

Scoil Naomh Molaise

Grange, Co. Sligo.

Special Educational Needs Policy

Introductory Statement:

Scoil Naomh Molaise, Grange is a co-educational mainstream primary school in the Diocese of Elphin. At present, we have four full-time Special Education Teachers (SET) and seven Special Needs Assistants (SNA) assigned to our school. This policy has been reviewed as a result of the new Special Education Teaching Allocation Model (Circular 13/2017). This policy was drawn up by the Principal and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team of Scoil Naomh Molaise.

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.
- To ensure compliance with the Education Act (1998) the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000), Disability Bill (2002), and the E.P.S.E.N. Act (2004), and to ensure compliance with DES circulars 007/2019 and 0013/2017: Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools: Special Education Teaching Allocation.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School:

It is our wish to provide a learning environment, which is most conducive to the academic, social, physical, psychological and moral development of the children under our care. To this end, three general aims permeate our educational processes:

1. To enable the children to live full lives as children.
2. To equip them to avail themselves of further education.
3. To prepare them to live full and useful lives as adults.

In the light of these aims our Special Educational Needs Policy emphasises the need to facilitate the full development of children with diverse talents and abilities. Our philosophy incorporates the tenet that the challenge in teaching is not so much to provide for the needs of children, who have the capacity to learn without our intervention. The challenge in teaching is to bring learning to those who cannot succeed without us.

Caring, sharing, and giving. We hope that all who pass through our gates will bring that spirit with them, that they will continue to identify with their school and keep intact that marvellous spirit of belonging. The central aim is the formation of the human person with respect to his/ her spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, aesthetically and socially.

Aims:

- To give clear outline to procedures and practices to be followed in relation to pupils with SEN.
- To ensure a whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to pupils with SEN.
- To facilitate inclusion of pupils with SEN with their peers in a mainstream school setting.
- To enable the children to participate in the curriculum at their class level.
- To integrate newcomer children to classes and provide support for their language needs.
- To establish communication structures for all significant adults involved (parents and multidisciplinary team).
- To develop positive self-esteem and attitudes towards school and learning in all pupils.
- To enable pupils to become independent learners.
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for pupils with additional needs in literacy or numeracy.
- To involve parents and secure their approval as partners throughout the process.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies on SEN.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce learning difficulties.

Content of the Policy:

Enrolment of children with identified special educational needs

- On acceptance of a place at Scoil Naomh Molaise, the school will acquaint themselves with a child's special needs by:
 - Meeting between parents/principal/class teacher/special needs staff and SENO, as appropriate
 - Obtaining copies/details of reports, assessments etc. from SENO, parents etc.
- Contact the Special Educational Needs Organiser, NEPS Psychologist or other psychologist /speech therapist /occupational therapist, referral from other Agency.
- The SEN Team will decide in consultation with the Principal whether the pupil should receive support at the level of Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the Staged Approach. (Circular 02/05)
- To ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school, the following procedure will be utilised:
 - Parental visits to school
 - Pupil visits to school
 - Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act) - Liaison with SENO to arrange for additional personnel, resources, training etc.
- If there are health and safety issues arising from the child's mobility and care needs, these will be identified and strategies developed to address them. *e.g. access, toilets, supervision, administration of medicine, intimate care, course for SNA e.g. lifting techniques.*

Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs

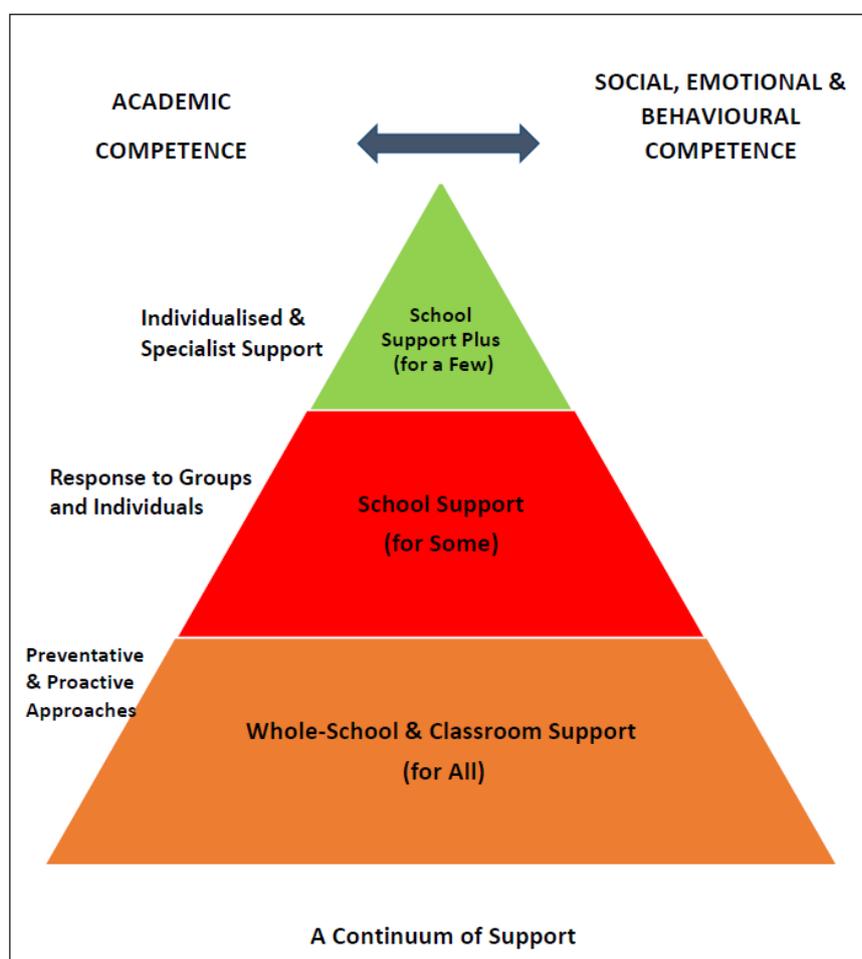
Continuum of Support

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.

Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and 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. This stage begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The teacher and parents discuss the nature of the concern and consider strategies which may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal 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 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

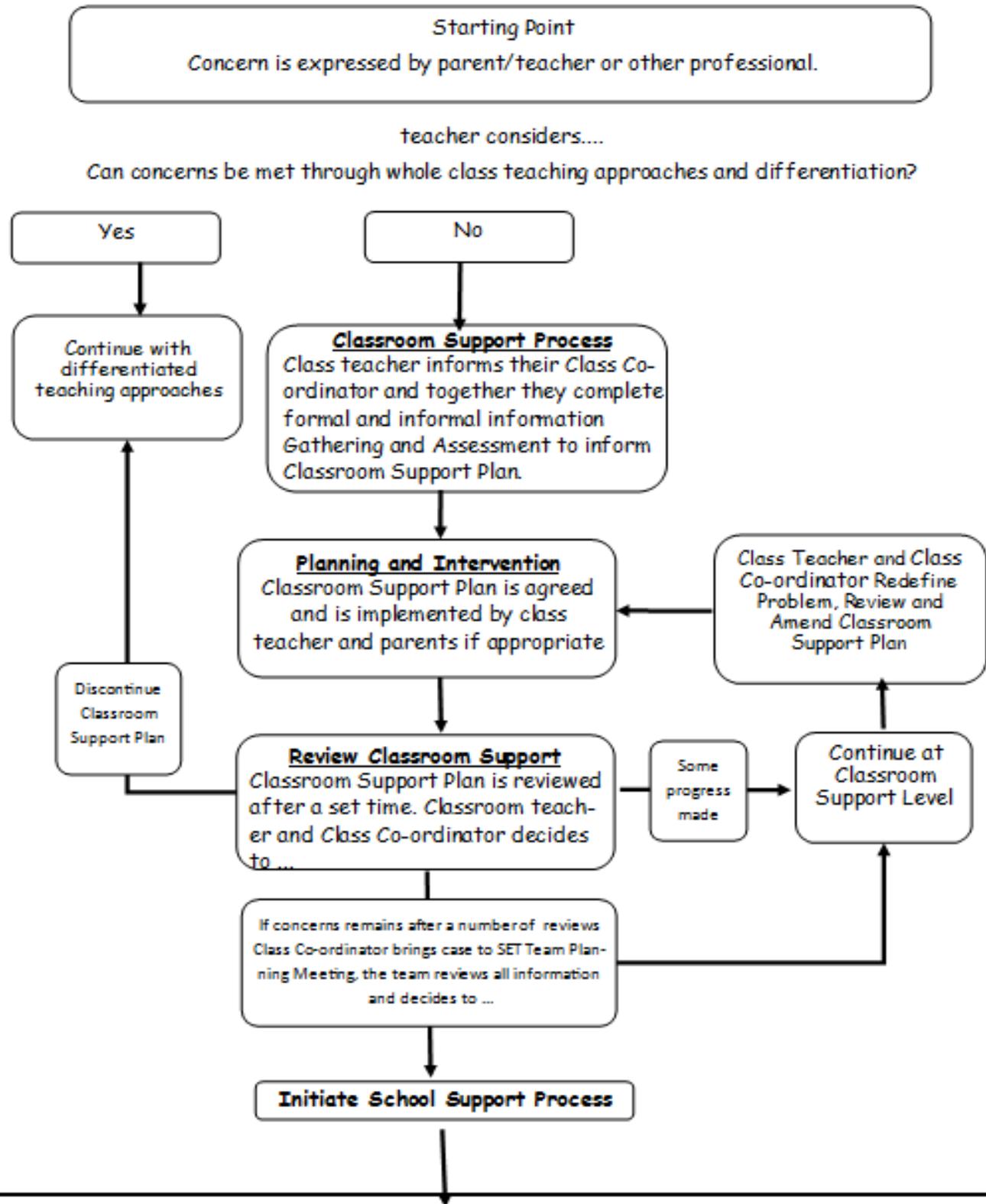
If a pupil's special educational needs are **severe and/or persistent**, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside of the school in the assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point at this level. Classroom Support and School Support will continue to be an important element of the child's Individual Education Plan.

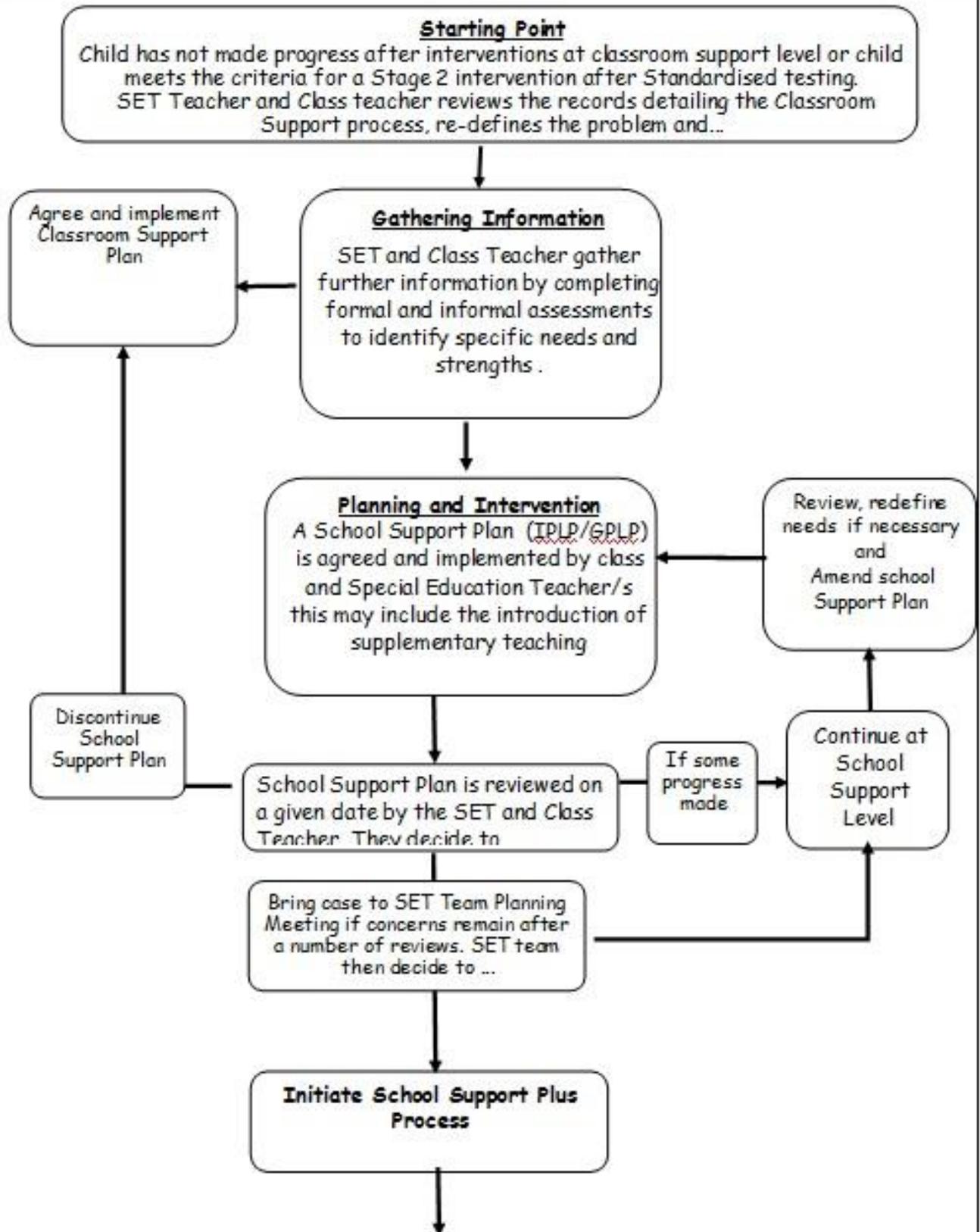
The flow diagrams on subsequent pages outline how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs. They have been adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers (Stage 1-pgs 12-15, Stage 2-pgs 22-25, Stage 3-pgs 32-35).

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



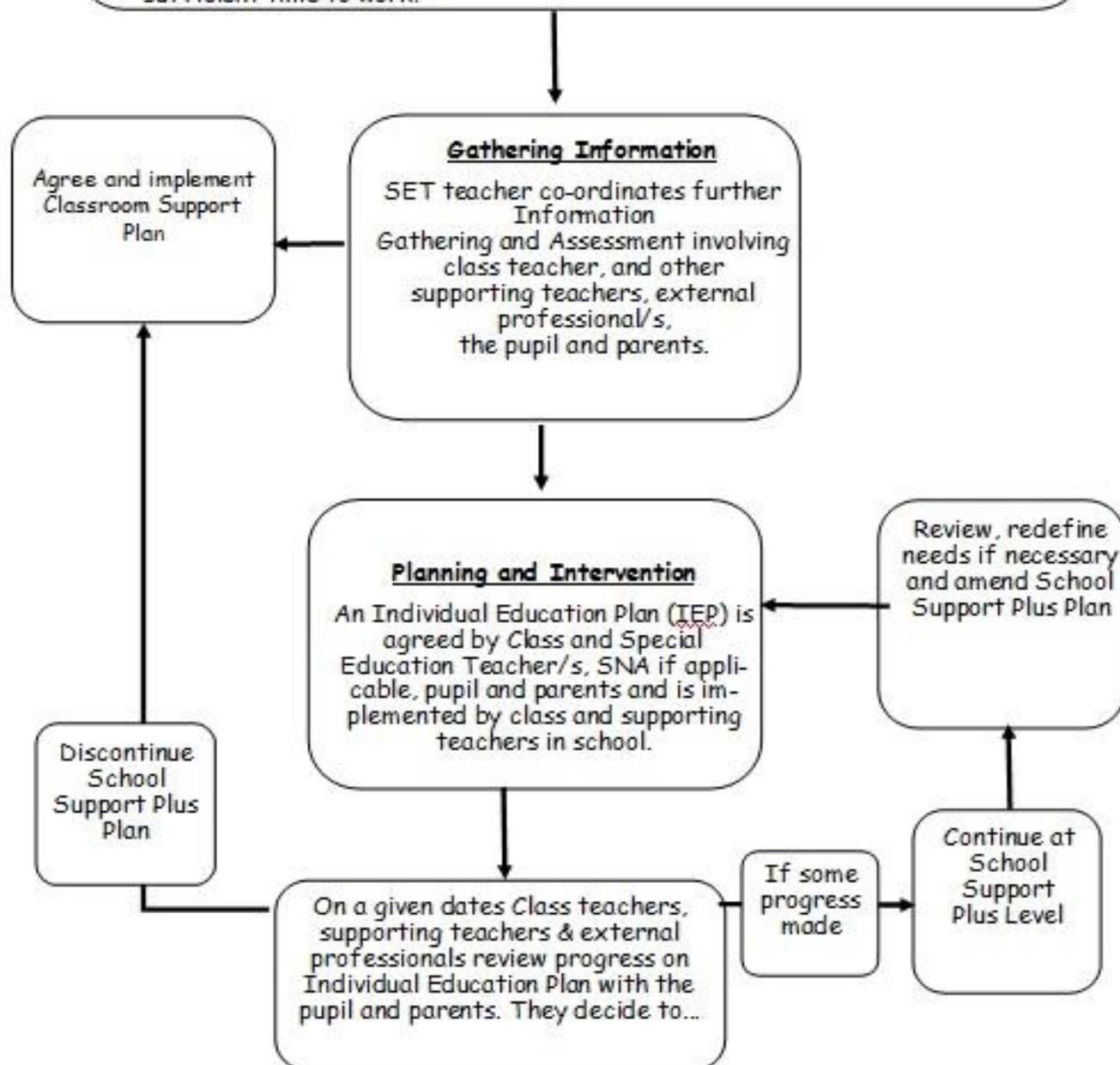


Starting Point

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?



Children with emerging special educational needs: The Staged Approach

Stage 1 (Classroom Support): Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of SEN of certain children.

A Class Teacher may identify concerns regarding the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child through teacher observation, parental observations, and use of simple teacher designed checklists, Infant profiling or screening measures.

- Concerns are documented by the class teacher
 - Micra T and Sigma T in October of First Class
 - Drumcondra Reading and Maths Tests.
- General information regarding the school's concerns is sought from and communicated to parents at this stage.
- The SEN Team support class teachers at Stage 1 by advising them on in-class strategies to be adopted such as curricular differentiation. They may set up general preventative systems in the classrooms such as the PAT Programme in Senior Infants or Reading Buddies / paired reading.
- A Classroom Support Plan (CSP) is drawn up and implemented for an agreed timespan. This plan is reviewed on an on-going basis.
- If these strategies are found not to be efficacious and concerns remain and/or increase, the child is moved onto Stage 2 of the process. Parents, principal, SEN teacher(s) as well as the class teacher are involved in this decision.
- If the concerns are of sufficient severity the above partners may decide to move the pupil to Stage Three of the process at this point.

Stage 2 (School Support): Referral to Special Education Teacher

- The following factors are considered in determining a child's need for supplementary teaching:
 - Assessment results
 - Teacher recommendation
 - Parents' concerns
 - Availability of resources
- Written parental consent for additional support and further diagnostic testing by the SEN Team should a need arise is sought on enrolment. Should a need arise, the class teacher will discuss the issues/concerns with the parent(s) prior to any intervention taking place. Parents are made aware that support is delivered in a variety of ways including individual and/or group withdrawal, or individual and/or group in-class support.
- Where parents are found to have sensitivities around their child receiving support, these will be addressed by early contact with parent to explain how additional support can address their child's learning need. This may be done by letter or by phone or in extreme cases at a meeting with the Principal and/or the Class Teacher and/or a member of the SEN Team.
- In the event of a refusal of a parent to consent to support for their child and/or further testing, the child will continue to be supported at Stage 1. Written confirmation will be sought from the parents and this record of refusal will be kept on the child's file.
- The diagnostic tests that the SEN teachers use are:
 - Quest
 - Neale Analysis
 - Schonell Word Reading Test
 - Aston Index
 - Jackson Test

- Dyslexia Screening Test – Junior (Pearson)
- WIAT - III

They are administered and interpreted by the SEN Team.

- Supplementary teaching is arranged by the SEN Team in consultation with the Class Teachers. A School Needs Analysis is carried out by the Principal at the beginning of each school year. The principal calls a meeting of the Special Educational Needs Team and class teachers during the first week of the school year and the strategy for the year is discussed. Caseloads are organised for each Special Education Teacher according to the needs of the pupils receiving support and timetables are drawn up. Scoil Naomh Molaise employs a mixed model of intervention incorporating elements of both Withdrawal and In-Class Support depending on need. Children with similar needs may be grouped, where appropriate.
- The Principal and the SEN team meet at the start of every term to review caseloads and discuss any new pupils presenting with additional needs. The SEN team co-ordinator maintains a record of the minutes of all these meetings.
- Preparation of a School Support Plan (SSP).
 - The Special Education Teacher in consultation with the Class Teacher has responsibility for preparation/co-ordination of a child's SSP. The Principal, SET, Classroom teacher, Parents and Pupils are responsible for the implementation of the plan.
 - There is close collaboration between all the above parties and discussions around implementation are facilitated as often as deemed necessary. This may be done informally through teacher/parent/pupil contact e.g. at the end of a school day and/or more formally through case conferencing involving all the concerned parties.
 - School Support Plans may be prepared for groups where appropriate.
- There are three instructional terms for the SEN Team during the school year as follows:
 1. September to Christmas
 2. January to Easter
 3. May / June
- Pupil progress is reviewed at the end of each period by the SET in consultation with the Class Teacher on the basis of progress and results of tests. A record of the review is maintained in the Student Support File.
- Continuing and Discontinuing support is undertaken according to the following procedure:
 - As children reach certain targets or levels of ability / independence their needs will be reassessed.
 - Spelling ages, reading ages, percentile scores and scores on Mathematical tests will be considered.
 - Parents and class teachers will be consulted with regard to continuation or discontinuation of supplementary teaching.
 - Supplementary teaching will continue for resource children according to Departmental Guidelines.
 - Newcomer children in receipt of language classes will receive two years of supplementary teaching and this may be extended depending on the level of need.
 - However, individual newcomer pupils will require additional support which will be provided at the discretion of the SEN team.
- If there is still a difficulty, the child, in consultation with parents will be recommended for Psychological Assessment from NEPS or privately. This may lead to an application to the NCSE for Resources i.e. Resource Hours, Services of a SNA, Equipment, Transport, Services of Visiting Teachers for Visual/Hearing Impairment etc. Referral to other services such as

speech and language therapist, social worker or other relevant professionals may also be considered. This involves principal and teaching staff in the referral process. Pupils are prioritised for referral at a meeting of the Principal and the SEN Team. Scoil Naomh Molaise is normally entitled to 3 NEPS assessments per annum but this is at the discretion of NEPS and is subject to the resources available to NEPS.

Stage 3 (School Support Plus): Consultation or referral for assessment to outside specialist

- The School Support Plus process will be initiated if, in reviewing the School Support Plan (Stage 2), it is agreed that the student is not making adequate progress, despite purposeful efforts. This process will generally involve external professionals and support services in a more detailed problem solving process.
- When the school feels that an assessment by an outside specialist would be in the best interests of the child, a Referral Form is prepared and the parents are asked to sign this along with a Consent Form. They may also be asked to sign a form consenting to relevant information being passed to and received from other agencies involved with the child.
- The school makes contact with the NEPS Psychologist and dates are arranged for assessment in order of priority. In cases where pupils are not shortlisted for assessment and/or an educational assessment is not appropriate, parents are made aware of the option to seek a private assessment or a medical assessment through the HSE where appropriate as in cases of ASD or ADHD. (Referral to other agencies such as paediatrician, speech and language therapist, audiologist, etc. is also undertaken if deemed appropriate).
- The responsibility for making the referral and liaison with the specialist lies with the Principal, the SEN Co-Ordinator, the Special Education Teacher and the Class Teacher.
- All the documentation is collected and submitted to the appropriate agencies while copies are kept in the Assessments File by the SEN Co-Ordinator.
- Assessments take place usually in a support classroom. The most appropriate setting for the assessment is determined by the psychologist having regard to the comfort of the child, an appropriate environment and parental sensitivities.
- In the event of limited availability of assessments through NEPS (3 per year) decisions regarding priority are reached according to the following criteria:
 1. Early Intervention
 2. Degree of Need
 3. Likelihood of acquiring extra resources for pupils.
- If parents have had assessments carried out privately, the recommendations contained therein have the same weighting in relation to assessments commissioned by the school. The school will retain the right to satisfy itself as to the qualifications and suitability of outside practitioners and will deploy its resources accordingly.

Procedure for early identification/screening/referral of pupils with SEN within the school (Information Gathering and Assessment).

- Class Teacher – informal and formal assessment e.g. checklists, self-assessment, questioning, teacher observation, portfolios of work and teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Informal feedback from pupils
- Co-ordinated input from parents

- For other pupils, preliminary screening through the administration of Drumcondra Reading and Maths in May (1st - 6th classes). The Micra and Sigma T are also administered to First Class in October, to assist with early intervention.
- Pupils in 1st and 4th classes are tested on the Non-Reading Intelligence Tests (NRIT) to acquire an IQ score, which can be compared to Standard scores on screening tests. This will indicate if a child's performance is in keeping with his/her ability.
- A School Needs Analysis is undertaken by the Principal at the beginning of each school year. From this, caseloads are organised and assigned to SEN Teachers.
- Priority will be given to pupils as follows:
 1. Children with complex needs identified by an external professional
 2. Children at or below the 12th percentile literacy
 3. Children with an Average Age-Based Standard Score in Literacy which is 15 points or more below their IQ (NRIT).
 4. Senior Infants/1st Class identified by the Class Teacher, through Teacher Observation/Early Literacy Tests /Micra T, as having difficulty in literacy.
 5. Children with a Specific Mathematical Disability (Dyscalculia).
 6. Children from 2nd Class up who are at or below the 12th percentile in numeracy.
 7. Children at or below the 20th percentile in literacy.
- Others that are in need of support (as much as timetable allows) are given support.
- The Special Education Teachers (SET) will administer appropriate diagnostic tests, the results of which will determine the type of intervention required.
- Diagnostic tests will be selected from the following:
 - Quest
 - Neale Analysis
 - Schonell Word Reading Test
 - Aston Index
 - Jackson Test
 - Dyslexia Screening Test – Junior (Pearson)
 - WIAT-III

Intervention Programmes

- Support teaching – provided by class teacher, SEN Teacher, visiting teacher as appropriate. Types of support teaching – one to one, small group teaching, classroom intervention such as Team Teaching and station teaching.
- The class teacher will differentiate the curriculum in a meaningful manner matching learning to need and consulting with the SEN Team for advice.
- Account will also be taken of class teachers recommendations.
- Results will be discussed with class teacher on class needs to receive supplementary teaching.
- Supplementary teaching can be carried out on a withdrawal basis or team teaching/ in class /withdrawal model or a combination of these supports where appropriate.
- Children who present with significant delays in reading, spelling and maths will undergo the Three-Staged Process. This will be done in consultation with the class teacher, special needs teacher, parents and Principal.

- A Student Support File for each child in receipt of supplementary teaching at Stage 1, 2 or 3 of the Continuum of Support is opened. A Classroom Support Plan (CSP) is drawn up for pupils at Stage 1. A School Support Plan (SSP) is drawn up for pupils at Stage 2. A School Support Plus Plan (SSPP) is drawn up for pupils at Stage 3.
- The Class Teacher and parent will have input into intervention programmes and also any relevant outside agency.

Tracking, recording, and reviewing progress

Student Support File (SSF)

The SSF is used to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It enables us to document the pupils' progress and needs over time and assists us in providing the appropriate level of support in line with the particular needs of our pupils. Our SSF is based on the NEPS template and is stored securely on the school premises. A copy is also uploaded onto the Aladdin System.

All support files should include:

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

The class teacher opens an SSF when the pupil is placed on **Stage 1- Classroom Support** on the continuum. This is stored in the pupil's records on Aladdin and in the class teacher's assessment folder.

If, after ongoing review, the pupil requires **Stage 2- School Support**, this information is then passed on to the SET. It is the shared responsibility of the class teacher and the SET to access and update this information in the SSF. The same system applies to those pupils placed on **Stage 3- School Support Plus**.

Support Plans

Three different support plans are used for the abovementioned three stages on the continuum of support.

Stage 1- Classroom Support

The 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 a member of the SET team which outlines the pupil's educational needs and actions (including individualised teaching, differentiation and management approaches etc.) required to meet the needs of the pupil at school. The plan may also include home-specific actions considered necessary to support the pupil's development. The CSP should include a review date. This review date usually occurs at the end of a school term.

Stage 2- School Support

The support plan at stage 2 is a **School Support Plan (SSP)**. This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and SET. It will outline the nature of the pupil's learning difficulties, establish pupil/group-specific teaching,

learning and behavioural targets and set a timescale for review. The plan will include in-class support and/or withdrawal from the classroom. Home-based activities may also be included. This plan is carefully monitored and revised regularly according to each pupil/group's response to actions taken and targets achieved. In this way a working document is created which informs all relevant parties.

Stage 3- School Support Plus

The support plan at stage 3 is **School Support Plus Plan (SSPP formally known as an Individual Education Plan (IEP))**. This plan is drawn up by the class teacher and SET in consultation with parents/guardians, SNA (if applicable), other relevant professionals external to the school and the child (if appropriate) based on information gathered.

The plan will outline:

- The nature and degree of the pupil's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the pupil's special educational needs and their effect on his/her educational development
- The pupil's current level of performance
- The special educational needs of the pupil
- The special education and related support services provision including:
 - The pupil's priority needs, long and short term targets, monitoring and review arrangements
 - Strategies for supporting progress and in-class inclusion
 - Individual and/or group interventions/programmes
 - Specific methodologies/programmes
 - Specific equipment/materials and/or IT supports
 - SNA support (if applicable)
- Student Support Plus Planning Meetings
 - The SET has responsibility for co-ordination of the School Support Plus Plans (SSPP).
 - Parents and all other interested parties participate in the preparation of SSPP where feasible.
 - Participation is facilitated through meetings and/or ascertaining relevant opinions by word-of-mouth or in written form (i.e. Homework Journal)
 - The pupil is included in the process by ascertaining his/her interests and likes and attempting to individualise the learning process accordingly in so far as is practicable.
 - A copy of the plan is given to parents and available to all other concerned parties working with the child.
- Progress Review
 - Ongoing monitoring is carried out by following the same process as listed in Procedures for Identification of Pupils with SEN. Individual records are kept of progress on a monthly basis and kept with the school's monthly reports.
 - Reviews take place at the end of term and records are maintained in each child's Student Support File.
 - The SET and Class Teacher are involved in the review in collaboration with the principal, parents and other relevant parties.
- Time-tabling is done by the Principal in collaboration with the SETs.
- If it is deemed that additional resources are required to meet a pupils needs, the Principal will bring this to the attention of the SENO and/or the NCSE.

- The Principal and SEN Co-Ordinator are also responsible for ongoing consultations with psychologists, SENO, others.
- The SET is responsible for co-ordination of education plans from class to class, sharing relevant information between staff, school and parents.

The SETs will maintain the following documentation:

1. Individual Pupils' School Support Plan or School Support Plus Plan
2. Short term planning
3. Progress Reports / Cuntas Míósúil (to be sent to the office)

Inclusion

It is a fundamental policy within the school to include all pupils in the learning process with regard to their holistic development, academically and socially.

- All children are educated within the mainstream class setting. They take part in all subject areas of the curriculum.
- The school endeavours to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom through SPHE classes, etc.
- There are also strategies in place in the SPHE curriculum to raise awareness in the general pupil population of the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Children diagnosed with SEN will continue to avail of Irish language teaching in class with peers. Homework assignments may be differentiated. Should parents request an exemption from Gaeilge, this must be done in writing and the school endeavour to facilitate the exemption in accordance with the relevant circular (see paragraph below).
- All children are included in all activities within the school and teachers employ appropriate models of differentiation as the need arises. Class teachers are responsible for devising strategies to include pupils with SEN.

Exceptionally Able Students

The definition in Scoil Naomh Molaise of a gifted pupil is “one who demonstrates a significantly higher level of ability than most pupils of the same age in one or more curriculum area or in any of the following:

- Physical talent
- Artistic talent
- Mechanical ingenuity
- Leadership
- High intelligence
- Creativity”

Identification:

A gifted pupil will be identified through teacher assessment and judgement. This assessment is carried out through:

- Discussion of pupils with colleagues
- Discussion with the child
- Consultation with parents /guardians

- On-going assessment using differentiated tasks
- Careful record keeping
- Collation of evidence/pupils work.

School aim:

- Create an ethos where it is ok to be bright.
- Encourage all pupils to become independent learners.
- Enrichment experiences – getting involved in cross curricular projects.
- Local and residential trips.
- Making child/children aware of outside school activities at local/national level.

Class aims:

- Varied and flexible pupil groupings, sometimes allowing able pupils to work together.
- Carrying out unaided tasks which stretch their capabilities.
- Enabling them to make choices about their work.
- Develop their ability to evaluate their work and so become self-critical.
- Abilities will be recognised and valued.
- Differentiated teaching will be used to take account of the needs of the exceptionally able student.

Exemption from the Study of Irish

In accordance with Circular 52/2019, an exemption from the study of Irish is granted only in exceptional circumstances. We are conscious that the decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her access to the curriculum and his/her future learning. The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal teacher, following detailed discussion with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), the class teacher, special education teachers, and the pupil.

Criteria for Exemption

Exemption from the study of Irish may be allowed in the following exceptional circumstances only:

a. pupils whose education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of their primary education) was received outside the State and where they did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish

OR

b. pupils who were previously enrolled as recognised pupils in primary schools who are being re-enrolled after a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment

OR

c. pupils who have **at least reached second class** and **present with significant learning difficulties** that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in both Irish and English over time. At the time of the application for exemption, the pupil present with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling **at/below the 10th percentile**

Documentary evidence to this effect, held by the school, should include Student Support Plans detailing

- regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment
- target-setting

- evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (word reading, reading comprehension, spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review.

OR

d. children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland.

Procedures for granting an exemption from the study of Irish

- A parent/guardian must make a written application to the principal for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of a pupil.
- Where an exemption is granted, a Certificate of Exemption, signed and dated by the school principal will be issued. The Certificate of Exemption will also state the name and address of the school, the school roll number, the pupil's name, date of birth and the criteria under which the exemption is being granted.
- Parents/guardians and pupils should be informed of the option not to exercise the exemption granted, without any loss of the right to exercise it at a future time.
- Where the application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, a parent/guardian can appeal the school's decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee (IEAC). An appeal must be lodged within 30 calendar days from the date the decision of the school not to grant an exemption was notified in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Deployment of Staff

- The Principal, in consultation with the Staff, ensures the most effective deployment of staff in meeting the overall SEN requirements of the school.
- SNAs are deployed according to the needs of the SEN pupils and are normally placed with pupils for whom access has been allocated by the NCSE. They play a vital role in supporting pupils with special needs in the school.

Collaboration and Communication

- There are various arrangements in place to facilitate collaboration between those involved in the child's education.
 - Informal contact between Class Teacher and Parent (e.g. at the end of the school day) is allowed within reason.
 - A note will be sent to parents annually to request the commencement of supplementary teaching.
 - To meet with parents of each pupil who has been selected for psychological assessment.
 - Meet with parents after assessment.
 - Discuss outcomes and learning targets for the term.
 - Demonstrate strategies to parents that will enable them to help their child.
 - Provide link by homework copy or notebook.
 - Written communication between teacher and parent is a useful form of contact and a good way of keeping school and home informed and up to date on progress.
 - Formal Parent-Teacher Meetings take place each November.
 - Parents can make appointments to have more in-depth meetings with principal, teachers etc.
 - Occasionally a case conference is arranged at the behest of the school or another agency involved with the child where all the concerned parties come together to review the current provision and plan for future provision. If the school calls such a conference it

will host the meeting and all the teachers involved, along with the Principal will attend. If the meeting is called elsewhere, the school will endeavour to send one or more representatives to attend.

Communication between SET Team /Principal /Class Teachers

SET timetables have been organised so that 2:30 – 3:00 each Friday is our designated co-ordination time if necessary. This allows all staff the opportunity to attend pupils support planning meetings, care team meetings, Team Teaching Planning 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.

Resources

- The following resources are available in the school:
 - Reading schemes (including PM assessment, Emergent Literacy)
 - Phonics materials (including Jolly Phonics, The PAT Programme)
 - Language programmes
 - Numeracy programmes
 - I.C.T. software
- The SEN co-ordinator in consultation with the Principal is responsible for sourcing and acquiring additional resources from recommendations from SEN teachers.
- Resources and Materials are updated as needs arise and as funding allows.

Transfer to post-primary

- To assist a smooth transition for pupils with special needs to post primary education, a representative from each Post Primary School in our area meets with the Principal and 6th Class Teachers to share information regarding SEN pupils.
- Where parental consent has been given, S.N. Molaise passes on all relevant information to the Post Primary schools.

Professional Development

- Staff, both SEN & Mainstream are encouraged to avail of Professional Development when it is available. Many courses are available on an ongoing basis in the local Education Centre. When the Principal in consultation with the Staff regards a course to be of potential benefit to the school, arrangements are made for one or more teachers and/or SNAs to attend. The choice of attendee(s) will be made having regard to role, suitability, availability, equality of opportunity and having the least impact on the running of the school for the day(s) of the course. The attendees on their return will be given an opportunity to share their new found expertise with the rest of the staff e.g. Staff Meeting, Planning Days etc.

Special Need Assistants

- There are currently seven full-time Special Needs Assistants in Scoil Naomh Molaise. All SNAs carry out their duties in accordance with the terms of SNA 15/05.
- The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) is responsible for deciding and reviewing the allocation of SNAs for the school.

- If, at Stage 3 of the Staged Approach, a child is found to have needs that the school feels require the services of an SNA, the school will apply to the SENO including all relevant documented evidence.

Passing on of relevant information subject to parental permission

Information relating to students' ability and progress e.g. test results, psychological reports etc. is passed on to relevant people or bodies subject to parental permission where it is in the interest of the student to do so.

Record Keeping

Individual SEN Files

All pupils' SEN files are stored securely in the Special Educational Teacher's room. It is the responsibility of SETs to update and manage the files of the children on school support and school support plus. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to update and manage the SEN files of children on classroom support. The following should be stored

- Student Support File (stored on Aladdin & one copy printed for SET's folder)
- Psychological Report (stored in pupil's file in Secretary's office & uploaded to Aladdin)
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies (stored securely in SEN Co-ordinators room)
- Copy of reports from outside agencies (stored in pupil's file in Secretary's office & uploaded to Aladdin)
- Records of SEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter-school meetings
- Records of SEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff

Files are stored indefinitely.

Health and Safety Issues and Child Protection

Health and Safety Issues

Each 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 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 or SNA 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.

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of all members of staff in the school to identify and provide for all children with special needs.

Role of the Board of Management

- The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting and monitoring school policy on special needs.
- To ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided.
- To provide a secure facility for storage of records.

The Role of the Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. She will work closely with the SEN team and will keep the BOM informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the Principal to:

- Work with the SEN team to develop inclusive whole school policies and monitor their implementation.
- Take responsibility for the development and implementation of school policy on special education.
- Work with teachers and parents.
- Co-ordinate and organise SNA's work and timetabling.
- Liaise with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Monitor the implementation of the special needs policy
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that the focus is on pupils with low educational achievement.
- Oversee the implementation of the whole school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need.
- Make available to teachers information on relevant in-career development.
- Call termly meetings of the SEN Team to discuss all of the above issues.

The Role of the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator

- Communicates with the Principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis.
- Supports class teachers and SETs in gathering information, preparing, implementing and reviewing Support Plans and communicating with parents.
- Supports class teachers and SETs in gathering information, preparing, implementing and reviewing Support Plans and communicating with parents.
- Liaises with external agencies e.g. SENO about the provision for pupils with additional needs.
- Liaises with the NEPS psychologist, the Principal, the SEN team and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments.
- Liaises with SETs and class teachers to identify, support & monitor children with additional needs.
- Meets with parents as required, regarding any concerns about their child, or to advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services.

- Liaises with outside agencies supporting pupils with additional needs in our school e.g. NEPS, SENO, Clinical Psychologists, CAMHS personnel, Speech & Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Visiting teacher(s) for Visual and Hearing-Impaired Pupils
- Co-ordinates the whole-school standardised testing at each class level.
- Maintains lists of pupils who are receiving additional support.

The role of the Class Teacher

- The overall responsibility for the educational needs of the pupil rest with the class teacher.
- To employ learning strategies that help prevent learning difficulties.
- To implement Drumcondra Reading and Drumcondra maths tests for screening.
- To collaborate with the SEN team in setting targets for the Student Support Plan.
- To differentiate the class curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special needs.
- To collaborate regularly on an ongoing basis with special education teacher.
- To discuss screening and diagnostic results.
- To maintain suitable records of progress.
- To meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child, and update them regarding their progress
- Gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- To open a Pupil Support File, in liaison with the SET, once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support
- Develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support
- Collaborate with staff to develop targets and learning programmes for each pupil in receipt of School Support
- Collaborate with Special Education Teachers and relevant staff to develop a targeted learning plan for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- Meet regularly with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff and parents to review School Support Plus plans
- Where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- Co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned.

The Role of the Special Education Teachers

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs.
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies in Literacy and Numeracy with an emphasis on Early Intervention.
- Collaboratively develop Support Plans with Class Teachers and other staff for each pupil selected for school support teaching.
- Meet with Class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus.
- Collaborate with Class Teachers and relevant staff to develop a targeted learning plan for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus.
- Regularly meet with class teachers, parents and relevant staff to review School Support Plus Plans.

- Update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support.
- Provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis.
- Support whole-school procedures for screening.
- Administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes.
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress.
- Co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload.
- Discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings.
- Provide necessary information to an SEN pupil's receiving school, with parental permission, once a transfer letter has been received.
- To advise principal teacher on issues that arise on a day to day basis.
- Analysis of outcomes of screening and diagnostic assessments in the form of an annual school needs analysis. .
- Short meetings when necessary with other professionals involved.
- Make referrals for educational psychological assessments.
- Make referrals for speech and language/occupational therapy.
- To assist the class teachers in carrying out the Drumcondra Tests in May/June.
- To carry out N.R.I.T. tests on 1st and 4th classes each school year
- To provide a model of support most appropriate to maximize learning or provide a combination of individual/in-class/group/withdrawal.

The Role of the S.N.A.

- Preparing and tidying classroom.
- Assisting school children to board and alight from school buses. When necessary travel as escort during school hours on school buses may be required.
- Special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties e.g. helping special needs pupils with typing, writing, computers or other use of equipment.
- Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the pupil.
- Assisting on out-of-school visits, walks, examinations and similar activities.
- Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and dispersal from the classroom for one reason or another.
- Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another.
- General assistance to the class teacher to the teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special Needs Assistants may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class or group of children).
- Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process.
- Engagement with parents of special needs pupils both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management.
- Other duties appropriate to the grade as may be determined by needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Special Needs Assistants may be reassigned to other work appropriate to the grade when special needs pupils are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise.

Success Criteria:

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our objectives. We will use the following indicators as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy:

- Inclusion of pupils with special needs into our school
- Progress of pupils with special needs in our school (assessments)
- Parental Feedback

Timeframe for Implementation:

This policy will be implemented from September 2020.

Time frame for Review:

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Responsibility for Review:

- Principal (DLP)
- SEN team
- Class teachers

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was ratified by the BOM on: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

S.N. Molaise does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM, distributed to all staff members and is available to the wider school community through the school office and/or the school website – www.molaise.com