction with class teacher, a Student Support File for those children who enrol with an identified need automatically requiring a School Support Plus Plan
- meet with class teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in need/receipt of School Support Plus.
- regularly meet with class teachers and relevant staff to review School Support Plus Plans
- meet twice a year with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review School Support Plus Plans.
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in- class support basis
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- administer and interpret standardised/diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- provide necessary information to and liaise closely with the SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received

Special Needs Assistants:

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned (Circular 0030/2014) (See the SNA Policy)

The SNA should:

- endeavour to enable students with additional care needs to attend, participate and be fully included in the school setting
- be familiar with the specific care/additional care support targets of the individual child
- contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils, while supporting

development of the child's independence skills

- attend School Support Plus 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
- relay a summary of support provided to their SEN pupil in Mainstream to the class teacher on a weekly basis or more regularly, as appropriate
- accompany pupil to supplementary lessons/mainstream classes when appropriate
- attend, where possible, training courses/workshops made available.

Parents/Guardians:

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children have much to contribute to their child's learning.

Parent/Guardian should:

- 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
- 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
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- inform the post-primary school of their child's needs at the transition stage

Pupils:

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

- contribute to the development/review of their support plan
- become familiar with the targets that have been set for them
- develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning
- contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

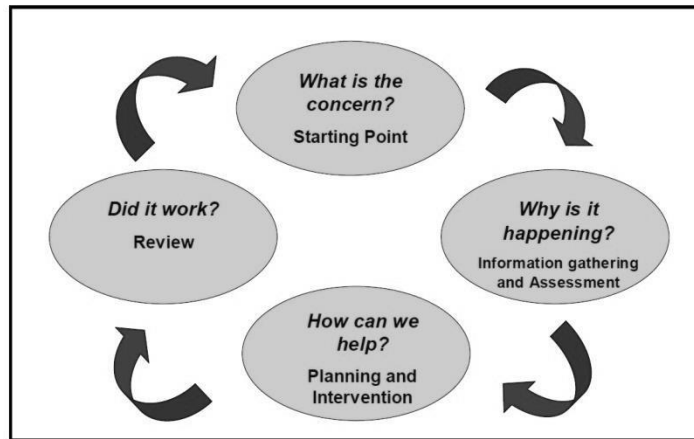
Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs

Continuum of Support

- We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs. Like this framework, we recognise that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs. By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental,

moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

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



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

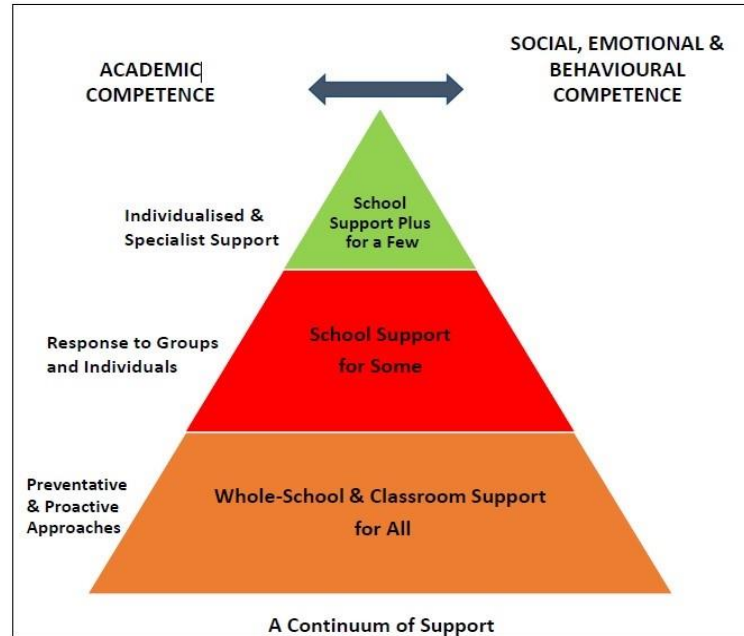
The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:

STAGE 1 CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are **additional to or different** from those required by other pupils in their class. Problem-solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil.

If the teacher/parent has concerns about a child, the teacher may request input from the SEN Team to discuss the nature of the

concerns and consider strategies which may be effective. However, if a parent has a concern which is liaised with the class teacher the teacher, parent and SEN Team discuss the nature of the concern 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. These strategies will be recorded in a Classroom Support Plan.



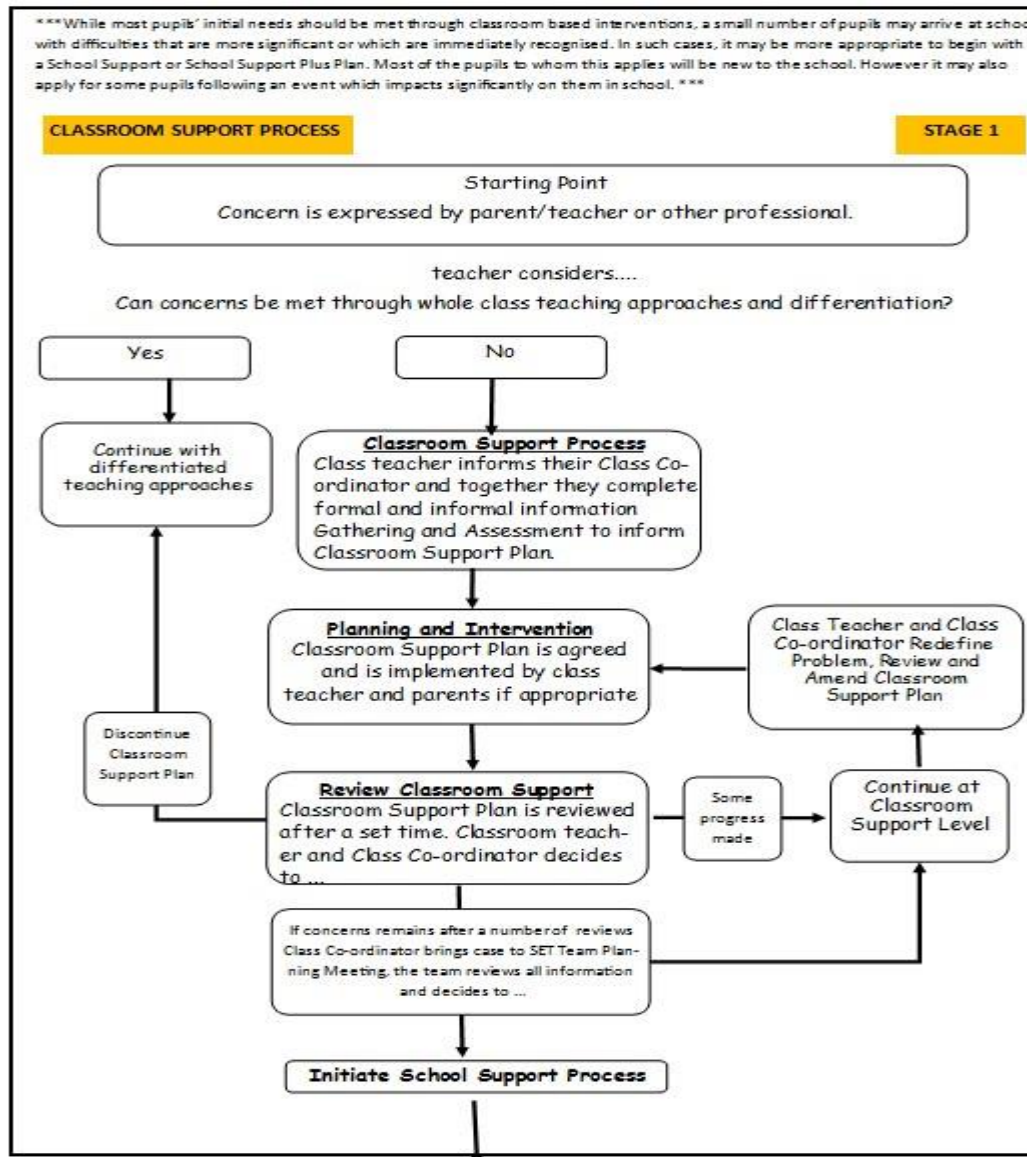
STAGE 2 SCHOOL SUPPORT

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required where a child who has had a minimum of two Classroom Support Plans implemented and the child did not reach their priority target(s). The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education 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. This plan will be opened collaboratively with the SET team, Class Teacher and Parents.

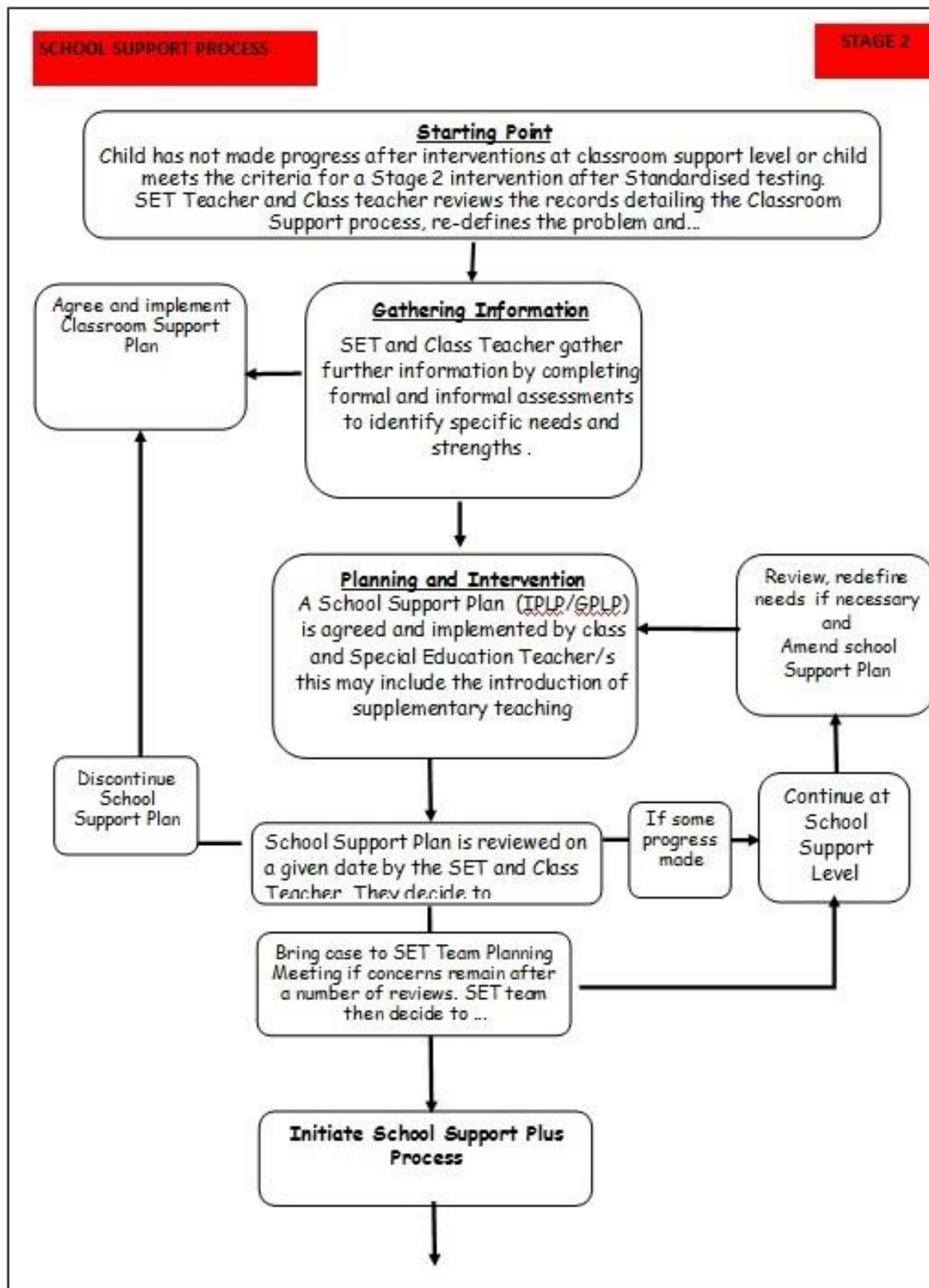
STAGE 3 SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

If a pupil's special educational needs are **severe and/or persistent**, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of his/her School Support Plus Plan.

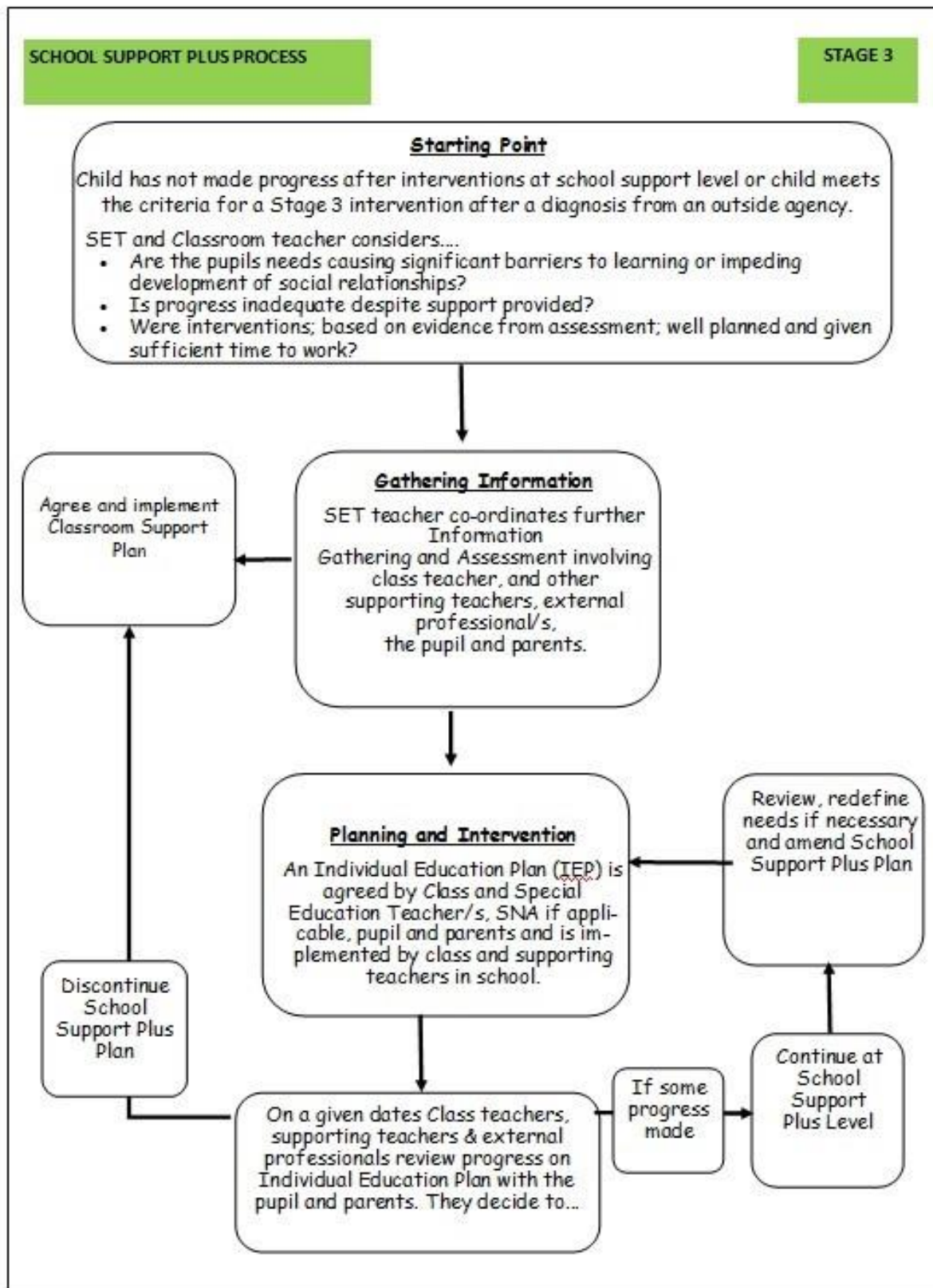
The flow diagrams below outline how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs. A more comprehensive explanation of each stage can be in the Continuum of Support – Guidelines for teachers https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf



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



*adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps, see page 22 - 25 of the Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers



* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 32 - 35 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

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 and school support plus plans.

Assessment and Screening Tests:

In our school we carry out the following assessment procedures:

- Junior Infants: Observation, Checklists, Language Links Screening
- Senior Infants: Observation, Checklists, Reading Recovery, Two Peas Phonological Assessment
- 1st class: Observation, Checklists, Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T, Reading Recovery and New Zealand Mathematical checklist, NNRIT
- 2nd class: Observation, Checklists Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T
- 3rd class: Observation, Checklists, Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T.
- 4th class Observation, Checklists, Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T.
- 5th class: Observation, Checklists, Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T and NNRIT/NVRT.
- 6th class: Observation, Checklists, Drumcondra Reading, Sigma T.

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. Therefore, we may deviate from the above list prior to the review date.

Results will be reviewed and monitored by the SEN Team and pupils scoring at or below the 12th Percentile will be considered for priority support in Numeracy and Literacy.

Inventory of Test Materials

Screening Tests

- Reading Recovery Assessments
- Drumcondra Spelling
- Drumcondra English
- New Zealand Maths Checklist
- MALT (Selected Pupils)
- Sigma-T
- New Non- Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)
- Dyslexia Screening Test (DST – J)

Diagnostic Tests

The following tests are among those available for administration:

- WRAT 4
- PM Benchmarking
- Aston Index
- MALT
- RAIN Sentence Reading Test
- * YARC (York Assessment of Reading Comprehension)
- * Reading Recovery Observation survey
- * Two Peas Phonological Awareness Assessment
- * NEPS Word Test/Duncan

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of 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 pupils 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.
- Adaptation of learning of environment when required
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Infant Teachers and the SET team.
- Promotion of literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), USSR (Uninterrupted, Sustained Silent Reading)
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. Ready Set Go Maths, Hands-on approach....
- Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g. Ready-Set-Go-Maths, Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents.
- Co-teaching methodologies are implemented within the Junior Classes
- In-class support from the SET team: Team Teaching, Aistear
- Withdrawing individuals/groups.
- Reading Recovery
- Mata sa Rang (Station Teaching/Team teaching)

(Some intervention strategies above are not used annually but are re-introduced when a particular need is identified, etc. Mata sa Rang – although teaching methodologies based on MSR are used in class)



Meeting the Needs and Allocating Resources

Once pupils' needs have been identified, Special Education Teachers 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 with class teachers and review children's needs, the resources in place and progress made using the Continuum of Support problem-solving model of assessment and stage approach flow charts. As a SET team, we 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.

As set out in the Continuum of Support, the deployment of SNA resources in mainstream (based on the New Frontloading Model), will aim to provide the greatest level of support to those with the highest level of identified care needs, and reviewed as appropriate.

SELECTION PROCESS/CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Stage 3: School Support Plus</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Physical Disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals who are not on or below the 12th percentile such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borderline Mild General Learning Disability Mild General Learning Disability Specific Learning Disability Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">School support Plus Plans</p>	<p>Type of Support: In class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel: SET Teacher Class Teacher Outside Agencies</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Stage 2: School Support</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Children with an identified need by external professionals who are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On or below the 12th percentile in Numeracy On or below the 12th percentile in Literacy Children who have had at least 2 Classroom Support Plans opened and reviewed, and have not made adequate progress after interventions at Stage 1 Children without an identified need who have scored on or under the 12th Percentile in Literacy or Numeracy Standardised Tests Children who have been identified as being gifted by an outside agency or professional 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">School Support Plans</p>	<p>Type of Support: In-class support Team-Teaching Group withdrawal Individual withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel: SET Teacher Class teacher</p>

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
- 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.

Tracking, recording and reviewing progress

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process.

Student Support File

We use a Student Support File to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. 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 kept in the filing cabinet in the SET Room in the Infant building.

All support files should include:

- Cover sheet with pupil's details
- A log of actions
- Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores
- Support plans (See below)
- Record of support/specific intervention received
- Checklists

A class teacher with the support of the SET Teacher should open a Student Support File once a child is placed on **Stage 1** –Classroom Support on the continuum. This is in the process of being stored digitally on the server in Pupil Records and a paper copy is stored in the class teacher's specified folder. At the end of the year, a copy of the information gathered is transferred in the handover process to the new class teacher.

Stage 2

- A School Support Plan is opened for children who have had a minimum of two Classroom Support Plans in place and have failed to reach the priority targets outlined.
- The SET teacher will consult with the Class Teacher and the Parents/ Guardians to identify areas for support. Assessments will be carried out in these areas and SMART targets will be put in place for the child. The plan will be signed by the Class Teacher, the SET and the Parents/ Guardians and a copy of the targets will be given to all parties.
- School Support Plans are generally drawn up after:
 - 2 or more Classroom Support Plans have identified a need for extra support
 - A particular need has been identified from test results and in consultation with parents
- If the school support is not immediately available upon identification of need, Station Teaching may be considered an appropriate intervention to address the identified need(s) of the child.
- If it is felt that a child has successfully achieved their targets, then the child's file may be closed and revisited in the future (if necessary).

A Review Meeting will take place in February. The Class Teacher, SET and the Parents/ Guardians will be in attendance. Parents are given the option for a phone call or in-person meeting. Targets will be discussed, along with the child's strengths and any changes that have occurred since the plan was put in place. Contact will be made with parent(s) at other times if deemed necessary.

- A decision will be made if the file is to remain open for the following academic year or if the file should be closed.

Stage 3

- A School Support Plus Plan is opened for children who are receiving support from any outside agencies or who have a specific diagnosis.
- The SET teacher will consult with the Class Teacher, Outside agencies, SNA and the Parents/ Guardians to identify areas for support. Assessments will be carried out in these areas and SMART targets will be put in place for the child. Targets will be signed by the Class Teacher, the SET and the Parents/ Guardians and a copy of the targets will be given to all parties.
- All children in the Cairde classes will have a School Support Plus Plan led by the special class teacher, involving the parties outlined above.
- Support Plus Plans are generally drawn up (reviewed) in October. Targets will continue to be monitored throughout the year.
- A Review Meeting will take place in February. The Class Teacher, SET, and the Parents/ Guardians will be in attendance. Recommendations from outside agencies will be part of the review process. Targets will be discussed, along with the child's strengths and any changes that have occurred since the plan was put in place.
- Proposed draft plan will be discussed with the class teacher, SET, SNA, parents/ guardians and targets outlined will be agreed on.
- A copy of the plan will be signed by all parties i.e. class teacher, SET Teacher and parents/ guardians involved with the child. A copy will be given to parents, Class teacher and SET Teacher. A master copy will remain in the SEN filing cabinet in the support room

(While October and February are the preferred months for drawing up/reviewing School support (Plus) Plans, input from other agencies may impact on these dates)

Support Plans

There is a different type of support plan for each of 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* 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. At stage 1, a minimum of two classroom support plans should be drawn up and reviewed to identify the next steps for the child

Stage 2 – School Support

A Support Plan at Stage 2 is a **School Support Plan**. 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 / 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 **School Support Plus Plan**. 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.

SEN Records

Individual SEN Files

All pupils' SEN files are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Support room. 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 SEN Team are responsible for managing the SEN files for children on School Support and School Support Plus.

The following should be stored

- Student Support File - individualised folders in SEN/Special class teacher's filing cabinet
- Psychological Report - individualised folders in the Office filing cabinet
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies - individualised folders in the Office filing cabinet
- Copy of reports from outside agencies - individualised folders in the Office filing cabinet/ individualised folders in SEN filing cabinet
- Record of SEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter- school meetings - individualised folders in SEN filing cabinet
- Record of SEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff - individualised folders in SEN filing cabinet

School Support Plus meetings are coordinated by the SET/Special Class teacher. Parents will be invited to attend the initial meeting in October and the review meeting in February.

Whole Class SEN Files

Whole class SEN records are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the School Office. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to ensure these are updated. The following should be stored in these whole class SEN folders:

- End of Term Needs Analysis record sheets
- Whole class test results (SIGMA – T, Drumcondra Reading, NNRIT)
- SEN children in receipt of interventions record sheets
- Copy of the Classroom Support Framework for each academic year

Communication between SET Team/Principal/Class Teachers

SET timetables have been organised so that 2:00-2:50 each Friday is our designated collaboration time. This allows all staff the opportunity to attend pupils support planning meetings, care team meetings, Team Teaching Planning Meetings and SEN consultation/planning/review meetings, when necessary. This flexibility ensures adequate cover for class teachers and also facilitates regular SET team planning meetings with the principal and or SENCO. Regular meetings for Special Class teachers/SENCO will also take place – both scheduled and informal.

Integration of Children from the Cairde classes into Mainstream:

- Integration of children from the Cairde Classes is done at each child's own individual pace.
- Integration on the school yard may often be the first step, followed by reverse integration – children from mainstream classes join their peers in the Cairde classes for lessons/activities such as Art, P.E., SESE, etc. This enables the development of relationships and ability to interact and work with others in a setting that is familiar to the children.
- Integration into the mainstream class must be meaningful to the child and requires input from both mainstream and special class teacher as they work together for the benefit of the child

- Integration into activities such as assemblies, concerts, sports, etc. is promoted where appropriate
- The class teacher must provide for children integrating into their classroom in their short term plans
- An SNA will accompany the child/children to the mainstream class
- Support of SNA may be gradually withdrawn if deemed appropriate

Health and Safety Issues

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

Supervision/Child Protection

- Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SET teacher is responsible for ensuring that both themselves and the pupil are visible through the glass panel in the door.
- Where there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.
- Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET teacher should collect and return children to their classrooms.
- 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.
- SNAs working in the Autism Classes may withdraw a child/children from the classroom for movement breaks, time in the Sensory Room, etc.
- Mainstream SNA can collect children from the Cairde rooms, where appropriate and if possible
- Please refer to the Child Protection and the SNA Policy

Ratification and Review

Scoil Mhuire will review this policy every three years. The policy may also be reviewed at an earlier time should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made. The Policy will be shared with all staff members and will be available on request in the school office on our school website, www.scoilmhuireclontibret.ie.

Scheduled for review: March 2026

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting in June 2017 and reviewed in June 2022.

Scheduled for review: June 2025

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: Cathal McGlone **Date: 7th July 2022**

Principal: Elizabeth Moorehead **Date: 7th July 2022**



Special Education Needs Policy