**St. Peter's National School**
*Church of Ireland*
*Rooske Road Dunboyne Co. Meath A86 PR92 Tel: (01) 8026741*

# Whole School Additional Educational Needs Policy

This Policy on Additional Educational Needs Provision was formulated in 2025 taking cognisance of directives contained in: the 1998 Education Act; The Learning-Support Guidelines (2000); the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004; Recent Department of Education and Skill Circulars, especially Circular 13/17 and 02/05.

**The following acronyms are used in this policy:**

**SENO:** Special Educational Needs Organizer
**NCSE**: National Council Special Education
**DES:** Department of Education and Skills
**NEPS:** National Educational Psychological Service
**ANA:** Additional Needs Assistant
**ANCO:** Additional Needs coordinator
**SSF:** Student Support File
**SSP:** Student Support Plan (learning plan)
**PPP:** Personal Pupil Plan (care needs plan)
**ST:** Support Teacher

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## 1. Introduction

This policy on Additional Educational Needs (AEN) is a statement in relation to the provision for additional educational needs in our school. The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers and parents and the school community on the provision of effective support to pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning. The policy was prepared in line with the Guidelines for Primary School Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Des 2017), Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers & Resources Pack for Teachers, Circulars no. 0013/2017 and 02/05, the Learning Support Guidelines (DES 200) and to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.

## 2. Situation

St. Peter's National School is a co-educational primary school with a Church of Ireland ethos under the patronage of The Right Reverend Patricia Storey the Bishop of Meath and Kildare. The school aims to foster an ethos and characteristic spirit of the Anglican Christian tradition. We cater for pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class with two Autism specific classes.

## 3. Specific Objectives of this Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Policy

- To support the inclusion of all pupils and facilitate pupils to participate in and benefit from the full curriculum.
- To ensure that the Staged Approach / Continuum of Support is implemented.
- To ensure that those with the highest level of need have access to the greatest level of support.

*In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the overriding 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. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour,*

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*emotional development and application to learning.'*

- To provide/support supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Mathematics.
  "*optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school*"
  (Learning-Support Guidelines [LSG]: p. 15).
- To support positive self-esteem, social and emotional function and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies for pupils with additional educational needs.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning.
- To involve parents in supporting their children s learning.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.

## 4. Guiding Principles.

The school recognizes that effective teaching and learning for all is underpinned by the following principles:

- ➢ Effective whole-school policies.
- ➢ An understanding that supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community.
- ➢ Provision of intervention/ prevention strategies and programmes to prevent/minimise learning difficulties.
- ➢ Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need.

## 5. Prevention and Intervention.

Prevention and early intervention are the cornerstone of supporting learning.

**Our strategies for preventing/minimising learning difficulties include:**

The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of English to ensure progression and continuity from class to class. (including the Plean Scoile for English, approaches to language development e.g. Phonological Awareness, Reading resources etc.).

The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Mathematics to ensure progression and continuity from class to class (including the Plean Scoile for Mathematics, availability of concrete teaching resources and a focus on Mathematical Language etc.).

Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.

Close collaboration and consultation between the Infant Teachers and the Support Teachers in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes at Classroom Support / School Support level and School Support Plus Level.

Thorough Assessment procedures throughout the school.

Class-based intervention by class teachers resulting in provision of additional support and differentiation at Classroom support level.
Close collaboration and consultation between the Class Teachers and the Support Teachers in the selection of pupils for intervention / support programmes at Classroom
Support / School Support level and School Support Plus Level.
Provision of additional support in social and emotional development / language development / early literacy / early mathematical skills to pupils who need it.
Promotion of Parental involvement including formal and informal Parent / teacher Meetings.

## 6. The Continuum of Support and Selection of pupils for Support Teaching

### 6.1 Selection of pupils for Support Teaching

In the allocation of places for support teaching prioritisation is influenced by Circular 13/2017 which states that: -

> "*Pupils under the new allocation model will be identified by schools for additional teaching support in accordance with the Continuum of Support Guidelines, and the Guidelines which accompany this Circular*" (p. 13).
> and
> *The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process*" (p. 15 and 16).

**In identifying pupils for support, St. Peter's NS will consider the following:**

- Pupils with significant and complex Additional Educational Needs including pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. St. Peter's NS also considers needs set out in professional reports, where available. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social, emotional or behaviour difficulties, coordination difficulties and attention control difficulties.
- Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit- hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.
- Pupils performing below the 10th percentile on standardised tests will be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy
- Pupils presenting with difficulties in literacy and/or numeracy e.g. difficulties that present a barrier to learning and full access to the curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils

who need English Additional language Support.

- High-Ability Pupils (those scoring above the 95th percentile in English or Mathematics on Standardised Assessments and / or have been diagnosed by an 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.
- Due consideration will be given to the overall needs of the school and all its pupils.

## 6.2 Provision of Supplementary Teaching

The primary work of the Support Teacher (ST) is the provision of supplementary teaching to the pupils identified above.

**Allocating Additional Teaching Supports:**
**Step 1: Identify Needs**

**Identification:** Using the Continuum of Support Framework, St. Peter's NS identifies pupils educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.
Ref: Appendix 5: Table 1 from the 2017 Guidelines: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process
**Planning:** A Student Support File has been developed by St. Peter's NS to plan interventions and to track a pupil s pathway through the Continuum of Support. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.
**Support List:** A list of pupils who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework is maintained
Ref: (Appendix 6): Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the continuum of support Guidelines

**Step 2: Meeting Needs Intervention and Prevention**:
This step focuses on the importance of effective teaching and learning strategies and the benefits of early-intervention and prevention programmes
Ref: Appendix 7 (Educational Planning from the 2017 Guidelines are outlined in Appendix 7).

**Target Setting**: Targets are informed by priority learning needs and linked to suitable interventions
Ref: Appendix 8: Appendix 1 of the 2017 Guidelines: Target setting as part of the problem-solving framework).

**Step 3: Monitor and Record Progress**

**Monitor Progress:** Pupils progress is regularly monitored in support weekly plans. Progress is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion- referenced tests and other methods of assessment (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This progress review may include measures of communication, independence, social inclusion and well-being as appropriate.
**Record Progress**: Results of such monitoring will be recorded in the student support file/plan and will inform planning on a weekly, fortnightly and monthly basis. Communication with parents will take place in the form of a formal review at the parent teacher meetings.

## 6.3. Screening and Diagnostic Assessment:

Class Teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessments. The Support Teacher (ST) will discuss each class s recorded results with the Class Teacher and carry out further screening tests and / or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the selection process.

## 6.4 Levels of Support:

Support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010).

Support involves collaboration between Class Teachers and the Support Team in the formulation and implementation of programmes of work for children with specific needs and those experiencing difficulty in specific areas of learning and development.

**Classroom Support:**

Pupils deemed to need additional support with their learning (literacy and numeracy) and / or specific needs (oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning) will be supported in the classroom by the Class Teacher. At this stage the class teacher will open a Support File and a brief support Plan and record the specific interventions in it.

**School Support and School Support Plus:**

- The Support Team may provide additional support for identified pupils, through withdrawal (1:1 or in a small group) and/or in-class support (e.g. station teaching / team teaching / in-class support / peer tutoring), depending on the pupil's needs.
- The Support Teacher and Class Teacher, in consultation with the Principal and with reference to guidelines issued by the DES, determines the size of groups, taking into account the individual needs of pupils and the overall caseload.
- Review of Support provision will take place regularly.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities in respect of AEN

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community: - The Board of Management; Principal Teacher; Class Teachers; Support Teachers; Autism Class Teachers; ANAs; Parents/Guardians; Pupils and External Bodies & Agencies.

### 7.1 Role of the Board of Management

"*Schools should ensure that the additional Special Educational Needs Teaching supports are used in their entirety to support pupils identified with special educational needs, learning support needs, and additional literacy needs such as English Additional Language Support.*" (DES Circular 13/17: p. 21).

**Role of the Board of Management:**

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the AEN policy.
- Ensure that satisfactory classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for all Teachers.
- Provide secure facilities for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of support.
- Budget for ongoing support for professional development in additional needs education for staff.

## 7.2 Role of the Principal:

*"The principal teacher has overall responsibility for the school's learning-support programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs".*

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.38).

The Education Act (1998) and the EPSEN Act (2004) have all reiterated this responsibility, along with Circular 13/17 and the accompanying Guidelines.

**The role of the Principal is to:**

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school s policies on Additional Educational Needs in co-operation with the Board of Management School staff, parents and children.
- Work with teachers and parents in the monitoring and development of the school plan in the context of AEN.
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with learning difficulties.
- Liaise with parents, staff and pupils to identify pupils with social, emotional or behavioural diff
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with the greatest need.
- Oversee and organise the implementation of a tracking system at whole-school level to identify and monitor the progress of pupils with learning difficulties. Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and / or special educational services.

- Liaise regularly with the Support team to co-ordinate the development of Support Plans / caseloads / work schedules.
- Liaise with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in relation to the provision of support such as ANA access, Support teaching posts, Assistive Technology for children with additional needs e.g. Autism, Sensory Impairments etc.
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals. Liaise with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs. Advise Parents on procedures for availing of special needs services.
- Complete application forms for outside agencies such as NCSE; NEPS; CAMHS etc.
- Arrange for the provision of AEN funding and resources and classroom accommodation for the Support Team.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with additional +educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, support teachers and additional needs assistants) are clear regarding their assigned roles and responsibilities in this area.

### 7.3 Role of the Additional Needs Coordinator

**An ANCO undertakes actions/duties, delegated to them by the Principal Teacher including:**

- Coordinate and manage the formulation and updating of the school's Additional Needs Policy.
- Meet with the Principal at least once a month/or as necessary to coordinate Additional Educational needs and address issues relating to the development and implementation of the school's plan for and provision of AEN.
- Collaborate with the principal and Support team to identify the level of support that is needed to meet individual students' needs.
- In collaboration with the principal, support and advise in the development of timetables for support teachers.
- In collaboration with the principal, class teachers and Support team support and advise in the development of planning for students with AEN.

- In collaboration with the principal, co-ordinate and collate the primary care needs of students accessing and/or requesting ANA access – annually and as required.
- Coordinate and attend Support Meetings in September/October and ensure reviews are completed in January/February.
- Organise annual standardised testing i.e. order and distribute test materials, co-ordinate test schedule and correction.
- Advise on and support comprehensive diagnostic assessment and teaching for pupils who have been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties when requested.
- Organise safe storage and retention of records in line with the Data Protection Commission s recommendations.
- In collaboration with the principal, classroom teachers and Support Team identify and co- ordinate applications for pupils with AEN for assessment by NEPS, Assessment of Need (complex). School Age team and Primary Care Team as appropriate.
- Support the principal in the maintenance of a register of pupils who have received the Assistive Technology Grant or an Irish Exemption, and with applications for Assistive Technology and Irish exemptions as needed.

### 7.4 Role of the Class Teacher

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her / his class, including those selected for supplementary teaching. The Class Teacher plays an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have general or specific social, emotional behavioural or learning difficulties.

"*Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes*" (2017 Guidelines: p. 12).

**The role of the class teacher is to:**

Implement teaching programs which optimise the learning of all pupils while addressing the diverse needs within the classroom, adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern.

Implement school policies on screening and identification of students for supplementary teaching in English and Maths by co-operating and assisting with the administration and scoring of appropriate screening measures and consulting with the Support Team to discuss outcomes.

Collaborate with the Support Team in the development of support plans for students with additional needs by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to support their needs.

**With regard to teaching pupils with AEN, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:**

- Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities.
- Placing an emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum.
- Providing pupils with extra opportunities to experience the key basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Setting learning targets at an appropriate level.
- Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress.
- Engage in co-teaching e.g. Team teaching, station teaching in forms best suited to maximising the support for all children, including those with Additional Educational Needs
- Research pupil s specific learning difficulty, to engage with relevant CPD appropriate to the individual and class.

**Classroom Support:**

- The Staged Approach requires Class Teachers to initially construct a simple, individual plan of support for students they identify as having additional needs, to implement the plan and review its success regularly, before referring the child for further interventions.
- At this point, the Class Teacher will open a Support Plan and File for the pupil at Stage Classroom Support which will include targets, interventions and progress.
- Classroom Support will continue when School Support / School Support Plus is being phased out or discontinued, to meet the pupil s changing needs.

**School Support and School Support Plus**

- For each pupil at School Support/School Support Plus, the Class Teacher will collaborate with the support teacher in the development of a Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
- This consultation and co-operation between the Class Teacher and the Support Teacher in the development, implementation and review of Support Plans will be achieved through regular formal and informal consultation as the need arises.

## 7.5 Role of the Support Teacher

Support activities include both teaching and non-teaching duties.

> "*Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level, or through mainstream classroom placement with additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models*"
>
> (2017 Guidelines: p. 13).

**The Role of the Support Teacher is to:**

Implement school policies on additional educational needs and provide supplementary teaching where deemed necessary.

- Provide supplementary teaching commensurate with the child s particular and individual needs. Being "*familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs*" (2017 Guidelines p.13).

- Administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcomes of those assessments.
- Develop and maintain a Support Plan, in consultation with class teachers, parents and pupils, for each pupil or group of pupils who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with Class Teachers and Parents.
- Provide supplementary teaching in Literacy and / or Mathematics to identified pupils at School Support / School Support Plus (as per Selection Criteria).
- Deliver early intervention and prevention programmes, caseload and selection criteria permitting.
- Liaise with outside agencies e.g. NEPS, Speech and Language Therapists etc pertinent to the children on their caseload.
- Meet with Class Teachers of each pupil who is in receipt of Classroom Support/ School Support / School Support Plus, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported throughout the school day.
- Meet with Parents of each pupil who is in receipt of support, when possible, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home, to review the pupil s attainment of agreed targets, to revise the pupil s Support Plan.
- Consult with parents, when possible, when supplementary teaching is to be discontinued at School Support / School Support Plus and identify ways in which the pupil s learning can continue to be supported at school and at home.
- Contribute at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the Support Teacher s room.
- Contribute to the development of policy on AEN at the whole school level
- Research the pupil s specific learning difficulty, to engage with relevant CPD appropriate to the individual and class.

## 7.6 Role of the Autism Class Teacher

The role of the Autism Class Teacher is similar to the role of other Class Teachers and also incorporates many of the roles of the Support Teacher.

**The Role of the Autism Class Teacher is to:**

- ➢ Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance learning.

➢ Contribute to the development of policy on AEN at the whole school level.

- Provide teaching commensurate with the pupils in their class particular and individual Needs.
- Research the pupil s specific learning difficulty, to engage with relevant CPD appropriate to the individual and class.
- Administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcomes of those assessments.
- Develop and maintain a Support Plan and File for each pupil in consultation with Parents, ANAs, ANCO and Principal.
- Monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in the class in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives that arise from them and record the observations in the Student File and Support Plan, or equivalent.
- Meet with Parents of each pupil to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home, to review the pupil s attainment of agreed targets and Support Plan.
- Liaise and collaborate with class teachers to facilitate inclusion (see integration and inclusion policy)
- Collaborate with and implement recommendations from outside agencies including Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy, wherever feasible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the children in their care.

## 7.7 Role of the Additional Needs Assistant (ANAs)

The purpose of the ANA scheme is to provide for the significant additional care needs, which some pupils with additional educational needs may have. ANA duties are assigned at the discretion of the Principal and Additional Needs Coordinator in accordance with Circular 0071/2011.

### Primary Care Needs ANA Tasks:

An ANA s role is to carry out duties based on the Primary Care Needs of the pupil

**These may include:**

- Assistance with feeding: Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time
- Administration of medicine: Where a pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene: Where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so
- Assistance with mobility and orientation: On an ongoing basis including assisting a pupil or pupils to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a pupil to access school transport), or to help a pupil to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards).
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: At recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.
- Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: Such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a pupil may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.
- Assistance with moving and lifting of pupils, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access or pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs and those with significant and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc...

The tasks noted above are the primary care support tasks for which access to ANA support is provided.

## Secondary Care Associated Tasks (ANA Tasks):

The following tasks are the type of secondary care associated tasks which ANAs will often perform. The list of secondary associated tasks listed below is not exhaustive and is reflective of the tasks detailed in Circulars 08/02 and 71/2011.

## The associated support tasks which may be carried out include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with Additional Educational Needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.
- Assist Teachers and / or Principal in maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by student with additional needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities.
- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including Class Teachers or Support Team.
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

See Appendix 3 Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)

## 7.8 Role of Parents/Guardians.

*"Parents through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning programmes"*

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.52).

"*Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs*"

(2017 Guidelines: p. 23).

**Parents/guardians can support the work of the school in supporting their child by:**

- Providing a home environment in which there are opportunities for adults and children to participate together in social, language, literacy and mathematical activities in the early years before formal schooling begins and throughout their years in primary school.
- Informing the Class Teacher / support teacher of the progress that they observe in their child s learning. They should also let the school know of any difficulties that they observe in their child at home and of the results of any external diagnostic assessments.
- Working on agreed Targets at home.
- Meeting with class teachers/support team/ANCO/Principal when difficulties arise, to celebrate successes and to review progress and plans.

## 7.9 Role of Pupils.

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

(Learning-Support Guidelines, p.54).

"*Good engagement and participation in their own education has many associated benefits for pupils. This is particularly important for pupils with special educational needs and can help enhance their academic and social and emotional outcomes*" (2017 Guidelines: p. 24).

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

- Outline his / her interests, aspirations, strengths.
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment and contribute to the Support Plan.
- Become familiar with the medium and short-term learning targets that have been set for them and be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of such targets.
- Contribute to the selection of texts and other learning materials that are relevant to the attainment of their learning targets.
- 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.

### 7.10 Role of External Bodies and Agencies.

"*Support and guidance is available to teachers from external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate, and allied health professionals. It is important that schools have established procedures / protocols for liaising with these services and bodies in order to optimise the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs at the individual, group or whole-school level. This is especially important for those pupils with more significant and enduring needs who benefit from a multi- disciplinary approach to identification of need and the development of interventions. The needs of many pupils span both health and education services. Health services (HSE and HSE-funded services) will continue to play an important role in early identification, assessment and diagnosis, intervention and review for pupils with special educational needs. It is important that schools are familiar with the range of health services in their locality, including referral pathways. Coordination is enhanced when schools liaise with and contribute to health-led assessment and delivery of interventions and when they facilitate meetings between parents and various support services. Schools should endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support*"

(2017 Guidelines: p. 25).

## 8. Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy.

Communication of Policy: A copy will be provided to all staff members in the school. It will be available for all parents from the school office/reception. It will be made available to the Parent Teacher Association and published on the school's website: www.stpetersnsdunboyne.com

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Peter's National School on 10/04/2025

This policy will be reviewed in April 2028, or earlier should the need arise.

Signature of Chairperson: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

St. Peter's National School
*Church of Ireland*
*Rooske Road Dunboyne Co. Meath A86 PR92 Tel: (01) 8026741*

**Appendix 1**

## *The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of DES Sp Ed Circular 02/05).*

### Stage I

A class teacher or parent may have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of certain pupils. The teacher should then administer screening measures, which may include screening checklists and profiles for pupils in senior infants and first class, standardised, norm-referenced tests for older pupils and behavioural checklists where appropriate.

The class teacher should then draw up a short, simple plan for extra help to be implemented within the normal classroom setting, in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management. The success of the classroom support plan should be reviewed regularly, with appropriate parental involvement. If concern remains after a number of reviews and adaptations to the plan, the special education support team or the learning support/resource teacher in the school may be consulted about the desirability of intervention at stage II.

### Stage II

**If intervention is considered necessary at stage II, then the pupil should be referred to the learning support/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing.** In the case of pupils with learning difficulties, if the classroom support plan fails to achieve the desired outcome the pupil should be referred to the learning support teacher/resource teacher, with parents permission, for further diagnostic testing. If this diagnostic assessment suggests that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this should be arranged. The parents and the class teacher should be involved with the learning-support/resource teacher in drawing up the learning programme, which would include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom, and during supplementary teaching.

The learning support/resource teacher and the class teacher should review regularly, in consultation with the parents, the rate of progress of each pupil receiving supplementary

teaching. If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews and adaptations to the learning programme, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at stage III.

In the case of pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, with serious difficulties, more urgent action may be needed. In these cases the pupil s needs should, with parents permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case should be referred to the clinical services of the Health Services Executive. This may lead to a more detailed behavioural management programme to be implemented at home and in class, or to referral for further specialist assessment (stage III).

**Stage III**

**Some pupils who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at stage III.** The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school in respect of pupils with learning difficulties or with mild or moderate behavioural problems (or both) who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of pupils with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.1

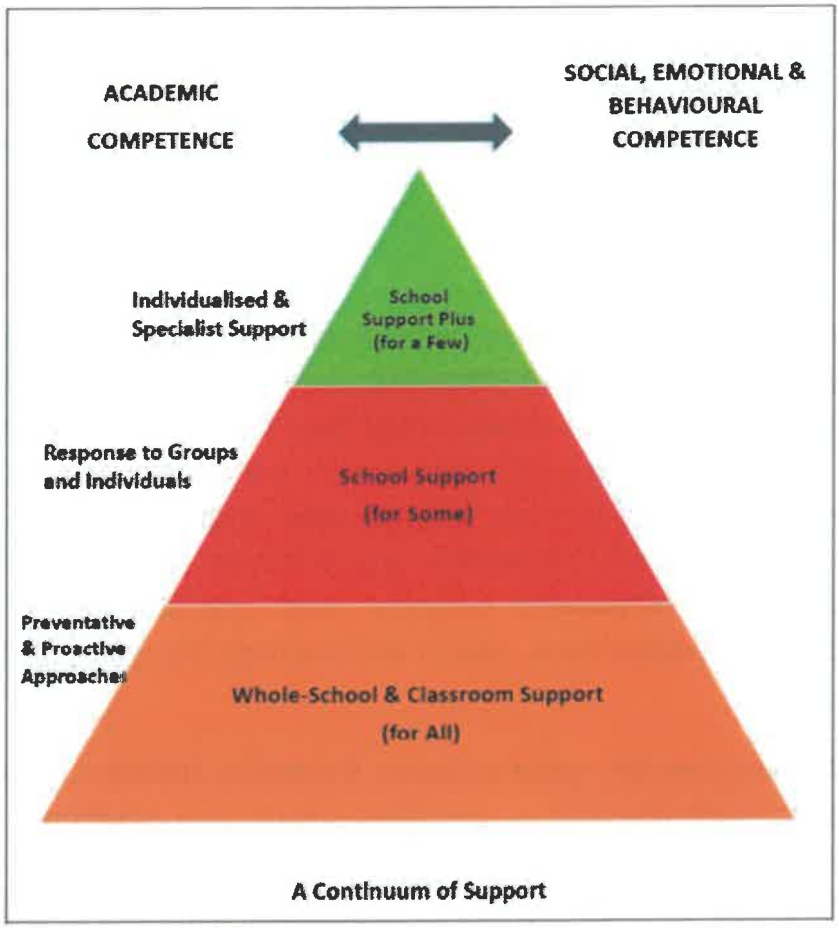
The learning support/resource teacher, resource teacher, if available, and the class teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. The parents should be fully consulted throughout this process. This programme should be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning programme and referral for specialist review, as necessary.

In the case of pupils identified at an early age as having very significant special educational needs, intervention at stage III will be necessary on their entry to school. Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such pupils, and primary responsibility for the pupil will remain with the class teacher, in consultation with the learning support/resource /or resource teacher.

## Appendix 2

The 2017 Guidelines (p. 8) present the NEPS Continuum of Support as follows

**The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:**




The 2017 Guidelines (p. 11-12) describe the NEPS' three tiers of support as follows - "*As special educational needs can vary from mild to transient to significant and enduring, educational planning should reflect the level of need of the individual pupil. In this regard, the Student Support File facilitates a graduated response across the different levels of the Continuum: Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. For pupils with significant, enduring and complex needs, collaboration with external professionals, including multi-disciplinary teams, is advised (for example, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and psychologist)*".

| PERSONAL PUPIL PLAN<br>This plan was devised as "schools applying for SNA support from the 15/16 school year will be required to submit a Personal Pupil Plan for each pupil outlining the pupil s special care needs and showing how the SNA will be deployed to assist the pupils. This plan should demonstrate how the school intends to actively reduce, and where appropriate, eliminate dependency on SNA support within a reasonable timeframe. The plan should include the time-bound targets for the development of independence skills." (Circular 0030/2014) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Name of Student** | | | |
| **Date of Birth** | | **ANA Access:** | **Date enrolled:** |
| **Date of Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)** | | **Class:** | **Class Teacher:**<br>**ST:**<br>**ANA:** |
| **Medical Care Needs** | | **Outside Agencies Consulted** | **Previous teacher/ANA:** |

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**Appendix 3**

## Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Behavioural Care Needs** | | | |

| **HOW THE A.N.A. WILL BE DEPLOYED TO SUPPORT THE PUPIL:** | |
|---|---|
| **Areas for Support:** | **Review Notes: (Date )** |
| **1.** | |
| **2.** | |
| **3.** | |
| **4.** | |

| HOW THE SCHOOL INTENDS TO ACTIVELY REDUCE/ELIMINATE DEPENDENCY ON ANA SUPPORT: | |
|---|---|
| **Areas for Support:** | **Review Notes: (Date)** |
| **1.** | |
| **2.** | |
| **3.** | |

| (TIME-BOUND) TARGETS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENCE SKILLS: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Target:** | **Strategies and Resources:** | **Timeframe** | **Review Notes: (Date)** |
| **1.** | | | |
| **2.** | | | |
| **3.** | | | |

| |
|---|
| |

Signed (Parent/Guardian): Date:
Signed (School Principal): Date:
Signed (CT): Date:
Signed (ANA): Date:
Signed (ST): Date:

## Appendix

Transition from Primary School to Post-Primary School

Taken from the 2017 Guidelines:
Good planning and support for transition helps to ensure the successful transfer of pupils from pre- school to primary school, from primary school to post-primary school and between special and mainstream settings. Effective transition support and planning can enhance the educational experience of the child and help reduce potential anxiety. Many schools already have excellent practices in place to support pupils at various transitional points.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post-primary schools. The materials are presented under the umbrella title of Education Passport and are available at www.ncca.ie/transfer. They include:

- 6th Class Report Card
- My Profile sheet (for children)
- My Child s Profile sheet (for parents)
- A Special Educational Needs Summary Form is included to support the sharing of information for children with identified learning needs.
  Since the 2014/15 school year schools have been required to use the Education Passport materials detailed above and forward to the relevant post-primary school, following confirmation of enrolment, ideally by end of June (Circular 45/2014).
  Additional resources for schools in planning for effective transitions are available at the Department of Education and Skills and NCSE websites.

## Appendix

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Table 1: from the 2017 Guidelines. Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process.

| **Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process** | |
|---|---|
| **Classroom Support** | The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.<br>A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.<br>This is informed by:<br>• Parental consultation<br>• Teacher observation records<br>• Teacher-designed measures /assessments<br>• Basic needs checklist *<br>• Learning environment checklist*<br>• Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist<br>• Literacy and numeracy tests<br>• Screening tests of language skills<br>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:<br>• Teacher observation records<br>• Teacher-designed measures / assessments<br>• Parent and pupil interviews<br>• Learning environment checklist<br>• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy<br>• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures<br>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for<br>social, emotional and behavioural difficulties<br>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition.<br>A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review. |
| **School Support Plus** | This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:<br>• Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures<br>• Parent and pupil interviews<br>• Functional assessment |

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Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc.

*These checklists are available in the *Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers*

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## Appendix 6

Pupils with Additional Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework

| **Classroom Support** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupil Name** | **Class** | **Description of SEN** | **Nature of Supports** Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills | **Focus of Support** In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **School Support** | | | | |
| **Pupil Name** | **Class** | **Description of SEN** | **Nature of Support** | **Focus of Support** |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **School Support Plus** | | | | |
| **Pupil Name** | **Class** | **Description of SEN** | **Nature of Support** | **Focus of Support** |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Schools may hold information on pupils and level of support on a class basis, as an integral part of classroom planning.

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## Appendix 7

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

### Educational planning

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process. The process involves the class teacher, special education teachers, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals. Interventions should draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers. These interventions should reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests. Support plans should set out the agreed targets, the resources required, the strategies for implementation and a time-frame for review.

### Student Support File

A Student Support File has been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a pupil s pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.

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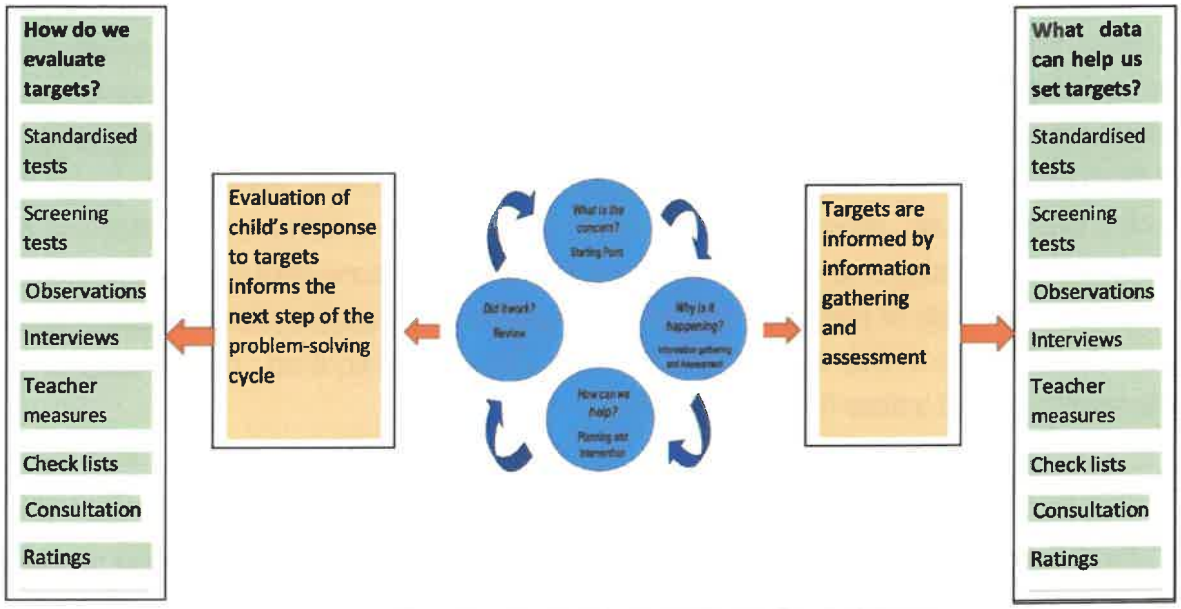
**Appendix 8**

From the 2017 Guidelines Appendix 1: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework




**Targets are written as desired skills which are:**

**Specific**
**Measurable**
**Achievable**
**Relevant**
**Time Limited**

**Targets should be written in definitive language to facilitate monitoring and review of progress, for example:**

*John will correctly identify the first 50 Dolch Words with 80% accuracy*

*Sean will speak in a full sentence which includes a subject, verb and object*

*Anne will use her PECS to request an activity break*

**Appendix**

Table 2: from the 2017 Guidelines - Planning the allocation of special education teaching supports

| **Table 2: Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs** | |
|---|---|
| **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).<br><br>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.<br>Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching.<br><br>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.<br><br>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:<br>• At **Whole-school and Classroom Support** level by all teachers<br>• At the **School Support and School Support Plus** levels by class teachers and special education teachers |