

St. Mary's Junior School

Additional Needs Policy

2021



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Introductory Statement

A review of our SEN policy was conducted in May 2021. This was led by Mairéad Byrne, SET coordinator in consultation and collaboration with the principal Maura O' Shea, and members of the ISLM and SET teams. The completion of our whole school Inclusion Policy attached in appendix c was led by assistant principal 1 Sarah McDonald and a working team representative of all staff members. Whole staff consultation on both took place at a staff meeting in June 2021 and feedback was used to form the basis of the final draft.

Consultation also took place with our NEPS psychologist Lauren Kingston in May 2021. Parental consultation was facilitated through our HSCL Méabh O' Connor. The decision to review the policy was driven by a number of factors; the need to update the SEN Policy to better inform and guide staff and parents on current best practice, the addition of 2 classes for children with ASD to our school and the implications of the General Allocation Model on our approach to catering for all children with additional needs across the school. This policy is the reviewed and amended policy completed by a working group in June 2021, in accordance with Circular No 0013/2017. It was reviewed and ratified by the Board in June 2021 and circulated to all school stakeholders in September 2021.

Mission Statement

All the parents, teachers and pupils of St. Mary's J.N.S work together to provide a positive, caring, inclusive, safe and happy learning environment which is both child centered and stimulating. We strive to provide a holistic education allowing each child to reach his/her full potential, thus fostering self-esteem, independence, tolerance and respect for self and others.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
- Outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
- Comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
- Fulfil DES circular 0013/17 -Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and new 2017 Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools).

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to outline our procedures and practices of how we:

- Identify additional needs that our pupils may have
- Allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of children with additional needs
- Divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs
- Establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent difficulties in learning.
- Track, monitor, review and report on the progress of children with additional needs
- Communicate information between the SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians
- Promote collaboration among teaching and SNA staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Management:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on SEN.
- Ensures that adequate classroom accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided.
- Supports Continuous Professional Development/ CPD for all staff members in the area of SEN.
- Ratifies the Additional Needs Policy and initiates a review in line with changing guidelines.

Principal:

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

The school principal should

- Implement and monitor the school's Additional Needs policy on an on-going basis.
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including Special Education Teaching/ SET team roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
- Liaise with the Deputy Principal, appointed SET Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher (i.e. SENCO)
- Communicate with the SENCO (Special Education Needs Organiser)
- Oversee a whole school assessment and screening programme and liaise with the Deputy Principal to oversee Assessment across the school.
- Allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents
- Inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SET

- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress

SEN Co-ordinator:

SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) should:

- Communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis
- Liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- Liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the SET team and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments (NEPS)
- Maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support, allocate caseloads and timetables to staff and review timetables and methodologies on an ongoing basis.
- Liaise on an ongoing basis with SEN Class Co-ordinators to identify, support and monitor children with additional needs
- Co-ordinate regular SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs and minute these meetings
- Liaise with staff and parents around School Support Plans and monitor their completion, implementation and review
- Meet with parents and the SET teacher when necessary/requested, regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents and update them on their child's School Support Plan and procedures for availing of special needs services
- Co-ordinate the whole-school standardised testing at each class level
- Co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- Select children for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted
- Oversee the tracking system of test results on password-protected Aladdin software to monitor the progress of pupils
- Oversee and coordinate the development of the policy on Additional Needs and liaise with the principal and staff around regular reviews and updates of such policy

Special Education Teacher (SET)

SET teachers will be assigned from the SET team to each class level or to particular children depending on the needs of the child. They should

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of need
- Work collaboratively with class teachers, regularly discussing the needs of the pupils in their class and advising the class teacher, where needed, of possible interventions to meet the needs of their pupils
- Providing advice to the class teacher in areas such as pupil assessment, programme planning, language development, reading, writing and maths for pupils experiencing learning difficulties
- Provide supplementary teaching for children with additional needs in literacy, numeracy and or those exhibiting behaviour of concern on a withdrawal and in-class support basis

- Assisting in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties.
- Communicate with the SENCO and the SET team regarding any concerns raised by class teachers at SET team planning meetings
- Maintain a record of these meetings and share them with the SENCO
- Co-ordinate class groups in collaboration with the SENCO and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- Advise class teacher on procedures for availing of external special needs services
- Support and advise the class teacher in the writing of Stage 1 Classroom Support Plans, identifying the child's learning style and collaborating with the class teacher on how best this can be accommodated in the classroom
- Collaboratively develop School Support Plans for each pupil selected for Stage 2 School Support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- Meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of Stage 3 School Support Plus and who require an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop an Individual Education Plan for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- Maintain hard copies of planning and assessment records for each individual or group of individuals in receipt of additional support
- Upload soft copies of all timetables, plans and assessment results using the School SET Planning Template to the school shared drive on a fortnightly/monthly basis
- Contributing at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources and working collaboratively with the SENCO and SET team to share and store school SET resources
- Support whole-school procedures for screening
- Administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- Communicate with the SENCO and the SET team regarding any concerns raised by class teachers at SET team planning meetings
- Discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- Ensuring recommendations from specialist reports are being implemented at class, learning support and school level
- Administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- Liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- Work in collaboration with the SENCO, Home School Community Liaison Teacher/ HSCL, principal and class teachers to provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received
- Attend Care Team meetings where appropriate

Class Teacher:

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class, including those selected for additional support. They should

- Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties

- Create a positive learning environment within the classroom and ensure the self-esteem of all children is nurtured
- Differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Class Co-ordinators to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- Gather information and regularly assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support;
- Develop Stage 1 Classroom Support Plans for children in receipt of additional/differential classroom support in consultation with parents and the SET teacher and share copies of these plans with parents and SENCO
- Review and update Pupil Support Plans in consultation with parents and the SET teacher in February and June
- Collaborate with staff to develop Stage 2 Pupil Support Plans or Group Plans and Learning Programmes (GPLP) for each pupil in receipt of School Support
- Meet with Special Education Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and contribute to these individual plans
- Regularly meet with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff to review IEPs
- Where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching in literacy and numeracy
- Collaborate with the SET teacher and SENCO where necessary in adjusting the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session
- Work collaboratively with the SENCO around timetables to co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of any SNA assigned to a pupil/pupils with additional needs in your class
- Liaise with and seek advice from their SET teacher and SENCO on an ongoing basis
- Seek opportunities for inclusion with children in the ASD class through ongoing consultation with the ASD class teacher.

ASD/Special Class Teacher:

The role of the ASD/Special Class Teacher is to support the delivery of the mainstream curriculum in a way that meets the needs of students with autism and to provide access to an extended curriculum, which will include; social skills training, life skills training, a sensory programme, stress management strategies etc.

Special Needs Assistants:

The duties of the SNA are carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/SENCO/class teachers, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 10/76).

The SNA should

- Make a child feel comfortable and safe and build and maintain a good relationship with the child
- Support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum, helping them get the maximum out of class time in terms of concentration, applying themselves to a task and staying focused

- Support learning and teaching in the classroom with a clear focus on the specific challenges individual children face and playing to their strengths
- Contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils
- Foster independence in children
- Support the development of the child's social and emotional skills
- Support the child in the management of his/her behaviour, following agreed strategies and approaches to the support of children exhibiting behaviours of concern
- Attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM
- Attend Pupil Support Plan meetings and/or CARE TEAM meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- Ensure the safety of pupils with additional needs in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- Coordinate with the SENCO in the maintenance of records of support provided to their pupils
- Accompany pupils with additional needs to supplementary lessons when appropriate
- Prepare resources for individual learning targets of children, ie; Boardmaker visuals, etc
- Assist in the preparation of an adapted curriculum under the direction of the class and or SET teacher
- Refer to the Classroom Environmental Checklist and ensure all sensory needs are met

Parents/Guardians:

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our Children with Additional Needs Policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children have much to contribute to their child's learning. Parent/Guardian should:

- Share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage
- Support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning
- Attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team
- Support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- Inform the senior school of their child's needs, at the transition stage

Pupils:

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

- Be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets in accordance with their age
- Become familiar with the targets that have been set for them
- Develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these strategies and skills to improve their own learning
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

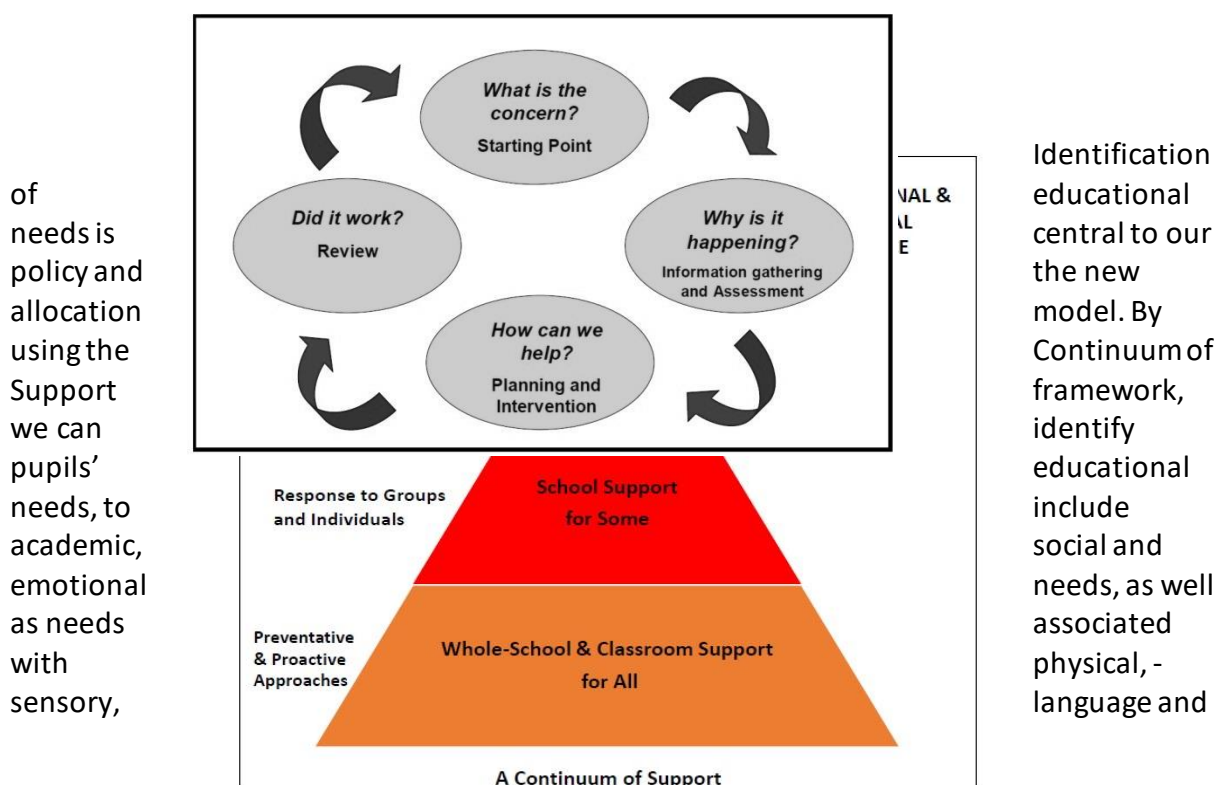
Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs

Continuum of Support

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

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

This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:



communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:

STAGE 1 CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are **additional to or different** from those required by other pupils in their class. Problem-solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The class teacher and parents discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs.

STAGE 2 SCHOOL SUPPORT

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

STAGE 3 SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

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

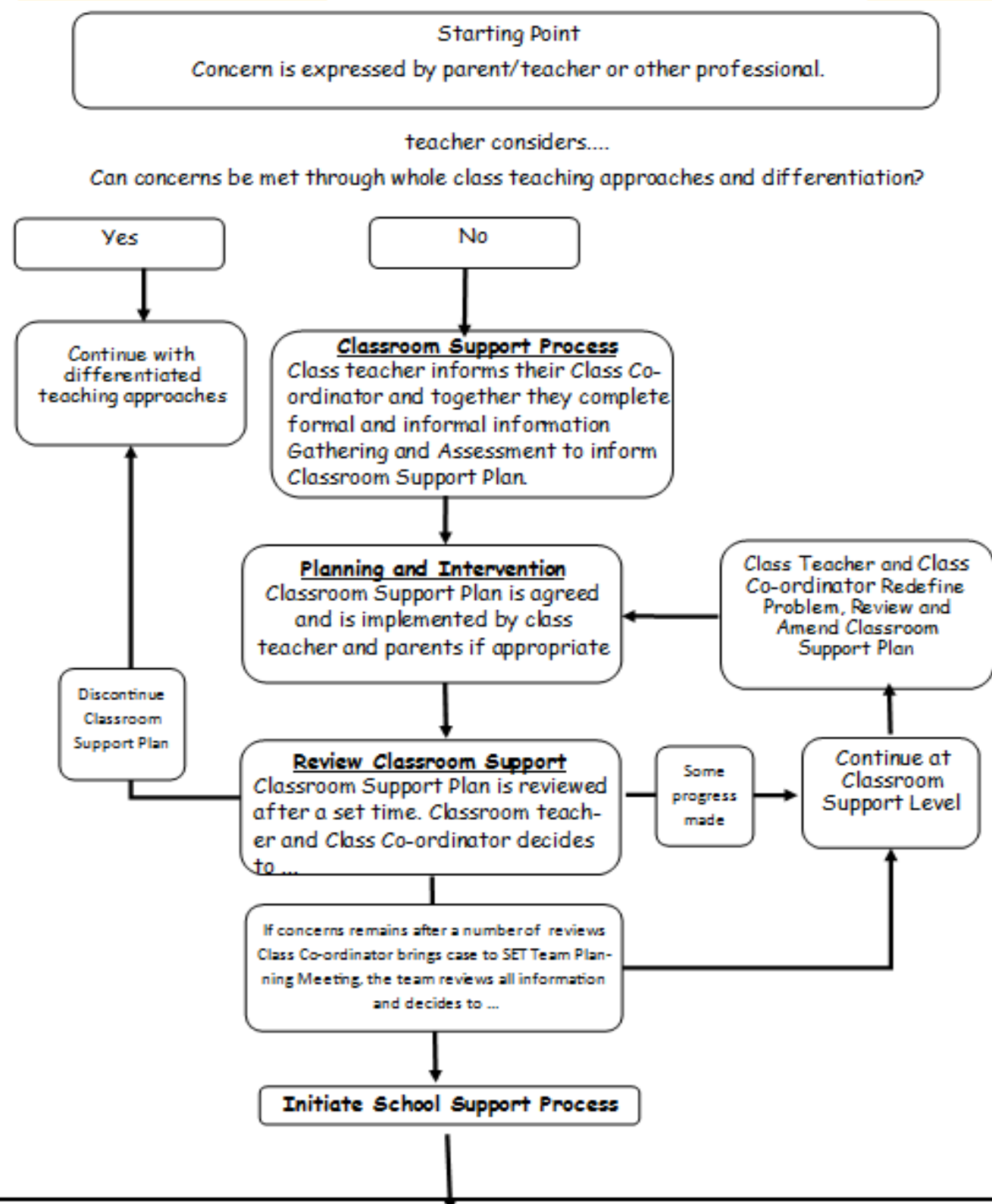
The flow diagrams below outline how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs. A more comprehensive explanation of each stage can be in the Continuum of Support – Guidelines for teachers

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

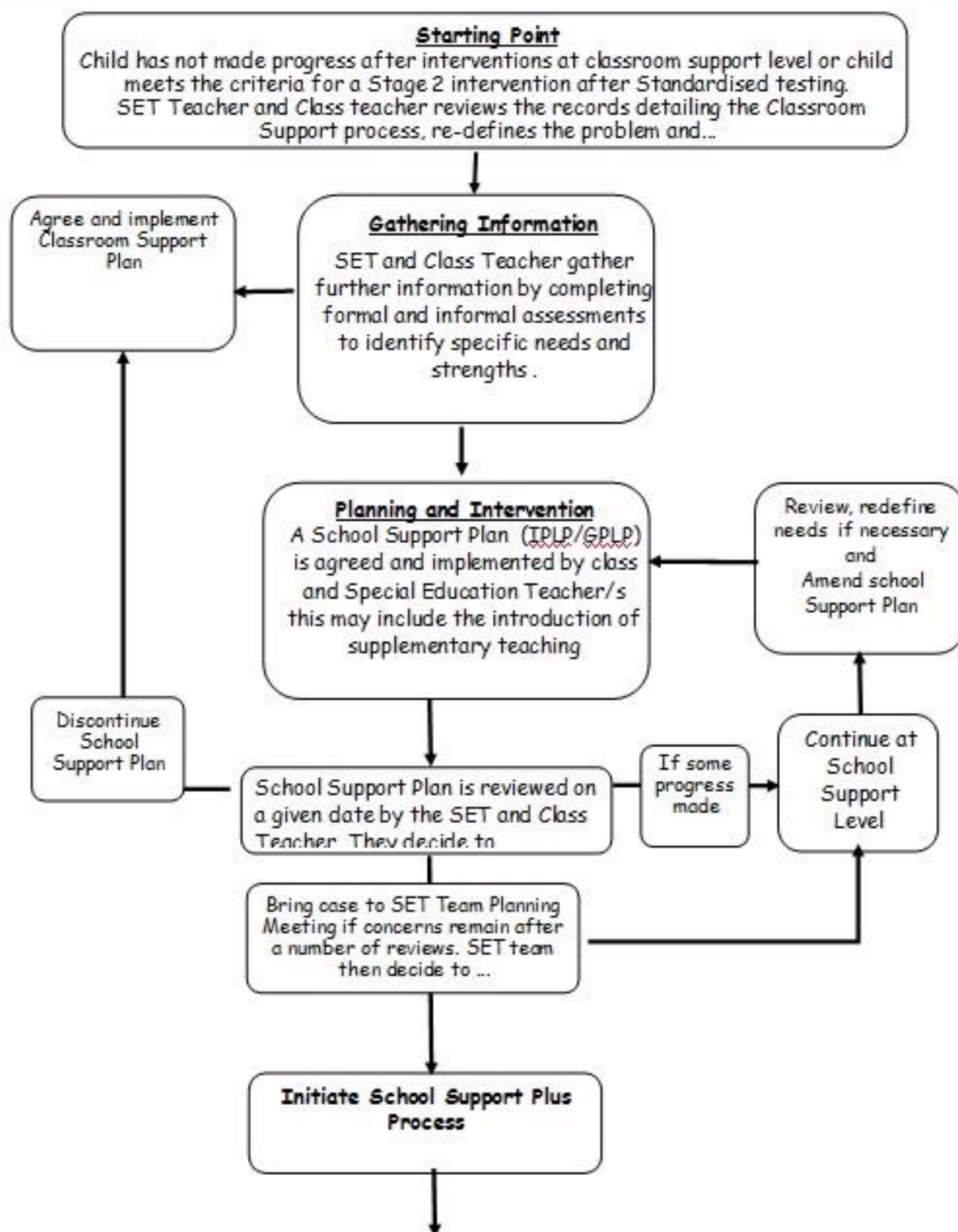
While most pupils' initial needs should be met through classroom based interventions, a small number of pupils may arrive at school with difficulties that are more significant or which are immediately recognised. In such cases, it may be more appropriate to begin with a School Support or School Support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

CLASSROOM SUPPORT PROCESS

STAGE 1



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



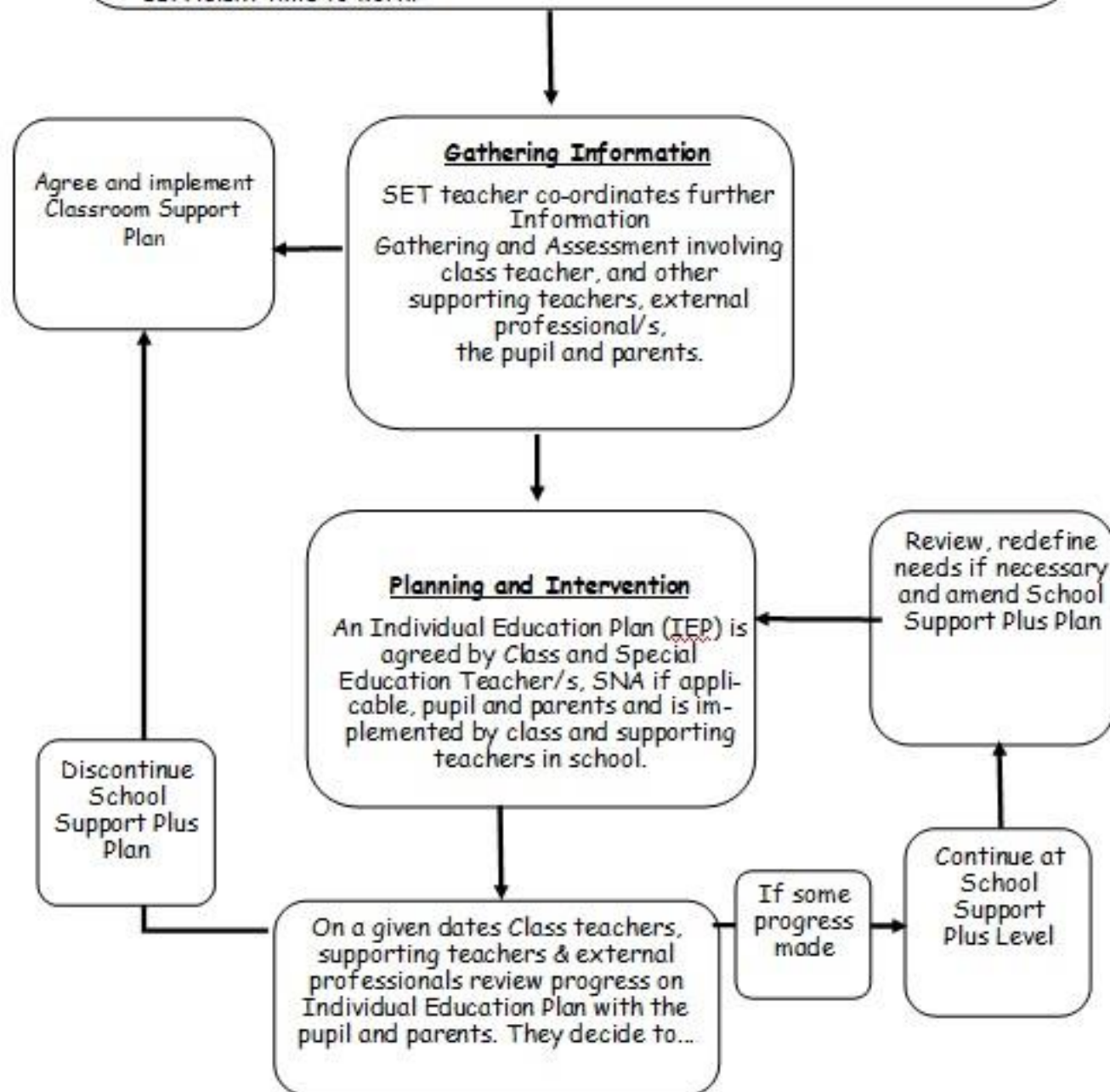
* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 22 - 25 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

Starting Point

Child has not made progress after interventions at school support level or child meets the criteria for a Stage 3 intervention after a diagnosis from an outside agency.

SET and Classroom teacher considers...

- Are the pupils needs causing significant barriers to learning or impeding development of social relationships?
- Is progress inadequate despite support provided?
- Were interventions; based on evidence from assessment; well planned and given sufficient time to work?



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

Information Gathering and Assessment

Assessment is part of what a class teacher does on a daily basis for all children. Some methods include self-assessment, questioning, teacher observation, portfolios of work and teacher-designed tasks and tests. The information gathered enables the teacher to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum.

In order to identify pupils who may require supplementary teaching, screening; including standardised testing, is carried out in all classes annually and further diagnostic testing may need to take place. The information gathered from these formal assessments is then used to inform decisions for support and pupil's support plans (CSP, IPLP/GPLP and IEP)

Assessment and Screening Tests:

In our school we carry out the following assessment procedures:

- Junior Infants: Observation, Checklists, BPVS (on selected pupils)
- Senior Infants: Observation, Checklists, MIST, Reading Recovery
- 1st class: Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT and Reading/Maths Recovery
- 2nd class: Observation, Checklists Micra T, Sigma T, Maths Recovery

We continually review the assessment and screening tests that we use in order to balance the needs of our pupils and the need to provide information for appropriate support. Therefore, we may deviate from the above list prior to the review date.

Inventory of Test Materials

Screening Tests

- Boxhall Assessment- Nurture Room criterion
- British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS)
- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Micra-T
- Bury Infant Check
- Sigma-T
- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
- New Non- Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)
- New Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Tests
- Drumcondra Tests of Early Numeracy
- Early Years Easy Screen
- Aston Index
- NEPS Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties-Continuum of Support- TOAD, ABC charts, Reward System
- Student Stamp Books

Diagnostic Tests

In our school the following tests are available for administration:

- Jackson Phonics Test
- Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
- Test 2r
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test
- Phonological Abilities Tests PAT
- Edmark Programme
- Maths Recovery screening tests
- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
- Reading Recovery Observation Survey
- Early Literacy Test
- Hodder Oral Reading Tests
- The Renfrew Language Scales
- Bankson Language Test BLT-2

- PEP 3
- Pep-3
- VB-MAPP: Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Program
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Basic Skills Checklists by Marlene Breitenbach
- ABLLS: Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Early Intervention Programme

- Early intervention begins for pupils in Junior Infants. Children who are experiencing difficulty settling into school are supported firstly by the class teacher (Classroom support). Additional support if needed may be offered by the SET team, inclusive of the Support Teacher, subject to resources being available (School Support). This support is usually classroom based in Junior Infants.
- The SET teacher, in consultation with the SENCO, class teacher and parents, decides on the most suitable form of intervention taking account of the individual learning needs of pupils and the overall caseload.
- Individual support is provided where specific recommendations have been made through formal assessments.

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- Class-based early intervention by the class teacher resulting in the provision of additional individualised support and differentiation.
- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class, such as The Jolly Phonics Programme, First Step reading and writing approaches and the use of common maths language.
- Provision of additional support in language development through the Aistear Framework and the explicit teaching of thematic vocabulary and mathematical language.
- 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, SENCO, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal 1 and the SET team.
- Promotion of literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, First Steps Literacy Programme, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), USSR(Uninterrupted, Sustained Silent Reading)
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. Ready Set Go Maths, Numberworlds, and the use concrete materials
- Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g. Maths for Fun, Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents.
- Differentiation - adapting the learning environment.
- In-class support from the SET team.
- Team Teaching/Aistear.
- Withdrawing individuals/groups
- Reading Recovery
- Maths Recovery
- Promotion of parental involvement through:

- Organising induction meetings for the parents of incoming Junior Infants to outline how they can help their child in school, provide them with language packs (CLOVER pack) and to give practical information on helping children settle into school.
- Informal contact with parents on a regular basis keeping them informed of their child's progress.
- Settling in meetings for parents of children in Junior Infants held in October.
- Formal parent-teacher meetings annually, where the progress of children is discussed and parents advised on how to help their child at home. Results of standardised tests are given at this meeting.
- Active involvement of the HSCL Teacher to promote participation of parents in the life of the school through various activities such as; games clubs, library, bed time reading, in school and after school activities facilitated through The School Completion Project.
- Teachers keeping parents informed of the outcomes of ongoing observation and assessment.
- Communication of progress and behaviour through weekly pupil stamp books

Meeting the Needs and Allocating Resources

Once pupils' needs have been identified, Special Education Teachers (SETs) are deployed to address these needs as required. We deploy SETs in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet pupils' needs. We aim to strike a balance between in-class support, group and individual support while ensuring that the needs of children with additional needs are met inclusively.

Importantly, the level and type of support reflect the specific targets of individual pupils as set out in their support plans and are informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. In this way, following a period of intervention, some pupils may no longer require additional teaching supports; some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive supports.

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. Importantly, those with **the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support**. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in areas such as; oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development, motor skills and application to learning.

At the end of each term the SENCO and SET teacher meet class teachers and review children's needs, the resources in place and progress made using the Continuum of Support problem-solving model of assessment and stage approach flow charts. The SET teacher then bring this information to the end of term SET team planning meetings. As a SET team, we review all support and resources for the subsequent term are allocated by the SENCO in consultation with the principal and individual SET teachers. We cross-reference the needs of pupils at School Support and School Support Plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping, to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. Timetables are constantly reviewed, reallocated and adapted throughout the year by the SENCO and SET teachers to meet the needs of the children.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL TEACHING SUPPORT

Stage 3 School Support Plus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disability • Hearing Impairment • Visual Impairment • Emotional Disturbance • Moderate General Learning Disability • Severe/Profound General Learning Disability • Autistic Spectrum Disorder • Assessed Syndrome • Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment 	Individual Education Plans	<p>Type of Support In-Class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel SET teacher Class Teacher Outside Agencies</p>
Stage 2 School Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes (Aistear, Reading/Maths Recovery, Infant Activities such as NumberWorlds and Ready Set Go Maths) 3. Children in JI & SI whom English is an additional language or children for whom English is an additional language newly arrived in Ireland in 1st & 2nd 4. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in Literacy Standardised Tests 5. Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals who are not on or below the 12th percentile in Literacy such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 6. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in SIGMA T 7. Children with a identified need by external professionals who are not on or below the 12th percentile in Numeracy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 8. Children who have not made adequate progress after interventions at Stage 1 9. Children in 1st & 2nd who have not made adequate progress after EAL interventions 	Group or Individual Profile and Learning Programme	<p>Type of Support In-Class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel SET teacher Class Teacher</p>

Timetabling

When drawing up timetables it is important to remember that:

- Timetables should be continually reviewed
- Children should not miss the same subject each time they are withdrawn
- If a pupil is unavailable for their supplementary session due to special circumstances, the Special Education Teacher will attempt to reschedule the session with the co-operation of another teacher.
- Interruptions to classes/classrooms should be kept to a minimum.
- The SENCO has overall responsibility for the coordination of class teacher, SNA and SET teacher timetables. This means that all staff are required to share their timetables and work in a collaborative and team spirited way to problem solve timetabling issues as they arise throughout the year. As the focus of supports is on the child and children's needs are ever changing across the school, so too are timetables.

Tracking, recording and reviewing progress

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

Student Support File

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

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

A class teacher or class coordinator should open a Student Support File once a child is placed on Stage 1 –Classroom Support on the continuum. This is stored digitally on Aladdin in Pupil Records and a paper copy is stored in the class teacher's assessment folder, SEN filing cabinet stored in SENCO's room and on the child's file in the principal's office. At the end of the year, updated information including reviews carried out by the class teacher is moved to the Child's SEN file in the SENCO's filing cabinet.

If, after a number of reviews, the child's case is moved to School Support, this information is still held on the child's SEN file in the SENCO's room. It is the responsibility of the class teacher and the allocated SET to access and update the information in the Student Support File. The same system is in place for children on School Support Plus.

Support Plans

We use three different support plans for the three stages of support on the Continuum of Support.

Stage 1 – Classroom Support

A Support Plan at stage 1 is a **Classroom Support Plan**. (CSP) This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the Class Teacher in collaboration with the parents and SET teacher which outlines the pupil's additional educational needs and the actions, including individualised teaching and management approaches, which will be taken to meet the pupil's needs. The plan may also include home-based actions to be taken by the pupil's parents to support their child's development. The Classroom Support Plan should include a review date. This could be at the end of a school term. A copy of this plan is provided to parents.

Stage 2 – School Support

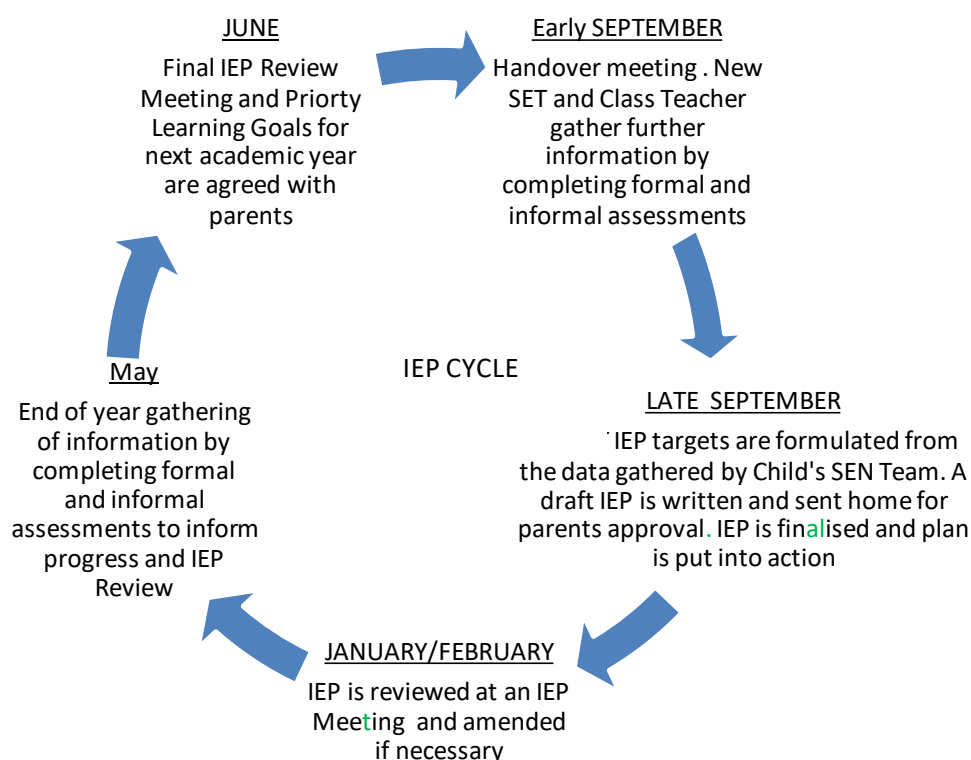
A Support Plan at stage 2 is a **Group or Individual Profile and Learning Programme** (GPLP/IPLP). This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed SET teacher. It will set out the nature of the pupil's learning difficulties, define specific teaching, learning and behavioural targets and set a timescale for review. The plan should, for the most part, be implemented within the normal classroom setting and complimented by focused school based intervention programmes. Depending on the nature of the needs and on the school context, additional teaching might be within a small group or individual or a combination of both either in class or on a withdrawal basis. Home-based actions may also be included. After the plan has been drawn up, it should become a working document through the careful monitoring of the pupil's response to the actions taken. A copy of this plan is provided to parents.

Stage 3 – School Support Plus

A Support Plan at stage 3 is an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**. This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed Special Education Teachers, in consultation with the child's parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child based on the information gathered. It will set out;

- The nature and degree of the pupil's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the pupil's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the pupil
- The special educational needs of the pupil
- The special education and related support services to be provided to the pupil to enable the pupil to benefit from including:
 - Strategies for supporting the pupil's progress and inclusion in the classroom setting
 - Individual and/or small group/special class interventions/programmes
 - Specific methodologies/programmes to be implemented
 - Specific equipment/materials and/or IT supports, if required to support learning and access to the curriculum
 - Support required from a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if appropriate
 - The goals which the pupil is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months
 - The pupil's priority learning needs, long and short term targets to be achieved, the monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place

IEP meetings are coordinated by the SENCO or Support Teacher through CARE TEAM. Parents may be invited meetings depending on the needs of the child and items for discussion. Parents will be updates on all meetings they are not present for.



SEN Records

Individual SEN Files

Hard copies of all pupils' SEN files are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the principal's office. It is the responsibility of SETs to update and manage the files of the children on school support and school support plus that they support. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to update and manage the SEN files of children on classroom support. The following if applicable should be stored :

- Student Support File
- Psychological Report
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies
- Copy of reports from outside agencies
- Record of SEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter- school meetings
- Record of SEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff

Soft copies of all pupils SEN records, including their Classroom Support, School Support or School Support Plus Plans are uploaded onto and updated annually on Aladdin. Parents can view these by logging onto Aladdin Connect.

Whole Class SEN Files

Whole class SEN records are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the SENCO's room. It is the responsibility of the class and SET teacher to manage and update these. The following should be stored in these whole class SEN folders:

- Copies of Classroom Support Plans, School Support Plans and School Support Plus Plans
- Caseload lists and SET timetables
- Records of all beginning and end of term assessments
- Whole class standardised test results (SIGMA – T, MICRA – T, NNRT)

Communication between SET Team/Principal/Class Teachers

SET timetables have been organised so that 1.30-2.30 each Friday is our designated co-ordination time. This allows all staff the opportunity to attend pupils support planning meetings, care team meetings, Team Teaching Planning Meetings, SEN Class Coordinator meetings and SEN consultation/planning/review meetings, when necessary. This flexibility ensures adequate cover for class teachers and also facilitates regular SET team planning meetings with the principal. In order to make effective use of this time, a SEN calendar is drawn up at the beginning of the year and cover buddies are assigned.

Health and Safety Issues

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

Supervision/Child Protection

- Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SET teacher is responsible for ensuring that both themselves and the pupil are visible through the glass panel in the door.
- Where there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.
- Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET teacher should collect and return children to their classrooms.
- Where a child has access to an SNA, they may withdraw the child from the class if a plan is in place with the class teacher.

Ratification and Communication

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management in October 2017

Implementation and Review

This policy will be implemented from September 2021. It will be reviewed in June 2022 by the Special Education Team and all staff at St Mary's Junior School.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson)

Date: _____

Appendix A: The Support Teacher

The support teacher specifically targets and supports the following children;

- Children who display aggressive behaviour.
- Children who display withdrawn behaviour.
- Children who display persistent non-compliant behaviour.
- Children who display anti-social or disturbed behaviour.
- Children who have not yet learned to socialize with other children.
- Children displaying hyperactive behaviour.
- Children who have suffered the trauma of domestic violence, separation, family substance abuse problems, death of a family member.
- Children with frequent absenteeism or an erratic attendance pattern and who are potentially at risk of failure to remain in the education system.

These children are given either one-to-one or small group support. The support is given both in class and through withdrawal to the support room, depending on the needs of the child.

The support teacher, in liaison with the class teacher, parents and SENCO maintains and shares the same records as other members of the SET team.

The Support Teacher coordinates the CARE TEAM; sets the agenda, organises meetings, facilitates cover for teachers to attend those meetings and minutes and shares records of those meetings.

The Support Teacher from September 2021 will be involved in our Nurture Room Project. More details will be added once CPD has taken place.

Appendix B: ASD Classes

ASD Classes

- Our first ASD class was established in September 2017. It caters for children diagnosed with ASD who have been recommended for placement in a special class.
- Our second ASD class was opened in September 2019.
- Children enrolled in these classes are also allocated to a specific mainstream class.
- Inclusion is encouraged and all staff are expected to work to maximise inclusion of children with ASD in mainstream. Please see Appendix C; Inclusion Policy
- Where the teacher in the ASD class is absent a colleague from the SET team or mainstream class is asked to cover. Where a substitute is employed, he/she is then assigned to the mainstream / SET role. The principal may at times, based on the length of absence and experience of the available substitute teacher, decide, to place the substitute teacher in the ASD class. In making such a decision the needs of all children across the school are taken into consideration.

Appendix C: Inclusion Policy for Children with ASD

Inclusion/Transitioning of Children with Special Needs into Mainstream:

Mission Statement:

All the parents, staff and pupils of St. Mary's J.N.S work together to provide a positive, caring, inclusive, safe and happy learning environment which is both child centred and stimulating. We strive to provide a holistic education allowing each child to reach his/her full potential, thus fostering self-esteem, independence, tolerance and respect for self and others.

Introduction:

Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities and removing barriers within and from education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her attendance at school. (NCSE Inclusive Education Framework 2011).

The need for a policy on inclusion developed from the collective desire of the teaching staff to have a defined and uniform whole school approach to the issue of inclusion. The policy was devised following consultation with all stake holders including mainstream, support teachers and HSCL and parents. The school strives to include all children in curricular learning experiences.

Due to complex nature of each child, their needs may be at a different point of stage in process. Progress can only be achieved through small incremental steps building on the child's strengths. Children's need for inclusion will be addressed, monitored and recorded through additional support plan if necessary. (See NCSE Inclusive Education Frameworks 2011 for suggested template)

Rationale:

The policy was formulated so that;

- Parents, Teaching and SNA staff have clear well-defined guidelines on best practice
- There is consistency throughout the school
- Optimum learning experiences are provided for all the children
- Individual children are involved in their own learning.

Aims:

- To provide a teaching and learning experience that enables pupils with Special Educational Needs to become exposed to learning in a mainstream setting
- To develop the social skills and self-esteem of the children
- To develop respect for one another
- Fostering an acceptance of difference with parents and families
- Provide teaching and learning experiences that enable pupils with special educational needs to learn at their individual ability
- Enable children in a mainstream setting to collaborate, observe, work with and accommodate children with special educational needs
- Develop the social skills and self-esteem of all children
- Foster the independence of children

Staff Roles:

SEN/ASD Coordinator: (Domain1 Leading learning and Teaching, LAOS 2016)

- Direct responsibility for co-ordinating an effective whole school approach to inclusion
- Encouraging the provision of in-service training and adequate resourcing
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and making relevant adjustment following consultation
- Working in collaboration with the special class teacher, with parents and out of school agencies with HSCL.
- Ensuring SSP targets are written and reviewed

- Special class teachers follow school plans.

Special Class Teacher(s): (Domain 1: Leading Teaching and Learning by assisting in planning and implementation of curriculum through IEP's)

They will -

- Identify the appropriate curriculum area the child should experience in consultation with mainstream teacher
- Collaborate and consult with mainstream class teachers in setting realistic targets
- Assume responsibility for an on-going School Support Plan in consultation with support services, parents and relevant teachers
- Allow and plan for reverse inclusion

Class Teachers' Individual Practice: (Domain 3: Teachers' Individual Practice, LAOS 2016)

The mainstream class teachers will

- Adapt curricular programmes to meet the needs of the Special Class pupil
- Share their termly and fortnightly plans with the ASD class teachers
- Provide a suitable seating arrangement in the mainstream setting
- Collaborate with the Special Class teacher and the S.N.A to enable inclusion
- Ensure the environment is suitable for learning
- Prepare the children for the inclusion of a child with autism in their class, educate them appropriately about autism and the needs and behaviours of the individual child/children assigned to their class
- Ensure consistency in approach and communicate clearly with Special Class teachers if there are changes in time table

SNA Support:

- Ensure the environment is suitable for learning
- Liaise with mainstream class teacher
- Will be available to adapt resources in preparing for inclusion times

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): The parent(s)/guardian(s) will:

- Encourage their child to participate in activities where they can meet children of the same age with different abilities.
- Encourage their child to develop friendship with classmates or other neighbourhood children.
- Work in partnership with teachers in devising a suitable inclusion plan for their child.

Children:

- Children will be asked to give their opinion around inclusion and discuss it with teacher.

Implementation:

The school promotes a policy of inclusion with age-appropriate peers on a social level and ability appropriate on a curriculum level. Inclusion will be on a phased basis and always based on the individual strengths and needs of the child based on their School Support Plan.

For inclusion to be effective it must

- Further develop social skills
- Be beneficial to all children.
- Be done in collaboration with the class teacher

Transitioning

Transitioning of students requires careful planning. Effective transitioning may require additional resources and these need to be considered by the mainstream and special class teacher. Each child has

individual strengths and needs, and these must be considered for the child to benefit from transitioning experience.

"As a school, we recognise that teachers may require additional supports in developing and using teaching and learning strategies that optimise inclusion of children with ASD from the special class. **(Leading Inclusive Learning: Theme 8, Sub-theme 8b: The Teaching Experience)** We offer this support primarily through the provision of physical resources such as visual supports, social stories and strategies that have proven successful in the special class. **(What we do already)**

In St Mary's JNS we use Aistear as an early intervention strategy and also as a precursory activity leading to inclusion for children with ASD into their peer class. Aistear takes place in the mainstream classes.

To facilitate Aistear and ensure positive outcomes for all children the following applies:

Children who have care needs or where a child's behaviour is such that they are a danger to themselves or other pupils, an SNA may be occasionally permitted to attend the mainstream class to facilitate Aistear. The duties of SNAs are solely related to care needs and are strictly of a non-teaching nature. **(The Future Role of Special Classes in Ireland link [here](#))"**

Aistear and Inclusion

Once a child from the special class can be meaningfully/ independently included at Aistear Time they will begin to be included throughout the day. Inclusion at all other times will be independent of SNA access, and based on strengths of individual child.

Exceptional circumstances where a child from Special Class may have access to SNA for Inclusion

Music Generation

Sports Day

Nature walks

Outdoor activity

Curricular Inclusion:

When a child has adjusted on a social level, he/she will slowly be introduced to areas of the curriculum appropriate to ability level and interests.

Planning:

Provision for observations in both mainstream and special class settings to plan and gather information for appropriate planning of inclusion. Decide on most appropriate time and subject for inclusion. Teachers to have monthly meetings to plan inclusion for the following month. Fortnightly plans must be shared with the Special Class Teacher. This should be in keeping with a SSP for the child and mainstream class. Each child should have a set place in mainstream class. Activities should be ready for the child and in keeping with the mainstream class.

Reverse inclusion:

We in St Marys Junior National School operate a policy of reverse inclusion. Once children are being included in their mainstream classes reverse inclusion may occur.

Staff Development: NCSE provide training in most areas of inclusion. www.ncse.ie

Assessment:

Assessment by observation and testing will be conducted by the special and class teacher(s) covering 3 aspects of development

- Social Integration
- Language and Communication
- Play and Behaviour

Home – School Liaison:

Parents will be informed of any inclusion that their child partakes in on a regular basis. With reverse inclusion, Parents will give consent for their child to be included. Parents will have the opportunity to speak with the HSCL around inclusion and ask any questions that they may have.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed in June 2021 as more information on techniques to ensure effective inclusion becomes available.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: _____ Date:

Principal: _____ Date: