



Scoil Náisiúnta
Baile Átha Cliath 7
Ag Foghlaim le Chéile

Dublin 7 Educate Together
National School

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Educate Together
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Whole School Special Educational Needs Policy

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Whole School Special Educational Needs Policy

This Policy on SEN Provision in Dublin 7 Educate Together, was originated formulated in 2015 and updated in 2020 taking cognisance of directives contained in : the 1998 Education Act; The Learning-Support Guidelines (2000); the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004; Recent Department of Education and Skill Circulars, especially Circular 13/17 and 02/05.

The Policy was reviewed and further developed by the teaching staff of Dublin 7 Educate Together during May 2020

The Policy was discussed, accepted and ratified by the Board of Management of Dublin 7 Educate Together on 26th May 2020.

The following acronyms are used in this policy:

SEN: Special educational needs
SET: Special Education Teacher
SET Team: Special Education Team (teachers)
SENO: Special Educational Needs Organizer
NCSE: National Council Special Education
DES: Department of Education and Skills
NEPS: National Educational Psychological Service
SNA: Special Needs Assistant
ASD: Autistic Spectrum Disorder
SNA: Special Needs Assistant
SSF: Student Support File
SSP: Student Support Plan (learning plan)
PPP: Personal Pupil Plan (care needs plan)

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1. Introduction

This policy on special educational needs (SEN) is a statement in relation to the provision for special educational needs in our school. The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers and parents and the school community on the provision of effective support to pupils experiencing learning difficulties. The policy was prepared in line with the Guidelines for Primary School Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Des 2017), Special Educational Needs: A continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers & Resources Pack for Teachers, Circulars no. 0013/2017 and 02/05, the Learning Support Guidelines (DES 200) and to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.

2. Situation

Dublin 7 Educate together is a co-educational mainstream primary school catering for children from mixed social and cultural backgrounds. The school's patron body is Educate Together, and the school subscribes to the principles and ethos of the Educate Together model. The school is: multi-denominational, i.e., all children have equal right of access, and the social, racial, cultural and religious background of each child is respected. The school is also co-educational, child-centred and democratic in character.

3. Specific Objectives of this Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

- To support the inclusion of all pupils and facilitate pupils to participate in and benefit from the full curriculum.
- To ensure that the Staged Approach / Continuum of Support is implemented.
- To ensure that those with the highest level of need have access to the greatest level of support.

'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. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning.'
(2017 Guidelines:P.19)
- To provide/support supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Mathematics.

"optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school"
(Learning-Support Guidelines [LSG]: p. 15).
- To support positive self-esteem, social and emotional function and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies for pupils with additional educational needs.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning.
- To involve parents in supporting their children's learning.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.

4. Guiding Principles.

The school recognizes that effective teaching and learning for all is underpinned by the following principles:

- Effective whole-school policies.
- An understanding that supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community.
- Provision of intervention/ prevention strategies and programmes to prevent/minimise learning difficulties.
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need.

5. Prevention and Intervention.

Prevention / early intervention is a cornerstone of supporting learning.

Our strategies for preventing/minimising learning difficulties include:

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of English to ensure progression and continuity from class to class. (including the Plean Scoile for English, approaches to language development e.g. Phonological Awareness, Reading resources etc.).
- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Mathematics to ensure progression and continuity from class to class (including the Plean Scoile for Mathematics, availability of concrete teaching resources and a focus on Mathematical Language etc.).
- 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.
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Infant Teachers and the Support Teachers in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes at Classroom Support / School Support level and School Support Plus Level.
- Thorough Assessment procedures throughout the school.
- Class-based intervention by class teachers resulting in provision of additional support and differentiation at Classroom support level.
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Class Teachers and the Support Teachers in the selection of pupils for intervention / support programmes at Classroom Support / School Support level and School Support Plus Level.
- Provision of additional support in social and emotional development / language development / early literacy / early mathematical skills to pupils who need it.
- Promotion of Parental involvement including formal and informal Parent / teacher meetings.

6. The Continuum of Support and Selection of pupils for Support Teaching

6.1 Selection of pupils for Support Teaching

In the allocation of places for support teaching prioritization is influenced by Circular 13/2017 which states that: -

"Pupils under the new allocation model will be identified by schools for additional teaching support in accordance with the Continuum of Support Guidelines, and the Guidelines which accompany this Circular" (p. 13).

and

The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process" (p. 15 and 16).

In identifying pupils for support, D7ETNS will consider the following:

- Pupils with significant Special Educational Needs including pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. DTETNS also considers needs set out in professional reports, where available. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social, emotional or behaviour difficulties, co-ordination difficulties and attention control difficulties.
- Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.
- Pupils performing below the 10th percentile on standardised tests will be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy
- Pupils presenting with difficulties in literacy and/or numeracy e.g. difficulties that present a barrier to learning and full access to the curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils who need English Additional language Support.
- Gifted Pupils (those scoring above the 95th%ile in both English and Mathematics on Standardised Assessments and / or have been diagnosed by a NEPS Educational Psychologist as having a "superior IQ"). Interventions will be made in the first instance by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support.
- Due consideration will be given to the overall needs of the school and all its pupils.

6.2 Provision of Supplementary Teaching

The primary work of the Special Education Teacher (SET) is the provision of supplementary teaching to the pupils identified above.

Allocating Additional Teaching Supports:

Step 1: Identify Needs

- **Identification:** Using the Continuum of Support Framework, D7ET identifies pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.
Ref: Appendix 5: Table 1 from the 2017 Guidelines: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process
- **Planning:** A Student Support File has been developed by D7ET to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.
- **Support List:** A list of pupils who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework is maintained

Ref: (Appendix 6): Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the continuum of support Guidelines

Step 2: Meeting Needs Intervention and Prevention:

This step focuses on the importance of effective teaching and learning strategies and the benefits of early-intervention and prevention programmes

Ref: Appendix 7 (Educational Planning from the 2017 Guidelines are outlined in Appendix 7).

- **Target Setting:** Targets are informed by priority learning needs and linked to suitable interventions
Ref: Appendix 8: Appendix 1 of the 2017 Guidelines: Target setting as part of the problem-solving framework).

Step 3: Monitor and Record Progress

- **Monitor Progress:** Pupils' progress is regularly monitored. Progress 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 progress review may include measures of communication, independence, social inclusion and well-being as appropriate.
- **Record Progress:** Results of such monitoring will be recorded in the student support file/plan and will inform planning.

6.3. Screening and Diagnostic Assessment:

- Class Teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessments. The Special Educational Needs Teacher (SET) will discuss each class's recorded results with the Class Teacher and carry out further screening tests and / or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the selection process.
- Parental permissions for school-based tests / individual assessments are sought when the child enrolls in D7 Educate Together National School.

6.4 Levels of Support:

- Support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010).
- Support involves collaboration between Class Teachers and the SET Team in the formulation and implementation of programmes of work for children with specific needs and those experiencing difficulty in specific areas of learning and development.

Classroom Support:

- Pupils deemed to need additional support with their learning (literacy & numeracy) and / or specific needs (oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning) will be supported in the classroom by the Class Teacher.
- At this stage the class teacher will open a Support File and a brief support Plan and recorded the specific interventions in it.

School Support and School Support Plus:

- The SET Team may provide additional support for identified pupils, through withdrawal (1:1 or in a small group) and/or in-class support (e.g. station teaching / team teaching / in-class support / peer tutoring), depending on the pupil's needs.
- The SET and Class Teacher, in consultation with the Principal and with reference to guidelines issued by the DES, determines the size of groups, taking into account the individual needs of pupils and the overall caseload.
- Review of Support provision will take place regularly.
- Classes will be intensive in terms of frequency.

7. Roles and Responsibilities in respect of SEN

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community: - The Board of Management; Principal Teacher; Class Teachers; Support Teachers; Special Class Teachers; SNAs; Parents; Pupils and External Bodies & Agencies.

7.1 Role of the Board of Management.

"Schools should ensure that the additional Special Educational Needs Teaching supports are used in their entirety to support pupils identified with special educational needs, learning support needs, and additional literacy needs such as English Additional Language Support. " (DES Circular 13/17: p. 21).

Role of the Board of Management:

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the SEN policy.
- Ensure that satisfactory classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the Support Teachers.
- Provide secure facilities for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of SEN.
- Budget for ongoing support for professional development in special education for staff.

7.2 Role of the Principal Teacher.

"The principal teacher has overall responsibility for the school's learning-support programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs".

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.38).

The Education Act (1998) and the EPSEN Act (2004) have all reiterated this responsibility, along with Circular 13/17 and the accompanying Guidelines.

The role of the Principal Teacher is to:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on Special Educational Needs in co-operation with the Board of Management School staff, parents and children.
- Work with teachers and parents in the monitoring and development of the school plan in the context of SEN.
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with social and learning difficulties.
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with the greatest need.
- Oversee and organise the implementation of a tracking system at whole-school level to identify and monitor the progress of pupils with learning difficulties. Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and / or special educational services.
- Liaise regularly with the SET team to co-ordinate the development of Support Plans / caseloads / work schedules.
- Liaise with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in relation to the provision of support such as SNA access, SET posts, Assistive Technology for children with additional needs e.g. ASD, Sensory Impairments etc.

- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals. Liaise with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs. Advise Parents on procedures for availing of special needs services.
- Complete application forms for outside agencies such as NCSE; NEPS; CAMHS etc.
- Arrange for the provision of SEN funding and resources and classroom accommodation for the SET Team.
- 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 assigned roles and responsibilities in this area.

7.3 Role of the Post Holder.

A Post Holder Currently undertakes actions/duties, delegated to her by the Principal Teacher including:

- Co-ordinate and manage the formulation and updating of the school's Special Educational needs Policy (first review February to June 2020).
- Meet with Principal once a Month/or as necessary to co-ordinate Special Educational needs and address issues relating to the development and implementation of the school's plan for and provision of SEN.
- Collaborate with principal and SET team to identify the level of support that is needed to meet individual students' needs.
- In collaboration with the principal, support and advise in the development of timetables for SEN teachers.
- In collaboration with the principal, class teachers and SET team support and advise in the development of planning for students with SEN.
- In collaboration with the principal, co-ordinate and collate the primary care needs of students accessing and/or requesting SNA access – annually and as required.
- Organise annual standardised testing i.e. order and distribute test materials, co-ordinate test schedule and correction.
- Advice on and support comprehensive diagnostic assessment and teaching for pupils who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties when requested.
- Organise safe storage and retention of records in line with the Data Protection Commission's recommendations.
- In collaboration with the principal, classroom teachers and SET Team identify and co-ordinate applications for pupils with SEN for assessment by NEPS, Assessment of Need (complex). School Age team and Primary Care Team as appropriate.
- Support the principal in the maintenance of a register of pupils who have received the Assistive Technology Grant or an Irish Exemption, and with applications for Assistive Technology and Irish exemptions as needed.

7.4 Role of the Class Teacher

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her / his class, including those selected for supplementary teaching. The Class Teacher plays

an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have general or specific social, emotional behavioural or learning disabilities.

"Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes" (2017 Guidelines: p. 12).

The role of the class teacher is to:

- Implement teaching programs which optimise the learning of all pupils while addressing the diverse needs within the classroom, adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern.
- Implement school policies on screening and identification of students for supplementary teaching in English and Maths by co-operating and assisting with the administration and scoring of appropriate screening measures and consulting with the Special Education Team (SET Team) to discuss outcomes.
- Collaborate with the Special Education Team (SET Team) in the development of individual profiles and learning programmes for students with additional needs by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to support their needs.

With regard to teaching pupils with SEN, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:

- Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities.
- Placing an emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum.
- Providing pupils with extra opportunities to experience the key basic skills of 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.
- Setting up 'buddy systems' in class (collaboratively working peer tutoring/paired reading etc).
- Engage in co-teaching e.g. Team teaching, station teaching in forms best suited to maximising the support for all children, including those with S.E.N.

Classroom Support / Stage 1:

- The Staged Approach requires Class Teachers to initially construct a simple, individual plan of support for students they identify as having additional needs, to implement the plan and review its success regularly, before referring the child for Stage 2 interventions.
- At this point, the Class Teacher will open a Support Plan and File for the pupil at Stage 1 / Classroom Support which will include targets, interventions and progress.
- Stage 1 / Classroom Support will continue when School Support / School Support Plus is being phased out or discontinued, to meet the pupil's changing needs.

School Support and School Support Plus /Stages 2 and 3

- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching at School Support/School Support Plus, the Class Teacher will collaborate with the SET in the development of a Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.

- This consultation and co-operation between the Class Teacher and the SET in the development, implementation and review of Support Plans will be achieved through regular formal and informal consultation as the need arises.

7.5 Role of the Special Educational Teacher (SET)

Special Education Teacher (SET) activities includes both teaching and non-teaching duties.

- *"Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level, or through mainstream classroom placement with additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models"*
(2017 Guidelines: p. 13).

The Role of the Special Education Teacher (SET) is to:

- Implement school policies on preventing learning difficulties, screening pupils for learning difficulties, interpreting the outcomes of diagnostic assessments and providing supplementary teaching, where it is deemed necessary.
- Provide supplementary teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs. Being
"familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs"
(2017 Guidelines p.13).
- Administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcomes of those assessments.
- Developing and maintain a Support Plan for each pupil or group of pupils who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with Class Teachers and Parents.
- Provide supplementary teaching in English and / or Mathematics to identified pupils at School Support / School Support Plus (as per Selection Criteria).
- Deliver intensive early intervention and prevention programmes, caseload and selection criteria permitting.
- Liaise with outside agencies e.g. NEPS, Speech and Language Therapists etc pertinent to the children on their caseload.
- Meet with Class Teachers of each pupil who is in receipt of Classroom Support/ School Support / School Support Plus, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported throughout the school day.
- Meet with Parents of each pupil who is in receipt of support, when possible, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home, to review the pupil's attainment of agreed targets, to revise the pupil's Support Plan.
- Consult with parents, when possible, when supplementary teaching is to be discontinued at School Support / School Support Plus and identify ways in which the pupil's learning can continue to be supported at school and at home.

- Contribute at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the Support Teacher's room.
- Liaise with external agencies such as speech and language therapists etc
- Contribute to the development of policy on SEN at the whole school level

7.6 Role of the Special Class Teacher

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

The Role of the Special Class Teacher is to:

- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties.
- Contribute to the development of policy on SEN at the whole school level.
- Provide teaching commensurate with the pupils in their class' particular and individual needs.
- Research the pupil's specific learning difficulty, to engage with relevant CPD appropriate to the individual and class.
- Administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcomes of those assessments.
- Develop and maintain a Support Plan and File for each pupil in consultation with Parents, SNAs and Principal.
- Monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in the class in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives that arise from them and record the observations in the Student File and Support Plan, or equivalent.
- Meet with Parents of each pupil, if possible: to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home, to review the pupil's attainment of agreed targets and Support Plan.
- Liaise and collaborate with class teachers to enable inclusion.
- Collaborate with and implement recommendations from outside agencies including Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy, wherever feasible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the children in their care.

7.7 Role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNAs)

The purpose of the SNA scheme is to provide for the significant additional care needs, which some pupils with special educational needs may have. SNA duties are assigned at the discretion of the Principal, or another person acting on behalf of the Principal in accordance with Circular 0071/2011.

Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks:

An SNA's role is to carry out duties based on the Primary Care Needs of the pupil
(Taken verbatim from Circular 30/2014).

These may include:

- Assistance with feeding: Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time

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

Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks):

The following tasks are the type of secondary care associated tasks which SNAs will often perform. The list of secondary associated tasks listed below is not exhaustive and is reflective of the tasks detailed in Circulars 08/02 and 71/2011.

The associated support tasks which may be carried out include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with Special Educational Needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.
- Assist Teachers and / or Principal in maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of

school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.

- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities.
- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including Class Teachers or SET Team.
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

Ref:(See Appendix 3 Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)

7.8 Role of Parents.

"Parents through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning programmes"

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.52).

"Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs"

(2017 Guidelines: p. 23).

Parents can support the work of the school in supporting their child by:

- Providing a home environment in which there are opportunities for adults and children to participate together in social, language, literacy and mathematical activities in the early years before formal schooling begins and throughout their years in primary school.
- Informing the Class Teacher / SET of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. They should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home and of the results of any external diagnostic assessments.
- Working on agreed Targets at home.

7.9 Role of Pupils.

"The involvement of pupils in the development, implementation and review of their own learning programmes is an important principle underlining effective supplementary teaching"

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.54).

"Good engagement and participation in their own education has many associated benefits for pupils. This is particularly important for pupils with special educational needs and can help enhance their academic and social and emotional outcomes"

(2017 Guidelines: p. 24).

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

- Outline his / her interests, aspirations, strengths.
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment and contribute to the Support Plan.
- Become familiar with the medium and short-term learning targets that have been set for them and be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of such targets.

- Contribute to the selection of texts and other learning materials that are relevant to the attainment of their learning targets.
- Develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning.

7.10 Role of External Bodies and Agencies.

"Support and guidance is available to teachers from external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate, and allied health professionals. It is important that schools have established procedures / protocols for liaising with these services and bodies in order to optimise the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs at the individual, group or whole-school level. This is especially important for those pupils with more significant and enduring needs who benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach to identification of need and the development of interventions. The needs of many pupils span both health and education services. Health services (HSE and HSE-funded services) will continue to play an important role in early identification, assessment and diagnosis, intervention and review for pupils with special educational needs. It is important that schools are familiar with the range of health services in their locality, including referral pathways. Co-ordination is enhanced when schools liaise with and contribute to health-led assessment and delivery of interventions and when they facilitate meetings between parents and various support services. Schools should endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support"

(2017Guidelines: p. 25).

8. Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy.

The Post holder for SEN has responsibility currently for Monitoring and Reviewing this SEN Policy. It is an ongoing and developmental process. Staff and Board of Management will engage in the developmental process, and the policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Appendix 1.

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

Stage I

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

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

Stage II

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

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

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

Stage III

Some pupils who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at stage III. The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school in respect of pupils with learning difficulties or with mild or moderate behavioural problems (or both) who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of pupils with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such

specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.¹

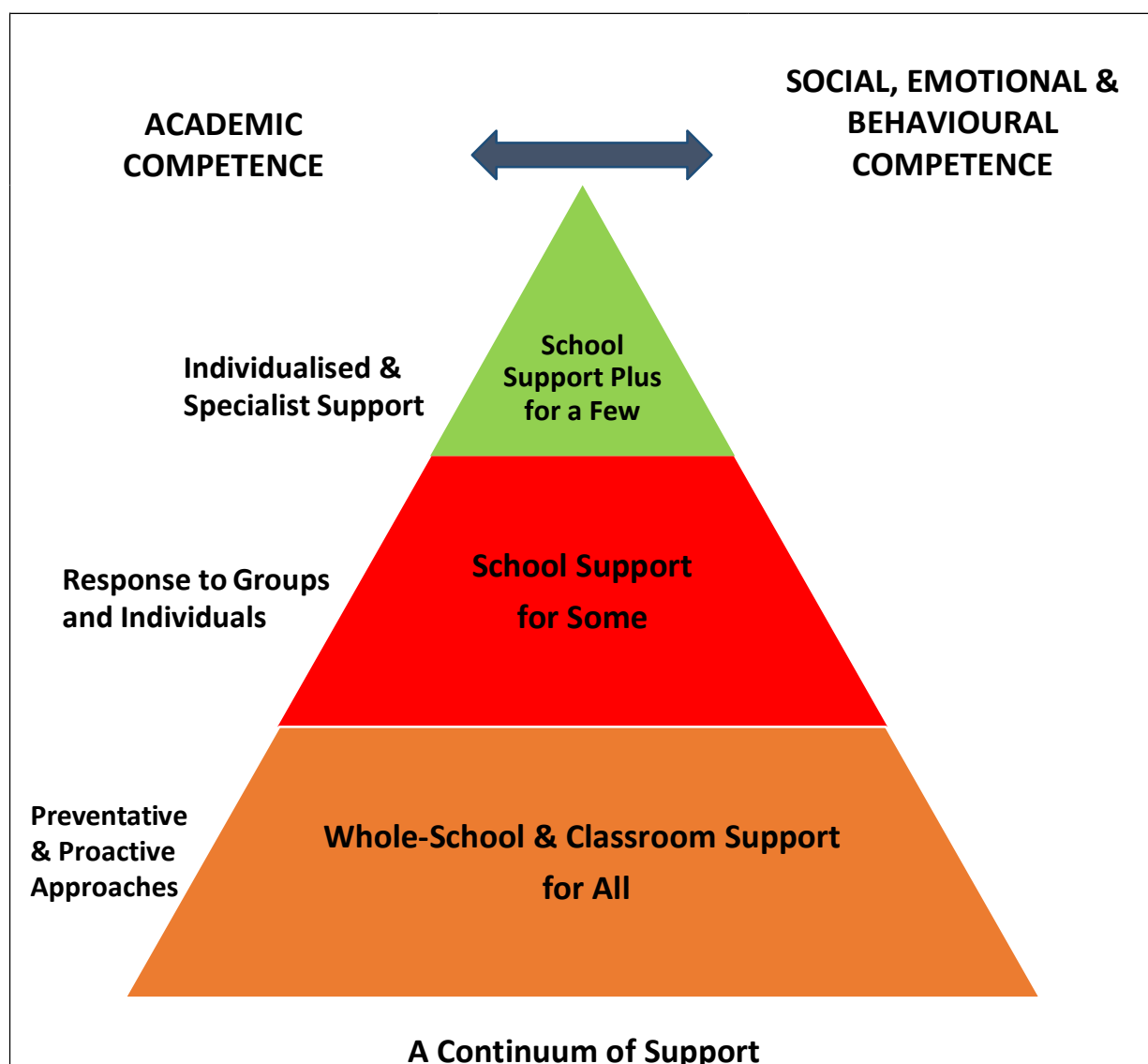
The learning support/resource teacher, resource teacher, if available, and the class teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order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

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

Appendix 2.

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

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



The 2017 Guidelines (p. 11-12) describe the NEPS' three tiers of support as follows - "As special educational needs can vary from mild to transient to significant and enduring, educational planning should reflect the level of need of the individual pupil. In this regard, the Student Support File facilitates a graduated response across the different levels of the Continuum: Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. For pupils with significant, enduring and complex needs, collaboration with external professionals, including multi-disciplinary teams, is advised (for example, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and psychologist)".

Appendix 3.

Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)

Personal Pupil Plan for _____ SNA support is vital in all of the areas ticked	
1. Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks (as per Circular 30/2014):	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with feeding: Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of medicine: Where a pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with toileting & general hygiene: Where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, & until such time as they are able to do so. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with mobility & orientation: On an ongoing basis including assisting a pupil or pupils to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a pupil to access school transport), or to help a pupil to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground & school grounds: At recreation, assembly, & dispersal times including assistance with arriving & departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: Such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a pupil may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with moving & lifting of pupils, operation of hoists & equipment. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs & those with significant, & identified social & emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc. 	
2. Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks) (as per Circular 30/2014):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation & tidying of workspaces & classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare & tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with special educational needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned & the review of such plans. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist teachers & / or Principal in maintaining a journal & care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance & care needs. Assist in preparation of school files & materials relating to care & assistance required in class by students with special needs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for activities & classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with Class Teachers & other Teachers such as the Resource Teacher & School Principal, attending meetings with Parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement & guidance of class 	

Teacher/Principal.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including class teachers or support teachers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff. 	
3. Other Vital SNA Tasks:	
Preventing the child from harming self	
Preventing the child from harming other children	
Preventing the child from harming staff	
Preventing the child from destroying property	
Careful supervision of the child to prevent the child from climbing / squeezing into tight spaces etc...	
Supervising the child who is a flight risk	
Accompanying the child to and from Learning Support / Resource	
Removing the child from whole school activities, if the child becomes distressed / overwhelmed	
Removing the child from the classroom when meltdowns occur	
Assisting the class teacher to raise the alarm if dangerous situations occur (children cannot be left alone)	
Assisting the class teacher to comfort other children who are injured / frightened by explosive behaviour	

Appendix 4.

Transition from Primary School to Post-Primary School

Taken from the 2017 Guidelines:

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 5.

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

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 measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group 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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc. <p>Data generated from this process are then 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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*These checklists are available in the *Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers*

Appendix 6.

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

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

5 Schools may hold information on pupils and level of support on a class basis, as an integral part of classroom planning.

Appendix 7.

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

Educational planning

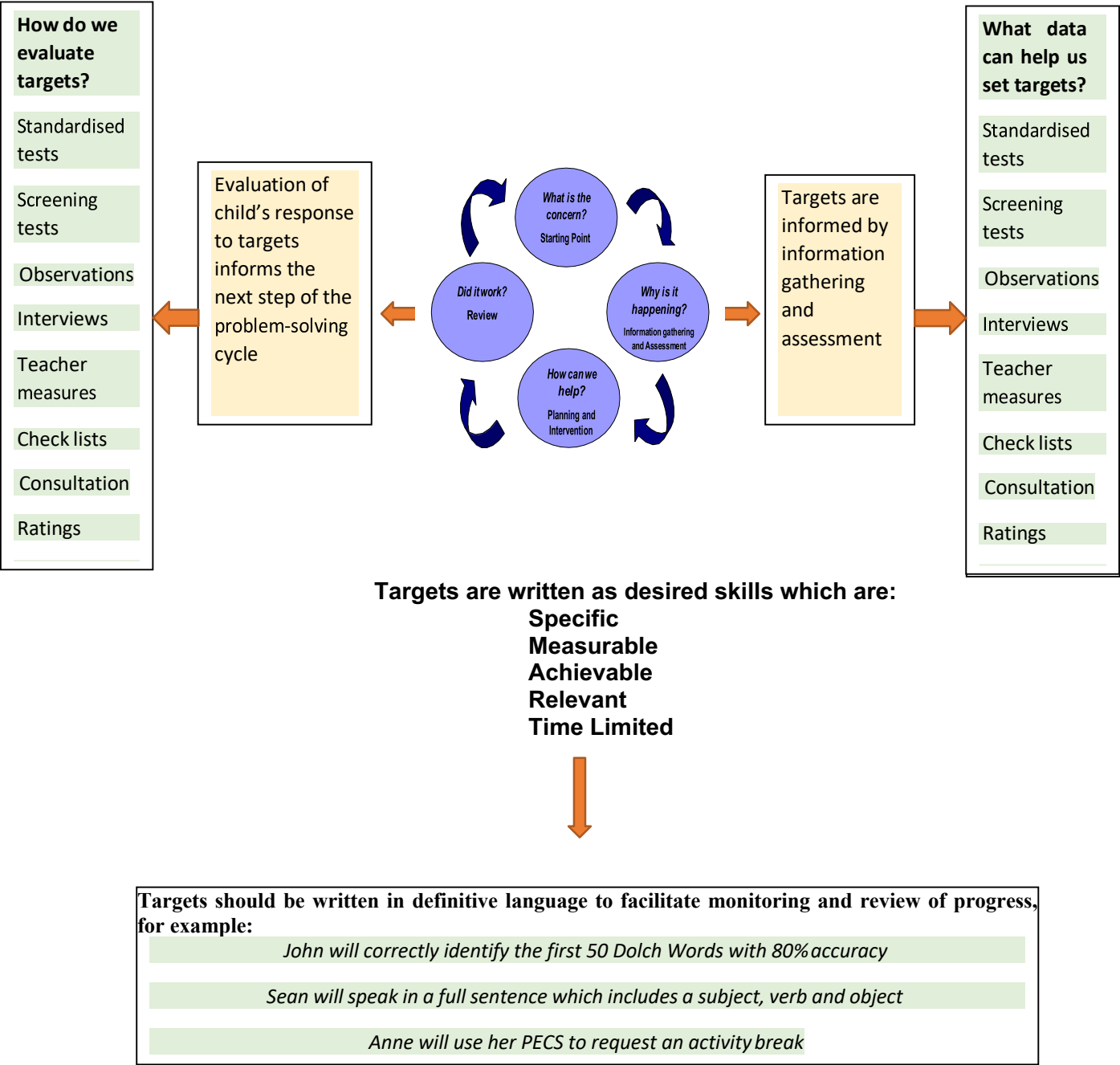
Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process. The process involves the class teacher, special education teachers, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals. Interventions should draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers. These interventions should reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests. Support plans should set out the agreed targets, the resources required, the strategies for implementation and a time-frame for review.

Student Support File

A Student Support File has been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.

Appendix 8.

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



Appendix 9.

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

Table 2: Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs	
Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	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). Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
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	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. 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.
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored: <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

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