



*Scoil Mhuire gan Smal,
New Inn,
Cashel,
Co. Tipperary.
Phone/Fax (052)7462122*

Special Educational Needs Policy 2018

The school currently has the following provisions to cater for children with Special Educational Needs

- **One S.E.N. teacher**
- **One visiting teacher 4.25hrs from New Inn Boys N.S**
- **Five class teachers**
- **1.33 S.N.A's**

Introductory Statement

Under the new General Allocation Model, from September 2017 – June 2019, Scoil Mhuire gan Smal has received its allocation of support teaching to meet the needs of the children in the school.

Changes to the previous policy the policy arise from

- The introduction of the new General Allocation Model
- Changes in our practice in recent years with a greater focus on in-class/whole-class support and a reduction in model of withdrawing children for learning support.
- An increase in invention groups for blocks of 6-8 weeks various classes not just early intervention.
- Our analysis of Micra T & Sigma T results as a result of School Improvement Plan and School Self Evaluation.
- Our ongoing commitment to ensuring that pupils experiencing learning/social/emotional difficulties receive the support that they need insofar as we can provide it
- Our ongoing commitment to support pupils in multigrade and split classes.

Our review involved,

- Reviewing whole class interventions from previous years and broadly timetabling projected interventions for 2018/19.

- Looking at the needs of those children who had resource hours under the previous model to ensure that their needs would continue to be met under the terms of our current provision.
- Collating the Staged Approach information provided by class teachers as well as the standardized test results to ensure that children who will need interventions outside those that can be provided in class, have their needs met.
- Allocating hours to the larger classes in the school to provide a variety of supports for it if that class has children struggling with the curriculum or a number of children with specific needs.
- Continuing the method of Station Teaching in use in Scoil Mhuire gan Smal.
- All Class teachers were consulted about the best way to allocate the resources available to us to meet our specific needs.
- It was agreed that this consultation would take place each September to broadly plan for the year ahead and make necessary changes to the time tabling of the SEN teacher. This time table would be subject to change as the year progresses and needs of the pupils arise.

Guiding Principles of SEN Policy:

- All children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all of our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.
- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- Support will be offered taking into account the allocation available to the school and the appropriateness of the support in meeting the needs of the child.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support
- Develop each child's potential to the full.
- Encourage a love of learning.
- Help children to develop skills they will use all their lives.

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

Inclusion:

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with SEN to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The following practical steps are in place already in Scoil Mhuire gan Smal, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom:

- Buddy system
- Student Council
- Worry Boxes
- Buddy Bench
- Educational outings
- Active School Activities
- A.S.A.P
- School tours
- SPHE classes
- Paired/ Shared Reading
- Drama
- P.E.
- Visual Art
- Swimming
- Religion
- SESE – where appropriate.

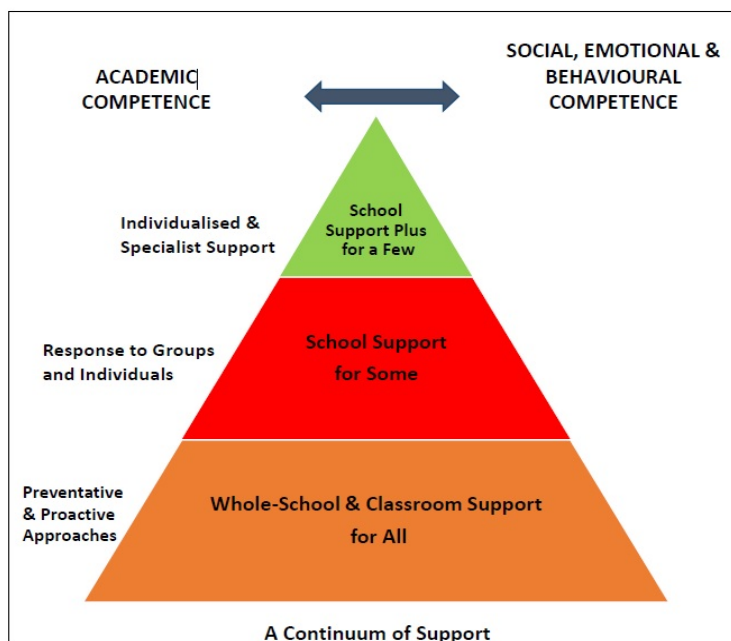
Three Principals for inclusion.

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success and to achieve as high a standard as possible. (See Appendix 4). In order to do this, Scoil Mhuire gan Smal will use the continuum of Support Process' as outlined in table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils. Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important

to look at a pupils needs in context, and to use our resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports).

Identification of Additional Needs of Pupils

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



The flow diagrams outline how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs. A more comprehensive explanation of each stage can be found in the Continuum of Support – Guidelines for teachers 12 - 35

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf

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 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.

Classroom Support

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.

This is informed by:

- Parental consultation
- Teacher observation records
- Teacher-designed measures/assessments
- Basic needs checklist *
- Learning environment checklist*
- Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist
- Literacy and numeracy tests
- Screening tests of language skills
- In-class differentiation

A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with parents, the triggers for this intervention could be

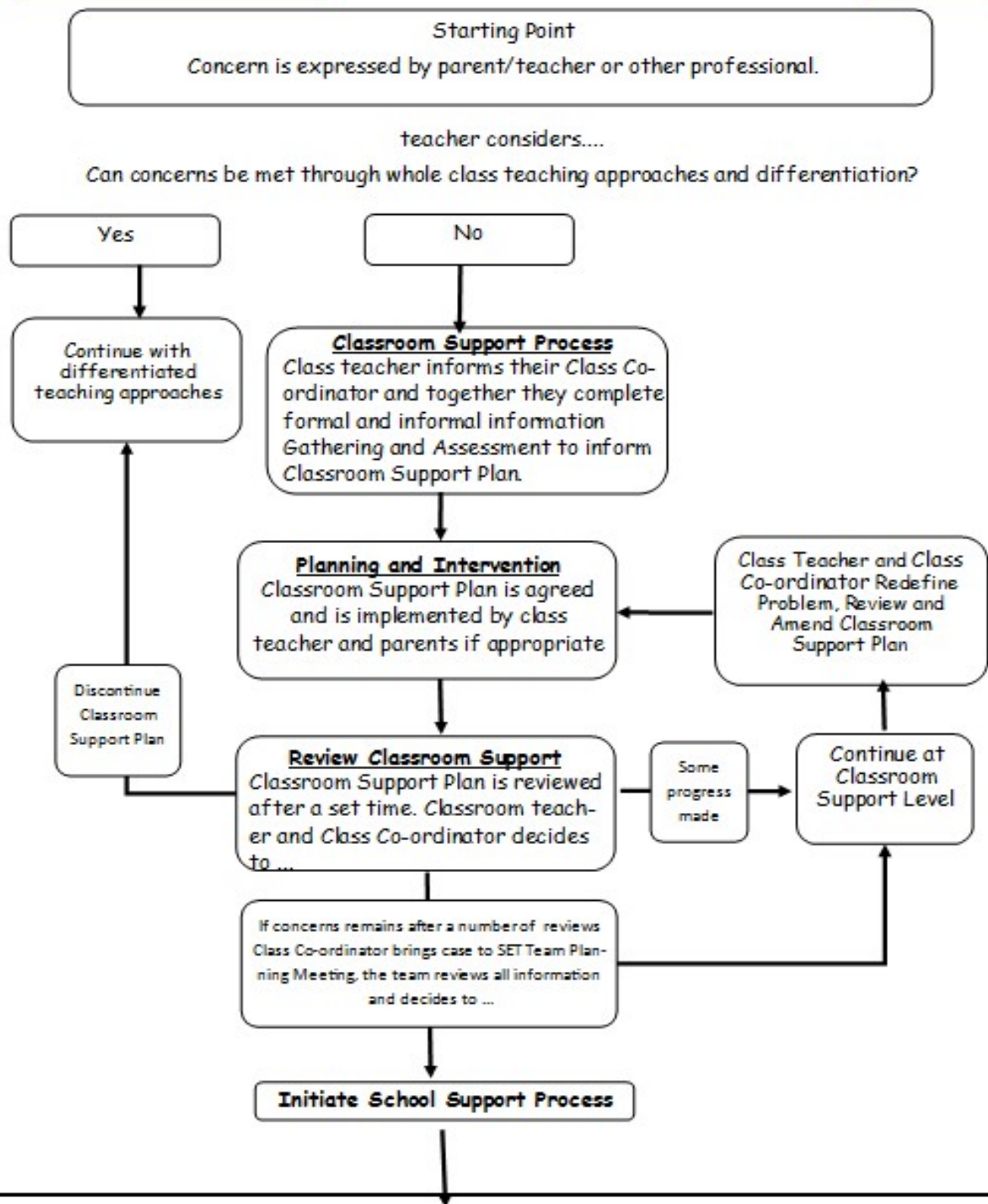
- The child makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness.
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment.
- Persistent emotional or behavioral difficulties which do not respond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

Class teacher completes a stage one form and monitors the record of differentiated support for half a term. If this strategy does not work then the teacher will continue to the next stage, school action. Teacher inform Parents that their child's needs would be best met served in a small group with support teacher. Parents' consent is required and consent form is signed.

While most pupils' initial needs should be met through classroom based interventions, a small number of pupils may arrive at school with difficulties that are more significant or which are immediately recognised. In such cases, it may be more appropriate to begin with a School Support or School Support Plus Plan. Most of the pupils to whom this applies will be new to the school. However it may also apply for some pupils following an event which impacts significantly on them in school.

CLASSROOM SUPPORT PROCESS

STAGE 1



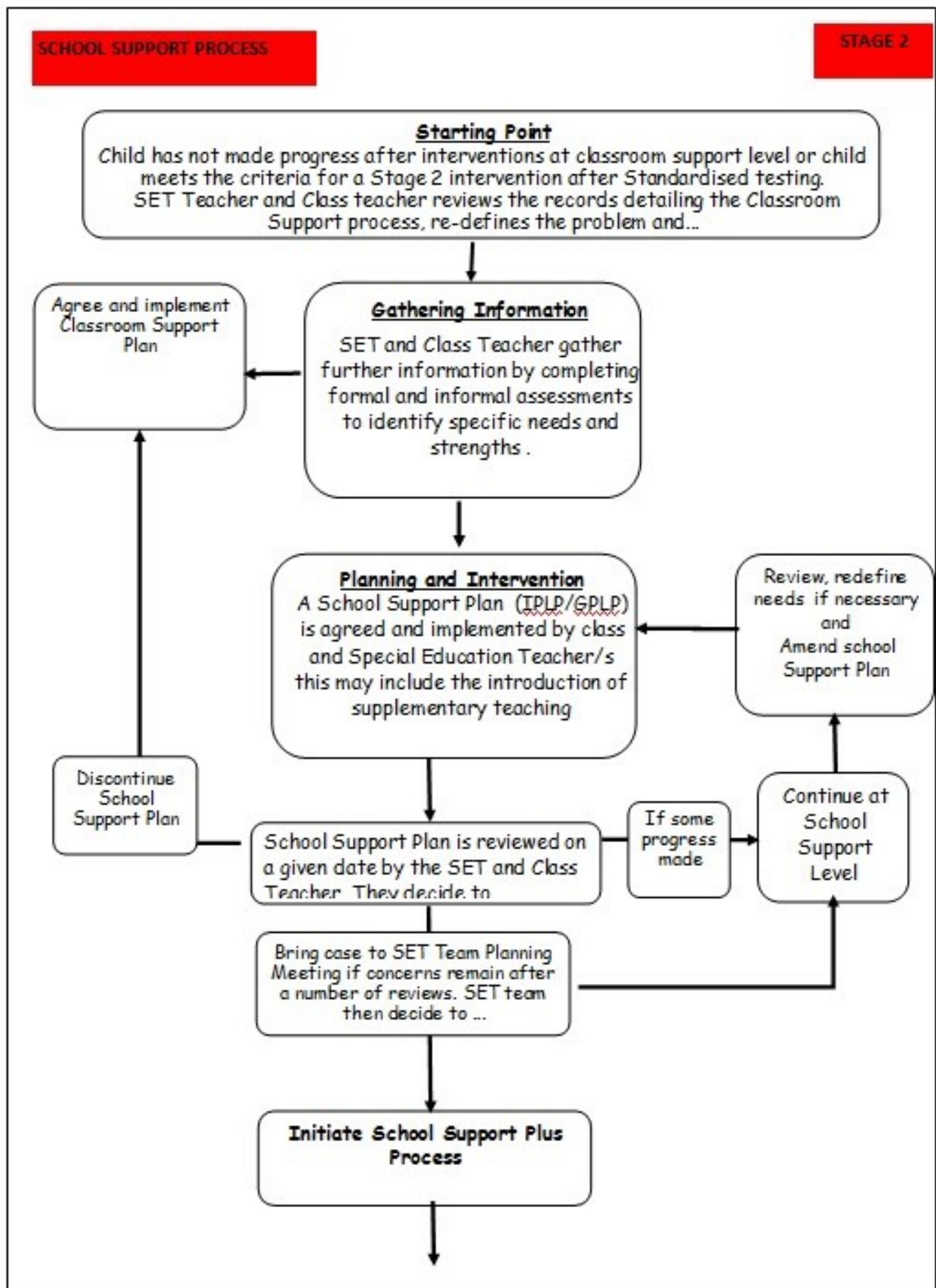
Stage 2 School Support

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education Teacher Team (SET Team) in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a School Support Plan.

School Support	<p>At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher observation records• Teacher-designed measures/assessments• Parent and pupil interviews• Learning environment checklist• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition.</p> <p>A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
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Again, class teachers will discuss their concern with parents. The action taken will be as follows,

- The class teacher and special education teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support teacher.
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas then a group educational plan will be implemented.
- These programs will be updated and reviewed every term.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in the class, there may be a need to work part of the program in an SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.



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. Where a pupil has a diagnosis/report from an outside agency, recommendations in the report will be considered in deciding what supports are offered. However, within the school, we may not always be able to offer the supports recommended. Also, we may not always feel that the recommendations are borne out by the evidence we have regarding a pupil. We retain the right to offer what we feel is the most appropriate intervention for each pupil, taking into account evidence from teachers, parents and any other agencies that may be involved. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of any intervention.

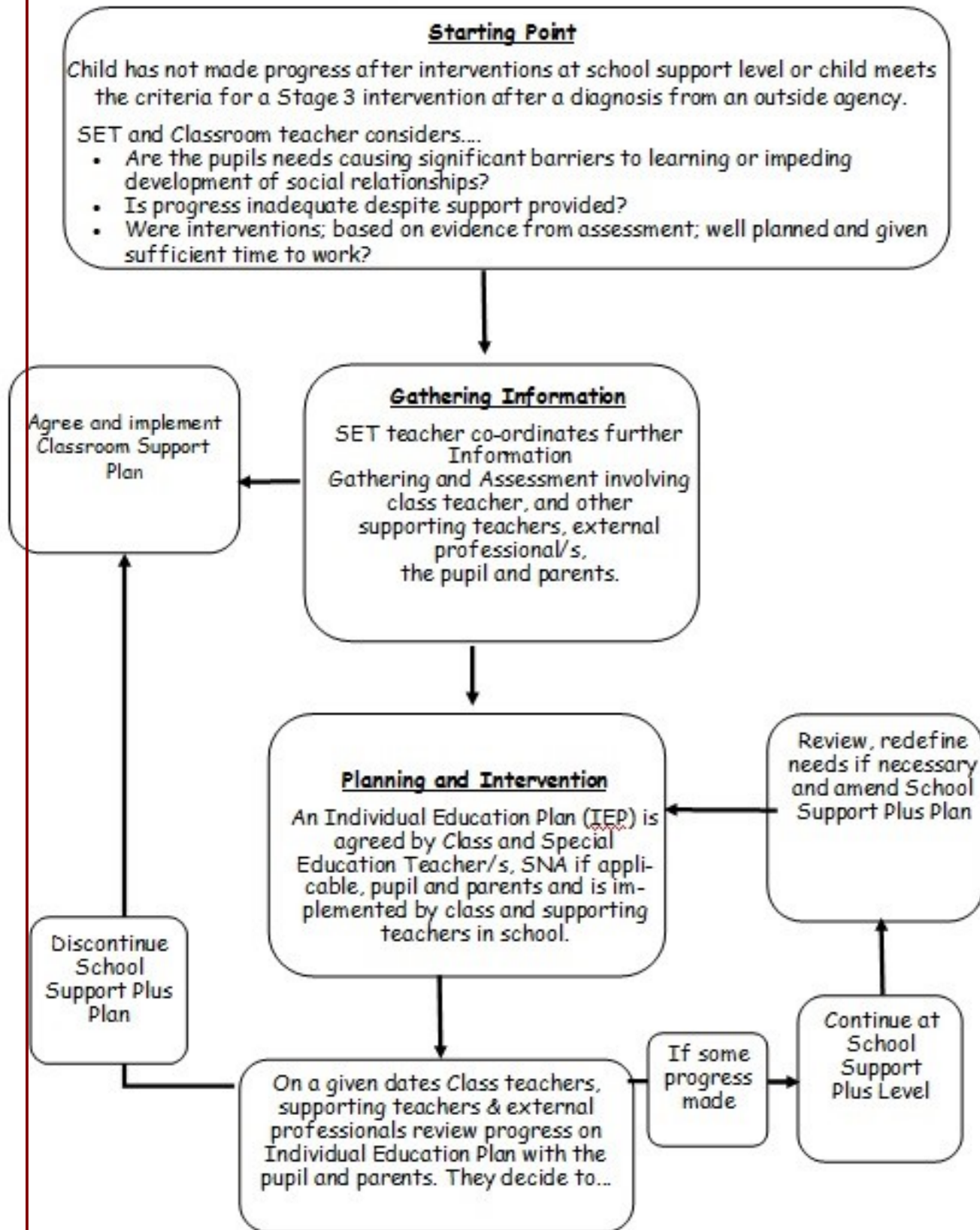
School Support Plus	<p>This level of the continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures • Parent and pupil interviews • Functional assessment • Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p>
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The support or class teacher will perform diagnostic tests on these children (at School Action) usually at the beginning and end of the school year. These tests will include the Neale Analysis Reading Test, Aston Index Spelling and Word recognition test, Non Reading Intelligence test etc.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling and performing below the tenth percentile despite School Action the class teacher with the support teacher and SEN coordinators, in consultation with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

1. A psychological assessment will be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
2. Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including IEP targets and strategies.
3. The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme the child:
 - Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
 - Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age
 - Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties

- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and IEP
 - Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service
 - Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and act as a barrier to learning.
4. If it is felt by the psychologist that a child has care needs, a special needs assistant may be applied for.
 5. In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used to at least two SNAs and either the class or support teacher. The SEN co-ordinator should also be present.
 6. The use of specialised yard equipment may also need to be demonstrated to these staff members. Courses will be provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
 7. If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Ed. And Skills.



* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support - see page 32 - 35 of guidelines

Information Gathering and Assessment

Class & SEN teachers will use their observations, class tests, standardized and diagnostic tests, parental input and reports from professionals involved with the child to create a list that includes every child in the class. It will record children who are not on the support continuum as well as those at stages 1, 2, 3. (See template). This list should be updated at regular intervals and presented to the SET team so that they have it for their reviews. These reviews take place regularly.

However, if a child presents with a more pressing concern, their needs may be addressed at any time.

A useful step in identifying pupils who may need learning support in English or Mathematics is for the class teacher to administer one or more screening measures. The screening measures that are administered depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils concerned but the following will be administered annually:

- Behavioral Checklists/Observation Charts.
- M.I.S.T will be used in Senior Infants .
- Reading and Maths tests (Micra and Sigma) will be used from first class onwards.
- The NRIT test is used in 2nd and 5th class.

In mathematics we focus on common language development and development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

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.

*Sometimes children may be included for support based on a teacher's experience and insight or where there are exceptional circumstances such as difficult home circumstances, ongoing poor performance not flagged in standardised tests, difficulties with processing, testing done prior to coming to school or in another school etc.

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Our strategies for supporting the needs of children:

- Implementation of early intervention programmes in the infant classes as an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. These programmes:
 - Include a strong emphasis on oral language laying the foundation for meaningful reading. (Jolly Phonics)
 - Emphasise phonemic awareness.
 - Sometimes involve small group teaching.

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
 - Comprehension Strategies (Building Bridges)
 - Listening Skills(We promote a classroom environment where children listen to each other do not interrupt/wait their turn)
 - Writing Genre
 - Word Attack Skills
- Genre writing
- Station Teaching
- Comprehension programmes for senior classes
- Team Teaching
- Aistear in Junior and Senior Infants
- Social skills groups
- Withdrawing individuals/groups
- Visiting Library
- DEAR
- Book Reviews
- Dressing up as a book character
- Visiting Authors
- Dictionary Work
- Word games
- Story time
- Debating
- Print rich environment

Each year we plan to use as many of the above listed interventions as we can resource and have time to provide. We may be in a position to introduce other interventions as our new model evolve or we may find that we have to reduce our intervention – this will depend on the needs of the children.

We also encourage

- Close collaboration and consultation between all teachers and the SEN teacher.
- Promotion of literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read)
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. Mental Maths
- Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g. Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents.
- Observation,
 - Personal checklists
 - Record sheets
 - Attendance sheets(daily)
 - Shared observation
 - Listening to reading and music
 - Correction of homework
 - Sharing of concern

Allocation of Resources

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with SEN(Primary Guidelines P.19 & 20)

Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	<p>Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests).</p> <p>Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
Action 2: Setting targets	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	<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. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place.</p> <p>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>
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	<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"> • 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.

Once a pupil's needs have been identified, where they have been listed as Stage2/3, Special Education Teachers (SETs) are deployed to address these needs as required. (Children at Stage 1 will have received in-class support from their teacher who may seek advice/recommendations from the SET). 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, whole-class interventions, 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 SEN teachers meet 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. The SEN teacher then bring this information to the first Croke Park Meeting of the next new term for review by the Principal and staff. Furthermore in Scoil Mhuire gan Smal the teachers, S.N.A's and SEN teacher regularly discuss needs of children both before and after school hours or as the need arise.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL TEACHING SUPPORT

<p>Stage 3 School Support Plus</p>	<p>1. Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disability • Hearing Impairment • Visual Impairment • Emotional Disturbance • Moderate General Learning Disability • Severe/Profound General Learning Disability • Autistic Spectrum Disorder • Assessed Syndrome • Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment • Multiple disabilities 	<p>Individual Education 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>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 2 School Support</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Prevention and Early Intervention Programs (Building Bridges, Whole Class Comprehension, team-teaching in classes over 30) 3. Children in JI & SI for whom English is an additional language or children for whom English is an additional language newly arrived in Ireland in 1st – 6th 4. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in Literacy Standardised Tests 5. Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals who on or below the 30th percentile in Literacy such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 6. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in Numeracy Standardised Tests 7. Children with a identified need by external professionals who are on or below the 30th percentile in Numeracy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 8. Children who have not made adequate progress after interventions at Stage 1 9. Children in 1st – 6th who have not made adequate progress after EAL interventions 	<p style="text-align: center;">Group or Individual Profile and Learning Programme</p>	<p>Type of Support</p> <p>In-Class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel</p> <p>SEN teacher Class Teacher</p>
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Roles and responsibilities

To facilitate the effective implementation of a school policy on special needs and learning support- support services, the roles of the different partners – the Board of Management, Principal, Class teachers, SEN teacher, Parents and Pupils are crucial.

Role of Board of Management:

- To oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on special educational needs.
- To ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for special education teachers.
- To provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of special educational needs.

Principal:

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. She should

- Implement and monitor the school's SEN policy on an on-going basis.
- Ensure that the children with the greatest needs have the greatest provision.
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles.
- Assign the SEN teacher appropriately to ensure that the needs of the children in literacy/numeracy/social skills etc. are met.
- Assign SEN teachers to liaise with each class.
- Assign responsibility for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher
- Plan to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to 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
- Communicate with the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser)
- Oversee whole school assessments.
- Allocate time within the school timetable for the SEN teacher to plan and consult with teachers and parents.
- Inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SEN
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.

- To work with teachers regarding external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
- To attend multi-disciplinary meetings regarding children with special educational needs.

SEN Co-ordinator 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 and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments (NEPS)*
- *co-ordinate regular planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs*
- *collaborate with other teachers 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 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*
- *oversee the tracking system of test results on password-protected Aladdin software to monitor the progress of pupils*
- *maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support*

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
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN teacher to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- 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
- maintain a list of children not included/included in the continuum of support and review this each term
- open a Pupil Support File once additional needs have been identified which require classroom support
- develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support
- collaborate with SEN teacher and parents to develop appropriate support plans
- collaborate with SEN teacher to regularly review support plans
- where applicable, collaborate with the SEN teacher regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching and whole class interventions
- 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

Special Education Needs Teacher (SEN)

The SEN 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 need
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop Support Plans for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus.
- collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review support plans
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- administer and interpret 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 / Croke Park Hours assigned for this discussion.
- provide necessary information to a 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 10/76).

The SNA should

- support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum
- contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils
- support learning and teaching in the classroom
- attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM
- attend IEP meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil
- accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate

(see also SNA policy)

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 SEN teacher
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- Keep the school informed of any home factors which may affect the child
- inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage

Effective communication with parents is critically important to the success of Special Educational Needs Programme. Activities that may be organised to increase the involvement of parents in supporting their children's learning, particularly parents in the Special Educational Needs Programme. Such activities include:

- Paired/Shared Reading.
- Developing children's oral language through discussion.
- Motivating children to learn more.
- Selecting high interest books for the children.
- Visits to places of interest to broaden the range of children's experiences.
- Encouraging children to use the library
- Engage children in activities to aid social and emotional development such as football, choir, drama, rugby etc.

Parents will be consulted regularly at all stages of processes outlined in this policy eg

- When a child is assessed as having needs that may require learning support
- When a child is identified as having behaviour issues/difficulties that may require further investigation within the school or by outside agencies
- During psychological assessments
- When a Support Plan – school/plus is being drawn up for a child
- When a review of a Support Plan means a significant change in the levels of out of class support being given to a child.

Pupils:

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

- be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets
- 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

Tracking, recording and reviewing progress

Provision for pupils with special educational needs relies upon 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 school-wide support of our pupils.

Student Support File

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

- Cover sheet with pupil’s details
- A timeline of actions
- Record of support received
- Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores
- Support plans (See school template)
- Checklists as appropriate

Beginning in Sept 2018 and at the end of each school year hereafter, each class teacher will collate the results/checklists/observations/parental input etc. which has informed the supports provided for children during the year, to review the children in receipt of support – on the continuum and draw up a class list showing children who are

- On Stage 1 of the continuum (Class support)
- On Stage 2 of the continuum (School support)
- On Stage 3 of the continuum (School Support Plus)

This list will be given to the SEN teacher for the purposes of planning for the following year, as well as being passed on to the class teacher who will be working with the class for the next school year. The list will be maintained throughout the year and reviewed in line with the termly reviews of the SEN teacher.

A class teacher should open a Student Support File once a child is placed on Stage 1 – Classroom Support on the continuum. At the end of the school year, the file should be printed and retained in the child’s file, by the SEN teacher and in the class teacher’s assessment folder

Individual Education Plan

Based on Psychologist's report, tests, Record of Differentiation and School Action Plan the class teacher with the support teacher, SNA (if assigned), parents and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary) formulate an Individual Education Plan.

These IEPs, which employ a small – steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that the child experiences success.

This plan includes:

- the nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills
- the degree of the child's special needs,
- the present level of performance,
- services to be provided,
- services for transition to 2nd level school where appropriate,
- the goals, which the child is to achieve over a period of half a year.

The strategies set out in the IEP will, as far as possible, be implemented in the normal classroom setting.

The management of the IEP strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher, support teacher and the SEN coordinator.

REVIEW of IEPs

The SEN teacher will ensure that the review is conducted at the end of three months (October, February, and May). The class teacher consults with the support teacher, the child (and SNA if appointed). They agree on the expected outcomes of the IEP. A draft copy is formulated and sent home to the child's parents. The parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss or make recommendations to the draft review if they so wish. Again, outside agencies may play a part in formulating the final copy. The review will be recorded on the IEP Review form. (Attached, Appendix 5).

Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently achieving targets over the stated time, a decision will be made to revert to class support.

The review in May will be to formulate an IEP, which will be part of the plan for the next teacher in September. It will be carried out as outlined above.

Complaints

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

The complaint will be investigated and dealt with as early as possible. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction, then the matter proceeds to the B.O.M.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This will lead to the

establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe as outlined below.

Sharing/Storing Information and Plans

- Every pupil in the school has a file, held in filing cabinets in the office. (When a pupil leaves the school, his/her file is moved to the past-pupil file in the office) In terms of SEN, each file should contain
 - Annual school report
 - Any reports relating to child's needs from outside agencies
 - End of year hard copy of any Support Plan which may have been drawn up for the pupil – replacing the plan from the previous year
 - The most recent standardized literacy and numeracy test which the child has take
- Each teacher will maintain a class list which records the name of every child and states where he/she is with regard to the continuum of support. SEN teacher should have a copy of this list.
- Each teacher – class and SEN - involved in supporting a child will have access to the child's record so that he/she can update the record of support/interventions being provided to that child. This is the means by which Support Plans will be created, shared and reviewed. We also store our files electronically.
- Whole class records will be retained by the Class Teacher – records such as end of the yearly or termly tests, standardized tests, MIST results etc. These are shared with the SET team.

Other Considerations with regard to SEN

Enrolment of children with identified special educational needs:

Parents enrolling children in the school can view our Enrolment Policy and Enrolment Form on the school website. Prior to the child's enrolment, the schools will acquaint themselves with a child's special needs by:

- Meeting between parents/principal/ class teacher/special needs staff and SENO as appropriate.
- Obtaining copies/details of reports, assessments etc. from psychologists, therapists etc
- Contact with SENO, NEPS psychologist or other psychologist/speech therapist/Autism therapist/occupational therapist involved with the child.

- Liaising with family counsellor / care worker where appropriate.

The following steps will be used to ensure a smooth transition into the school for both the pupil and the school.

- Parental visits to the school.
- Pupil visit to the school.
- Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for the child with special educational needs to be educated in an inclusive environment.
- Liaising with SENO to arrange for individual personnel, resources, training where appropriate.
- In some circumstances a transition period may be established to help a child to settle in the school.

Referral of pupils to outside agencies including NEPS

Where teachers feel it necessary to seek intervention of outside agencies they should

- Consult with the principal
- Consult with the SEN teacher
- Speak to parents

In general teachers get the opportunity to consult with members of the Speech and Language team if requested.

The NEPS psychologist attached to the school meets with the principal where necessary to discuss the needs of the pupil and to plan the support offered to the school.

In the event of a limited availability of assessments through NEPS priority will be given to the pupil with the greatest need.

Where an assessment takes place in the school:

- the class teacher should oversee initial contact with parents.
- The principal will liaise with assessment services.
- The SEN teacher will collect all documentation concerning the pupil's test scores.
- This will be co-ordinated by the principal.

In general, our school has access to three psychological assessments every 2 years through the NEPS scheme.

Our present psychologist is Evelyn Buckley

Teachers may also recommend to parents, that children in need of support, especially in the case of behavioural/emotional needs, should be referred through a GP.

Transfer to Post Primary

All children in 6th class will have an Educational Passport. This will be provided to Secondary schools upon request.

Where children with SEN are transitioning to the local secondary school, the 6th class teacher and/or the principal will liaise with the SEN teacher or 1st year co-ordinator of the new school.

The 6th class teacher will work to prepare the class for transition to secondary school. An SEN teacher may support this work.

Pupils with Exceptional ability

We seek to support pupils with exceptional ability by the following means:

- Differentiation of work
- Providing additional follow-on work of a higher level
- Whole class interventions
- Recommendations to parents
- Occasional engagement with experts in areas such as PE, Art Music, IT

In exceptional circumstances a teacher may draw up a class support plan for a pupil with exceptional ability.

Related Policies

The schools' curricular and organisational policies and plans take into account the needs of pupils with SEN, through differentiation of content and methodologies in curriculum areas.

Concluding Section

Success Criteria

The following points will be indicators of the success of the Special Educational Needs Policy.

- Pupils with special needs will be catered for.
- The progress of pupils with special needs will be monitored and recorded.
- Discussion/meetings with parents.
- Feedback from teaching staff, pupils, psychologists etc.
- Standardised test results
- Inspector's Reports.

Roles and Responsibility

The roles and responsibilities of parents, teaching staff, principal and BOM have already been outlined in the policy

It is the role of the SENO to allocate the annual support provision to the school, based on the information provided to her by the principal.

Other agencies involved in meeting the needs of the pupils are the DES and NEPS. The school also relies on the support of a variety of therapists and psychologists in analysing the needs of our pupils.

Implementation, Ratification and Communication

This policy has been drawn up in the Sept 2018 school year. It will be updated every two years when the school receives its allocation of support hours. The underlying principles, roles and responsibilities will be reviewed every 5 years.

Following ratification, it will be published on the school web-site at the earliest opportunity.

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

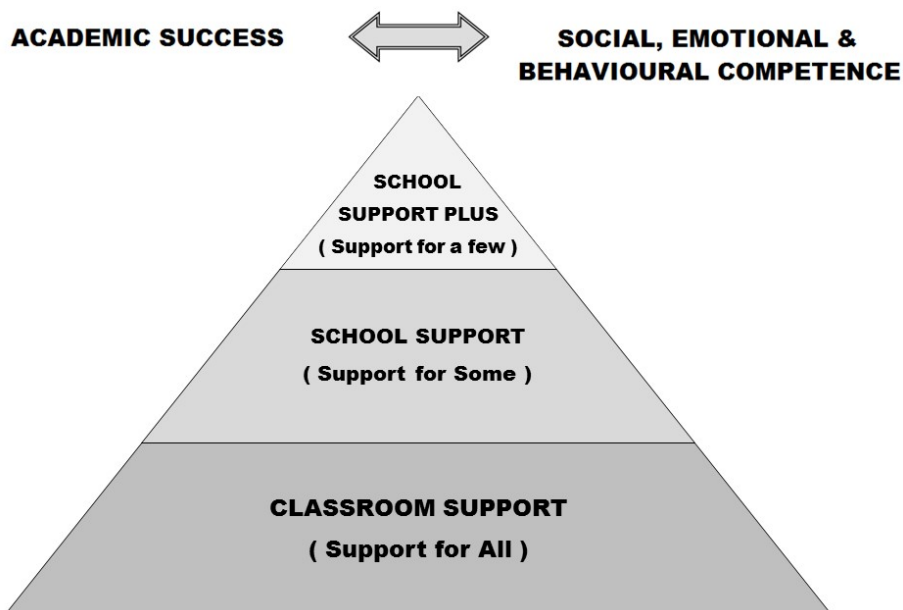
Policy was drafted in September 2018

Ratified by the Board of Management on 4/10/18 Signed: *Breda Hickey*, Chairperson

Review date: 2021

Appendix 1

A Continuum of Support



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concern. We gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

Student Support File: Classroom support plan

Name	D.o.B	Scoil Mhuire gan Smál	Roll No:13404v
Class	Class teacher	Name of SNA:	Category of need:

Date	Concerns	Strategies planned	Contact with Parents	Discussed with SEN/Principal	Review date

SUPPORT PLAN*

Classroom Support
 School Support (Support for SOME)
 School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the Teacher(s)

For help, see 'SEN, A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', *BESD: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers* pp.71-74; *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers*, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Student's Name:		Age:	
Lead Teacher:		Class/Year:	
Start Date of Plan:			
Review Date of Plan:			
Student's Strengths and Interests:			
Priority Concerns:			
Possible Reasons for Concerns :			
Targets for the Student:			
Strategies to help the Student Achieve the Targets:			
Staff Involved and Resources Needed:			
Signature of Parent(s)/ Guardian(s):			
Signature of Teacher:			

SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD*

Classroom Support
School Support (Support for SOME)
School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.

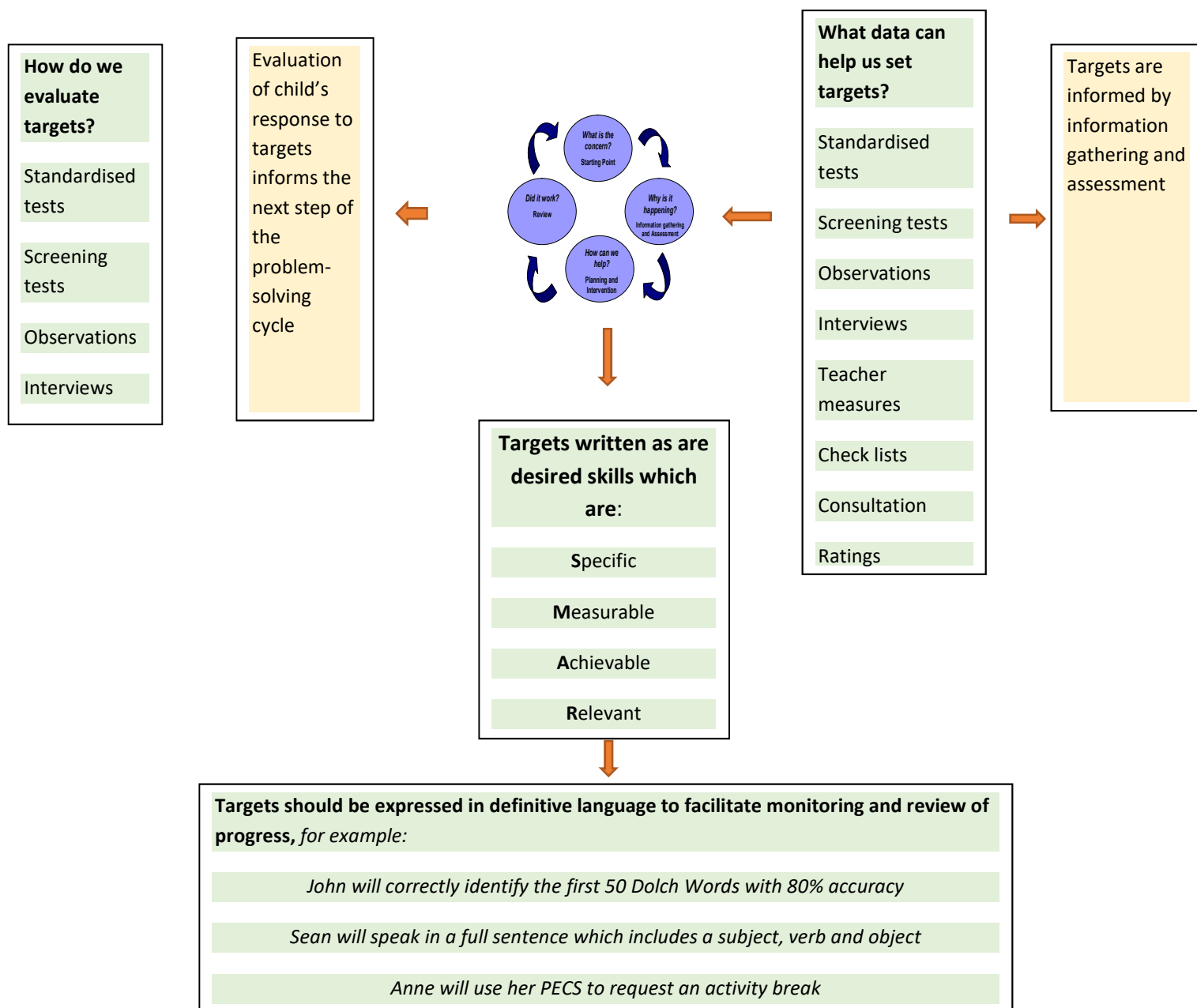
For help, see 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', 'BESD: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', 'A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers', 'Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools'.

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

Outcome of Review (tick as appropriate):			
	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support		Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
	Continue at Current Level of Support		Request consultation with other professionals

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

Appendix 2: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving-framework



Appendix 3:

Support Checklist		
Name:	Age:	Class:
General Information:	Date Checked:	Comments:
1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Consulted:		
2. Information from previous school/preschool gathered:		
3. Hearing:		
4. Vision:		
5. Medical Needs:		
6. Basic Needs Checklist Completed:		
7. Assessment of learning-screening:		
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning:		
9. Observation of Behaviour:		
10. Interview with Pupil:		
11. Classroom work differentiated?		
12. Learning environment adapted?		
13. Yard/school environments adapted?		
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
16. Other interventions put in place in school?		
Action needed		

Appendix 4

Exceptional Ability & Giftedness Policy

Definition and Background:

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

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

School Ethos:

We, the teaching staff at Scoil Mhuire gan Smal have agreed to cater for those pupils who are exceptionally able in **academic** areas (i.e. the top 2% of the school population).

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

Procedure for identification of pupils with Exceptional Ability

Criteria for Assessment:

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

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

2. From first class onwards, pupils who score on or above the 98th percentile in the Micra **and** Sigma tests will then do the NRIT, NVRT and BPVS to gain a more definitive guide of their ability.

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

Catering for Pupils with Exceptional Ability:

Pupils who meet the criteria for exceptionally able (IQ of 130+) will be catered for within the classroom based on a differentiated programme of work **or** if deemed possible by the Principal may be offered extension classes on a withdrawal basis, subject to the approval

of the pupil and their parents. These classes will form part of the SEN teacher's timetable where feasible.

Responsibility and Management:

1. The class teacher is responsible for differentiation within the classroom, including acquisition and distribution of teaching resources for differentiation.
2. The SEN teacher will be responsible for the assessment stage of this process, organisation of extension classes including timetabling (where applicable), acquisition and distribution of information regarding referral and assessment by outside agencies.
3. The Principal will liaise with parents, SEN teacher and class teachers throughout the process.
4. According to guidelines for professional development, costs will be paid by the BoM to teaching staff who attend in-service training and courses about giftedness.

Appendix 5

IEP Planning/Review Sheet

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Progress to Date/ Strengths:

(The nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents)

Areas for Improvement/Presenting Difficulties:

(The nature and degree of the child's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her progress)

(The present level of educational performance of the child)

Summary of Special Educational Needs:

(The special educational needs of the child)

Special Educational Provision:

(The special education and related support services to be provided to the child)

Further Information: