

Scoil Eoin Phóil

Special Education Needs and Inclusion Policy

Introductory Statement

The policies and procedures in this document are updated from those outlined in previous Learning Support Policies. These include changes we have made to conform with Department Guidelines, The Education Act (1998), Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act 2004), Learning Support Guidelines (DES 2000), and Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (DES 2017), Circular 0013/2017: Special Education Teacher Allocation and Circular 02/2005 and with our effort to provide appropriate education for children with Special Education Needs in an inclusive environment.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of our School.

Scoil Eoin Phóil seeks to ensure that the needs of all children – be they physical, emotional or academic- are accommodated and catered for in an inclusive environment. A positive ethos and learning environment are encouraged, where all pupils including those with special educational and additional needs, feel welcome and experience a sense of community and belonging. Scoil Eoin Phóil promotes the active engagement of each pupil in his/her learning and in the life of the school. We are committed to developing the pupils' academic, social, emotional and independent living skills with a determination to improve outcomes for all.

The following extract from Section 1 of Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN) defines a special education need as;
“a restriction in capacity to participate in and benefit from education due to an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition and cognate words shall be considered accordingly.”

Rationale

The rationale for having a policy is:

- ❖ to cater for the enrolment of children with special education needs in our school
- ❖ to comply with legislation and department circulars
- ❖ to update existing policy and to respond to changing circumstances in the school
- ❖ to document the provision of special needs support in the school

Aims

- ❖ to enable pupils of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education.
- ❖ To support the inclusion of children with special educational needs in our school
- ❖ to guide the implementation of the revised model for allocating special education teaching supports - Continuum of Support NEPS 2007 and Circular 0013/2017
- ❖ to outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to pupils with special educational needs

- ❖ to assist parent(s)/guardian(s) in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school
- ❖ to outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to supporting the learning of pupils with special educational needs
- ❖ to establish communication structures for the involvement of all partners in the education of pupils with special educational needs – home, school and outside agencies.
- ❖ to provide practical guidance for teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s) and other interested parties on the provision of effective learning support to pupils with special education needs including exceptionally able pupils.
- ❖ to enable staff to attend to the needs of children with special educational needs in line with current research and best practice.
- ❖ to develop staff expertise in supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- ❖ to ensure that special educational needs is not viewed in isolation but in the context of the whole school and community.

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies.

Prevention Strategies

- Differentiation of the curriculum by product, instruction, resources, time etc by the mainstream class teacher to cater for individual strengths and needs
- The implementation of agreed approaches by staff to language development and to teaching other aspects of the English programme i.e. Jolly Phonics, Aistear, Guided Reading using PM Readers, Oxford Reading Tree etc, Phonological and Phonemic Awareness, Whole School Spelling Policy, Peer Tutoring etc
- Agreed approaches in Mathematics- i.e. agreed language, methodologies, tables strategies, Problem solving strategies, Mental maths strategy etc
- The use of concrete materials as much as possible and as appropriate
- Class based early interventions by the class teacher focusing on individualised support where required.
- Specific programmes e.g. Building Bridges, Peer Tutoring etc
- School initiatives focusing on particular areas of Literacy i.e. oral language, writing genres and comprehension
- School initiatives focusing on particular areas of numeracy i.e. maths problem solving, computation, mental maths, tables
- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of the children in Infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Promotion of parental involvement through the attendance at induction meetings at the various class levels and through the arrangement of formal and informal parent/teacher meetings.

Early Intervention Strategies

Early intervention strategies may be provided by the class teacher and the Special Education Teacher in accordance with the Continuum of Support (Staged Approach) from NEPS.

Consultation and collaboration between the class teachers and the SET team should identify children who may need early intervention.

Early intervention strategies will include:

- active learning for all Junior and Senior Infant children with specific emphasis on oral language development, underpinned by the Aistear programme and the Primary language Curriculum.
- implementation of language programme for children with English as an additional language with the emphasis on basic vocabulary.
- in class support, team teaching, group work, individual support and withdrawal to support teaching room will be provided as appropriate and if it is in the child's best interest.
- differentiation by product, instruction, resource, time
- reduction in volume of written work
- strategic seating
- shared teaching in the classroom
- specific programmes e.g. Building Bridges, Peer Tutoring etc
- school initiatives focusing on particular areas of Literacy i.e. oral language, writing genres and comprehension
- school initiatives focusing on particular areas of numeracy i.e. maths problem solving, computation, mental maths, tables

Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of special educational needs in children.

In Scoil Eoin Phóil, we employ a **staged approach** to supporting pupils. The National Education Psychological Service's **Continuum of Support** provides the structure for this approach. The identification of educational needs is central. These include academic, social and emotional needs as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.

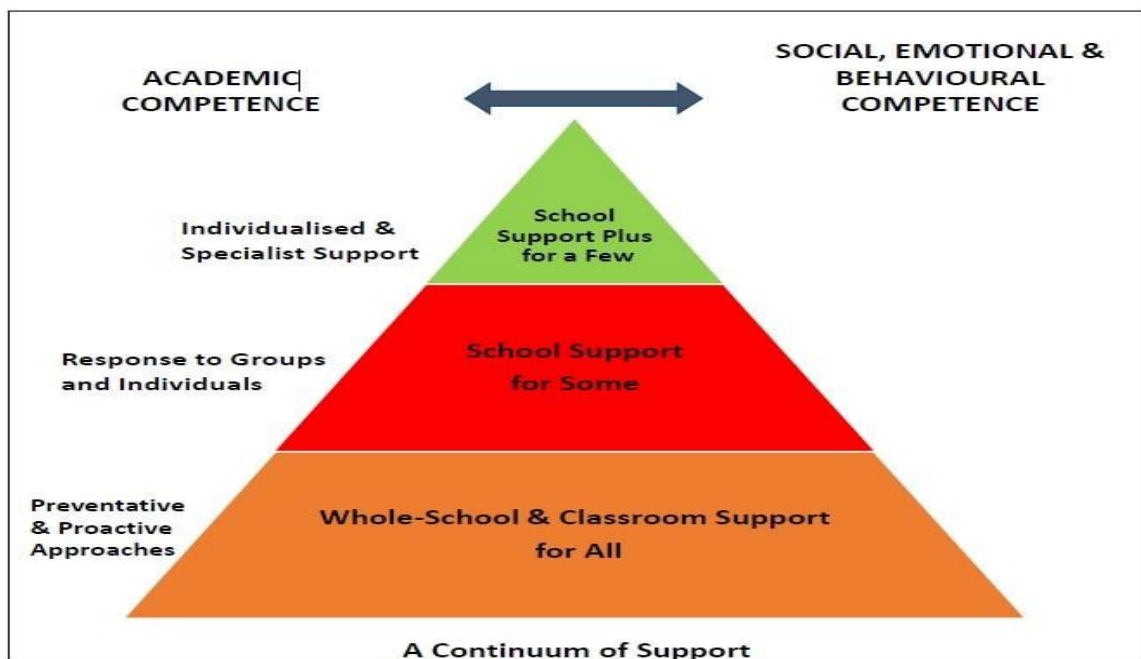
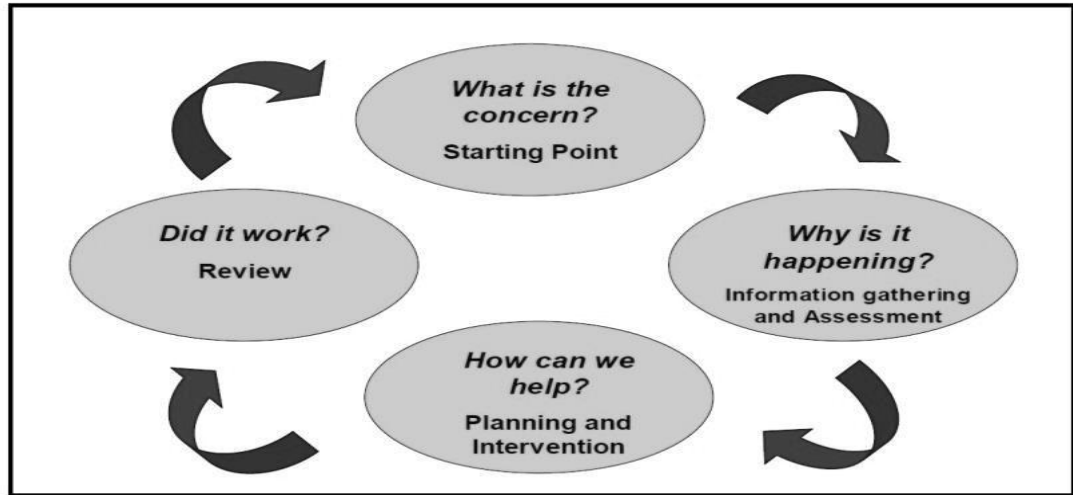
It is our policy that pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest level of support.

Continuum of Support

CF:

- **A Continuum Of Support 2007 NEPS**
- **Circular 0013/2017 (Special Education Teacher Allocation)**
- **Supporting Pupils with Special Education Needs in Mainstream Schools ((2017)**

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



Stage 1: Classroom Support for All

Where a class teacher or parent/guardian has concerns about a child, the teacher will:

- identify concerns regarding the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child using teacher observation, screening checklists (e.g. Dyslexia, ADHD, ADD, Dyspraxia, ASD, Behavioural), infant profiling (e.g. MIST), results of standardised tests (e.g. DPRT) etc
- commence the Student Support File with parental agreement

- draw up a short simple plan for extra help to be implemented within the classroom setting, in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management, using the Stage 1/Classroom Support templates.
- review the plan and liaise with parents on a regular basis dependent on the need weekly, monthly, termly.
- The SET will support the class teacher at Stage 1/Classroom Support through informal meetings.
- The SET and class teacher will meet to review the efficacy of the plan implemented to support the child
- If concerns remain after the review(s), the SET teacher supporting the class brings the matter to the SET team which reviews all the information at the SET team planning meetings
- If concerns remain after the review(s), then intervention at Stage 2 - School Support for Some will be implemented.

CF: Appendix 1 Classroom Support Process, Stage 1 from Continuum of Support

Stage 2: School Support -Support for Some

(Referral to Special Education Teacher)

Where the child has not made progress after classroom support interventions or where a child meets the criteria for Stage 2 intervention after Standardized testing, the child is put on Stage 2 School Support – Support for Some.

The *Student Support File* will be continued.

- Where Stage 2 intervention is considered necessary, the child is referred to the S.E.T for further diagnostic testing. Written parental permission is sought for this.
- In the event of a parent/guardian's reluctance or refusal to consent to further testing, the school makes every effort to inform the parent/guardian of the concerns of the school, as well as the benefits of supplementary teaching for the child. The school, however, recognizes that it is a parent(s)/guardian(s)' right to refuse the offer of this extra support. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to put this refusal in writing stating that they have been made aware of the concerns, have been offered further testing/support and that they do not wish their child to receive this supplementary support.
- The SET teacher and class teacher will collaborate with parent(s)/guardian(s) in drawing up a Student Support Plan
- The Student Support Plan will be implemented with supplementary activities in the class and at home
- The supplementary teaching will be reviewed with the SET, class teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s). If it is decided that supplementary teaching is to be reduced or discontinued, it is necessary to record this in the child's profile.
- If significant concerns remain after a period of instruction, interventions at Stage 3, School Support Plus will be implemented.
- **CF: Appendix 2: School Support Process: Stage 2 from the Continuum of Support.**

STAGE 3: SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS- Support For The Few

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

Stage 3: School Support Plus

- Where pupils continue to present with significant learning needs, the school, in collaboration with parent(s)/guardian(s), may formally recommend a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from specialists outside the school. These include psychologists, speech and language therapists, audiologists etc. Following the receipt of the relevant report, a learning programme (Student Support Plus Plan) will then be drawn up in consultation with the relevant specialist(s), S.E.T. teacher, class teacher and parent/guardian. This Student Support Plus Plan will be the subject of regular reviews.
- In the case of pupils identified at an early age as having very significant special educational needs, intervention at Stage 3 may be necessary on their entry to school. Parental consent will be sought.
- Assessments by the relevant specialists are facilitated in the school if necessary. The most appropriate setting is determined following discussion with the parent(s)/guardian(s), staff and specialists
- If parent(s)/guardian(s) have assessments carried out privately, their recommendations are given equal priority in relation to assessments commissioned by the school
- Specialist advice may also be sought from psychologists, speech and language therapists, audiologists, paediatricians etc. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be advised of the Assessment of Need process.

CF: Appendix 3: School Support Plus Process: Stage 3 from Continuum of Support

Preparation of Student Support Plan Plus

Where an assessment has been carried out and a diagnosis made, a Student Support Plan Plus will be prepared and implemented in accordance with EPSEN 2004. The SET with responsibility for the pupil co-ordinates the process.

The Student Support Plan Plus will contain

- ❖ strengths and needs of the pupil
- ❖ priority learning needs
- ❖ targets for each priority learning need
- ❖ methodologies/strategies used to deliver programme
- ❖ resources needed to implement the targets
- ❖ list of staff who will be involved in delivering the programme
- ❖ signature/s of parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers

- ❖ Personal Pupil Plan (where pupil has SNA access)
- ❖ date for review

The Student Support Plan Plus is in place from September to January. It is reviewed at the end of January and an updated support plan is put in place from February to June. The support plans are reviewed on an ongoing basis by the SET, class teacher, parent(s)/guardian(s) and SNA if applicable and new targets are set where appropriate. A copy of the Student Support Plan Plus is given to class teachers. A copy is also given to parent(s)/guardian(s).

Procedures for liaison with Outside Agencies

The Principal and/or SET will liaise with The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), The National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), The National Council for Special Education (NCSE), and the Special Educational Needs Organizer (SENO) and with other agencies e.g. Speech & Language Therapist (SALT), Autistic Spectrum Disorder Services etc. Class teachers will inform the Principal and SET of any correspondence or information received from outside agencies, parent(s)/guardian(s) etc. All documentation is to be collected and stored in the child's file. Copies of these documents are held by the Principal and the SET (See Data Protection Policy)

Referral for Assessment

When a pupil is to be referred for assessment

- ❖ Parental consent is sought
- ❖ Necessary information is gathered from parent(s)/guardian(s)/class teachers/SNA and a referral form is completed and forwarded to the relevant agency by SET

NEPS assessments are school based and the necessary arrangements are made to facilitate the pupil and the psychologist.

The school has access to a limited number of assessments per year based on enrolment. This stands at 2 to 3 assessments based on our current enrolment.

After assessment, the parent(s)/guardian(s), the SET and the class teacher meet with the specialist to discuss the report and any intervention which may follow. Application is made to the SENO for the necessary resources as recommended e.g. assistive technology.

CF: Scoil Eoin Phóil: Assessment Policy

Criteria for access to Special Education Teaching.

'Those with the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support'

In determining eligibility for learning support teaching, priority will be given to;

- pupils whose achievement is at or below the 10th percentile on standardised tests of reading or mathematics.
- pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30th percentile) on standardised assessments in literacy and/or Maths and who continue to experience difficulty, despite

- interventions at Classroom Support level of the Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Student Support Plan and recorded interventions in it.
- pupils who have a psychological report recommending that learning support provision be provided.

The SET team will identify pupils in the following categories who require support teaching:

- pupils with complex special educational needs – e.g. ASD, dyspraxia, an assessed syndrome etc
- pupils with a specific learning difficulty –dyslexia, dyscalculia etc
- pupils with a physical impairment – visual, auditory etc
- pupils with social, emotional, and/or behavioural needs where support is deemed necessary
- pupils identified as exceptionally able, where there are sufficient resources to cater for this category. Gifted pupils (those scoring at/above the 99th percentile (and the 98th percentile dependant on numbers) in English and/or 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 open a Support Plan and record the interventions in it.
- pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) i.e. pupils who are enrolled without any English or pupils whose English needs further support.

It is a requirement that Stage 1: Classroom Support for All must be in place and interventions recorded in it for these pupils to be considered.

Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

- At the end of each instructional block/term, the progress of each child who is in receipt of support teaching will be evaluated following consultation with the child’s class teacher and where appropriate, the child’s parent(s)/guardian(s)
- A decision will be made regarding their continued level of support and revised targets will be set in their Support Plan
- Supplementary support may be discontinued if satisfactory progress has been made and targets have been met.
- Supplementary teaching may be discontinued where the pupil is now performing above the STEN/percentile set down in the selection criteria for receiving support; however, if both the class teacher and SET feel that continued supplementary teaching is necessary to maintain this standard, this will be offered if places are available in the appropriate group.
- The Discontinued Learning Support form is placed in the relevant section of the School Assessment Folder to notify the subsequent class teacher that a pupil had attended learning support previously. The class teacher is advised to monitor the pupil’s progress carefully and to communicate any concerns to the SET.
- On occasion, a child may need to be withdrawn again for an additional period of supplementary teaching.

School Screening/Testing

The following procedure for whole school testing is in place.

Formal Assessment:

Appendix 1: Timetable of Standardized and Screening Tests

Test	Class	When Administered?	Who Administers?
B.I.A.P./BURY	Junior Infants	April	SET Team and Teacher
DELT –(S)	Senior Infants or as necessary	April/May	SET Team and Class Teacher
M.I.S.T.	Senior Infants	Before Easter	SET Team and Class Teacher
NNRIT	1 st	February	SET Team and Class Teacher
DPRT	1 st – 6 th	May	Class Teacher
DPST	1 st – 6 th	May	Class Teacher
SIGMA T	1 st – 6 th	Early June	Class Teacher and SET teacher working with* Maths group being withdrawn
SPAR	1 st – 6 th	May	Class Teacher
Drumcondra Gaeilge	1 st – 6 th	May	Class Teacher

Completed tests booklets are kept for 1 year except in the case of children who attend S.E.T. These will be kept until they are 25 years old.

Alltest results are kept until children are 25 years old.

Screening Tests

Screening facilitates the early identification of learning difficulties and allows for effective communication with the child's parents and enables the teacher/school to organize appropriate support.

Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)

Some sections are administered to Junior Infants in March/April. The S.E.T. team helps to administer the test with the class teacher. Results are used to support the learning needs

of the children and to inform future teaching. Results are communicated to parents where there is a concern. Results and test materials are filed in SEN coordinator's room.

Bury Infant Check

This includes language, learning styles, memory, number and perceptual motor skills.

Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)

This is administrated in Senior Infants each year. Results are used by the class teacher to support the learning needs of pupils and to inform future teaching. Results are communicated to parents, where the teacher has a concern about a pupil's progress. The MIST programme, Forward Together, may be recommended for pupils who obtain scores below the threshold. Parents will be encouraged to use the Forward Together programme at home.

Results and test booklets are filed in the SEN coordinator's room. The results are inputted on Aladdin.

New Non Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)

The NNRIT is administrated in February to all pupils in 1st class. Results are communicated to parents, where necessary. The test is administrated and corrected by the SET. Results and test booklets are filed in the SEN coordinator's room. The results are inputted on Aladdin.

DTEL-(S) Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy –(Screening)

The DTEL- Screening is designed to identify pupils who may be at risk of reading difficulties so that, if needed, further diagnostic assessment and targeted instruction can be implemented. It assesses two aspects of reading: word recognition and comprehension

SPAR Reading Test:

Senior Infants – 6th Class. This test is administrated and corrected by the class teacher. The SET/class teacher communicates these scores to all parents of pupils who receive additional support and also where deemed necessary. Results and test materials are filed in SEN coordinator's room.

Dyslexia Screening Test

This test is designed to give an indication of possible dyslexia difficulties. The test is administered where the class teacher and SEN teacher suspect a child has dyslexia tendencies. Parents will be consulted. No actual diagnosis is given. Depending on the outcome, a psychological assessment with NEPS or another agency may be sought. Parents will be informed at all stages of the process. Results of the test will be placed in the child's file in the SEN coordinator's room.

E.L.T.

The ELT is administered to pupils in Junior Infants who have been recommended by their class teacher for testing.

Diagnostic Testing

Diagnostic tests play an important role in identifying pupils with learning difficulties. The S.E.T. team and mainstream teachers are involved in selecting children for diagnostic testing. The S.E.T. team will administer the tests. The results of the assessments will inform future learning plans.

At times, it may be necessary to consult the NEPS psychologist about diagnostic test results and the SEN coordinator and/or the Principal will arrange this.

YARC – York Assessment of Reading and Comprehension 5 – 11

This diagnostic test may be used where parents seek an Irish exemption for their child but there is no report from an outside agency indicating an exemption is warranted.

Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA) – can also be used for Irish exemption.

Diagnostic Spelling Analysis (DSA) – can also be used for Irish exemption.

DTEL-(D) Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy – Diagnostic

This test is recommended for children who have attained low scores on the DTEL-(S). It is divided into 3 parts – Phonological Awareness, Phonological Working Memory and Knowledge of Letters and Letter Sounds.

RAIN Sentence Reading Test

Jackson Phonics

Early Literacy Test

MALT(Maths)

Collaboration and Communication

- The SET team meets at the beginning of the academic year to examine test results, for results analysis, time-tabling and pupil allocation.
- The SET team meet every second Friday afternoon for a one-hour progress meeting.
- The SET team meets at the end of each quarter/term to review current practice and plan for the next quarter/term.
- S.E.T. team meets the class teacher on a formal basis at the beginning of the year and once during each term thereafter. It may be necessary to meet more often.
- The class teacher meets with parent(s)/guardian(s) initially to discuss concerns and to outline supports available.
- The SET team meets parent(s)/guardian(s) for Student Support Plan meetings. These meetings are held in October and January.
- Formal Parent/Teacher meetings are held in December and June. The SET team is also available to meet parent(s)/guardian(s) on request outside of these times.
- The SET liaises with parent(s)/guardian(s) of children receiving supplementary support to demonstrate methodologies that could be useful to further the child's learning at home.
- An opportunity is given to discuss the end of year report with parent(s)/guardian(s).

Deployment of Staff

Scoil Eoin Phóil has 4 Special Education Teachers (S.E.T)

- ❖ The Principal deploys staff according to the overall SEN requirements of the school. Additional teaching support may be provided via in class support, team teaching, small group situations either within the classroom or by withdrawal to S.E.T. room. Some pupils, however, may require intensive one to one teaching and support for periods of time.
- ❖ Scoil Eoin Phóil has 2 Special Needs Assistants. Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) are allocated to pupils because of assessed needs and are reviewed by the SENO.

SNAs offer practical support and assistance in accordance with the care needs of the child. They support the pupils in class, at recreational activities and out of school activities. Their role is agreed in collaboration with the Principal, the class teacher and the SET

Timetabling of Supplementary Teaching

When designing timetables, the following points are taken into account:

- all staff needs to be as flexible as possible
- timetables are reviewed regular
- the supplementary teaching given to children is, as far as possible, in addition to the regular class programme in English and Maths.
- co-teaching, where two teachers work together to plan, instruct and assess the same group of pupils in the same classroom can operate during English and Maths times. If it is deemed more beneficial, however, to withdraw a group from the class, this may be done.
- in so far as is practicable, the pupil should not miss out on the same subject area each time they attend supplementary teaching.
- the SET team will review the overall school SET timetable at the end of each term.
- where a child who is taken on an individual basis is absent, the SET teacher will access the priority list for support

Record Keeping

- Class teachers will keep a record of teacher designed tests, end of term tests and various checklists in the Class Assessment Folder
- Copy of the Standardised Test Results are kept in the School Assessment folder
- Continuum of Support documents for children with special educational needs will be kept in the Classroom Assessment folder in the classroom.
- End of Year school reports are issued to parent(s)/guardian(s) in June of each year. These are available on Aladdin under the Class setting.
- SET teachers maintain a folder of their schemes/Pupil Plans. Monthly reports are maintained to outline the work completed with groups and with individual children.
- Personal Pupil Plans (PPP) for children with SNA access will be kept in the child's file in the classroom
- Psychological Reports that are active are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Principal's office. A copy of the report is placed in the child's file in the SET room. A synopsis of the child's assessment report is given to the class teacher for the School Assessment folder
- A ring binder folder is maintained for each pupil who avails of supplementary teaching. This folder is kept in the relevant SET room.

This folder contains:

- Pupil Profile Page – i.e. test results.

- Continuum of support Plans –IEP/Pupil Support Plan Plus, IPLP / Pupil Support Plan
 - Completed test booklets from current and previous years
 - Records of meetings with parents
 - Attendance permission forms.
 - Where a child has access to an SNA, documents relating to this access may also be part of the file – behaviour charts etc.
- A file is kept on each child which contains assessments carried out by agencies and relevant reports e.g., Medical, Psychological, Psychiatric, Speech and Language reports, and Occupational Therapy reports. This is stored in the locked filing cabinet in Room 17.
A synopsis is made of all external reports. The original synopsis is kept in a folder in the locked filing cabinet in the SET Coordinator’s room. A copy of the synopsis is placed in each pupil’s file. A copy is placed in the relevant class section of the School Assessment Folder in the classroom.
 - An IEP/ Student Support Plan Plus is written for all pupils who are taken individually. An I.P.L.P/Student Support Plan is written for all other children attending SET in a group.

Health and Safety/ Child Protection

Each staff member and pupil are entitled to a safe, secure working environment and to be treated with respect. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of each pupil with additional needs. When a child with additional needs is enrolled, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports which the child needs are in place as soon as possible. Staff will be made aware of any potential risks and, where necessary, individual plans will be devised and implemented.

- Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET should collect and return children to their classrooms.
- Each SET room has a door with a class panel. It is the responsibility of the SET to ensure that both he/she and the pupil are visible through the glass panel of the door. **CF: One to One Teaching Policy**
- A child who has access to an SNA may be withdrawn by the SNA if a plan is in place agreed with the class teacher.
- Each SET maintains an attendance register for each child who is withdrawn.

Staff Training:

Staff attends in-service as appropriate. The SET teachers attend courses organised by the Special Education Support Service (SESS). The SET teachers are members of ILSA and IATSE and may attend the annual conferences of these associations. Staff is facilitated to share information from courses at staff meetings and at SET meetings.

Resources

A bank of resource material is available to all staff and new materials are evaluated and purchased regularly.

A central stock of relevant reading material and resource material is stored in the teachers' library. An inventory is updated by the S.E.T. post holder

Transfer to post-primary school

Contact is made with the Special Education Team in the post primary school. In May each year, the SEN co-ordinator from Coláiste Chiaráin or other relevant school meets with the members of the S.E.T. who worked with the 6th class pupils. Results of standardised tests, school reports and reports from outside agencies are forwarded to the school once confirmation of enrolment has been received.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal:

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of SEN policy in the school. The Principal should:

- assign staff to teaching roles including Special Education Teaching roles
 - implement and monitor the school's Special Needs Policy
 - ensure that whole school procedures are in place to facilitate communication among parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, pupils and external agencies/professionals
 - ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored consistently
 - assign responsibility for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher
 - oversee a whole school assessment and screening programme
 - allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with class teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s)
 - ensure all school staff are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
 - facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with additional needs
 - liaises with outside agencies e.g. psychologist, speech and language therapists, SENO, DES etc in relation to the provision of services such as SNA access, assistive technology etc.
 - facilitates the renewing and updating of resources.
 - liaises with post holder with responsibility for Special Education Needs in the school
 - meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding any concerns about their child
- CF: Learning Support Guidelines pp 38 – 42**

The Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of all pupils in her/his class including those attending supplementary support. In supporting the implementation of the school policy on SEN, the class teacher should:

- implement teaching programmes and methodologies which optimise the learning of all pupils and to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- administer and correct standardised tests in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SET team to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) 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
- open a Student Support File once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support and develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support before school support is implemented
- meet with Special Education Teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s) and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus and who require an Individual Education Plan
- meet regularly with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff to review Student Support Plans
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- adjust the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with special educational needs within the class(es) to which they are assigned prepare a Personal Pupil Plan for relevant children in collaboration with SNA and SET
- liaise with and seek advice from the SENO
- Consult with S.E.T before parent/teacher meetings.
- Differentiate for child/ren with exceptional abilities. C/f App 1 of Exceptionally Able Students: Guidelines for Teachers NCCA 2007
- Monitor the progress of pupils discontinued in Learning Support

The Role of the Special Education Teacher (S.E.T)

The SET teacher should:

- familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs
- Implement the selection criteria for supplementary teaching
- collaboratively develop Student Support Files for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s) and other staff
- meet with class teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s) and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- Regularly meet with class teachers and relevant staff to review Student Support Plans.
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of supplementary teaching
- provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis
- maintain weekly/fortnightly plan.
- implement the selection criteria for supplementary teaching
- co-ordinate the administration of standardised testing of all pupils from Junior Infants to 6th class.
- analyse the results of these tests and seek class teachers' views and identify areas of need.
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the outcomes
- meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- consult with parent(s)/guardian(s) and class teacher re IEP's Student Support Plan Plus and IPLP's Student Support Plan
- 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 a receiving school when a child with additional needs leaves the school once a transfer letter has been received
- obtain written permission from parent(s)/guardian(s) to administer standardised and diagnostic tests to pupils. This will be requested on entry to school c/f Parental Consent Form re testing.
- obtain written parental consent for all pupils selected for supplementary testing.
- meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) of pupils receiving supplementary teaching
- consult with parent(s)/guardian(s) and class teacher re IEP's Student Support Plan Plus and IPLP's Student Support Plan
- co-ordinate the administration of standardised testing of all pupils from Junior Infants to 6th class.
- analyse the results of these tests and seek class teachers' views and identify areas of need.
- carry out diagnostic tests where appropriate and implement supplementary teaching following the school's selection criteria.
- engage in co-teaching where best suited to maximising the support for all pupils – in particular those with literacy and numeracy difficulties.
- liaise with external agencies such as psychologists to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.

- co-ordinate and assist in implementing specific strategies/programmes throughout the school e.g. Socially Speaking, Building Bridges, Peer Tutoring, etc..
- work daily with groups of children who are withdrawn from class or who are receiving in-class support.
- celebrate the diversity of cultures in our school
- attend conferences/workshops and seminars relating to the teaching of pupils with special education needs

The Special Education Teacher/Team will also assist in:

- developing and implementing whole school strategies to enhance early learning and prevent learning difficulties by promoting phonological awareness e.g. Jolly Phonics, spelling strategies, comprehension strategies, circulating lists of basic sight vocabulary, simple checklists on reading readiness etc..
- developing the Special Education teaching policy within the school
- supporting class teachers with pupils experiencing learning difficulties
- evaluating and purchasing appropriate resources
- liaising with/advising Principal teacher
- consulting with school staff as a group re Special Education Policy within the school
- collaborating with class teacher in planning schemes of work for both in class and withdrawal groups

The Role of the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

The school acknowledges the role of parent(s)/guardian(s) as primary educators and values their contribution to their child's learning. Collaboration and sharing of information between home and school are essential elements of our Special Education Needs Policy.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should

- inform the Principal/class teacher if they have concerns about their child's progress in school
- share any information, reports or pending reports from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development.
- support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning
- attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage
- collaborate with the Special Education Teacher and class teacher in drawing up, implementing and reviewing the Student Support Plan Plus for their child.

The Role of Special Needs Assistant

The SNA carries out duties according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the Principal/class teachers.

The S.N.A. will:

- address the care needs of the SEN pupils to whom they have been assigned. (Circular 0030/2014 and Circular 0030/2020). The SNA should support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum
- contributes to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils
- supports learning and teaching in the classroom
- attends, where possible, training courses/workshops to upskill
- attends Student Support Plan Plus meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- ensures the safety of their assigned pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- maintains a record of support provided to the pupil in their care
- accompanies the pupil to supplementary lessons where necessary

The Role of the Pupils

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

- be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets
- become familiar with the targets that have been set for them
- develop ‘ownership’ of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning
- contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

The Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on Special Education Needs. It ensures compliance with Section 2 of EPSEN Act 2004 – “A child with SEN shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs, unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this act **or** the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

The Board of Management should:

- ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) of pupils with special education needs are informed and consulted regarding their child’s education
- co-operate with the National Council for Special Education.
- ensure that all relevant staff of the school are aware of the special education needs of pupils and the importance of identifying these pupils.

- develop an awareness among pupils of the requirements of persons with special needs and facilitate an inclusive atmosphere in the school
- oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on special education needs.
- ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for all Special Education Teachers.
- provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of support teaching.
- support the professional development of the staff

Review of Policy

A meeting will be held in the last term of each year between the Principal and the Special Education Team in order to address issues relating to Special Education in the school and to review and update the policy as necessary.

Communication of the Policy

This policy will be communicated to all staff and parent(s)/guardian(s) via the school website.

There will be regular input from the SET team at staff meetings on the procedures in the policy.

Relevance to other policies

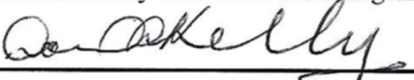
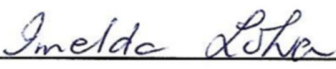
This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Scoil Eoin Phóil's Assessment Policy
- Scoil Eoin Phóil's Psychological Assessment Policy
- Learning Support Guidelines.
- Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (Department of Education & Skills)
- Circular 30/2014 Special Needs Assistants
- Circular 13/2017 Special Educational Needs – New Model
- Circular 0030/2020 Special Needs Assistant allocation in for mainstream classes in Primary Schools
- <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Special-Education/a-new-model-for-allocating-special-education-teachers-to-mainstream-schools.pdf>
- FAQs: see below

Useful Websites

- Department of Education & Skills: www.education.ie
- National Council for Special Education: www.ncse.ie
- National Council for Curriculum Assessment: www.ncca.ie
- Health Service Executive: www.hse.ie

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 29/3/2021
Signed  Date 29/3/2021
Chairperson
Signed  Date 29/3/2021
Principal

FAQs To Accompany Special Education Needs Policy

1. What is SEN?

SEN means special educational needs. Under the new model of allocation, the term special educational needs is broad and includes children who have difficulty attaining literacy and/or numeracy skills, children with fine or gross motor skills in so far as they impact on the children's progress, children who have English as an additional language (if that impacts on their progress) and children who have diagnosed disabilities. The new model of allocation for SEN teaching provides for appropriate teaching for these children using what is called a staged approach.

2. What do you mean by a staged approach?

We take a step-by-step approach to understanding and supporting children who are presenting with a special educational need. There are three main stages and they are outlined in the policy document under the heading Continuum of Support. The Continuum of Support is developed by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and is used in all primary schools.

3. Who decides which teacher works with my child? It is the Principal's responsibility to allocate teachers to classes. The Principal is mindful of the needs of our pupils and the particular strengths and interests of our teachers.

4. Who has access to my child's reports?

Professional reports are often provided to the Principal to assist us in planning appropriately for your child. The reports are confidential and are only shared with teachers of your child.

5. What is Aladdin?

Is it secure? Aladdin is our Information Management System. It is cloud based and secure. It is GDPR compliant (data protection regulations). Teachers only have access to records for pupils in their current class.

6. What is an SNA?

SNA is a Special Needs Assistant who is employed to assist with the care needs of a specific child or children while in the care of the school. The allocation of SNAs is governed by DES Circular 30/2014.

7. What is a Personal Pupil Plan?

A Personal Pupil Plan outlines a pupil's special care needs and shows how the SNA will be deployed to assist the pupil. The plan is developed with the parents and teachers of a pupil, and refers to the pupil's support plan (based on the Continuum of Support).

8. Can my child have support from an SNA?

If your child has a disability and has care needs please talk to the Principal to discuss an application for SNA access.

9. What is NEPS?

NEPS is the National Educational Psychological Service and is a service of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and aims to support the personal, social and educational development of all children through the application of psychological theory and practice in education. It has particular regard for children with special educational needs.

10. What is NCSE?

The National Council for Special Education. It was set up to improve the delivery of education services to persons with special education needs. The NCSE is responsible for the allocation of teaching supports and SNAs to support children with special education needs. This is organised locally through Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs).

11. What is HSE and why is it involved in schools?

The HSE is the Health Service Executive and part of its duties concern the care and welfare of children. The HSE provides services to children through its Early Intervention Teams, its School Age Teams, its Speech & Language and Occupational Therapy services etc. The HSE also offers vision and hearing screening to pupils in our school.

12. What is a screening measure or test?

Screening tests are easy to administer, contain relatively few items, and can be completed in a relatively brief time, sometimes only a few minutes per child. They can be paper and pencil tests, rating scales, checklists or observations of skills/abilities. They are used to

alert the school to a possible problem and can be followed up with more in-depth assessment.

13.What is a diagnostic test?

A diagnostic test or assessment can provide a profile of a pupil's strengths and weaknesses and can help the teachers develop appropriate teaching plans for the pupil. These plans form part of the Student Support Plan.

14.What is a STEN score?

Basically, a STEN score means a score out of ten. It is used as a marker to compare children's results on a standardised test with other children who took the same test. About 68% of children score between 4 and 7 as this is the average range.

15.What is a percentile score on a test?

A percentile score compares a child's test score with other children who took the same test. For example, a child who scores the 60th percentile has done better on the test than children who score 59th percentile or below on the same test. Standardised tests give teachers norms to compare scores with so that we know how children score compared to other children in Ireland taking the same test.

16.What is EAL?

EAL means English as an Additional Language. Teaching supports are provided to children who have English as an Additional Language in so far as it impacts on their educational progress. Many of our pupils who have English as an Additional Language have welldeveloped literacy and numeracy skills which transfer into their learning of English.

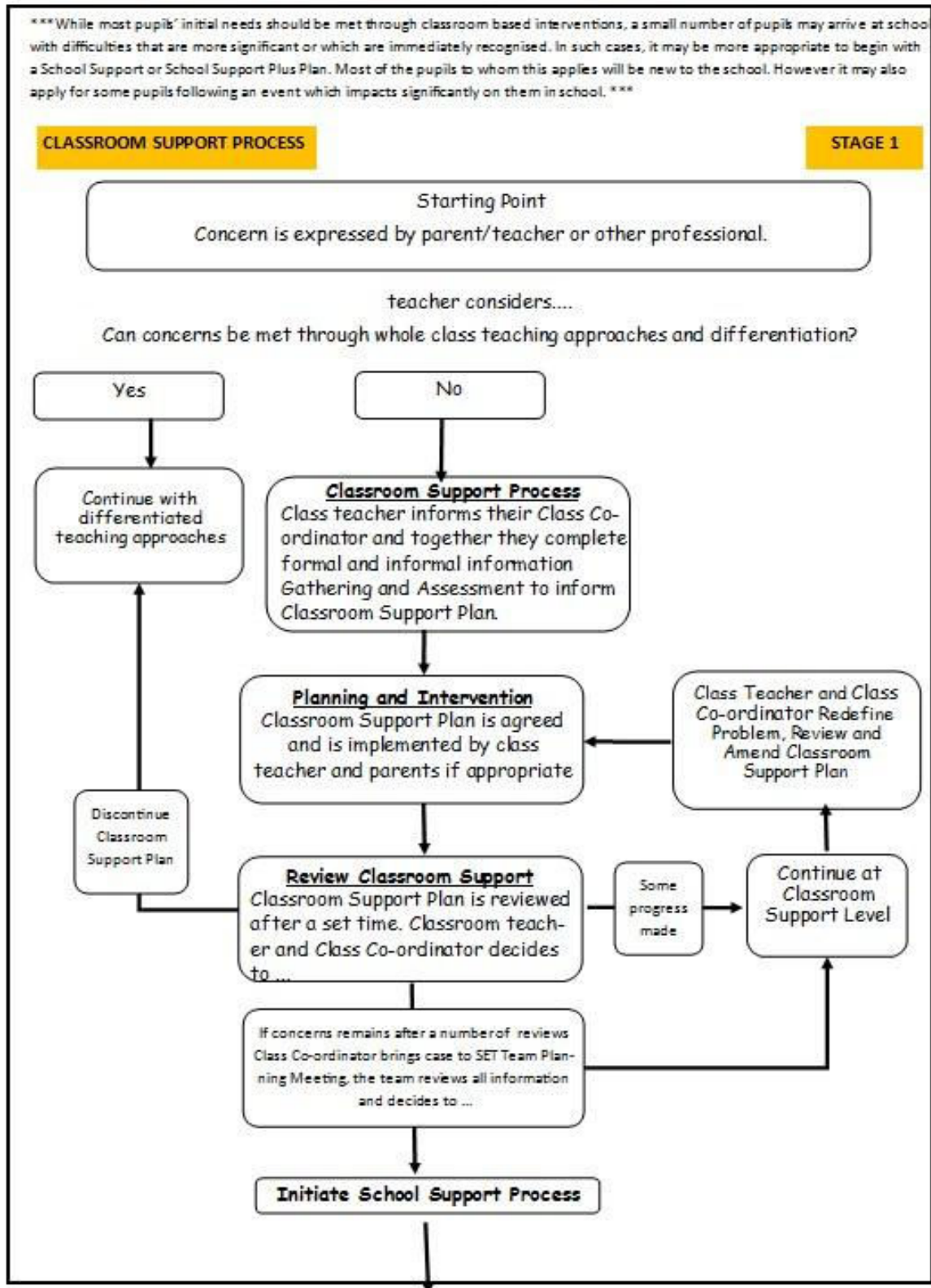
17.What is Aistear?

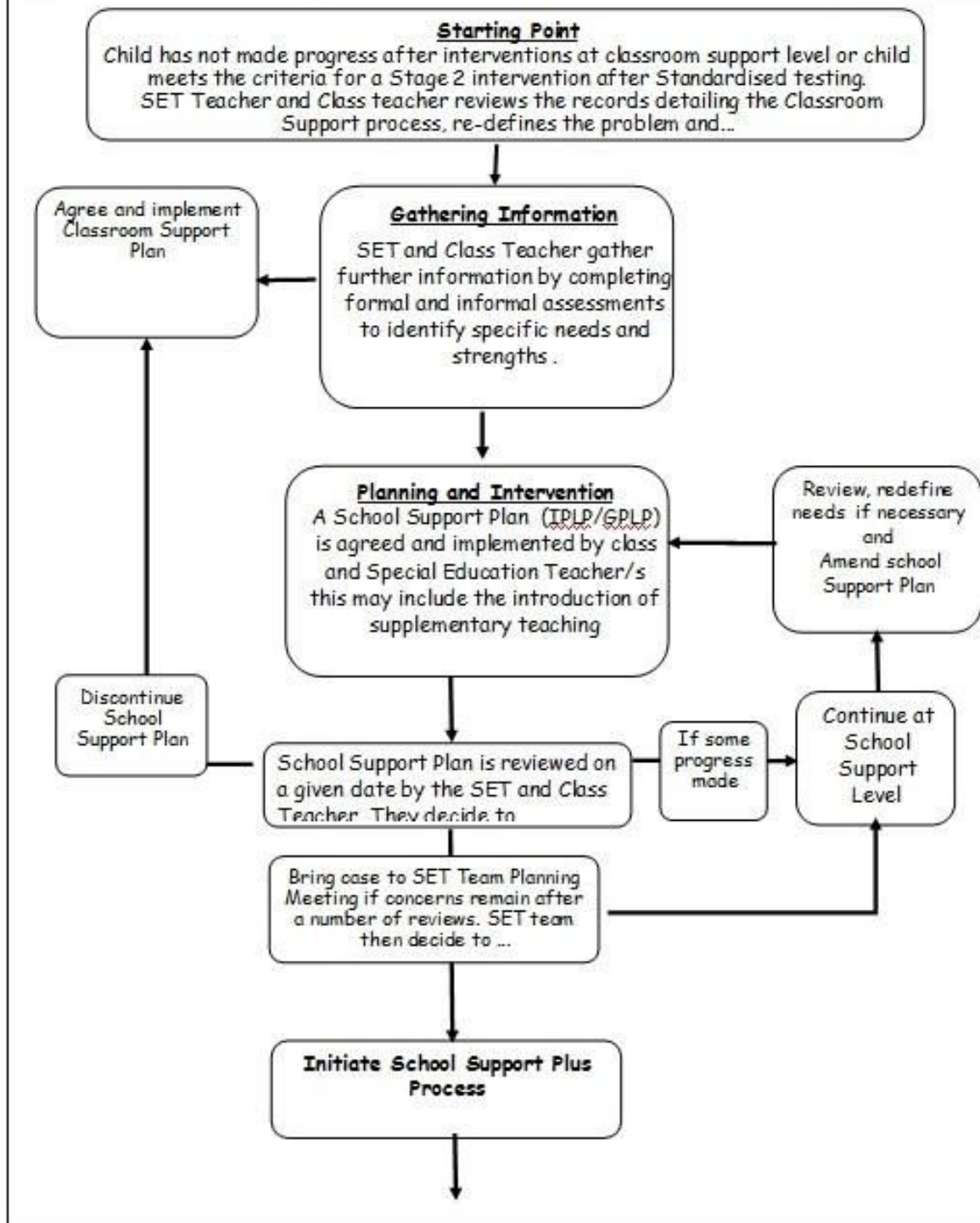
Aistear is part of the National Curriculum framework for early childhood education. In our school, Aistear takes the form of structured play-based learning around chosen themes.

18.What is Guided Reading?

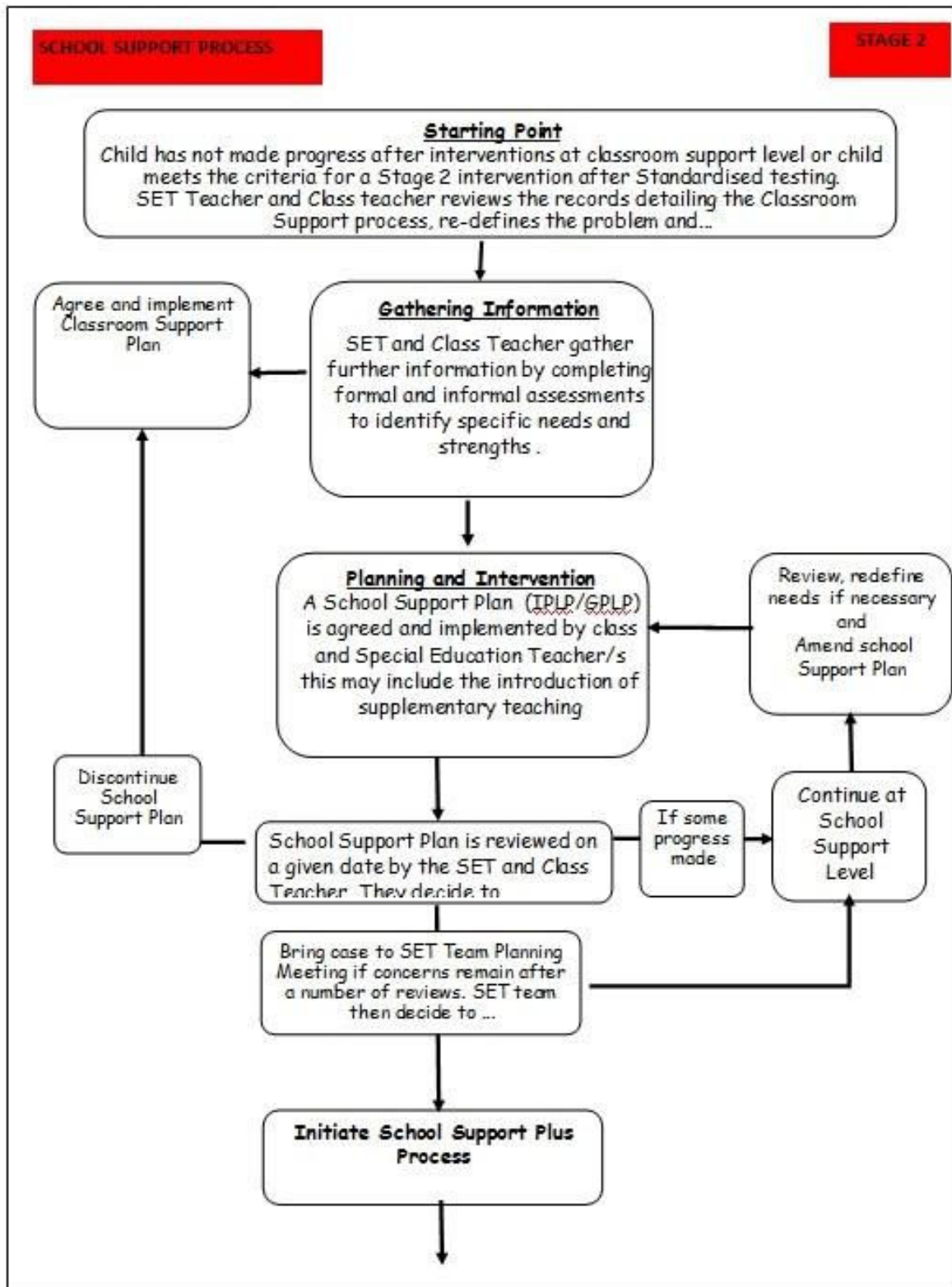
Guided reading is an instructional approach that involves a teacher working with a small group of students who demonstrate similar reading skills and can all read similar levels of texts.

Appendix I Classroom Support Process: Stage 1 from Continuum of Support





Appendix 2
 School Support Process: Stage 2 from Continuum of Support



Appendix 3
 School Support Plus Process: Stage 3 from Continuum of Support

