

Special Educational Needs Policy

School Name: St Manchans N. S, Mohill, Co. Leitrim

Date: September 2023

Title: Special Educational Needs Policy

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the SEN staff and the Principal of St Manchans National School, Mohill in September 2021. This policy is updated with the following considerations in mind:

- The General Allocation Model
- The opening of a new class for pupils with Autism.
- Changes in our practice in recent years with a greater focus on in-class/whole-class support and a reduction in model of withdrawing children for learning support.
- A perceived increase in social/emotional difficulties among pupils.
- Our ongoing commitment to ensuring that pupils experiencing learning/social/emotional difficulties receive the support that they need insofar as we can provide it

Rationale

The rationale for this policy is to ensure compliance with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000) and fulfil DES circular 0013/17 -Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and new 2017 Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools).

Aims of SEN Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.

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

- identify additional needs that our pupils may have
- allocate resources to effectively meet these needs
- divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs
- track, monitor, review and report on the progress of children with additional needs
- communicate information between the SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians

Guiding Principles of SEN Policy:

- All children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all of our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.
- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines. Support will be offered taking into account the allocation available to the school and the appropriateness of the support in meeting the needs of the child.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support

Inclusion:

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy, aims to enable children with SEN, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The following practical steps are in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom:

- SPHE classes
- Whole school events such as plays, assemblies
- Transition programmes
- Core curricular programmes based on child's abilities
- Wellbeing programmes- Weaving Well being
- Regulation stations
- Peered tutoring – Senior classes
- Aistear
- Drama
- P.E.
- Visual Art
- Religion
- SESE – where appropriate.

As far as possible, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience when going for inclusion. We believe that meaningful inclusion takes place when all children involved are learning at their own level.

Identification of Additional Needs of Pupils

Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, - sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:

Stage 1 Classroom Support

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

Classroom Support

The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.

A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.

This is informed by:

- Parental consultation
- Teacher observation records
- Teacher-designed measures/assessments
- Basic needs checklist *
- Learning environment checklist*
- Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist
- Literacy and numeracy tests
- Screening tests of language skills

A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

School Support

At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:

- Teacher observation records
- Teacher-designed measures/assessments
- Parent and pupil interviews
- Learning environment checklist
- Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy
- Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures
- Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition.

A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

Stage 3 School Support Plus

If a pupil's special educational needs are **severe and/or persistent**, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. Where a pupil has a diagnosis/report from an outside agency, recommendations in the report will be considered in deciding what supports are offered. However, within the school, we may not always be able to offer the supports recommended. Also, we may not always feel that the recommendations are borne out by the evidence we have regarding a pupil. We retain the right to offer what we feel is the most appropriate intervention for each pupil, taking into account evidence from teachers, parents and any other agencies that may be involved. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of any intervention

Information Gathering and Assessment

A useful step in identifying pupils who may need learning support in English or Mathematics is for the class teacher to administer one or more screening measures. The screening measures that are administered depend on the age and stage of development of the pupils concerned but the following will be administered annually:

- MIST in Senior infants in March
- Drumcondra test of early Numeracy and Literacy in May and, where necessary, in Junior Infants, BIAP.
- Children in 1st- 6th class will be tested using the Micra-T and Sigma T in the last term to provide a reading age which can be used to inform class teaching and literacy /Numeracy interventions.
- The NNRIT test is used in 1st and 5th.

*Sometimes children may be included for support based on a teacher's experience and insight or where there are exceptional circumstances such as difficult home circumstances, ongoing poor performance not flagged in standardized tests, difficulties with processing etc.

Inventory of Test Materials:

Screening Tests

- Benchmarking Kit for PM Plus
- Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)
- Maths Trackers
- Drumcondra Maths/English
- Micra-T
- New Non- Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)
- Dyslexia Screening Test
- Maths assessment tests related to classroom schemes
- Sound Linkage – Phonological Awareness test
- Sigma T

Diagnostic Tests

In our school the following tests are available for administration:

- Jackson Phonics Tests
- Aston Index
- Quest Literacy and Maths tests
- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
- NNRIT
- Single Word Spelling Test
- MALT

Use is made of checklists, teacher designed tasks, Dolch lists etc

Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies

Our strategies for supporting the needs of children:

- Implementation of early intervention programmes in the early primary classes as an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. These programmes:
 - Include a strong emphasis on oral language laying the foundation for meaningful reading.
 - Emphasis on phonological awareness.
 - Sometimes involve small group teaching.
- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
 - Writing Genre
 - Word Attack Skills
 - Whole school planning.
- Peer Assisted Learning
- Team Teaching
- Aistear in Junior and Senior Infants
- Social skills groups
- Weaving Wellbeing
- Withdrawing individuals/groups
- Regulation stations – Brain Calm, Sensory room and sensory path.

Each year we plan to use as many of the above listed interventions as we can resource and have time to provide. We may be in a position to introduce other interventions as our new model evolves or we may find that we have to reduce our interventions – this will depend on the needs of the children.

We also encourage

- Close collaboration and consultation between all teachers and the SET team.
- Promotion of literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read)
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. Mental Maths
- Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g. Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents.

Allocation of Resources

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with SEN(Primary Guidelines P.19 & 20)

Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests). Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
Action 2: Setting targets	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	Cross-reference the needs of pupils at school support and school support plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place. Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At whole-school and classroom support level by all teachers • At the school support and school support plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers.

Once a pupil's needs have been identified, where they have been listed as Stage2/3, Special Education Teachers (SETs) are deployed to address these needs as required. (Children at Stage 1 will have receive in-class support from their teacher who may seek advice/recommendations from the SET). We deploy SETs in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet pupils' needs. We aim to strike a balance between in-class support, group and individual support while ensuring that the needs of children with additional needs are met inclusively.

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

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

In our school there is constant communication between mainstream teachers and SETs. Support plan reviews will take place annually in February.

The role of the liaison teacher will be

- To collect the lists from his/her class.
- To consult with the teacher on the needs of the children who are at stages 1, 2 or 3 on the continuum
- To report back to the SET team
- Support the class teacher in creating a Student Support File once additional support is implemented
- Support the class teacher in the writing of classroom support plans

In practice in our SET team, the teacher involved in supporting the target contributes to the support plan. A child's support plan may have input from all SETs if he/she has targets in literacy, numeracy, behaviour social skills etc.

The team will then cross-reference the needs of pupils at School Support and School Support Plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping, to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches and how these needs can best be met by the skill set of the team

SELECTION PROCESS FOR ALLOCATING ADDITIONAL TEACHING SUPPORT

Stage 3 School Support Plus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children with identified complex needs by an external professional such as a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disability • Hearing Impairment • Visual Impairment • Emotional Disturbance • Moderate General Learning Disability • Severe/Profound General Learning Disability • Autistic Spectrum Disorder • Assessed Syndrome • Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment • Multiple disabilities 2. Prevention and Early Intervention Programme e.g Literacy Lift Off, Whole Class comprehension, Team teaching. 3. Children from Senior Infants who score below 50% on the Drumcondra Early Literacy and identified at risk in the MIST assessment. 4. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in Literacy Standardised Tests 5. Children with an identified need assessed by external professionals on or below the 30th percentile in literacy such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 5. Social/Emotional difficulties 6. Children on or under the 12th Percentile in Numeracy Standardised Tests 	Individual Education Plans	<p>Type of Support In-Class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel SET teacher Class Teacher Outside Agencies</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Stage 2 School Support</p>	<p>7. Children with an identified need by external professionals who are on or below the 30th percentile in Numeracy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Borderline Mild General Learning Disability 2. Mild General Learning Disability 3. Specific Learning Disability 4. Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 5. Social/Emotional difficulties <p>8. Children who have not made adequate progress after interventions at Stage 1.</p> <p>9. Children newly arrived in Ireland for whom English is an additional language</p> <p>10. Children in 1st – 6th who have not made adequate progress after EAL interventions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Group or Individual Profile and Learning Programme</p>	<p>Type of Support In-Class Support Team-Teaching Group Withdrawal Individual Withdrawal</p> <p>Personnel SET teacher Class Teacher</p>
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Roles and responsibilities

To facilitate the effective implementation of a school policy on special needs and learning support- support services, the roles of the different partners – the Board of Management, principal, class teachers, special Education teachers, parents and pupils are crucial.

Role of Board of Management:

- To oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on special educational needs.
- To ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for special education teachers.
- To provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of special educational needs.

Principal:

The principal has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school. The new allocation model states the principal's leadership role is central. She should

- Implement and monitor the school's SEN policy on an on-going basis.
- Ensure that the children with the greatest needs have the greatest provision.
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles.
- Assign SET appropriately to ensure that the needs of the children in literacy/numeracy/social skills etc. are met.
- Assign SET teachers to liaise with each class.
- Plan to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils.
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
- Communicate with the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser)
- Oversee whole school assessment
- Allocate time within the school timetable for the SET team to plan and consult with teachers and parents
- Inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SET
- Meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- To work with teachers regarding external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
- To attend multi-disciplinary meetings regarding children with special educational needs.

SEN Co-ordinator (Post-holder in the school):

SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) should:

- communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis
- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the SET team and class teachers to prioritize children for psychological assessments (NEPS)
- liaise with SEN Class Co-ordinators to identify, support and monitor children with additional needs
- co-ordinate regular SET team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs
- collaborate with the SET team in creating timetables for additional support
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate the whole-school standardized testing at each class level
- co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests
- select children for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted
- oversee the tracking system of test results on password-protected Aladdin software to monitor the progress of pupils
- maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support (lists to be completed by midterm in term 1)

Class Teacher:

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

- implement teaching programmes which optimize the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties
- create a positive learning environment within the classroom
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with liaison SET Class Co-ordinators to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- maintain a list of children not included/included in the continuum of support and review this each term
- open a Pupil Support File once additional needs have been identified which require classroom support
- develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support
- collaborate with SET and parents in devising appropriate support plans
- collaborate with SET to regularly review support plans
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching and whole class interventions
- 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 SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned
- liaise with and seek advice from their liaison SET
- maintain the class overview of support list

Special Education Teacher (SET)

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 need
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop Support Plans for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus.
- collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review support plans
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- provide necessary information to an SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received
- engage with CPD to upskill with regard to SEN
- provide a listening ear and a support for children who may confide concerns

The Role of the EAL Teacher (English as an Additional Language)

The EAL teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of pupils assessed as being in need of such supports using the Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) for English language learning. In addition, the EAL teacher will advise and liaise with class teachers, parents/guardians and other professionals in the pupil's interests, along with engaging with in-class support teaching in a range of subject areas.

The role of the EAL teacher:

- Develop School Support Plans for small groups in consultation with the SEN Coordinator and relevant class teachers.
- Set specific time-related targets for each pupil, agreeing these with the class teacher and making them available to the Principal and SEN Coordinator.
- Advising class teachers in regard to adapting the curriculum, teaching strategies, textbooks, IT and other related matters.
- Meeting and advising parents/guardians, when necessary, accompanied by the class teacher as necessary.

- Direct teaching of pupils, either in a separate space or within the mainstream classroom.
- Co-teaching when the pupils concerned will derive benefit from it.

- Assessing the pupils' needs and progress in relation to their English language learning using the PSAK and/or formative and summative assessments.

The Role of the Special Class Teacher for Children on the Autism Spectrum:

St. Manchan's NS operates a Primary Class (4 to 12 years) for children on the Autism spectrum. In this class, we provide a high quality and positive educational experience, including access to a wide-ranging curriculum that is relevant and appropriate to our pupils' learning needs. We work to:

- Ensure that each pupil develops to his/her potential in an environment that offers clarity, predictability and calm.
- Enhance the pupil's communicative and social skills.
- Facilitate meaningful inclusion in the school community.

The special class teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of our pupils.

The role of the teacher is to:

- Be the main point of contact for the pupil's parents/guardians.
- Prepare a School Support Plus Plan, in consultation with parents/guardians, and in liaison with other staff working with the pupil.
- Initiate a review of the School Support Plus Plan at agreed intervals in consultation with the relevant education partners, including the mainstream class teacher where relevant.
- Coordinate the supporting work of the SNAs on an ongoing basis.
- Engage in agreed long-term and short-term planning to complement the School Support Plus Plan.
- Liaise with the mainstream class teacher, where relevant, to identify regular opportunities for integration or reverse integration, where appropriate.
- Liaise with the mainstream class teacher to identify and implement accommodations that the pupil may need to be successful in the mainstream classroom, where appropriate.
- Lead the review of each pupil's progress at the end of each school year, in consultation with the relevant education partners, and including an assessment of the suitability of the child's continued placement.

Special Needs Assistants:

SNA support is provided specifically to assist schools to cater for the care needs of pupils with additional needs in an educational context, where the nature of these care needs have been outlined in professional reports as being so significant that a pupil will require adult assistance in order to be able to attend school and to participate in education.

Primary care needs which are considered significant and which may require SNA support are:

- Assistance with feeding.
- Administration of medicine.
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene.
- Assistance with mobility and orientation.
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds.
- Care needs associated with specific medical conditions.
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential.
- Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties.

If a child has been granted access to an SNA on the basis of primary care needs, the SNA will often perform secondary care associated tasks. These include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms.
- Assistance with the development of a Personal Pupil Plan (PPP).
- Assist teacher in maintaining a journal or behavioural data.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements.
- Attending meetings.
- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy (OT, speech & language, physio) under the direction of qualified personnel.
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, visits or trips where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

The quantum of SNA support provided to a school is decided by the National Council for Special Education in accordance with Department of Education policy. The provision of a quantum of support to St. Manchan's NS gives us the autonomy and flexibility to manage our allocation of SNA support in order to utilise this support to the best possible effect. It allows us to target support to those pupils who have the greatest degree of need at any given time, recognising that the level of need that a pupil may have may be variable over time. St. Manchan's NS is in a position to use our educational experience and expertise to manage the level of support which has been allocated to us to provide for the care needs of identified pupils as and when those needs arise and to provide access to SNA support for all pupils who have been granted access to support.

SNA duties are assigned at the discretion of the Principal, in consultation with mainstream teachers and SET. The work of SNAs is monitored by the Principal and teachers on an ongoing basis and modified accordingly by them.

Parents/Guardians:

The staff of St. Manchan's N.S. view parents as partners in their child's education and endeavor to involve parents as fully as possible in the education of their child. It is our aim to work with parents in an honest, trustworthy and discrete manner at all times. We value the contribution of parents in informing the school community regarding their child's needs and how they feel these needs may be met in the school setting. All parents are aware that they are welcome to make an appointment to meet with school staff whenever the need arises.

Parents will be consulted regularly at all stages of processes outlined in this policy eg

- When a child is assessed as having needs that may require learning support
- When a child is identified as having behaviours/difficulties that may require further investigation within the school or by outside agencies
- During psychological assessments
- When a Support Plan – school/plus is being drawn up for a child
- When a review of a Support Plan means a significant change in the levels of out of class support being given to a child

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
- contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

Sharing/Storing Information and Plans

- Each SEN pupil has a file in a locked filing cabinet in the office. Each file should contain
 - Annual school report
 - Any reports relating to child's needs from outside agencies
 - End of year hard copy of any Support Plan which may have been drawn up for the pupil – replacing the plan from the previous year
 - The most recent standardized literacy and numeracy test which the child has taken

- Each teacher – class and SET - involved in supporting a child will have access to the child’s record so that he/she can update the record of support/interventions being provided to that child.
- Whole class records will be retained by the SET team – records such as running records, standardized tests, MIST results etc.
- A whole school record of children in receipt of support is maintained annually
- All data in respect to individual children’s attainments in standardized tests and support plans is maintained on the school data system – Aladdin

Other Considerations with regard to SEN

Enrolment of children with identified special educational needs

“A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his/her overall needs” – The Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004

Parents are required to notify the school of their child’s Special Needs in advance of enrolling in Mainstream. The BOM will request a copy of the child’s medical or psychological report. No child will be refused permission solely on the grounds of SEN. In some circumstances a transition period may be established to help a child to settle in the school.

Our school is committed to early identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs. A child who presents with an identified significant SEN arising from a low incidence disability will be given a specific individual allocation of resource teaching hours through the relevant SENO (Special Education 02/05). The school will adhere to the continuum of support model for identification, assessment and programme planning for all other pupils.

Referral of pupils to outside agencies including NEPS

Where teachers feel it necessary to seek intervention of outside agencies they should

- Consult with the SET
- Speak to parents
- Inform the Principal

The NEPS psychologist attached to the school meets with the principal at the beginning of the year to discuss the needs of the pupils and to plan the support which will be offered to the school. This may take the form of CPD for staff, of advice for teachers with regard to individual pupils/whole school concerns or, it may involve an assessment and psychological report for an individual pupil.

In the event of a limited availability of assessments through NEPS priority will be given to the pupil with the greatest need.

Where an assessment takes place in the school, the class teacher should oversee initial contact with parents. The principal will liaise with assessment services. The relevant special education teacher will collect all documentation concerning the pupil's test scores. This will be coordinated by the principal. Teachers may also recommend to parents that children in need of support, especially in the case of behavioural/emotional needs, should be referred through a GP.

Transitions:

In St. Manchan's NS, we place a lot of emphasis on supporting pupils to manage transitions. In June of each year, a transition programme will be completed at whole-class level for all pupils to help the pupils make a successful transition to their new class. The transition programme can include any of the following:

- A visit to the new classroom.
- The new class teacher will visit the class and engage in an activity with the class.
- The class is introduced to the new line up area on the yard.
- A question and answer session is facilitated with the new class teacher or with pupils from the year group that the pupil is moving to.

Some pupils with special educational needs may need some extra support to aid their transition to a new class. The transition plan for these pupils may include the following:

- Communication Passport
- Social story
- New class teacher works with the pupil with special educational needs in a small group
- One to one pairing sessions with the new class teacher and pupil with special educational needs
- A transition booklet.

A transition plan may also be prepared for pupils who are transferring from preschool or another primary school to St. Manchan's NS, or from St. Manchan's NS to another primary school or to a special school.

For a pupil with special educational needs transferring to post-primary school, a transition plan may include the following:

- A visit to the new school as part of a large group and follow up visits in a smaller group or individually.
- The 6th Class teacher will work to prepare the class for transition to secondary school. A SET may support this work.
- A meeting between the 6th class teacher and relevant post-primary staff to communicate pertinent information.
- A review by a NEPS psychologist.
- An individual transition programme may form part of the support plan for some pupils in 6th as identified by consultation between the class teacher and SET.

Pupils with Exceptional ability

We seek to support pupils with exceptional ability by the following means:

- Differentiation of work
- Providing additional follow-on work of a higher level
- Whole class interventions
- Recommendations to parents such as the Dublin City University center for talented youth and The National University of Ireland Galway Youth Academy.

In exceptional circumstances a teacher may draw up a class support plan for a pupil with exceptional ability.

Related Policies

The schools' curricular and organisational policies and plans take into account the needs of pupils with SEN, through differentiation of content and methodologies in curriculum areas. Special needs are also reflected in the following policies: Enrolment, Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying and Record Keeping

Timetable

Timetabling for Special Education Support is done through a collaborative approach between Principal, SEN team and class teachers. In a situation where there is a shared SET, principals within the cluster will collaborate to draw up an effective timetable taking due recognition is taken of the specific needs of each child.

Facilities/ Resources

The School has three Special Education rooms. The school has adequate resources which are stored in the Special Education rooms.

Other related policies:

- The school's curricular and organizational policies and plans take into account the needs of pupils with SEN e.g. differentiation.
- The Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying Policy and Homework Policy recognizes special needs in the area of behavioral and emotional difficulties.
- The school's curricular and organizational policies and plans take into account the needs of pupils with SEN e.g. differentiation of content and methodologies in curriculum areas.

Success Criteria

The following factors will be considered as indication of the success of this policy:

- The effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in our school and the successful meeting of their diverse learning needs.
- Pupils with special educational needs being identified and assessed in a timely manner.
- The effective schoolwide implementation of the Continuum of Support.
- The provision of high quality teaching and learning experiences to those pupils most in need of additional support.
- High quality communication and collaboration between school personnel, parents/guardians, and external agencies.
- Positive progress in the learning of our pupils with special educational needs and in their sense of themselves as learners.

This policy was reviewed by the SEN team and staff of St. Manchan's NS in 2021/2022 and in 2023/2024. It will be regularly reviewed according to the changing needs of our pupils.

The implementation of this Special Educational Needs Policy will be monitored by the Principal, Special Education Needs Co-ordinator and Board of Management, in consultation with school staff and parents/guardians.

Ratified by the Board of Management on: 13/10/2023

Signed: Maeve Heslin Date 13/10/2023
Principal

Signed: Fr. Nigel Charles Date 13/10/2023
Chairperson