



Scoil Bhríde, Straffan

Special Education Policy

Mission Statement

Scoil Bhríde, Straffan strives to achieve the highest possible educational standards for all its pupils in a happy, supportive, inclusive and caring environment, with due emphasis given to the individual needs of each pupil. As part of this purpose, the present policy is designed to ensure that those pupils who have special learning needs will be given effective and appropriate support.

Aims

1. To ensure that the theory and practice of Special Education in the school is in line with current best practice and with the policies and guidelines of the Department of Education and Science. The delivery of the Special Education aims and objectives will be subject to facilities and resources being made available to Scoil Bhríde, Straffan by the D.E.S and may change from time to time in accordance with D.E.S. policy changes as may be outlined in D.E.S. circulars and letters.
2. To ensure that a service in Special Education is delivered which meets with the guidelines and objectives as set out in: The 1998 Education Act; The Guidelines for Students with General Learning Disabilities; The Learning Support Guidelines; The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003); The EPSEN Act (2004) and Circular 14/2017.
3. Further elaboration of Special Education aims can be seen in Appendix 1.

Roles and Responsibilities Role of the Board of Management

1. To oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on Special Education.
2. To ensure adequate accommodation and resources are provided.
3. To provide a secure facility for storage of records.

Role of the Principal

1. To assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the schools policy on Special Education.
2. To work with teachers and parents on the development, implementation and review of the school plan.
3. To monitor the implementation of the plan.
4. To monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring focus is on low achievers.
5. Assume direct responsibility for co-ordination of special needs education or appoint a teacher to do so.
6. Oversee implementation of an assessment and screening programme to identify pupils in need of supplementary teaching.
7. To keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
8. To help teachers to increase their knowledge and skills in Special Education by, for example, providing guidance and advice with regard to teaching methods and materials and by encouraging teachers to avail of in-career development.

Role of the Special Education Co-ordinator (Deputy Principal)

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Organises the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeps a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
- Facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
- Supports the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Advises parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with (NEPS)

- Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS, Speech and Language etc to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Liaises with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision
- Stores confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and shares same with principal, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.
- Participates in and or oversees the drafting of IEPs, IPLPs and classroom support plans
- Arranges for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.

Role of the Class Teacher

1. Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils, and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
2. Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and in Mathematics, by administering and scoring the screening tests and by discussing the outcomes with the learning-support teacher in the context of each pupil's general performance in class.
3. Implement the Continuum of Support (Student Support File and Classroom Support Plan) when concerns arise. (Appendix 2)
4. To collaborate with the SET in the development of a School Support Plan/IEP by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
4. For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, adjust the class programme in line with the agreed learning targets and activities on the pupil's Student Support Plan/I.E.P. and maintain a record of pupil's progress towards achieving those learning targets.
5. Differentiate the class curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils within the class.
6. To keep parents informed regarding their child's progress and the interventions, where applicable, which are in effect.
7. To inform parents when an intervention is no longer required.
8. Approaches and methods recommended for teaching pupils with special learning needs can be found in (Appendix 5).

Role of the Special Education Teacher

1. Assisting in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties.
2. Ensure Continuum of Support/ School Support Plans are implemented where necessary.
3. Developing a School Support Plan/I.E.P. for each pupil who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with class teachers and parents.
4. Maintaining a weekly plan and a Cúntas Míosúil or equivalent for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of Special Education Support Teaching.
5. Delivering intensive early intervention programmes and providing supplementary teaching in areas of need to pupils in the Junior section of the school (Junior Infants to Second class).
6. Providing supplementary teaching to pupils in the senior section of the school (third to sixth classes) who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties.
7. Co-ordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, in line with the selection criteria specified in the school plan and input from the pupils' class teachers and parents.
8. Contributing to the development of policy on SEN at the whole-school level.
9. Providing advice to class teachers in such areas as individual pupil assessment and programme planning, as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and mathematics for pupils experiencing learning difficulties.
10. Contributing at the school level to decision-making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials.
11. Supporting colleagues in responding to the learning requirements of children with social and emotional needs.

Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

1. Promotion of Literacy:
 - Whole school promotion of Reading for Pleasure Record in journals, book review cards, DEAR Time, Literacy Week, Readathon
 - Building Bridges Comprehension Strategies
 - Genre Writing
 - Power Hour-Junior Infants to 2nd Class,

- Guided Reading-3rd -6th Class
- Print rich environment ,
- Shared/paired reading ,
- Phonetics Programme
- Power Hour
- Fundamental Movement
- Story time, Pre-reading activities, nursery rhymes, oral language games, big books, Library time, DEAR time, Book Week, Book Fair, Reading buddies, Word games, Class library, visiting authors.
- Phonological Awareness
- Write a Book Project for children.
- Access to Literacy apps on school ipads and at home

2. Provision of additional support in language development and in relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to pupils who need it. Additional support at Stage 2, should it be required, will begin in the third term of Junior Infants. (See screening policy.)

3. Emphasis on developing early Mathematical skills through play and use of concrete materials and the Ready Steady Maths from Maths Recovery Programme/Mata sa Rang.

4. Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties. This observation/assessment is informal in the Junior Infant classes. It is based on the teachers' daily interaction with the children and the detailed information acquired in this interaction. Observation notes will also be made during Maths Recovery and Power Hour. Where there are persistent concerns, various suitable diagnostic tests will be carried out such as the Belfield Infant Assessment in the second/third term of Junior Infants. In the last term of Senior Infants the Drumcondra Early Literacy& Numeracy Screening tests will be used to identify possible learning difficulties.

Early Intervention

The principle of early intervention should underpin school policy on Special Education and the provision of supplementary teaching programmes in English and Mathematics. Research evidence indicates that the implementation of an *Intensive Early Intervention Programme* in the early primary classes (i.e. Junior infants to second) is an effective response to meeting the needs of children who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties. Programmes with the following characteristics have proved most successful in improving pupils' achievements:

1. They are set within a specific time frame, such as an instructional term of 13 to 20 weeks. (Therefore, it is suggested that, for the purposes of organising learning support, the school year should be divided into two or three instructional terms, each between 13 and 20 weeks.).

2. They are based on a shared expectation of success by everybody involved.
3. They involve small-group teaching or one to-one teaching when small-group teaching has not been effective.
4. They are intensive in terms of the frequency of lessons (daily where possible) and the pace of instruction.
5. They include a strong focus on the development of oral language, laying the foundation for meaningful reading activities and further development of language and comprehension skills.
6. They emphasise the development of phonemic awareness and a range of other word identification skills.
7. They engage pupils in frequent supervised oral and silent reading of texts at appropriate levels of difficulty, and monitor their comprehension of these texts.
8. They stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
9. In mathematics, they focus on language development and the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

Early Intervention Programmes currently in use are Power Hour, Fundamental Movements, Early Intervention (1st Term Junior Infants) Mata Sa Rang/Maths Recovery.

Criteria for Prioritising Children for Special Educational Support

Under the new Special Education Needs Model of Support, as set out in Circular 14/17, schools have a greater discretion as to how they can distribute resources, based on individual needs of the student. The school may allocate additional teaching support to students who have identified needs for teaching and learning using school based assessment, the NEPS Continuum of Support and the Guidelines provided to schools. Schools can also draw on professional reports where available. Every two years, the school will be re-profiled to ascertain the teaching resources required by the school. Under the new model, a student should receive additional teaching support based on their learning needs, rather than primarily on diagnosis of disability.

In summary, in identifying students for support, schools should take into account the following:

- Standardised tests can be used to screen and identify students' performance in reading and mathematics. Those students performing below the 20th percentile (Sten 4) should be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.

- Students who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from an SET and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Students who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. Schools should also take into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.
- Students with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties and students who have specific learning disabilities.
- Students with significant Special Educational Needs. For example, students with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These students need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Schools should also carefully consider the needs of other students who may present with a range of learning whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the students' learning and ability to access the curriculum.
- Students who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those students who need additional English Additional language Support.
- In Irish language schools the support provided for pupils by schools to assist with pupils literacy development may be conducted in Irish or English, or a combination of both, as considered necessary by the school.

The intensity of additional support that is provided for students with low achievement and students with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process.

Inclusion

Scoil Bhríde Straffan is 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, traveller children and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

Three principles for inclusion

1. Setting Suitable Learning Challenges

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. (See also More Able Children policy, Appendix 4) In order to do this, Scoil Bhríde Straffan 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 the 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).

Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process	
Classroom Support	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>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">• 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 <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"> • 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>
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>

2. Meeting Children’s Diverse Learning Needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning our support, the ‘Planning Template’ outlining the 6 point action plan below will be utilised.

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Primary Guidelines, P19-20)

<p>Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</p>	<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>
<p>Action 2: Setting targets</p>	<p>Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.</p>
<p>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</p>	<p>Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>
<p>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources</p>	<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>
<p>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</p>	<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.

3. Preliminary Screening:

Observation and/or checklists:

Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, record sheet for each child, Shared observation (2nd opinion), listening to reading, General correction of homework.

Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, Teachers own observation.

Share concerns with: - Last year's/ next year's teacher, similar level teacher, parents, L/S teacher, SEN co-ordinator.

Assessment

It is the policy of Scoil Bhríde, Straffan to carry out the following screening tests/assessments and to follow through on their results as described below:

1. In the case of Senior Infants, identification of pupils with particular needs will be based on teacher made checklists and observations and possibly the Drumcondra Early Literacy & Numeracy Screening Tests, which if necessary are administered late in the 2nd term/early third term.
2. For classes 1st to 6th, the Drumcondra English & Maths tests will be administered and scored by the class teacher in the third term.
3. Drumcondra Spelling will be administered periodically from 1st-6th Class late in the 2nd term/early 3rd term.
4. The Special Education Teacher in consultation with the class teacher will select pupils for diagnostic assessment. Priority will be given to pupils who score below the 20th percentile.
5. When concerns arise as a result of screening tests, parents are informed of these concerns and of the procedures and policies within the school as well as the resources and choices that are available.

2. Diagnostic Assessment

Once the pupils are identified who are in need of additional support, diagnostic assessment will be administered by the special education teacher, to identify the pupil's learning strengths and needs and to decide on the most appropriate form of learning support for each pupil. This may entail additional support from the class teacher and/or supplementary teaching from the learning-support teacher. The following diagnostic tests are used in the school:

Reading:

Maths:

Belfield Infant Assessment Profile Drumcondra Early Literacy Diagnostic Test, Phonological Awareness Screening Test, Aston Index, Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment Kit, Benchmark PM+ Kit NNRIT 1-3, Belfield Infant Assessment Profile, Sound Linkage-Phonological Test, Quest-borrow from Rathcoffey NS, Dyslexia Screening MIST Dyslexia Screening Test Junior 6-11 Non Verbal Reasoning 8-9, 10-11, 12-14	Drumcondra Early Diagnostic Test Drumcondra Maths 1 st -6 th
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Stages of Assessment and Provision

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher identifies a child with SEN the class teacher consults with the SEN coordinator and provides interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher. However, as most of our support is in-class the stages are less defined than in situations where learning support is delivered by withdrawal.

Assessment and Reporting

The school Special Education Programme is divided into two teaching terms, September to January and January to June. School Support Plans/IEP's will be prepared in June and January. Parents will be met twice in the year to sign the new School Support Plans/IEP's. Assessment is ongoing and a full review takes place at the end of each teaching term. Supplementary teaching ceases when in the opinion of the class teacher and the SET teacher the child has made satisfactory progress. Parents are informed of the decision to cease supplementary intervention and a record is kept of the child's progress and attainments.

Record of Differentiated Support in class

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

Classroom Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Supports	Focus of Support
			Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard
School Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Support	Focus of Support
School Support Plus				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Support	Focus of Support

Stage One

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's 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 behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school
- Has sensory or physical difficulties
- Has communication and/ or relationship difficulties

The class teacher completes a Classroom Support Plan (Stage One) 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 Support Plan (Stage Two).

Teachers inform Parents that their child's needs would be better served in a small group with a support teacher. Parents will need to sign their consent.

Stage Two

In cases where the Record of Differentiated Support indicates that progress has not been made, or if the results of tests (Early Numeracy and Early Literacy (Drumcondra) Drumcondra Primary Reading Test, Sigma T, Belfield Infant Assessment Programme) and teacher observation indicate this to be the case, intervention in the form of a support teacher will be accessed. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and SET 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 programmes will be reviewed and updated every term.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in a SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only (e.g. Literacy Boost.)
- 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 Three

The SET or class teacher will perform diagnostic tests on these children (Stage Two) usually at the beginning and end of the school year. These tests will include the Aston Index Spelling and Word recognition test, Non Reading Intelligence test etc.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling or 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.

Individual Education Plan

Based on Psychologist's report, tests, Record of Differentiation and School Support 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 coordinator will ensure that the review is conducted in December and June. 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 2).

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 School Action.

The review in June 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.

IEPs for children moving to 2nd level will be referred to at the consultation meetings with the 2nd level representative.

Procedures Adapted when Withdrawing Children from Class

1. Whenever it is feasible, the class teacher and the SET will engage in team teaching, in preference to withdrawing pupils from class. Written permission from parent/guardian must be received if children are to be withdrawn from class.
2. Children should be collected from and returned to the classroom by the S.E.T.
3. At no time should children be unsupervised.

Time-tabling

The SET team will endeavour to have the timetables ready for early September each year.

Timetables will be reviewed at the end of each instructional term.

Class timetables must be flexible and based around the timetabling needs of children receiving support from special education teachers.

It is the policy of the school that intervention/supplementary classes should take place within the classroom setting. The SET team will try to be as inclusive as possible to meet the needs of the pupils-such as co-ordinating SPHE, PE etc with the class teacher. Pupils should only be withdrawn when the specific needs of the children warrant withdrawal and cannot be adequately addressed in the classroom setting.

The Special Education Teacher's Schedule

The work of the Special Education Teacher entails providing as many supplementary teaching lessons as possible. However, in addition to providing supplementary teaching, the SET must also allocate time to non-teaching activities. These activities could include:

- overseeing the early intervention and prevention programmes
- conducting diagnostic assessments
- maintaining and reviewing pupil records
- co-ordinating special needs services and
- consulting with teachers and parents and other outside agencies

Parental Involvement

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress. The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support File provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of scoil Bhríde Straffan can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework.
- Reading and telling stories to their child/children.
- Listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading.

- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Signing and returning consent forms to the school regarding withdrawal for support teaching.
- Talking positively about school and school work.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors which may be affecting their child's progress.
- Participating in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Helping children to develop their organisational skills.
- Helping children to look after school books and other resources which are loaned to the children for use at home.
- Supporting programmes and initiatives implemented by the school.

Outside agencies

In cases where a pupil's learning needs necessitate the involvement of an agency outside the school, the teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating special needs/learning-support services in the school should oversee initial contact with parents, liaise with assessment services, and, where appropriate, make arrangements for additional educational provision for children with diagnosed special needs.

The school maintains a close liaison with NEPs, in accordance with the policies and guidelines governing its operation. Pupils who are referred to NEPs for psychological evaluation will be selected according to the following criteria:

1. The number of referrals allowed by NEPs.
2. The availability of resources from NEPs.
3. The urgency of the pupils' needs, priority being given to those pupils who have low incidence disabilities and who are judged by the principal, the SET who is involved with the pupil and the class teacher to be most in need of an evaluation.

Record Keeping

All screening tests will be uploaded onto Aladdin. Each teacher will have access to the results of the pupils that are relevant to him/her.

The results of all tests conducted by SET such as diagnostic tests will be uploaded onto Aladdin. Signed student support plans (School Support Plan) will be uploaded onto Aladdin and attached to the pupil's profile.

Signed IEP's will also be uploaded onto Aladdin by the SET and attached to the pupil's profile. A hard copy of these plans will also be kept in a folder with any psychological assessments and kept in a locked office.

At the end of the school year, it is the responsibility of the SET teacher to file away documents such as tests, IEP's and school support files etc before the start of the new school year.

The SET teachers will keep weekly planning and progress record/cuntas míosúil.

Resources

A considerable quantity of resource material is available in the school for use in special education. This includes tests, teaching materials and resources containing information for teachers (for example, on Dyslexia).

From time to time this bank of resources will need to be supplemented, updated or replaced in part due to damage, loss, wear and tear etc. The Special Education Co-ordinator will be responsible for the maintenance of resources.

Insofar as it is feasible, the special education resources should be available to the class teachers, particularly in cases where the teacher is undertaking intervention at stage one. (see above)

Appendix 9 contains a list of available resources.

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.



Monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File provides schools with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils. Such monitoring of progress, and subsequent adaptation of support plans, are key drivers of effective practice.

In addition to monitoring outcomes at the individual level, it is also important to review outcomes at group, class and whole-school level. This review will include some of the following measures: attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being (for example, sense of belonging and connectedness to school) for pupils with special educational needs.

The BoM will ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of the school development plan and will evaluate the effectiveness and success of this policy by monitoring:

- the standards obtained by children with special needs
- the number of children at each of the three stages: Differentiation within Class, School Action and Resource.
- The level and pattern of help (i.e. average time allocated and the balance of in-class and withdrawal support)
- Views of parents
- Visits from specialist teachers
- Staff views on in-service
- Children's views

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

Ratified by the BOM on the _____

Signed : _____

Chairman, Board of Management Scoil Bhríde, Straffan

Appendix 1

Aims of Special Education

To establish prevention and early intervention programmes.

To provide supplementary teaching for pupils with special learning needs in English and / or Maths.

To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies and systems to support the needs of pupils who have special educational needs.

To develop positive attitudes in pupils who have learning difficulties/special educational needs.

To enable pupils with learning difficulties to participate in the full curriculum with appropriate modifications.

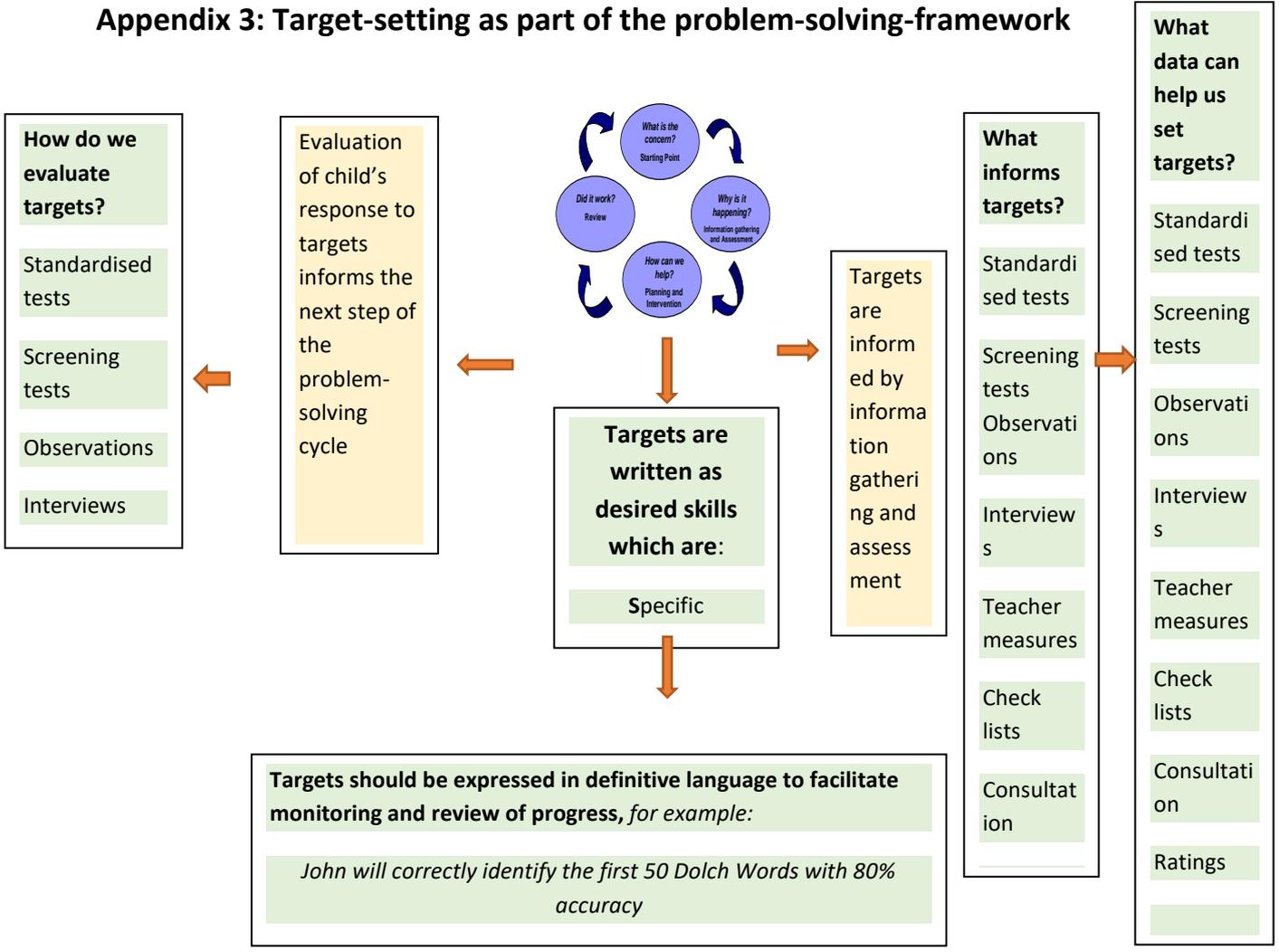
To optimise the teaching and learning process so that pupils with learning difficulties/special needs will achieve levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy appropriate to their potential, before leaving school.

To enable pupils with learning difficulties/special needs to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.

Appendix 2

Student Support File

Appendix 3: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving-framework



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 [Insert School Name] 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 each SET's timetable where feasible.

Appendix 5**Approaches and methods recommended for teaching pupils with special learning needs:**

- group teaching;
- modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with special learning needs in class activities;
- placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum;
- providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy;
- setting learning targets at an appropriate level;
- providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress;
- carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work in order to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty for particular attention in subsequent lessons;
- arranging for more able pupils to work collaboratively with other pupils in peer tutoring programmes and paired reading programmes.
- Peer tutoring-5th/6th Class-i.e. Buddy Reading

Appendix 6

Monitoring Progress

In order to monitor the effectiveness and smooth operation of the SEN support process, regular meetings will be scheduled between the principal teacher, the special education teachers and the teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating special needs and learning-support services.

As part of the monitoring process, the principal teacher should also consult with class teachers and parents on these issues. The outcomes of any review of school policy should be shared with the Board of Management and the teaching staff in the school.

The meetings referred to in paragraph one, should occur at least once each school term, and should address the following issues, as appropriate:

- development and implementation of the school's prevention and early intervention programmes
- implementation of the school's screening programme for the selection of pupils for diagnostic assessment
- implementation of the various procedures such as the Continuum of Support (Student Support File) that necessitate the involvement of the class teacher and the parents, for example, diagnostic assessment, the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching and programme planning
- implementation of appropriate criteria for continuing/reducing support levels for pupils at the end of a term of supplementary teaching
- allocation of the SET's time across various teaching and consultative activities
- progress of pupils in receipt of supplementary teaching, with reference to the learning targets in their Classroom Support Plan/ School Support Plan/I.E.P.
- implementation of parental involvement programmes
- involvement of class teachers and parents in implementing suggested activities in pupils' learning programmes
 - alignment of pupils' class and supplementary teaching programmes
 - referral of pupils for additional assessment and support
 - co-ordination of the learning-support service and other support services for pupils with special needs
 - time-tabling of pupils for supplementary teaching
 - adequacy of resources for supplementary teaching

Appendix 7

Principles Governing Time-Tabling

- As a general principle the supplementary teaching that pupils receive should be in addition to their regular class programme in English and/or Mathematics.
- A second general principle is that pupils should not miss out on the same curricular area each time they receive supplementary teaching.

These two principles suggest that a flexible approach to time-tabling should be adopted by the class teacher taking into account the needs of pupils with regard to learning support, their right of access to the full curriculum and the schedule of the learning-support teacher. Similarly, the learning support teacher should organise his/her work with a view to minimising disruption to class work.

Appendix 8

Letter to parents re Team Teaching & Supplementary Teaching

Dear parent,

In line with recent Department of Education & Science guidelines, supplementary educational interventions in Scoil Bhríde, Straffan, will take place within the classroom to the extent that this is feasible .

It is school policy, that the class teacher and the special education teacher will conduct team teaching in the classroom, and that this will be the preferred option. When a special education teacher is supporting the class teacher (team teaching) in his/her classroom no individual correspondence will be sent to parents, but we do advise parents to stay in ongoing contact with the class teacher and the special education teacher in relation to their child's progress.

Children will continue to be withdrawn from class for supplementary lessons, whenever this best serves their learning requirements, or when the needs of the situation are better met by withdrawal rather than team teaching.

Written permission of parents/guardians will be sought if pupils are to be withdrawn from class on a continuous basis to receive supplementary teaching.

If you have any question in relation to team teaching , you should contact your child's class teacher immediately to discuss his/her educational needs going forward.

Should you wish to discuss any of these issues, feel free to contact the school and arrange to see the class teacher or the relevant Special Education Teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Special Education Coordinator

Appendix 9

The following resources can be found in the learning support/special education rooms:

TESTS

Drumcondra Tests (Reading, Maths, Spelling)

Drumcondra Early Screening Tests in Literacy & Numeracy

Reading Tests Middle Infant Screening Test

Dyslexia Screening Test Junior-6-11

Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment Kit

NRIT Level 1-3

Aston Index

Non Verbal Reasoning 8-9, 10-11, 12-14

Sound Linkage

Benchmark PM+ Kit

TEACHING MATERIALS

The Fuzzbuzz Reading Scheme

Phono-graphix: Reading Reflex

P.A.T. (Phonological Awareness Training)

Alpha to Omega

Ginn Key Stages Comprehension Series

Toe-by-Toe

Cloze in on Language

Literacy Now Age 6-11 (Brodie)

Stories for Thinking

Teaching Comprehension Strategies (Prime-Ed)

Developing Literacy: Non-Fiction Compendium: Age 7-11