

# Special Educational Needs Policy

**Tobar an Léinn**

**(Uimhir Rolla: 16667w)**

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## **Introduction and Rationale**

In Tobar an Léinn, Raheen, we endeavour to provide effective provision for pupils with special educational needs situated within an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all, and good collaboration and engagement between the school, parents/guardians, pupils and outside/support agencies. This policy is a new policy which was developed by the Principal, Staff and Board of Management of the school in February 2023 in light of the introduction of the revised model for Special Education teaching in Irish Primary schools in the school year 2017-2018. This policy is informed by the relevant legislation regarding pupils with SEN. This legislation includes the following:

- Education Act (1998)
- Education Welfare Act (2000)
- Equal Status Act (2000)
- Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)
- Equality Act (2004)
- Data Protection Acts (1988,1998 and 2003)
- GDPR 2018
- Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

This policy is also drafted in the context of

- Department of Education & Skills (DES) Circular Letters
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE) guidelines
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) guidelines.

## **Description of School**

Tobar an Léinn is situated in Raheen, Mountrath , County Laois. The school teaching staff comprises of an Administrative Principal ,six mainstream class teachers and two support teachers (one fulltime and one shared). The Deputy Principal holds the role of Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO). The school has 2 Special Class catering for children with ASD. The school has an allocation of 6.5 Special Needs Assistants (SNA's) as well as ancillary staff including a part-time secretary and caretaker. In Tobar an Léinn, **Raheen** we welcome and cherish each individual child in our care. We strive to create a

fully inclusive and supportive learning environment, where all pupils are given the opportunity to access, benefit from and experience success in and with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum along with other school based programmes and initiatives. We put adequate provisions and support in place for pupils with Special Educational Needs.

### **Enrolment of children with identified SEN**

1. In line with the EPSEN Act (2004)

*“A child with special educational needs **shall** be educated in an **inclusive** environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with*

*a) the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or*

*b) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.”*

2. The Acceptance of Admission form for the school will serve to identify children with special educational needs (i.e. those identified as having Special Educational Needs prior to enrolment).

3. Prior to the child’s admission, the school will endeavour to acquaint themselves with the child in order to determine the level of support required to address the pupil’s needs. This will include:

- Obtaining copies of reports, assessments etc. from parents, where available.
- Contact with the Special Educational Needs Officer ( SENO), psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist etc. or other outside support agency.

Based on the above, the school will decide on the most appropriate level of support that will address the pupil’s individual needs.

4. The staff of Tobar an Léinn will ensure a smooth transition to school for the pupil by engaging in the following where appropriate:

- Parental visits to school
- Pupil visits to school
- Visits from outside professionals and agencies as relevant
- liaising with outside professionals and agencies as relevant.

If there are health and safety issues arising from the child's mobility and care needs, the school will identify strategies to address them. E.g. access arrangements, toilets, supervision, care needs administration, course information for SNA e.g. lifting techniques. Where practicable and feasible, the school will endeavour to address these issues prior to the child starting school.

### **Aims of Special Education Provision**

The principal aim of special education teaching is to optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties/needs to access the curriculum within the context of a truly inclusive environment.

The following subsidiary aims relating to the provision of support services for pupils with low achievement and/or learning and behavioural difficulties arise from the principal aim of Special Education Teaching

1. To enable these pupils to participate in the full curriculum for their class level.
2. To enable all pupils to access, benefit from and experience success in/with the curriculum.
3. To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils.
4. To enable these pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.

5. To provide supplementary teaching (in the classroom and/or the support room) and additional support and resources for these pupils.
6. To establish early intervention programmes and other programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning.
7. To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of the whole-school policies on Special Education Teaching for these pupils;
8. To involve parents in supporting their children's learning through effective parent support programmes.

### **Special Education Provision - A Collaborative Process**

Effective support/special education teaching requires a high level of collaboration and consultation with the whole school community including:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Principal
- Deputy Principal/SENCO
- Class teachers
- Special Education/Support Teachers
- Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO)
- Special Needs Assistant (SNA)
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Other relevant professionals and outside agencies (e.g. Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language therapist etc. )
- Board of Management of the school.

### **Roles and Responsibilities in Special Education/Support Teaching**

#### **1. The Board of Management**

The Board of Management plays an important role in developing, supporting and reviewing school policy in relation to the inclusion of pupils with special

educational needs.

The Board of Management make arrangements for:

- The preparation of a school plan that lays down the objectives and practical measures that will ensure access to, participation in and benefit from all aspects of the school to the 'greatest extent practicable'
- Publication of school policy (in relation to pupils with SEN)
- Admissions Policy
- Identifying and providing for pupils with SEN
- Ensuring that the appropriate/ proper physical infrastructure is in place for pupils with SEN

Other responsibilities:

- Ensure reasonable accommodation is being made for all pupils including those with SEN
- Contribute to the development of awareness of staff members (Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers, SNAs etc. ) as to their responsibilities.
- Support in-career development, e.g. providing funding where necessary to allow SEN staff to attend courses eg. ILSA :Irish Learning Support Association Conference, SESS provided training, local education centre courses
- Arrange for policy on storage, dissemination and transfer of confidential reports/ records (See school's Data Protection Policy).
- Provide secure storage for the above items.
- Ensure that resources, including staff, are appropriately used.

## **2. Roles of the Principal**

- Overall responsibility for the school's provision for SEN and for the access to support services for students with SEN.
- Ensure that pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the

greatest level of support.

- Create an inclusive environment for pupils with SEN.
- Develop inclusive whole school policies and monitor their implementation.
- Work with the Board of Management, Deputy Principal (SEN coordinator), school staff, parents and inside agencies in the development, implementation and review of whole school policies.
- Ensure that such policies are outlined in the school plan.
- Establish and maintain a core team of teachers and Special Needs Assistants to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- Liaise with the Deputy Principal/SEN Coordinator to ensure optimal provision for pupils with SEN;
- Consult, liaise and work with the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) and National Council for Special Educational Needs (NCSE).
- Consult, liaise and work with NCSE, National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) and other outside professionals to ensure effective provision for pupils with SEN.
- Overall responsibility for ensuring that Student Support Files, Support Plans and Individual Education Plans are prepared and in place.
- Work with whole school community to review this SEN Policy
- Monitor the implementation of this SEN Policy.
- Support in-service education for all staff in the area of SEN.
- Oversee the implementation and analysis of whole school assessment (e.g. standardised tests, screening assessment, diagnostic assessment etc.)
- Monitor whole-school interventions.
- Facilitate the school's provision for the inclusion of pupils with SEN.
- Facilitate collaboration e.g. opportunities for team-teaching/parallel teaching etc. and time for co-operative planning (among the SEN team).
- Facilitate efficient transition to the next school for pupils with SEN.
- Oversee the adoption and implementation of a staged approach to



identify, assess and support pupils with SEN – and a continuum of support in accordance with need (refer to the NEPS Guidelines re. same).

- Three staged approach:
  - Stage 1 - Classroom Support
  - Stage 2 - School Support
  - Stage 3 - School Support Plus.
- Ensure the implementation and review of IEPs within the school.
- Ensure that class teachers are aware of their responsibilities with respect to pupils with SEN.

### **3. Role of the class teacher**

The class teacher has prime responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class(es), including those selected for supplementary teaching.

- A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to create a classroom environment in which learning difficulties can be alleviated:
  - Foster an inclusive classroom environment for all pupils with SEN.
  - Make parents aware of the concerns of the school about their child's progress
- Engage in appropriate planning, assessment (teacher designed tasks and tests, miscue/error-analysis, observation, screening) and progress monitoring
- Facilitate differentiation in order for all pupils to be able to access the curriculum
- Maintain primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with SEN.
- Operate the Continuum of Support/Staged Approach
- Create/open student support files for pupils who require them i.e commencing at the Classroom Support Stage of the Continuum of Support.
- Oversee and formulate a Classroom Support Plan for pupils on the Continuum of Support (Stage 1: Classroom Support).

- Contribute to the formulation of School Support Plans (stage 2 of the continuum of support-school support) and Individual Educational Plans (Stage 3 of the Continuum of Support-school support plus).
- Familiarise themselves with all assessments from outside agencies and seek clarification if necessary.
- Keep written records of all assessments, interventions, evaluations and correspondences with relevant team members

#### **4. Role of the Support Teacher**

The Support Teacher is a dedicated resource for pupils with special educational needs. The support teacher may deliver a learning programme to pupils in the setting that is deemed most appropriate to the pupils needs (i.e. co-teaching/team teaching or individual/group withdrawal.) The work of the support teacher is closely aligned with that of the pupil's class teacher.

The role of the support teacher is to:

- Operate and follow the staged approach to Special Educational Needs i.e. the NEPS Continuum of Support.
- Maintain and add to Student Support Files as part of the Continuum of Support.
- Formulate Student Support Plans for pupils at stage 2: school support stage of the continuum of support (in collaboration and consultation with classroom teachers, parents etc).
- Implement student support plans.
- Co-ordinate and formulate Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) for children at stage 3 (school support plus) of the continuum of support (in collaboration and consultation with classroom teachers, parents, outside agencies and professionals).
- Implement IEPs.
- Engage in inclusive teaching strategies
- Implement whole school procedures for the selection, continuation and

discontinuation of pupils for supplementary teaching, in line with the selection criteria specified in this school plan

- Provide supplementary teaching in areas of need; social, emotional, behavioural, and academic.
- Deliver targeted early intervention programmes.
- Provide support and advice to class teachers in such areas as differentiation of the mainstream classroom, individual pupil assessment and programme planning
- Keep in regular contact with parents to facilitate communication e.g. home-school diary.
- Keep written records of all assessments, interventions, evaluations and correspondences with relevant team members
- Co-ordinate the school's provision for the inclusion of pupils with SEN
- Maintain a register of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and/ or special education services at all three stages in the continuum of support.
- Work with the principal in monitoring the progress of pupils with learning difficulties at a whole school level.
- Prioritise pupils in need of referral to outside agencies for further assessment i.e. at stage three of the continuum of support.
- Familiarise themselves with all assessments from outside agencies and ensure that all relevant information is clarified and relayed to relevant staff members.
- Assist new members of the SEN team in how to devise and efficiently implement Support Plans and Individual Educational Plans.
- Liaise with outside agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs
- Make applications for specialised equipment
- Consult and collaborate with Post-Primary schools re. Transition

arrangements.

- Keep up-to-date with new research based assessments, intervention programmes and resources and source them for the school where necessary.
- Facilitate standardised assessment at whole-school level, class level and individual level
- Encourage teachers to avail of career development opportunities – inform them of professional development opportunities.

## **5. Role of the Special Class Teacher**

The role of the Special Class Teacher is similar to the role of other Class Teachers and incorporates many of the roles of the Support Teacher.

The role of the Special Class Teacher is to:

- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties
- Provide teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs.
- Research the pupil's specific learning difficulty, to become au fait with this impediment to learning.
- Implement recommendations from outside agencies, wherever possible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the pupils in their care.
- Develop a Support Plan for each pupil in consultation with Parents, SNAs and Principal.
- Maintain a Forward Planner and Progress Record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of pupils in the classroom
- Deliver intensive early intervention programmes and provide supplementary teaching in all areas required including Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy as outlined by the relevant professionals.
- Contributing to the development of policy on SEN at the whole school level.

- Meet with Parents of each pupil, if possible, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home.
- Meet with Parents of each pupil at the end of each instructional term, if possible:
  - To review the pupil's attainment of agreed targets.
  - To discuss the next instructional term.
  - To revise the pupil's Support Plan.
- Liaise with external agencies such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists etc... to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with autism.

In addition to providing supplementary teaching to pupils, the SEN Teacher is involved in administering a range of formal and informal assessments and in maintaining records of the outcomes of those assessments. The Teachers shall:

- Monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in the class in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives and record the observations in the Forward Planner and Progress Record, or equivalent.
- Review the progress of each pupil at the end of an instructional term and record it on the pupil's Support Plan.

For each pupil who is in a SEN classroom, the Class Teacher will adjust the curriculum/class programme in line with the agreed learning targets and activities on the pupil's Support Plan and maintain a record of the pupil's progress towards achieving those learning targets.

## **6. Role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA)**

The purpose of the SNA is to provide for the significant additional care needs, which some pupils with special educational needs may have.

### **1. Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks:**

These may include:

- Assistance with feeding

- Administration of medicine

The school registration form will require information to be given on any medical problem requiring medication i.e. Asthma, epilepsy, diabetes etc.

There would be an initial meeting with parents to discuss the matter.

Attention will be drawn on the school policy to the administration of medicines.

- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene
- Assistance with mobility and orientation
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds
- Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential
- Assistance with moving and lifting of pupils, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties

## **2. Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks):**

The associated support tasks which may be carried out include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with Special Educational Needs,.
- Assist Teachers and/or Principal/Deputy Principal in maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities
- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes

- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities:  
(See Appendix 3: Personal Pupil Plan (PPP))

## **6. Role of Parents**

Parents, through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning programmes. The active involvement of the community of parents in school life has also been shown to enhance the effectiveness of the school as a whole.

- Parents should inform the school on enrolment or as soon as they become aware of any difficulties their child may be experiencing.
- Parents should implement suggested home-based activities outlined in their child's IPLP/I.E.P/Support documentation and discuss the outcomes with the child's teacher and the support teacher.
- Parents should contribute to the formulation of IEP documents.
- If a parent does not want their child to access support/SEN teaching they must inform the school of their decision in writing

## **7. Role of Pupils**

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

- Outline his / her interests, aspirations, strengths.
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.

Contribute to the Support Plan.

- Become familiar with the short-term and medium learning targets that have been set for them. They should be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of such targets.
- Contribute to the selection of texts and other learning materials that are relevant to the attainment of their learning targets.

- 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.

## **8. Role of External Bodies and Agencies.**

"Support and guidance is available to teachers from external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate, and allied health professionals. We as a school liaise with these services and bodies in order to optimise the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs at the individual, group or whole-school level. This is especially important for those pupils with more significant and enduring needs who benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach in order to identify the needs of the pupil and the development of appropriate interventions.

The needs of many pupils span both health and education services. Health services (HSE and HSE-funded services) will continue to play an important role in early identification, assessment and diagnosis, intervention and review for pupils with special educational needs.

## **The Continuum of Support: The Staged Approach to Assessment and Intervention**

### **The Continuum of Support**

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to pupils' needs.

This framework recognises 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 educational needs. Using this framework in Tobar an Léinn, Raheen helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based



interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and that they are informed by careful monitoring of children's progress.

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

Identification of educational needs is central to the new model. Using the Continuum of Support framework, schools can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. The framework emphasises the importance of looking at a pupil's needs in context, and provides useful resources to support this (for example, Learning Environment Checklist, Teacher Checklist for Whole-class Structures and Supports - see "Appendices" to this policy).

The Continuum of Support enables schools to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way. This means that needs can be responded to as early as possible. Of course, the principle that pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support is of primary importance. This approach is also supported by information and engagement with external professionals, as required.

There are three stages in the Continuum of Support Process:

1. Classroom Support
2. School Support
3. School Support Plus

### **Stage 1: Classroom Support**

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically the first response to

emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are additional to or different from those required by other pupils in their class. Problem solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The teacher and parents will 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. At this stage a **Student Support File** will be opened for the child in question (see below for information regarding Student Support Files).

<b>Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process</b>	
<b>Stage 1: Classroom Support</b>	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning program effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated program This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Parental consultation</li> <li>· Teacher observation records</li> <li>· Teacher-designed measures /assessments</li> <li>· Basic needs checklist (NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pg. 3)</li> <li>· Learning environment checklist ( NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pg. 9)</li> <li>· Pupil consultation – My Thoughts About School Checklist (NEPS SEN</li> </ul>

	<p>Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pg. 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Literacy and numeracy tests</li> <li>· Screening tests of language skills</li> </ul> <p>A Classroom Support Plan will be drawn up for the pupil in question (see pg. 20 of the Continuum of Support guidelines for a sample Classroom Support Plan). The classroom support plan is signed by the pupil's teacher and parents.</p> <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review on a regular basis.</p> <p>Please refer to ( NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pgs. 12-16 for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Classroom Support Checklist.</li> <li>• A Classroom Support Plan</li> </ul>
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## **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 will involve the Support/SEN teachers 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 or an Individual Pupil Learning Profile (IPLP). Please see page 21 of NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers for a School Support Plan Template).

<p><b>Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process</b></p>
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<p><b>Stage 2: School Support</b></p>	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teacher observation records</li> <li>· Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>· Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>· Learning environment checklist (as in the classroom support stage).</li> </ul> <p>School Support Checklist (NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pg. 17)</p> <p>Screening Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Diagnostic assessments in literacy/ numeracy (see below for details regarding the same and also refer to the school's Assessment policy).</li> <li>· Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>· Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition. The school support plan is signed by the pupil's teacher, support teacher and parents. A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to regular review. A School Support Review Record will be undertaken using the template provided in NEPS SEN Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers pg. 17)</p>
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**Stage 3: School Support Plus**

This level of the continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to

information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals/agencies (as appropriate) and may include

- Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures
- Parent and Pupil Interviews.
- Consultation with outside agencies i.e. Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Play Therapist etc.
- Functional Assessment.
- Assessment by outside professionals/agencies (as outlined at point 3 above).

At this stage and pertaining to the pupil's difficulties the school/principal may formally requests a consultation, and where necessary, an assessment of need from a specialist from outside the school in respect of pupils with learning difficulties and mild/moderate behavioural problems who have failed to make progress following supplementary teaching at Stage 2: School Support of the Continuum of Support and the early Stages of Stage 3: School Support Plus.

In consultation with the relevant specialist/s and parents, the Support Teacher and the class teacher will devise an School Support Plus document for the pupil in question (Please refer to *NEPS Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support* pgs. 38 to 44 regarding the formulation of the School Support Plus Document.)

### **Student Support Files:**

As part of the Continuum of Support a Student Support File will be used by the school to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support as outlined above.

The rationale for the use of the student support file includes the following:

- The Student Support File allows the school to track the pupil'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.

- The Student Support File allows the school to document progress and needs over time.
- The Student Support File ensures continuity of support for a pupil, including transition from primary to post-primary school.
- The Student Support File may encourage parental collaboration and parental engagement in the pupil's learning.
- The Student Support File assists schools in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need.
- The Student Support File keeps together all the information about the support of the pupil: information gathered, plans and interventions, consultations and reviews.

### **Selection of Pupils for Support/Supplementary Teaching within Tobar an Léinn**

As per the “*Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*” (2017) **those with the highest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support.**

The Following framework will be used to guide the allocation of Additional Teaching Supports to/for pupils with SEN in Tobar an Léinn

<b>Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</b>	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
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	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.
<b>Action 2: Setting Targets</b>	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the Continuum of Support
<b>Action 3: Planning Teaching Methods and Approaches</b>	Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the Continuum of Support. The school will consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. We will also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
<b>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</b>	Based on identified needs, the school will choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
<b>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources.</b>	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. The school will always be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.
<b>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</b>	Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored namely through the creation of Student

	<p><b>Support Files.</b>          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</p>
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**Priority will be given to (not in any particular order):**

- Pupils who have not made the desired progress at Stage 1: Classroom Support Stage of the Continuum of Support.
- Pupils performing at or below the 24<sup>th</sup> percentile (Sten 4) on standardised tests of reading and/ or Mathematics.
- Pupils with learning difficulties including mild speech and language difficulties, mild social or emotional difficulties, mild co-ordination or attention control difficulties associated with identified conditions such as Dyspraxia, ADD, or ADHD.
- High Incidence Disabilities: *mild/borderline mild general learning disability, specific learning disability (inc. Dyslexia).*
- Early intervention in Senior Infants; (Team Teaching or group withdrawal for literacy and/or maths)
- Early intervention in the third term of Junior Infants (Team Teaching or group withdrawal for literacy and/or maths)
- Pupils who are still experiencing difficulties following Stage 1

**Procedures for continuing/discontinuing pupils**

At the end of an instructional term, post-tests and/or standardised tests (in Summer term) are used to evaluate the pupil's progress. The Support and class teachers meet to review the Student Support files and Support Plans and a decision is made to continue/discontinue the provision of supplementary teaching.

The **criteria** on which this decision is based include:



- Achievement of targets as outlined in the Support Plan/IEP document.
- Standardised tests scores in reading/Maths (at end of summer term)  
i.e. Micra-T and Sigma-T.
- NNRIT quotient scores.
- Ability to cope in the classroom without supplementary teaching.
- The caseload of the Support teacher and the subsequent availability of resources (always ensuring that the students with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest level of support).

### **Options**

- Discontinue provision of additional support.
- Reduce the level of supplementary teaching (e.g. 2 hours to 1 hour)
- Change the model of delivery (e.g. individual withdrawal to in-class support).
- Plan and implement a further programme of work comprising new or revised targets.
- If significant concerns remain, it may be necessary to implement Stage

### **Assessment (Refer to the school's Assessment Policy)**

Assessment in the early years is both informal and formal. It is a natural part of a teacher's interaction with pupils. Much assessment takes place through observation of the pupil and active listening to the pupils in a variety of learning situations contexts and in this regard both Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment Of Learning (AoL) techniques are used/employed.

Because the early years provide the foundation for subsequent learning, it is important to identify children who are presenting with difficulty as soon as

possible. In Tobar an Léinn we duly recognise the crucial importance of early intervention in this regard.

The following assessments are undertaken in the infant classes:

- The Test 2R are undertaken with all pupils in Senior Infants in November
- The Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants in the Spring term;
- Teacher Designed Tests are administered for different subject areas;
- Checklists i.e Phonics Screening Checklists.

Results of these tests will be analysed and interpreted by the Principal, class teachers and Special Education Team/Support teachers.

The booklets and scripts of/from the tests outlined above will be dated and stored in the pupils' individual files.

Parents are informed of the overall performance in the tests through parent-teacher feedback and consultation.

### **Standardised Testing**

The standardised tests measure a pupil's achievement compared to other pupils in all schools at the same class level or age level (national norms).

Standardised testing in English and Maths will be undertaken with all classes from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class at the end of May/beginning of June each year.

As per section 6.4 of Department and Education and Skills Circular 0056/2011 *'Students may be excluded from standardised testing if, in the view of the school principal, they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the tests or, in the case of migrant students, where the level of English required in the test would make attempting the test inappropriate.'*

### **Standardised Tests administered:**

**English:** The MICRA-T test for English reading will be administered to all children in 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class in May each year:

- Level 1 – First Class;
- Level 2 – Second & Third Class;
- Level 3 – Fourth Class;
- Level 4 – Fifth & Sixth Class.

**Maths:** The SIGMA-T test for Maths will be administered to all children in 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class in June each year.

The following results of standardised tests are recorded – raw score, standard score, percentile rank, STEN (and reading age for English). This procedure is uniform across all classes.

STen scores from the standardised tests will be communicated to parents in the end of year report cards. The NCCA Information Leaflet *'Information for Parents-STen Score.' What do my Child's Standardised Test Score's Mean?'*

<https://ncca.ie.iiiediae1400englishtipsheetsten.pdf1> will be sent home with the end of year report card. STen scores may be communicated prior to the end of year report being sent home/issued if the Principal/Teacher feels that it is necessary.

Results of standardised tests will also give information on class and school performance in comparison with national norms and the results will be tabulated and graphed accordingly using *'Aladdin for Schools'* software. Results will then be interpreted and analysed by the Principal, class

teachers and Special Education Team (SET). Results will be used to inform classroom planning and as a means of selecting appropriate differentiation strategies, in order to provide and cater for the specific learning needs of different pupils.

Aggregated assessment data from standardised tests will be reported to the Board of Management of the school on an annual basis as per DES circular 0056/2011.

Standardised Test Results (STen scores) for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>\*</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class will be submitted to the Department of Education and Skills on an annual basis via Esinet.

Standardised Test results (STen scores) for 2<sup>d</sup>, 4<sup>h</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class will be sent to secondary schools when 6<sup>th</sup> class children are making the transition to second level. This information will be communicated on/via the 6<sup>th</sup> Class Education Passport from the NCCA.

Standardised test results will also inform the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process.

<b>Literacy</b>	<b>Maths</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diagnostic Spelling Test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To be confirmed ..waiting on advice</li> </ul>

The results of Screening Assessments will be interpreted by SET's and the class teacher.

## Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic tests are administered by the Special Education team/Support Teachers following referral/concerns raised by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. Diagnostic assessment will generally be undertaken in/at stage 2: The School Support Stage and stage 3: School Support Plus of the Continuum of Support (NEPS) - please refer to the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

Diagnostic tests that will be used in Tobar an Léinn, Raheen include:

Literacy	Maths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dyslexia Portfolio from GL Assessment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>MaLT Test</li></ul>

Parents are contacted and consulted in advance of administering diagnostic tests. A consent form is used to acquire parents' permission.

The Support Teacher analyses and interprets the results of diagnostic assessment in consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal (SEN coordinator) and class teacher.

Following testing, where appropriate, information is shared between relevant teachers, parents and relevant agencies with parental consent.

### Assessment by outside Professionals and Agencies

If stage 1 (Classroom Support) and 2 (School Support) and possibly Stage 3 (School Support Plus) of the Continuum of Support fail to deliver adequate intervention the Principal may contact the pupil's parents/guardians for permission to secure a psychological or other form of assessment for the

pupil. Such an assessment will determine the subsequent level of intervention required.

The Principal is responsible for requesting and arranging an assessment from a Psychologist with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) although a parent may decide to have an assessment done independently. This may arise due to the fact that only one Psychological Assessment is allocated per annum. The Principal and/or Class Teacher may recommend an assessment by a Speech & Language Therapist, Audiologist, Optician, Occupational Therapist or other such professional to a parent, who may then proceed with such an assessment through the HSE or other relevant agency.

### **Informal Assessment**

<b>Area of Need</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Literacy	Word Recognition - Dolch Word List
	Running Record, Miscue Analysis
	PM Benchmarking
	Teacher Designed Test based letter recognition of sounds and names, letter construction, recognising initial final and medial sounds in CVC words, blending sounds, spelling 3 and 4 phoneme words, tricky words)
	Running Record Analysis
Social	Social Skills Checklist
	Playground observation
	Time and Interval Sampling

Motor	Teacher designed Test of fine motor skills
Behaviour	Playground observation
	Time and Interval Sampling
Maths	Maths assessments from Maths programme in use.
	Error Analysis (E.g. Based on Sigma T)
	Checklist for Assessing Students Skills Development (NCCA Guidelines 2007)

### **Self- Assessment**

All curricular areas	Self-Assessment and Learning Folder (SALF)
Social Awareness	Socially Speaking Self-Assessment

### **Possible Support Interventions**

<b>Teaching Strategies for Literacy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guided Oral Reading with Teacher Feedback</li> <li>2. Find the Word</li> <li>3. Reading Record</li> <li>4. Timed Repeated reading</li> <li>5. Paired reading</li> <li>6. Precision teaching (Dolch words) (i.e. Rapid Word-Recognition Chart (RWRC))</li> <li>7. Visual Supports; flashcards (Dolch, phonics cards), ICT, pictures</li> <li>8. Interactive computer software e.g. Wordshark,</li> </ol>
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	<p>Jolly Phonics Resource C.D. etc</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Language Experience Approach</li> <li>10. Structured Phonics Programme e.g. Newell, Jolly Phonics, Toe-By-Toe etc</li> <li>11. Phonological Awareness Training</li> <li>12. Personal Dictionary</li> <li>13. Word Study</li> <li>14. Shared and Guided/Scaffolded Writing</li> <li>15. ICT; Photostory, Powerpoint, Clicker 5, Accelerate, Accelewrite</li> <li>16. Drama, Role-Play</li> <li>17. Storyboards</li> <li>18. First Steps</li> </ol>
<b>Teaching Strategies for Maths</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maths Trails</li> <li>2. Mental Maths Strategies</li> <li>3. Visual Supports</li> <li>4. Concrete Materials</li> <li>5. Social Maths</li> <li>6. Multi-sensory approaches</li> <li>7. Peer-Tutoring</li> <li>8. Response Boards</li> <li>9. ICT software</li> </ol>
<b>Teaching Strategies for Language</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sequencing Cards</li> <li>2. Barrier Games</li> <li>3. Drama/Role Play</li> <li>4. "What If" cards</li> <li>5. Feely Bag</li> </ol>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Our News</li> <li>7. Exploring Story (summarising, predicting, inferring)</li> <li>8. Debates</li> <li>9. Syntax and Grammar</li> <li>10. Word Finding Activities (e.g. categories of discrimination, odd one out quiz, dictionary word)</li> <li>11. Project work and presentations</li> </ol>
<b>Teaching Strategies for Social Development</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social Skills Training Programme - Socially Speaking</li> <li>2. Peer-Tutoring</li> <li>3. Circle Time</li> <li>4. Modelling</li> <li>5. Role-Play</li> <li>6. Practising Social Situations</li> <li>7. Social Stories</li> <li>8. Parental Involvement</li> <li>9. Visual Aids</li> <li>10. Self-Monitoring</li> <li>11. Social Games (Socially Speaking Board Game, Chinese Whispers etc)</li> </ol>
<b>Organisation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Colour Coding</li> <li>2. Checklists</li> <li>3. Time-Tabling</li> <li>4. Visual Supports</li> </ol> <p>Things I need for school each day</p> <p>Homework checklist</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Independent work file</li> </ol>

<b>Behaviour</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual Behaviour Plans</li> <li>2. Positive Reinforcement (star chart, token economy)</li> <li>3. Differential Reinforcement</li> <li>4. Anger Management Programme</li> <li>5. Circle-Time</li> <li>6. Buddy System</li> <li>7. Visual Supports e.g. Rules for good listening: High Five</li> </ol>
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### **Junior and Senior Infants Early Intervention Programme**

The aim of the early intervention programme is to identify and meet the needs of pupils who experience low achievements and /or learning difficulties at infant level.

Our programme will include the following characteristics which have proven most successful in improving pupil's achievements.

- They are set within a specific timeframe, such as an instructional term of 4 weeks
- They are based on a shared expectation of success by everybody involved.
- They involve small group teaching
- They include a strong focus on the development of oral language.
- They include a strong emphasis on the development of phonological awareness in its many guises .
- They emphasise the development of phonological processing; phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and range of other word identification skills.
- They stress four language components: interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

- In mathematics, they focus on language consistency development and the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

It is our hope and aim that by the end of the E.I.P (early intervention programme), that many of these pupils will be able to return to participate in the full curriculum for their class level with a positive attitude towards school learning. It will also identify the pupils who are in need of continued support.

### **Outside Support Agencies**

Outside support agencies that we will access to improve our special education teaching provision in the school will include:

- DES Inspectorate
- Department of Education and Special Education Centre
- Special Educational Support Services (SESS)
- Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO)
- National Education Psychological Services (NEPS)/ other educational psychologists.
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech and Language Therapists.
- Play Therapists
- Enable Ireland
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS)
- Teacher for the Deaf
- Teacher for the visually impaired.
- Laois/ Offaly Support Services
- Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)

### **Timetabling and Organisation of SEN/Support Teaching**

- A concerted effort is made to ensure that pupils do not miss out on the same curricular area each time they attend SEN/support teaching on withdrawal basis. A flexible approach to timetabling is adopted by class

teachers and supports teachers in this regard.

- The provision of support/SEN teaching in Tobar an Léinn includes withdrawal of pupils from their classroom and co-teaching models such as parallel teaching, station teaching, one teaching-one drifting and team-teaching

### Support/SEN Teaching Timetable:

<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caseloads allocated – SENCO and Principal</li> <li>• . Standard score compared to Micra T and Sigma T by SENCO</li> <li>• Diagnostic testing by Support teachers for all pupils on Stage 1, 2 &amp; 3</li> <li>• Scheduled collaborative meetings between Parents/Guardians, Class Teacher and Support teacher</li> <li>• Stage 1, 2 &amp; 3 plans drawn up and ‘Pupil Profiles’ sent home to parents/guardians</li> <li>• SEN teachers’ timetable formulated in conjunction with class teachers</li> <li>• Supplementary teaching begins (3rd week)– in class/withdrawal depending on the individual/group’s needs</li> <li>• ‘My Thoughts about School’ completed by all pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class to support pupil engagement and kept in the class teacher’s assessment folder. Copy to be given to the support teacher if child is on Stage 2 or 3 support</li> </ul>
<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPP’s for pupils with SNA access submitted to SENCO – Principal</li> <li>• All stage 1,2 &amp; 3 Student Support Plans uploaded to pupil’s SEN file on Aladdin</li> <li>• Observation and assessment by Class teachers</li> <li>• Classroom Support plans drawn up where required</li> <li>• Early intervention - Infant room</li> <li>• Withdrawal &amp; in class (depending on individual/group’s needs) supplementary teaching continues</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation and assessment by Class teachers continues</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Classroom Support plans drawn up</li> <li>● Parent Teacher Meetings (JI – 6<sup>th</sup> class) – difficulties discussed and suggestions made for home support</li> <li>● Early intervention - Infant room</li> <li>● Withdrawal &amp; in class (depending on individual/group's needs) supplementary teaching continues</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observation and differentiation in class &amp; home support continues</li> <li>● Early intervention continues - Infant room</li> <li>● Supplementary teaching continues – withdrawal/in-class</li> </ul>
<b>January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Class Teachers review Classroom Support Plans and further assessments are carried out if necessary</li> <li>● Supplementary teaching continues - withdrawal/in-class</li> </ul>
<b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Diagnostic testing by Support teacher to review programmes. (2<sup>nd</sup> week in February during the pupil's slots)</li> <li>● Review IPLP's/IEP's – Scheduled collaborative meetings between Parents/Guardians, Class Teacher and Support Teacher</li> <li>● IPLP's/PPP's drawn up for new pupils on Stage 2 &amp; 3</li> <li>● SEN teachers' timetable for Term 2 formulated in conjunction with class teachers</li> <li>● New term of supplementary teaching begins - in-class/withdrawal depending on the individuals/group's needs (after midterm)</li> <li>● Withdrawal of groups of Junior Infants for intense early intervention begins</li> <li>● All new Stage 1,2 &amp; 3 plans uploaded to Aladdin</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observation and differentiation in class and forming of new Classroom Support Plans where necessary</li> <li>● Early intervention continues</li> <li>● Withdrawal/in class supplementary teaching</li> <li>● MIST Assessments carried out with Senior Infants</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observation and differentiation in class and forming of new Classroom Support Plans where necessary</li> <li>● Early intervention continues</li> <li>● Withdrawal/in class supplementary teaching</li> </ul>

<p><b>May</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Test2R– Junior Infants, results analysed by SENCO and Class teacher</li> <li>● Standardised assessments by Class Teacher 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class (Sigma T, Micra T and Drumcondra).</li> <li>● Analysing and reporting of overall results by SENCO and Principal</li> <li>● Pupil Transfer Forms completed for 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils on the Staged Approach by Class teacher &amp; relevant Support teacher &amp; liaising with Secondary Schools where required</li> <li>● SENCO prepares list of pupils requiring SNA access in the following school year</li> </ul>
<p><b>June</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Class Teachers review Classroom Support Plans and further assessments are carried out if necessary</li> <li>● Diagnostic testing by Support teacher to review programmes and identify pupils requiring supplementary teaching in the following school year (last 2 weeks in June)</li> <li>● Scheduled collaborative meetings with Class teachers and Support teachers to review progress</li> <li>● Stage 2 &amp; 3 plans reviewed by Support teacher and Support Review Record completed and sent to Parents/Guardians with recommendations made for the following year’s targets</li> <li>● SENCO updates Staged Approach list in collaboration with Support teachers and Class teachers</li> <li>● Class teachers consult with parents/guardians on decisions regarding discontinuing support in the new school term or moving pupils from one stage to the next and send out Discontinuation of Support or Permission for Stage 2 withdrawal slips to Parents/Guardians to sign and new Continuum of Support file is opened on Aladdin</li> <li>● School report cards completed</li> </ul>

**Transfer to post primary school**

To ensure a smooth transition for pupils with SEN to post primary school;

- In September of 6<sup>th</sup> class (mainstream), the class teacher and/or Principal will talk to parents about preparing their children for post primary school.

- The Principal, Deputy Principal (SENCO), class teacher, members of the support team and the parents may pass on all relevant information to the pupil's future school.
- Where appropriate, members of the support team will meet with members of the support team of the post primary school in question, to enable a smooth transition to post primary.
- The SENCO will be informed as to what school the pupil is being transferred to.
- Where appropriate, a Transition Programme will be implemented to address the particular needs of the pupil.

### **Record Keeping.**

The following records in relation to pupils with SEN will be maintained:

- Student Support Files for all pupils on the Continuum of Support.

The Student Support files will contain:

- Support Plans and all documentation pertaining to the same i.e. initial data gathering instruments namely the assessment templates from the Continuum of Support guidelines.
- All outside agency reports
- School-based assessments as outlined above (both formal and informal)

Student Support files will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the main Support Room.

### **Success Criteria.**

The school-wide implementation of this policy will result in enhancement of pupil learning in the following ways:

- Improved standards of academic, behavioural, emotional, social and motor development within the pupil's individual learning programme.
- Opportunities for all pupils to access, benefit from and experience success in/with the curriculum for their class level.

- Enabling the discontinuation of the provision based on positive assessment results.
- Enhanced parental involvement in supporting their child’s learning needs.
- Increased opportunities for effective communication between school personnel in relation to pupils' progress.
- The achievement of these success criteria will be assessed through feedback from teachers, pupils and parents.

**Implementation and Review**

The implementation of this policy, after review and ratification, will commence in March 2023 . The policy will be reviewed in June/September 2024 and at the end of every third school year thereafter.

**Ratification and Communication.**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Tobar an Léinn at its meeting on \_\_\_\_\_. Parents can review a copy of this policy at the school with the Principal by prior appointment

\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the Board of Management  
Tobar an Léinn, Raheen

\_\_\_\_\_

Principal  
Tobar an Léinn, Raheen



## **List of Appendices.**

### **Appendix 1.**

The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of Circular 02/05).

### **Appendix 2.**

The 2017 Guidelines presentation of the NEPS Continuum of Support levels of support.

### **Appendix 3.**

Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) template.

### **Appendix 4.**

Transition from Primary to Post-Primary School.

### **Appendix 5.**

Table 1: from the 2017 Guidelines. Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process.

### **Appendix 6.**

Template: Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework.

### **Appendix 7.**

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

### **Appendix 8.**

Appendix 1 from the 2017 Guidelines: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework.

## **Appendix 9.**

Table 2: from the 2017 Guidelines Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs.

## **Appendix 1.**

**The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of DES Special Ed Circular 02/05).**

### **Stage I**

A class teacher or parent may have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of certain pupils. The teacher should then administer screening measures, which may include screening checklists and profiles for pupils in senior infants and first class, standardised, norm-referenced tests for older pupils and behavioural checklists where appropriate.

The class teacher should then draw up a short, simple plan for extra help to be implemented within the normal classroom setting, in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management. The success of the classroom support plan should be reviewed regularly, with appropriate parental involvement. If concern remains after a number of reviews and adaptations to the plan, the special education support team or the learning support/resource teacher in the school may be consulted about the desirability of intervention at stage II.

### **Stage II**

If intervention is considered necessary at stage II, then the pupil should be referred to the learning support/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing.

In the case of pupils with learning difficulties, if the classroom support plan fails to achieve the desired outcome the pupil should be referred to the learning support teacher/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing. If this diagnostic assessment suggests that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this should be arranged. The parents and the class teacher should be involved with the learning-support/resource teacher in drawing up the learning programme, which would include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom, and during supplementary teaching.

The learning support/resource teacher and the class teacher should review regularly, in consultation with the parents, the rate of progress of each pupil receiving supplementary teaching. If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews and adaptations to the learning programme, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at stage III.

In the case of pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, with serious difficulties, more urgent action may be needed. In these cases the pupil's needs should, with parents' permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case should 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 referral for further specialist assessment (stage III).

### **Stage III**

Some pupils 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 pupils with learning difficulties or with mild or moderate behavioural problems (or both) who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of pupils with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.

The learning support/resource teacher, resource teacher, if available, and the class teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. The parents should be fully consulted throughout this process. This programme should be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning programme and referral for specialist review, as necessary.

In the case of pupils identified at an early age as having very significant special educational needs, intervention at stage III will be necessary on their entry to school. Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such pupils, and primary responsibility for the pupil will remain with the class teacher, in consultation with the learning support/resource /or resource teacher.

## **Appendix 2.**

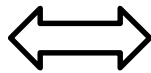
The 2017 Guidelines (p. 8) present the NEPS Continuum of Support as follows

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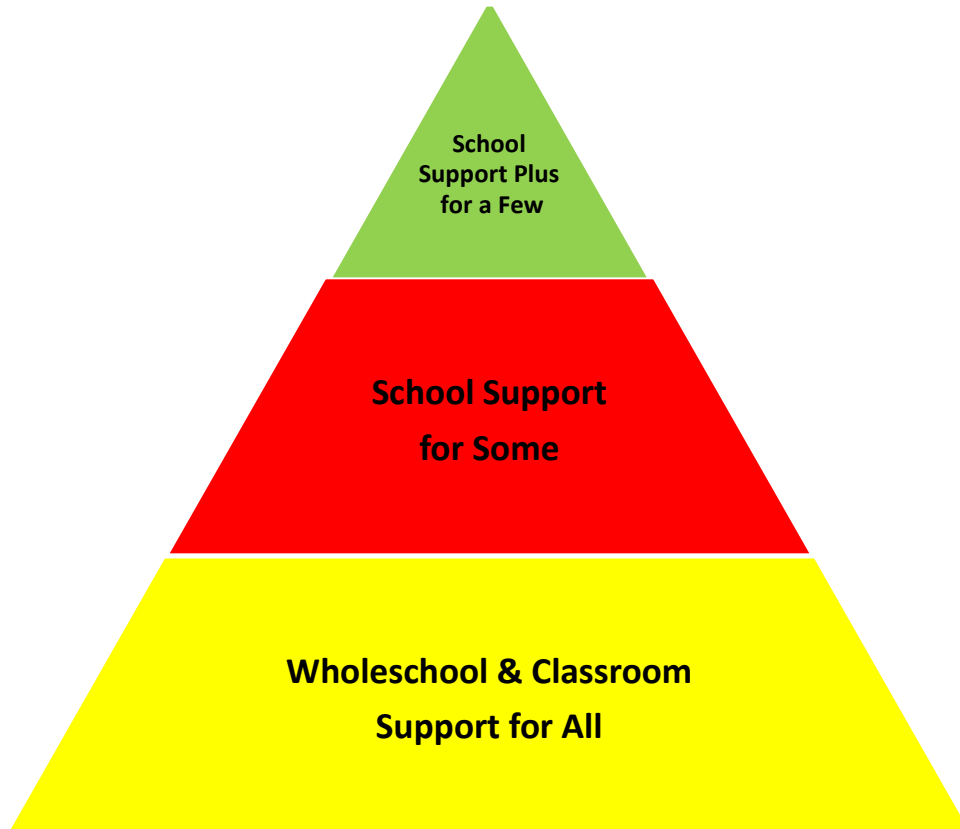
The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:

### **A Continuum of Support**

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS**



**SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL &  
BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE**



### **A Continuum of Support**

The 2017 Guidelines (p. 11-12) describe the NEPS' three tiers of support as follows - "As special educational needs can vary from mild to transient to significant and enduring, educational planning should reflect 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, is advised (for example, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and psychologist)".

## **Appendix 3**

### **Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)**

<b>Personal Pupil Plan for</b> _____	
<b>SNA support is vital in all of the areas ticked</b>	

<b>1. Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks (as per Circular 30/2014):</b>	
Assistance with feeding: Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.	
Administration of medicine: Where a pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.	
Assistance with toileting & general hygiene: Where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, & until such time as they are able to do so.	
Assistance with mobility & orientation: On an ongoing basis including assisting a pupil or pupils to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a pupil to access school transport), or to help a pupil to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.)	
Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground & school grounds: At recreation, assembly, & dispersal times including assistance with arriving & departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.	
Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: Such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.	
Care needs that require frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a pupil may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.	
Assistance with moving & lifting of pupils, operation of hoists & equipment.	
Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs those with significant, & identified social & emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include	

assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.	
<b>2. Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks) (as per Circular 30/2014):</b>	
Preparation & tidying of workspaces & classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare & tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.	
Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with special educational needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned & the review of such plans.	
Assist teachers & / or Principal in maintaining a journal & care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance & care needs. Assist in preparation of school files & materials relating to care & assistance required in class by students with special needs.	
Planning for activities & classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with Class Teachers & other Teachers such as the Resource Teacher & School Principal, attending meetings with Parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement & guidance of class Teacher/Principal.	
Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including class teachers or support teachers.	
Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.	
<b>3. Other Vital SNA Tasks:</b>	
Preventing the child from harming self	
Preventing the child from harming other children	
Preventing the child from harming staff	



Preventing the child from destroying property	
Careful supervision of the child to prevent the child from climbing / squeezing into tight spaces etc...	
Supervising the child who is a flight risk	
Accompanying the child to and from Learning Support / Resource	
Removing the child from whole school activities, if the child becomes distressed / overwhelmed	
Removing the child from the classroom when meltdowns occur	
Assisting the class teacher to raise the alarm if dangerous situations occur (children cannot be left alone)	
Assisting the class teacher to comfort other children who are injured / frightened by explosive behaviour	

## **Appendix 4.**

### **Transition from Primary School to Post-Primary School**

Taken from the 2017 Guidelines:

Good planning and support for transition helps to ensure the successful transfer of pupils from pre-school to primary school, from primary school to post-primary school and between special and mainstream settings. Effective transition support and planning can enhance the educational experience of the child and help reduce potential anxiety. Many schools already have excellent practices in place to support pupils at various transitional points.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post- primary schools. The materials are presented under the umbrella title of Education Passport and are available at [www.ncca.ie/transfer](http://www.ncca.ie/transfer). They include:

- 6th Class Report Card
- My Profile sheet (for children)
- My Child's Profile sheet (for parents)
- A Special Educational Needs Summary Form is included to support the sharing of information for children with identified learning needs.

Since the 2014/15 school year schools have been required to use the Education Passport materials detailed above and forward to the relevant post-primary school, following confirmation of enrolment, ideally by end of June (Circular 45/2014).

Additional resources for schools in planning for effective transitions are available at the Department of Education and Skills and NCSE websites.

## Appendix 5

### *Identification of Needs through the Continuum of Support Process - (Primary Guidelines, p.9-10)*

Classroom Support	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parental consultation</li> <li>● Teacher observation records</li> <li>● Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>● Basic needs checklist *</li> <li>● Learning environment checklist*</li> <li>● Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist</li> <li>● Literacy and numeracy tests</li> <li>● Screening tests of language skills</li> </ul> <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
School Support	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher observation records</li> <li>● Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>● Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>● Learning environment checklist</li> <li>● Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>● Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>● Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition. A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
School Support Plus	<p>This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad</p>

range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:

- Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures
- Parent and pupil interviews
- Functional assessment
- Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc.

Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation

\*These checklists are available in the Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers

## Appendix 6

Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework

### Classroom Support

<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Supports:</b>  Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	<b>Focus of Support:</b>  In class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard

### School Support

<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Supports:</b>  Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	<b>Focus of Support:</b>  In class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard

**School Support Plus**

<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Supports:</b>  Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	<b>Focus of Support:</b>  In class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard


## **Appendix 7.**

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

### **Educational Planning**

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. The process involves the class teacher, special education teachers, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals. Interventions should draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers. These interventions should reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests. Support plans should set out the agreed targets, the resources required, the strategies for implementation and a time-frame for review.

### **Student Support File**

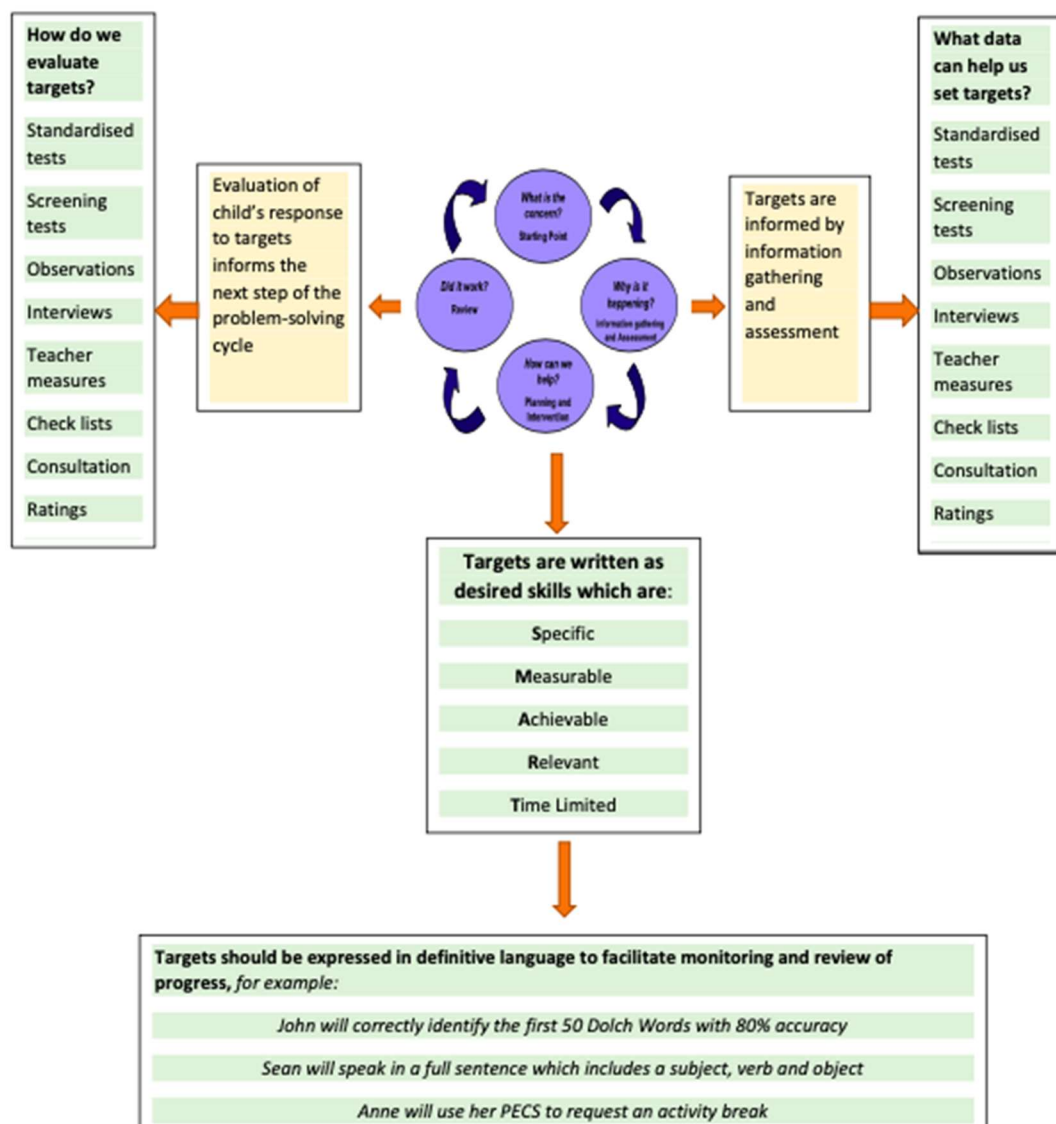
A Student Support File has been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with 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.



## Appendix 8.

From the 2017 Guidelines

### Appendix 1: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework



## Appendix 9

Table 2: from the 2017 Guidelines - Planning the allocation of special

Table 2: Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs	
<b>Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</b>	<p>Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data, and any information from parents and external professionals.</p> <p>Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests).</p> <p>Identify <b>all</b> pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
<b>Action 2: Setting targets</b>	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the Continuum of Support.
<b>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</b>	<p>Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the Continuum of Support.</p> <p>Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching.</p> <p>They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.</p>
<b>Action 4: Organising early-intervention and prevention programmes</b>	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early-intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
<b>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place. Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.</p>
<b>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</b>	<p>Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At <b>Whole-school and Classroom Support</b> level by all teachers</li> <li>• At the <b>School Support and School Support Plus</b> levels by class teachers and special education teachers</li> </ul>

education teaching supports