

Scoil Mháirtín, Kilworth

Whole School Policy for SEN Provision

This policy on SEN Provision in Scoil Mháirtín was formulated during 2011 and updated in 2014 and 2018, taking cognisance of directives contained in:

- The 1998 Education Act
- The Learning Support Guidelines 2000
- The Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004
- Recent Dept. Of Education Circulars, especially Circular 13/17 and 02/05.

The policy was discussed and further developed by the teaching staff of Scoil Mháirtín during September 2018.

Aims of SEN Provision

- To support the inclusion of SEN pupils in the Primary School.
- To ensure that the Staged Approach/NEPS Continuum of Support is implemented.
- To “optimize the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving Primary School”(LSG;pg 15). This support may be provided by the Class or Support Teacher as outlined in the Staged Approach.
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Mathematics.
- To enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum.
- To encourage differentiation in the classroom.
- To develop positive self esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
- To support attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To involve parents in supporting their children through effective parent-support programmes.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies on learning support for children
- To guard the self esteem and self image of the learner.

Principles

Effective learning programmes are based on the following principles:

- Effective whole-school policies.
- Quality of teaching
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need.
- Implementation of the staged approach to support provision at Class Support/ School Support and School Support Plus
- Provision of the model of intervention appropriate for the pupil and the difficulty they are experiencing:
 1. Withdrawal Model: a)1:1 interventions, b) small group interventions
 2. In-Class support Model: Station Teaching/Team Teaching/ Peer Tutoring etc
- Parental involvement
- Collaboration between teachers
- Maintenance of Support Plans by Class Teachers and Support Teachers at Class Support/School Support and School Support Plus
- Thorough assessment procedures

- Regular contact with SEN pupils
- Manageable Caseloads/Timetables
- Prevention of failure.
- Provision of intensive early intervention
- Support from outside agencies
- Continuing professional development (CPD)

Staff Roles and Responsibilities.

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all, the Board of Management, Principal Teacher, Class Teachers, Support Teachers, S.N.A's, parents, pupils and external bodies and agencies. It is important that everyone contributes in the implementation of our school plan on SEN Provision.

Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management shall :

- Ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the SET.
- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the SEN policy.
- Provide adequate funds for the purchase of SEN materials.
- Provide a secure facility for storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of SEN.

Role of Principal

“The principal teacher has overall responsibility for the school’s learning-support programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs”. (Learning-Support Guidelines, p.38).

The Principal Teacher is required to:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school’s policies on learning-support and special needs in co-operation with the Support Teachers.
- Work with teachers and parents in the development of the school plan on SEN.
- Monitor the implementation of the school plan on SEN on an ongoing basis.
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with very low achievement.
- Oversee the implementation of a 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.
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
- Help teachers to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of School Support.
- Encourage and facilitate staff members to attend CPD courses.
- Liaise regularly with SET, parents, and external agencies such as psychological services.
- Arrange classroom accommodation for Support Teachers
- Arrange for provision of SEN funding and resources.
- Ensure that students who are allocated SEN provision receive it.
- Complete application forms for outside agencies such as NEPS, NCSE, CAMHS etc
- Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching.

- Advise parents on procedures for availing of services.
- Liaise with external agencies.
- Co-ordinate and organise SNA`s work and timetabling.

The **SEN Co-Ordinator** undertakes the following duties, delegated to her by the Principal Teacher:

Policy:

- Taking responsibility for formulating and updating the school`s SEN policy.
- Collaborating with the Principal Teacher and meeting with her at least once each school year to discuss issues relating to the development and implementation of the school plan on SEN, and to the provision of SEN.

Selection:

- Monitoring the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching with the Principal, ensuring that support is focused on the pupils with very low achievement.
- Identifying the level of support that is needed to meet the pupil`s needs, in conjunction with the Principal, Class Teacher and Parents.
- Assisting the Support Teachers to co-ordinate their caseloads / work schedules.

Assessment:

- Overseeing the implementation of a 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.
- Co-ordinating the administration by Class Teachers of a whole-school screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and / or learning difficulties in English and Mathematics
- Consulting with Class Teachers on the identification of pupils who may need diagnostic assessment, taking into account:
 1. The pupils` scores on an appropriate standardised screening measure
 2. A criteria for identifying pupils
 3. Teachers` own views of the pupils` difficulties and needs
 4. Support Teacher caseload.
- Co-ordinating comprehensive diagnostic assessment for each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties.
- Keeping teachers informed about external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals, when requested. Researching current assessments for primary schools.
- Maintaining assessment tests.
- Ordering standardised assessment scripts each year.
- Distributing standardised assessment scripts to Class Teachers each year.
- Maintaining the results of standardised assessment each year and share the results with the Principal Teacher.
- Advising Class Teachers about baseline and screening assessments in September each year, when requested.

Support Plans:

- Advising the Principal Teacher on the construction of Support Plans.
- Advising the Principal on current individualised planning best practice, when requested.

- Advising Class teachers and Support Teachers about Support Plans, when requested.

Co-ordination Activities:

- Maintaining a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching at each stage of support - Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus.
- Advising Parents on procedures for availing of special needs services, when requested.
- Advising Class Teachers on procedures for availing of special needs services, when requested.
- Liaising with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.

Role of Class Teacher

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

“A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to create a classroom environment in which learning difficulties can be prevented or at least alleviated”, (Learning-Support Guidelines, p. 42).

This can be achieved by:

1. Grouping pupils for instruction
 2. Providing lower-achieving pupils with strategies for reading, spelling and problem solving
 3. Adapting learning materials for lower-achieving pupils
 4. Liaising closely with their parents.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, the class teacher will collaborate with the Support Teacher in the development of a Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
 - With regard to teaching pupils with low achievement, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:
 - 1 Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
 - 2 Placing an emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
 - 3 Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
 - 4 Setting learning targets at an appropriate level.
 - 5 Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
 - 6 Carrying out error analyses of a pupil’s work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty, for particular attention in subsequent lessons.
 - 7 Setting up ‘buddy systems’ in class (high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers).

Identification of Learning Difficulties:

- The Class Teacher plays an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have general or specific learning disabilities.
- In supporting the development and implementation of the school SEN Policy, the Class Teacher will administer and score appropriate screening measures, and discuss the outcomes with the Support Teacher(s).
- The Class Teacher will liaise closely with Parents and elicit relevant information from them regarding e.g. hearing / vision checks.

Classroom Support / Stage 1:

- Circular 02/05 demands the implementation of a Staged Approach (Appendix 1) for the provision of additional support, as does the NEPS Continuum of Support (Appendix 2).
- Stage 1 of the Staged Approach and NEPS' Classroom Support requires Class Teachers to support their pupils' learning, in the first instance.
- Stage 1 / Classroom Support will continue when School Support / School Support Plus is being phased out or discontinued, to meet the pupil's changing needs.
- **Support Plans:**
- The Staged Approach requires Class Teachers to construct a simple, individual plan of support, to implement the plan and review its success regularly, before referring the child for Stage 2 interventions. The Class Teacher will open a Support Plan for the pupil at Stage 1 / Classroom Support level of interventions, including targets, interventions and progress.
- Circular 02/05 demands that, "*Interventions with pupils at stages 2 and 3 should include a classroom support plan to ensure that the pupils' needs are met for the whole school day*" (p. 7). The Class Teacher will collaborate to complete and update the Support Plan at School Support and School Support Plus.
- Log actions in the Support Plan.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching at School Support / School Support Plus, the Class Teacher will collaborate with the Support Teacher in the development of a Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, the Class Teacher will adjust the class programme in line with the agreed learning targets and activities in the pupil's Support Plan and maintain a record of the pupil's progress towards achieving those learning targets.
- A key role of successful support is a high level of consultation and co-operation between the Class Teacher and the Support Teacher. Central to this consultation is the development, implementation and review of Support Plans. This consultation will be achieved through formal timetabling at least once per instructional term, and through informal consultation as the need arises.

Communicating with Parents:

- It is accepted practice for Class Teachers to consult with the Parents of all pupils in the class from time to time. However, for Parents of pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching, additional time should be devoted to consultation and collaborative planning.
- In the case of each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or a learning difficulty following administration of an appropriate screening measure, the Class Teacher should:
- Make Parents aware of concerns about their child's progress.
- Outline the support that is available to pupils who experience low achievement and / or learning difficulties (Classroom Support / School Support or School Support Plus).
- Inform Parents that a meeting with the Support Teacher(s) and / or the Class Teacher will follow diagnostic assessments.
- Attend, if possible, the meeting between the pupil's Parents and the Support Teacher(s).
- Collaborate with Parents and Support Teachers on the formation of a Support Plan.
- Indicate to Parents how the pupil's class programme will be modified in order to achieve the agreed learning targets in the pupil's Support Plan.

- Parental permissions for school-based tests / assessments is sought when the child enrolls in our school and is retained by the Class Teacher in the pupils' files in the classroom.

Role of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Teacher (Support Teacher).

- *"It is envisaged that schools will establish and maintain skilled special education support teams to guide provision"* (2017 Guidelines: p. 27).
- Support Teacher activities should include both teaching and non-teaching duties. According to the Learning-Support Guidelines (2000): *"The particular balance that the Learning-Support Teacher achieves between supplementary teaching and consultative activities will depend on the specific circumstances of the school"* (p. 32). The Support Teacher's activities should include, where possible:
 - Providing supplementary teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs.
 - Researching the pupil's learning difficulty / SEN, to become *au fait* with this impediment to learning.
 - Being *"familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs"* (2017 Guidelines p.13).
 - Implementing suitable recommendations from outside agencies, wherever possible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the children on their caseload.
 - Developing a Support Plan for each pupil who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with Class Teachers and Parents. *"Special education teachers, in consultation with class teachers, should plan their interventions carefully to address pupils' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant Continuum of Support plan"* (2017 Guidelines p.14).
 - Maintaining a Forward Planner and Progress Record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support.
 - Providing supplementary teaching in English and / or Mathematics to pupils who experience low achievement and / or learning difficulties at School Support / School Support Plus (as per Selection Criteria).
 - Delivering intensive early intervention programmes, caseload and selection criteria permitting.
 - Assisting the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
 - Contributing to the development of policy on SEN at the whole school level / at the cluster level, if requested.
 - Providing advice to the Class Teacher (if requested) about pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties in such areas as:
 1. Individual pupil assessment
 2. Programme planning
 3. Curriculum differentiation
 4. Approaches to language development
 5. Approaches to reading
 6. Approaches to spelling
 7. Approaches to writing
 8. Approaches to Mathematics
 9. Behaviour difficulties
 - Meeting with Class Teachers of each pupil who is in receipt of School Support / School Support Plus, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported throughout the school day.

- Meeting with Parents of each pupil who is in receipt of support, if possible, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home.
- Meeting with Parents of each pupil who is in receipt of support at the end of each instructional term, if possible:
 - To review the pupil's attainment of agreed targets
 - To discuss the next instructional term
 - To revise the pupil's Support Plan.
- Contributing at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the Support Teacher's room.
- Liaising with external agencies such as speech and language therapists etc...
- Implementing school policies on preventing learning difficulties, screening pupils for learning difficulties, interpreting the outcomes of diagnostic assessments and providing supplementary teaching, where it is deemed necessary.
- In addition to providing supplementary teaching to pupils, the Support Teacher is involved in administering a range of formal and informal assessments and in maintaining records of the outcomes of those assessments. The Support Teachers shall:
 - Conduct an initial diagnostic assessment of each pupil who has been identified as having low achievement and / or a learning difficulty, based on results of an appropriate screening measure and record the findings of the assessment in the pupil's Support Plan.
 - Monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in receipt of supplementary teaching in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives that arise from them, and record the observations in the Forward Planner and Progress Record, or equivalent.
 - Review the progress of each pupil at the end of an instructional term and record it on the pupil's Support Plan.

Role of Parents

Parents will support the work of the school by participating with their child in such activities as:

- Helping children with their homework
- Creating a home environment in which learning will thrive.
- Book sharing / reading stories
- Storytelling
- Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
- Motivating their children to read more frequently.
- Counting and measuring and other activities involving number.
- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities outlined in their child's learning programme.
- Parents should keep the class teacher informed of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. They should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home.

Role of Pupils

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

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.54).

Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching **should**, as appropriate **develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching** and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning.

Whole school Prevention Strategies

Early intervention is a vital component of the NEPS Continuum of Support model.

- Early intervention programmes may be provided by the Class Teacher and / or by the Support Teacher, in accordance with the Staged Approach (Appendix 1) and the NEPS Continuum.
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Class Teachers and the Support Teachers, should identify pupils who may be in need of early intervention. Teacher observation and professional opinion will be given due consideration in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes at Classroom Support / School Support level.
- Intensive early intervention programmes in the early primary classes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. Such programmes will:
 - Be set within a specific time frame (13-20 weeks)
 - Be based on a shared expectation of success by everyone involved
 - Involve small group teaching or one-to-one teaching where small group teaching has not been effective / difficulties are significant
 - Include a strong focus on oral language, laying the foundation for meaningful reading activities and further development of language and comprehension skills
 - Emphasise the development of phonemic awareness
 - Develop phonic skills, once phonological awareness has been developed well
 - Develop word identification skills
 - Engage the pupils in frequent supervised oral and silent reading of texts at appropriate levels of difficulty and monitor their comprehension
 - Stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing
 - Focus on language development in mathematics, and in the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

Policy regarding Permissions; Screening; Assessment; Caseload; Selection; Allocating Additional Teaching Supports; Time Management and Review.

Parental Permissions:

(1) Written parental permissions are required for children to receive School Support / School Support Plus.

(2) Written parental permissions for school-based assessments are given to parents on school entry.

Initial Screening:

Class Teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessments. The Support Teachers will administer further screening tests, if deemed necessary.

Diagnostic Assessment:

The Support Teacher will discuss each class's recorded results with the Class Teacher, and carry out further screening tests and / or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the caseload selection process. The Principal Teacher and post holder will be kept informed at all times during this process.

Caseload Decisions:

Large caseloads have led to a dilution of SEN support provision, and this is to be avoided, as is the inclusion of average-achieving pupils on the Support Teachers caseload. The Staged Approach,

together with current guidelines (2017), and DES Circulars will inform all decision-making regarding the Support Teachers' caseloads.

Selection Criteria:

- *Standardised tests can be used to screen and identify pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. Those pupils performing below the 10th percentile should be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.*
- *Pupils who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.*
- *Pupils who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. Schools should also take into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.*
- *Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties. Pupils who have specific learning disabilities.*
- *Pupils with significant Special Educational Needs. For example, pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.*
- *Schools should also carefully consider the needs of other pupils who may present with a range of learning whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the pupils' learning and ability to access the curriculum.*
- *Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils who need additional English Additional language Support.*

- *The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process" (pages 15 and 16).*
- Support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010).
- Class Teacher (NEPS' Classroom Support):
 - Pupils deemed to need additional support with their learning (literacy & numeracy) and / or specific needs (oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning) will be supported in the classroom by the Class Teacher.
- Support Teacher (NEPS' School Support and School Support Plus):
 - The Support Teacher may provide additional support for the following pupils, through withdrawal (1:1 or in a small group) or in-class support (e.g. station teaching / team teaching / in-class support / peer tutoring), depending on the child's needs.
 - The following selection criteria encompasses current DES Circulars, Guidelines and general good practice. The school will select pupils in accordance with these criteria, starting at point (1) and continuing on through the selection criteria until caseloads / timetables are full.
 - *"Those with the highest level of need should have the greatest level of support" (2017 Guidelines: p. 19).*

- Pupils previously in receipt of "Resource hours" who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Pupils previously in receipt of "Learning-Support" who continue to experience significant learning difficulties (scoring below the 12th%ile on standardised assessments).
- Pupils diagnosed as having "Low Incidence Learning Disabilities".
- Pupils diagnosed as having "High Incidence Learning Disabilities".
- Pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) i.e. (a) pupils who arrive to our school without any English (b) pupils who have lived in Ireland less than two years, and whose English needs further support.
- Pupils scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy.
- Pupils scoring at/below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy (to allow for a margin of error).
- Pupils scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in Mathematics.
- Pupils scoring at/below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in Mathematics (to allow for a margin of error).
- Early intervention in literacy - Infant class pupils who continue to experience difficulties in early literacy skills, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**
- Early intervention in Mathematics - Infant class pupils who continue to experience difficulties in early numeracy skills, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**
- Pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30th percentile) on standardised assessments in literacy, who continue to experience difficulty, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**
- Pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30th percentile) on standardised assessments in mathematics, who continue to experience difficulty, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**
- Pupils experiencing serious difficulties with oral language / social interaction / behaviour / emotional development / application to learning, despite interventions made by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**
- Transition to Post-Primary School (Appendix 4).
- Gifted Pupils (those scoring above the 95th%ile in both English and Mathematics on Standardised Assessments and / or have been diagnosed by a NEPS Educational Psychologist as having a "superior IQ"). Interventions will be made in the first instance by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. **The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.**

Early Intervention Programmes

Early intervention is a vital component of the learning-support provision in this school.

Close collaboration and consultation between the class teachers and the learning-support/resource teacher, will identify pupils who may be in need of early intervention. Teacher observation and professional opinion will be given due consideration and respect in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes.

Intensive early intervention programmes e.g. Forward Together Programme, Literacy Lift Off or maths Recovery in the early primary classes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement.

These programmes will:

- Be based on a shared expectation of success by everyone involved
- Involve small group teaching or one-to-one teaching where small group teaching has not been effective.
- Include a focus on oral language, laying the foundation for meaningful reading activities and further development of language and comprehension skills.
- Emphasise the development of phonemic awareness and a range of other word identification skills
- Engage the pupils in frequent supervised oral and silent reading of texts at appropriate levels of difficulty and monitor their comprehension
- Stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Focus on language development in mathematics, and in the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

Record Keeping

The Support teachers will maintain records of the outcomes of standardised referenced tests, diagnostic assessments and learning programmes and progress records for the children receiving learning support/resource hours.

Screening, Assessment, Caseload, Selection, Permission and Review:

Initial Screening

Class teachers will carry out the initial screening tests.

Class teachers will also correct and record results of screening tests.

Diagnostic Assessment

The Principal teacher will discuss the school's recorded results with L.S./R. teachers and select pupils for possible learning support. In identifying pupils for diagnostic assessment and supplementary teaching priority will be given to pupils who are performing at or below the 10th percentile in English and / or Maths. Prior to receiving supplementary teaching L.S./R. will carry out further screening and /or diagnostic assessment where it is deemed necessary.

Judgement of Class Teacher is an important criteria in the selection of pupils for diagnostic assessment.

Parental Permission

Written parental permission is required for children undertaking individual diagnostic assessment and to attend learning support.

Liasing with Parents

Once a child has come to the attention of the school because of low achievement on the basis of a low score on an appropriate screening measure and consultation between class teacher, LS/R teacher and principal the pupil's parents will be made aware of the school's concerns in relation to the child's progress.

The school's procedures for diagnostic assessment by the learning support teacher will be outlined and the parents approval to proceed with the assessment will be sought.

If supplementary teaching is being offered approval will be sought from the pupil's parents.

Children with diagnosed Special Needs

In consultation with the class teacher supplementary teaching in the areas of English and / or Maths are incorporated into the resource hours provided. These children do not normally receive extra supplementary teaching time.

Programme Planning and Implementation

- Learning targets are set within a specific time frame (usually between 13 - 20 full school weeks.) then reviewed and targets are adjusted or reset.
- Children receive as many support lessons as is possible.
- Small group or individual supplementary teaching is provided as is deemed suitable to achieve learning targets.

Continuing /discontinuing supplementary teaching

The progress of each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching will be evaluated/reviewed at the end of each instructional term or at the end of the school year, as appropriate. Following consultation with the pupil's class teacher and principal a decision will be taken about the level of support that will be provided by the L.S./R. teacher. Depending on the pupil's needs this may range from infrequent monitoring and assessment or support to more frequent and intensive supplementary teaching.

Referral to Out of School Agencies

An important part of the Principal teacher's role is the co-ordination of learning support and special needs services. The Principal plays an important role in liaising with such agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessment and special provision for pupils with special needs. The principal also advises parents on procedures for availing of special need services.

Monitoring and Reviewing of Policy.

- Monitoring of the Learning-Support Policy is an ongoing and developmental process.
- A review of the elements of the school plan on learning support/resource shall take place as necessary.

Selection Criteria:

The following selection criteria encompass all current guidelines and general good practice. Children are selected in accordance with these criteria, stopping at 1 if caseloads are full, but continuing on to point 2 caseloads permitting, and so on through the selection criteria.

- (1) Pupils diagnosed as having low incidence learning disabilities.
- (2) Pupils diagnosed as having high incidence learning disabilities.
- (3) Pupils scoring at / below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy.
- (4) Pupils scoring at / below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy (to allow for a margin of error.)
- (5) Early intervention in literacy (Infants - 2nd class pupils who continue to experience difficulty, despite Stage 1 intervention by the class teacher.)
- (6) Early intervention in Maths (Infants - 2nd class pupils who continue to experience

difficulty, despite Stage One intervention by the class teacher.)

(7) Pupils scoring at/below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in maths.

(8) Pupils scoring at/below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in maths (to allow for a margin of error)

(9) Early intervention in maths. (Infants - 2nd class pupils who continue to experience difficulty, despite Stage 1 intervention by the class teacher.)

(10) Pupils scoring above the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in literacy, who continue to experience difficulty, despite Stage One intervention by the class teacher, under the Staged Approach)

(11) Pupils scoring above the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in maths, who continue to experience difficulty, despite Stage One intervention by the class teacher, under the Staged Approach).

Deploying Resources :

The steps from Circular 02/05:

- Identification of pupils in need of support.
- The list will be examined in consultation with Circular 02/05, and each child will be allocated support, as appropriate, under the terms of the Staged Approach.
- A list of members of the L.S./R.T. will be compiled.
- A member of staff will be allocated to support the learning of each pupil identified, taking into account: the Staged Approach; the needs of the pupils; the expertise and experience of the teacher; and practical considerations.
- L.S./R. teachers will actively monitor the progress of their pupils.

Meeting with parents.

Learning Support teacher will discuss child's progress at parent teacher meetings.

Monitoring Progress.

Monitoring the academic progress of the pupils in this school will be accomplished by:

- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties by the class teacher.
- Formal and informal testing and observation of work by the class teacher.
- Implementing the school policies on screening and the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching in English and / or in Mathematics by administering and scoring appropriate measures:
 - 1 For Senior Infant pupils: MIST each year in February .
 - 2 For 1st to 6th Class pupils: Drumcondra Early Literacy and Numeracy Test at beginning of 1st Class and Drumcondra Reading, Spelling and Maths Test in

May/June each year.

- Standardised and diagnostic testing by the learning-support teacher.
- Record keeping (Children have a file where records, test results and assessments are kept in a secure filing cabinet).
- Non-academic progress of pupils in this school will be reviewed informally, for example under the headings of improvements in the pupil's self esteem; school attendance; attitude to learning; attitude to school and general behaviour.

The reviewed policy was ratified by the B.O.M. in September 2018.

Appendix 1

Differentiation

“Differentiation is the process whereby teachers match the need for progress through the curriculum by the selection of appropriate teaching methods for individual children within a group situation”
(Visser 1990)

Differentiation is about

- **Matching ability and levels of attainment with tasks.**
- **Making tasks achievable** for all pupils so they can demonstrate what they know, understand and do.
- **Varying** content, activities, methodologies and resources.
- **Motivating pupils** by giving them **attainable tasks** that help them **feel success**.

Rationale:

- **All children learn differently.** They have different learning rates and learning styles. All teachers know that there is a range of abilities in any class.
- Differentiation is about matching strategies and approaches and expectations to a range of abilities and learning styles in a mainstream classroom.
- Different teaching methods and approaches work with different children.
- **Differentiation encompasses the concept different but equal.**
- Differentiation is synonymous with good teaching and students can often display hidden strengths when children are given the opportunity to respond in different modes of response.

Types of Differentiation

- Grouping
- Input
- Output/outcome.

Why differentiate?

Good teaching:

- Promotes good behaviour
- Is motivating
- Is self esteem enhancing

- Is inclusive

Challenges

- Class management
(appendix 1 contd.)
- Planning time
- Teaching methods.

Planning for Differentiation (appendix 1 contd.)

- Whole class teaching
- Mixed ability group(good for opened or creative tasks)
- Triads
- Pair work/small group work/ individual work.
- Peer tutoring/buddy system.

Input

Instructions:

- Presentation methods: written, spoken word,demonstration,audio,video.
- Provide clear instructions, illustrations or diagrams.
- Modelling and demonstrating by teacher or peers. Breaking the instructions down into simple steps/visual cues/using pictures.
- Using different coloured chalk or pens.
- Underlining key words/highlight critical features.
- Asking children to repeat back instructions or to give instructions to their peers.

Tasks

- Modify a task so that it can be presented at higher or lower levels of difficulty.
- Pupils can work on the same topic with different materials to vary the level of difficulty.
- Provide materials to scaffold learning - visual cues, framework, preview/predict.
- Pupils can also work on different parts of a task/co-operative groups.
- Personal interests:draw on personal interests/knowledge of students.

Presentation, resources and materials:

- Adapting worksheets- large font. Clear layout, highlight key words or tasks.
- Written, spoken, doing/making, audio, video presentation.
- Concrete practical materials versus formal/abstract, oral lessons and

(Appendix 1 contd.)

visual cues.

- Using a variety of resources and linking these with outside experiences (guest speakers, field trips)

Output/outcome (Appendix 1 contd.)

- Listening and looking at pictures.
- Represent the story by drawing, storyboard, story map.
- Cloze procedure/quiz.
- Sequencing/rearranging sentences.
- Verbal response.
- Word-web/topic webs.
- Sentence completion.
- Writing frames.
- Record response on tape.
- Think - pair - share.

- Make response self-correcting where possible.