

Support Policy for Pupils with Special Educational Learning Needs

Signed: S. McConkey

Chairperson, BoM

Date: __17th October 2023_____

Guiding Principles:

- All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all 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
- 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

The School Setting

Howth Road Mixed National School is a small 4 teacher school under the patronage of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The school provides primary level education from Junior Infants to Sixth Class in a co-educational multi-grade setting.

The mission of Howth Road Mixed National School is to promote the fullest possible development of every child as a whole person. We seek to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual, moral and cultural needs of each pupil are identified and addressed.

We undertake to:

- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners able to make informed choices.
- Foster a love of learning
- Foster self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others.
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs and beliefs.
- Value and respect all cultures
- Provide a safe and happy workspace.
- Promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment.

To help achieve this ideal Howth Road Mixed National School provides a broad education in line with the curriculum guidelines for Primary Schools, including coherent and practical planning for the inclusion of children with special needs, allowing each child to reach the highest level of academic attainment consistent with his or her abilities or talents, so that the school community is enriched by the unique gifts and talents of all its students.

Howth Road Mixed National School recognises that the parents/guardians are the primary educators and that it is only through co-operation between them and the school that our ideal can be realised.

This mission statement is fully in keeping with the 1998 Education Act and EPSEN 2004.

1998 Education Act: ‘ to make provision for the education of every person in the State, including any person with a disability or who has other special educational needs respect diversity spirit of partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff, the community’

Education for People with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN 2004) ‘A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature of those needs is such that to do so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the child, or 3 (b) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated In line with our ethos and official Department of Education and Skills (DES) recommendations, learning support strategies will actively seek to include the diverse range of cultures and abilities of its students.

Consultation

This policy was formulated in consultation with the teaching staff and management of Howth Road Mixed N.S., parents of students with Special Educational Needs (S.E.N.), the Board of Management (BOM), Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), and the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO).

Rationale

- This policy document aims to outline the school’s provision of additional educational support for students with S.E.N.
- It outlines the philosophy that underpins this provision.
- The policy is written in the context of the various pieces of legislation listed below.
- The policy is a working document and will be reviewed regularly (minimum every 3 years or as changes affect it)
- The policy is a reflection of our current practice.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students with S.E.N., including students with exceptional ability, who attend Howth Road Mixed N.S. It is also intended to serve the school community including B.O.M, the Principal, the teaching and ancillary staff and parents.

Legal Framework

Howth Road Mixed N.S. sets out to provide education for all its students, with reference to legislation regarding students with S.E.N. as listed below:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)
- The Equality Act (2004)
- The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
- The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

This policy is drafted in the context of:

- DES Circular Letters
- The guidelines published by the NCSE
- The guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process 2006
- The Guidelines on the Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools (NEPS).
- The guidelines published by the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SESS)

As far as possible, therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum.

Inclusion:

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with SEN, traveller children and children whose first language is not English, 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.

Principles for inclusion

Setting Suitable Learning Challenges

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

In order to do this, Howth Road Mixed National School will use the 'Continuum of Support Process' as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils.

Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.

It is important to look at a pupils needs in context, and to use our resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports).

Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process	
Classroom Support	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>

School Support	<p>At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition.</p> <p>A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
School Support Plus	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures • Parent and pupil interviews • Functional assessment • Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p>

Meeting Children's Diverse Learning Needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning our support, the 'Planning Template' outlining the 6 point action plan below will be utilised.

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Primary Guidelines, P19-20)

<p>Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>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).</p> <p>Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
<p>Action 2: Setting targets</p>	<p>Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.</p>
<p>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</p>	<p>Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>
<p>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</p>	<p>Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <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.

Overcoming Potential Barriers to Learning and Assessment for Individuals and Groups of Children

We recognise that a minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements. Our SEN policy envisages a school-wide approach that takes into account the roles of the Board of Management, the principal, class teacher, special education teacher and the parents.

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the BoM, principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

Board of Management

The BoM will fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be knowledgeable about the school's SEN provision – funding, equipment and personnel. The BoM:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on support for children with extra needs
- Provides adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provides a secure facility for storage of records.

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. He/She will work closely with the SEN co-ordinator and will keep the BoM informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal in collaboration with the SEN co-ordinator to:

- Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work 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

Special Educational Needs Teacher

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. 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.

Some pupils with more complex and enduring needs may require specific methodologies, teaching approaches and/or learning activities. Such interventions should be based on careful identification of strengths and needs, including multi-disciplinary assessment when necessary.

The type of support offered depends on the child's individual needs and takes the form of:

- curriculum support
- life and/or social skills training
- physical training/gross motor development
- speech training/communication and/or language development
- behaviour modification programmes
- assistance with sensory modulation
- development of anger management strategies
- a combination of some/all of the above

Special education teachers, in consultation with class teachers, should plan their interventions carefully to address pupils' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant continuum of support plan. Short-term planning should reflect the support plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each pupil's specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for pupils should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Special Educational Needs Teacher will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Organises the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeps a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
- Facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
- Supports the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Advises parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with the liaising NEPS psychologist.
- Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Liaises with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision

- Stores confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and shares same with principal, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.
- Participates in and or oversees the drafting of IEPs, IPLPs and classroom support plans
- Arranges for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.

The Role of the Class Teacher

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes. Accordingly, classroom teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom. This will include adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern. This may require targeted interventions to develop relevant adaptive skills related to these needs. All mainstream class teachers will implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. These include:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Heterogeneous group work
- Differentiation
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Embedding Information and communications technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment

Every pupil needs to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level. Pupils' levels of interest, attention, concentration and persistence should be gradually developed, extended and rewarded, using appropriate teaching strategies. To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, mainstream class teachers will regularly need to differentiate their lessons. This can be achieved by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly

Teachers can make lessons accessible to a broad range of pupils through the use of a variety of appropriate teaching approaches and methodologies, including active learning, small-group tuition, individual teaching, and scaffolded instruction. This may also require environmental adaptations to promote curricular access.

The Role of the Special Needs Assistant

At times, where a pupil has physical, medical, communication, care or behavioural needs a Special Needs Assistant may be appointed to further support the pupil to engage with their learning in the school context.

This is a vital role, enabling pupils to access as much of the classroom learning as is possible for them.

Special Needs Assistants have specific duties pertaining to meeting the physical, behavioural and care needs of these pupils. They are not in place to offer academic one to one tuition.

What does the SNA do?

SNAs meet the care needs of identified pupils. This can involve:

- Managing hygiene concerns
- Supporting communication for pupils with limited verbal abilities
- Supporting communication for pupils with emotional difficulties
- Supporting feeding
- Managing support equipment- wheelchairs, assistive technology etc.
- Managing toileting difficulties
- Managing class release time for pupils with behavioural difficulties
- Any other duties that support the physical, care and behavioural needs as directed

When are special Needs assistants appointed?

SNAs are occasionally appointed where a pupil at the school support plus level of the continuum of support has additional physical needs or behavioural needs or care needs that cannot be met by the class teacher whilst teaching the whole class group.

Under the revised system for the allocation of SNA support staff, Principal teachers and Boards of Management will have the responsibility for assigning SNAs to assist different pupils within the school.

Under the new system there will be no requirement to have a “formal diagnosis” in order to access SNA support, however it must be noted that SNA supports are funded by the Dept of Education through the NCSE. The school only has the autonomy to direct SNAs once appointed to the school.

Applications for SNA support for pupils should be made through the Special Education Team and the Principal.

Parental Involvement

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children’s needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress. The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support File provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There may also be opportunities for parents to work collaboratively with the school through initiatives such as paired reading

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to

the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of School Howth Road Mixed National School can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework.
- Reading and telling stories to their child/children.
- Listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading.
- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Signing and returning consent forms to the school regarding withdrawal for support teaching.
- Talking positively about school and school work.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors which may be affecting their child's progress.
- Participating in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Helping children to develop their organisational skills.
- Helping children to look after school books and other resources which are loaned to the children for use at home.
- Supporting programmes and initiatives implemented by the school.

Enrolment

The school aims to meet the needs of any child whom the parent wishes to register at the school as long as a place is available and the admission criteria are fulfilled. The Ed. For Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that 'A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs'.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's special needs upon acceptance of enrolment. The Board of Management may request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child will be refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

Special Facilities

Howth Road Mixed National School is a two storey building with ramps where appropriate. All classes can be delivered on ground floor level where necessary. There are rooms specially appointed for the teaching of special needs. Where specialised equipment is to be used (i.e. in the case of a child with cerebral palsy) training will be given to staff as required. The school also is equipped with more than one UAT bathroom facilities.

Resources

Howth Road Mixed National School is a well-resourced school, which constantly monitors and updates its resources. I.T. provision is good and is updated regularly.

Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

1. Promotion of Literacy:

- Whole school promotion of Reading for PleasureDEAR Time, book week, story time in Infants, class libraries etc.
- Genre Writing
- Aistear oral language support.
- Guided Reading from Junior Infants to 2nd class.
- Print rich environment ,
- Shared/paired reading ,
- Book Fair, Word games, visiting authors,
- Local library visits
- Access to Literacy apps on school IT devices and at home

2. Early Intervention

We believe it is very important to identify and assess children with special needs as early as possible so that effective interventions can be put in place. **Screening tests are administered in Junior Infants during their second term in school.** The M.I.S.T. (Middle Infants Screening Test) is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants during the second term of the school year. Pupils who present with scores below a given point are selected to participate in follow-up supports. At the end of the 8-10 weeks, every participating pupil is re-tested (using M.I.S.T.) to measure progress made as a result of this early intervention.

3. Promotion of Numeracy

- Whole school promotion of awareness of number
- Consistent , agreed approaches in explaining mathematical concepts
- Station teaching
- Concrete mathematics using equipment at all age levels
- Aistear –playful engagement with Maths
- Maths Week
- Motivation for ” problem solving for life”
- Maths rich environment

4. Developing Listening Skills:

Promoting a classroom environment where children listen to others, do not interrupt the speaker and wait their turn; Circle time, Listening games/activities; Listening Programmes; Listening to music.

Observation and/or assessment:

Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, record sheet for each child, Shared observation (2nd opinion), listening to reading, General correction of classwork and homework.

Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, Teachers own observation.

Share concerns with: - Last year's/ next year's teacher, parents, SET teacher

Stages of Assessment and Provision

Access to the school’s broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher, or home school liaison teacher, identifies a child with SEN the class teacher consults with the SEN coordinator and provides interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school’s usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher. However, as most of our support is in-class the stages are less defined than in situations where learning support is delivered by withdrawal.

Record of Differentiated Support in class

Register of Pupils with Special 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

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents.

The triggers for this intervention could be;

- The child makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school
- Has sensory or physical difficulties
- Has communication and/ or relationship difficulties

The class teacher completes a Stage One form and monitors the Record of Differentiated Support for half a term. If this strategy does not work then the teacher will continue to the next stage, School Action.

Teachers inform Parents that their child's needs would be better served in a small group with a support teacher. Parents will need to sign their consent.

Stage Two

In cases where the Record of Differentiated Support indicates that progress has not been made, or if the results of tests (M.I.S.T., Drumcondra Primary Reading Test, Sigma T, Belfield Infant Assessment Programme) and teacher observation indicate this to be the case, intervention in the form of a support teacher will be accessed. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support teacher.
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, then a group educational plan will be implemented.
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated every term.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in a SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only (e.g. Reading recovery.)
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

Stage Three

The support or class teacher will perform diagnostic tests on these children (at School Action) usually at the beginning and end of the school year. These tests may include the Neale Analysis Reading Test, Aston Index Spelling and Word recognition test, Non Reading Intelligence test etc.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling and performing below the tenth percentile despite School Action the class teacher with the support teacher and SEN coordinators, in consultation with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

1. A psychological assessment will be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
2. Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including IEP targets and strategies.

3. The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme the child:
 - Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
 - Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age
 - Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties
 - Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and IEP
 - Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service
 - Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and act as a barrier to learning.
4. If it is felt by the psychologist that a child has care needs, a special needs assistant may be applied for.
5. In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used to at least two SNAs and either the class or support teacher. The SEN co-ordinator should also be present.
6. The use of specialised yard equipment may also need to be demonstrated to these staff members. Courses will be provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
7. If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Ed. And Skills.

Individual Education Plan

Based on Psychologist's report, tests, Record of Differentiation and School Action Plan the class teacher with the support teacher, SNA (if assigned), parents and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary) formulate an Individual Education Plan.

These IEPs, which employ a small – steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that the child experiences success.

This plan includes:

- the nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills
- the degree of the child's special needs,
- the present level of performance,
- services to be provided,
- services for transition to 2nd level school where appropriate,
- the goals, which the child is to achieve over a period of half a year.

The strategies set out in the IEP will, as far as possible, be implemented in the normal classroom setting.

The management of the IEP strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher, support teacher and the SEN coordinator.

Review of IEPs

The SEN teacher will ensure that the review is conducted at the end of three months (October, February, and May). The class teacher consults with the support teacher, the child (and SNA if appointed). They agree on the expected outcomes of the IEP. A draft copy is formulated and sent home to the child's parents. The parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss or make recommendations to the draft review if they so wish. Again, outside agencies may play a part in formulating the final copy. The review will be recorded on the IEP Review form. (Attached, Appendix 5).

Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently achieving targets over the stated time, a decision will be made to revert to School Action.

The review in May will be to formulate an IEP, which will be part of the plan for the next teacher in September. It will be carried out as outlined above.

IEPs for children moving to 2nd level will be referred to at the consultation meetings with the 2nd level representative.

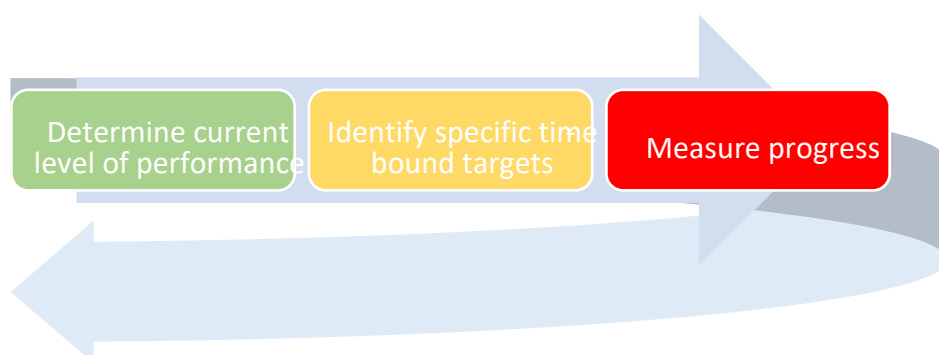
Complaints

If parents have a complaint about the Special Ed. provision made, then they should in the first instance make an appointment to speak to the SEN coordinator and then the principal.

The complaint will be investigated and dealt with as early as possible. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction, then the matter proceeds to the B.O.M.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process 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 will lead to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe as outlined below.



Monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File

provides schools with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils. Such monitoring of progress, and subsequent adaptation of support plans, are key drivers of effective practice.

In addition to monitoring outcomes at the individual level, it is also important to review outcomes at group, class and whole-school level. This review will include some of the following measures: attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being (for example, sense of belonging and connectedness to school) for pupils with special educational needs.

The BoM will ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of the school development plan and will evaluate the effectiveness and success of this policy by monitoring:

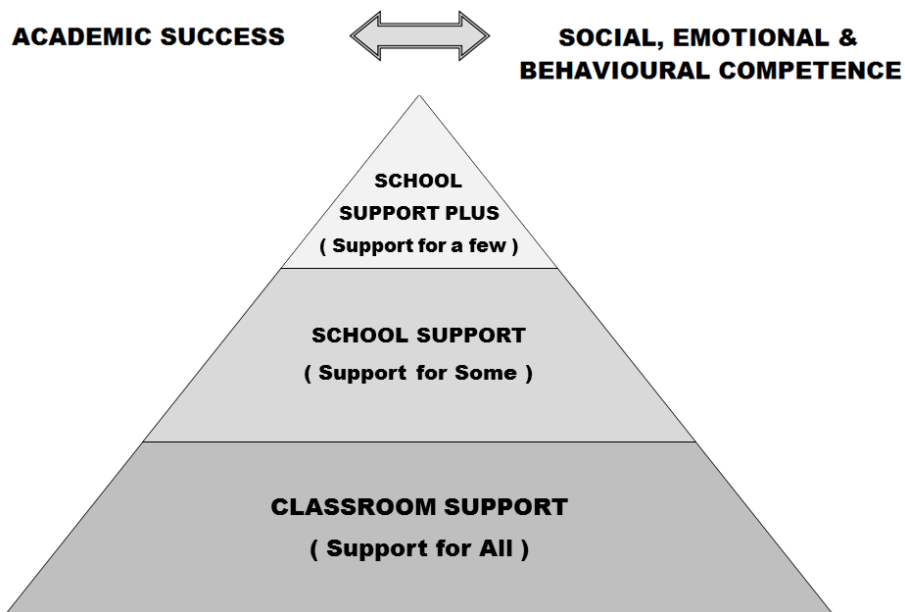
- the standards obtained by children with special needs
- the number of children at each of the three stages: Differentiation within Class, School Action and Resource.
- The level and pattern of help (i.e. average time allocated and the balance of in-class and withdrawal support)
- Views of parents
- Visits from specialist teachers
- Staff views on in-service
- Children's views

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Appendix 1

Student Support File	
Name of Student:	
Date of Birth:	
School:	
Date File Opened:	
Date File Closed:	

A Continuum of Support



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concern. We gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

SUPPORT PLAN**Classroom Support**School Support (Support for SOME)**School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)***To be completed by the Teacher(s)**

For help, see 'SEN, A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', *BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers* pp.71-74; *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers*, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Student's Name:		Age:	
Lead Teacher:		Class/Year:	
Start Date of Plan:			
Review Date of Plan:			
Student's Strengths and Interests:			
Priority Concerns:			
Possible Reasons for Concerns :			
Targets for the Student:			
Strategies to help the Student Achieve the Targets:			
Staff Involved and Resources Needed:			
Signature of Parent(s)/ Guardian(s):			
Signature of Teacher:			

SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD*

Classroom Support

School Support (Support for SOME)

School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.

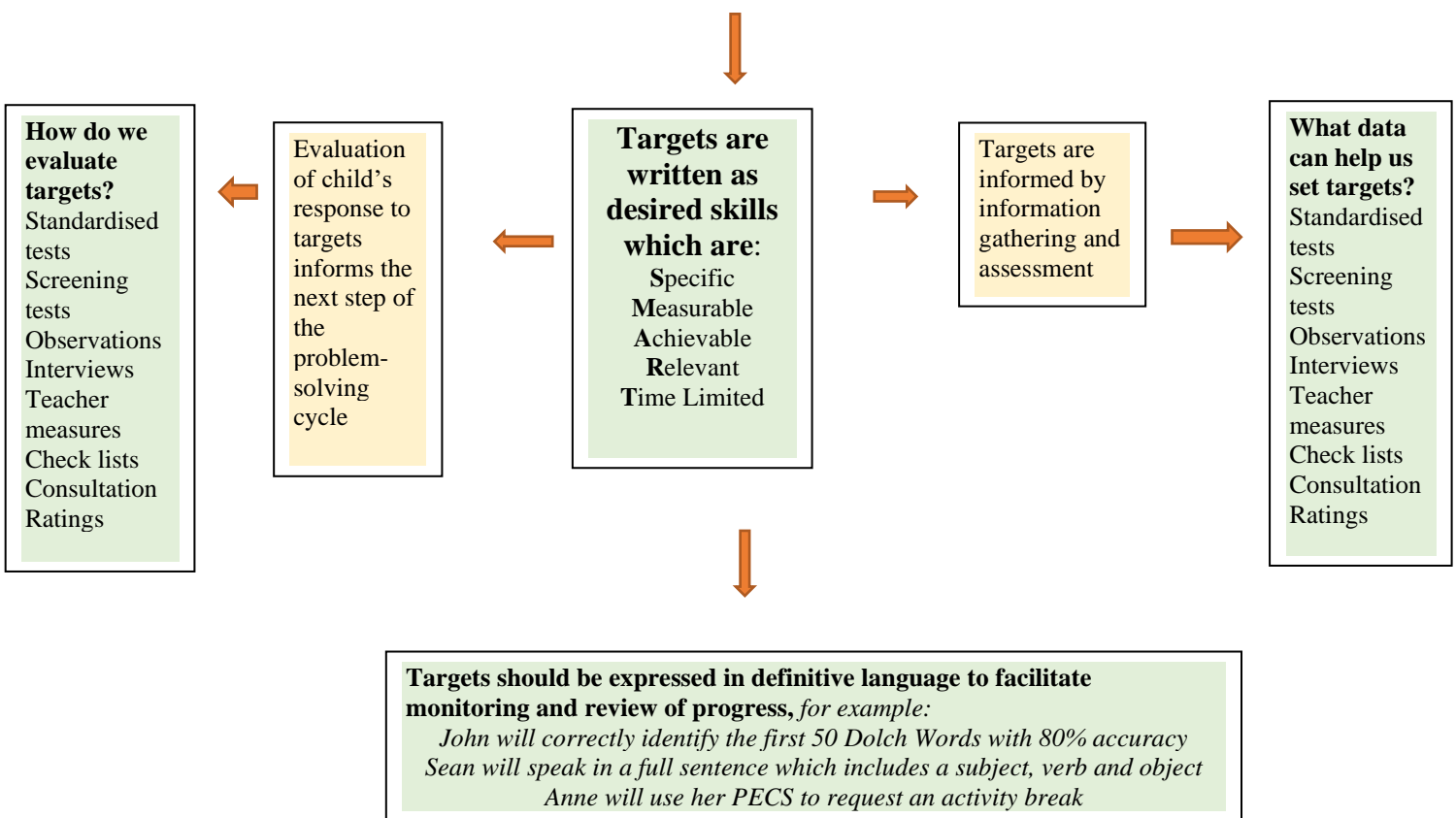
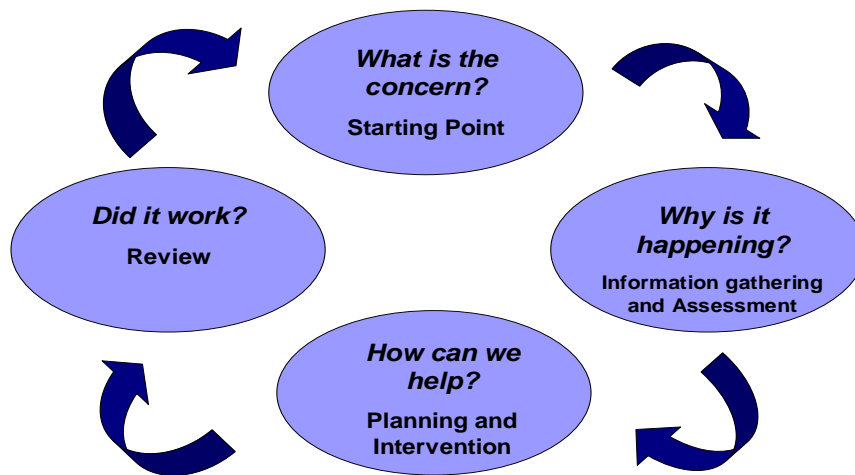
For help, see 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', 'BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers', 'A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers', 'Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools'.

Student's Name:	Class/ Year:
Names of those present at review:	Date of Review:
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?	
Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?	
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan? If so, how?	
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when?	
Any comments from the student?	
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s)?	
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s):	
Signature of teacher(s):	

Outcome of Review (tick as appropriate):			
	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support		Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
	Continue at Current Level of Support		Request consultation with other professionals

*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review

Appendix 2: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving-framework



Appendix 3:

Support Checklist		
Name:	Age:	Class:
General Information:	Date Checked:	Comments:
1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Consulted:		
2. Information from previous school/preschool gathered:		
3. Hearing:		
4. Vision:		
5. Medical Needs:		
6. Basic Needs Checklist Completed:		
7. Assessment of learning- screening:		
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning:		
9. Observation of Behaviour:		
10. Interview with Pupil:		
11. Classroom work differentiated?		
12. Learning environment adapted?		
13. Yard/school environments adapted?		
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
16. Other interventions put in place in school?		
Action needed		

Appendix 4:

Exceptional Ability & Giftedness Policy

Definition and Background:

'An able child is one that achieves or has the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of their peer group. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range'. (Eyre, 1999)

- Children who are considered gifted may have been assessed by a psychologist and found to have a high level of intelligence (an IQ score of 130+, 98th Percentile)
- Giftedness is recognised as a 'disability' or special education condition in the Education Act (1998).

School Ethos:

We, the teaching staff at Howth Road Mixed National School have agreed to cater for those pupils who are exceptionally able in **academic** areas (i.e. the top 2% of the school population).

Those pupils who show exceptional talent in **non-academic** areas e.g. psychomotor ability, mechanical aptitude, visual and performing arts ability, will be given information regarding the relevant outside agencies.

Procedure for identification of pupils with Exceptional Ability

Criteria for Assessment:

1. A range of strategies may be used to identify exceptionally able pupils:

- Annual standardised tests
- NRIT
- Psychological Assessments
- Teacher observation
- Parental requests
- Referral by other individuals, schools or organisations.

2. From first class onwards, pupils who score on or above the 98th percentile in the Micra **and** Sigma tests will then do the NRIT, NVRT and BPVS to gain a more definitive guide of their ability.

3. Where a teacher observes children displaying exceptional ability in a specific academic area, then further assessment may be carried out to establish giftedness. Where it is a non-academic area, the parent will be informed of outside agencies more suited to the development of the pupil's giftedness.

Catering for Pupils with Exceptional Ability:

Pupils who meet the criteria for exceptionally able (IQ of 130+) will be catered for within the classroom based on a differentiated programme of work **or** if deemed possible by the Principal may be offered extension classes on a withdrawal basis, subject to the approval of the pupil and their parents. These classes will form part of each SET's timetable where feasible.

Responsibility and Management:

1. The class teacher is responsible for differentiation within the classroom, including acquisition and distribution of teaching resources for differentiation.

2. The SET team will be responsible for the assessment stage of this process, organisation of extension classes including timetabling (where applicable), acquisition and distribution of information regarding referral and assessment by outside agencies.
3. The Principal will liaise with parents, SETs and class teachers throughout the process.
4. According to guidelines for professional development, costs will be paid by thing BoM to teaching staff who attend in-service training and courses about giftedness.

This policy is subject to review following the issue of NCCA Guidelines or at least every 3 years.

Policy was drafted on ___2021 -2023_____

Ratified by the Board of Management on ____17th October 2023_____

Appendix 5

SNA Needs target form

Name of Pupil	Class	SNA support period	Targeted needs for SNA support	Review Target met Y/N	Further assistance needed Y/N

Appendix 6
IEP Planning/Review Sheet

Name of Student: _____ Class: _____

Progress to Date/ Strengths:

(The nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents)

Areas for Improvement/Presenting Difficulties:

(The nature and degree of the child's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her progress)

(The present level of educational performance of the child)

Summary of Special Educational Needs:

(The special educational needs of the child)

Special Educational Provision:

(The special education and related support services to be provided to the child)

Further Information: