



Parteen National School
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Special and Inclusive Education Policy

The Continuum of Support

The NEPS Continuum of Support provides a structure for a staged approach for supporting students.

The Guidelines for Teachers, Resource Pack for Teachers, Behaviour Emotional and Social Difficulties Guidelines and Student Support File Resources are all available here:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Model-of-Service.html>

The Support Plan template is in the Support File on Aladdin. This one document is used for Classroom Support/ Student Support/ Student Support Plus.

Stage 1: Classroom Support (Support for All)

In order to proactively support students, a number of interventions are in place to address additional needs in the areas of numeracy, literacy, social and emotional learning and development.

Such interventions include:

Literacy-Lift Off in SI-2nd

Graded Reading 3rd-6th

Mata sa Rang in SI-2nd

Station teaching in Literacy and Numeracy.

Teacher differentiation by product, instruction, resource, support and time given to complete tasks.

Building Bridges

Writing Genres

Social Groups

Where specific concerns remain regarding a student's learning or social development, following engagement with some of the above interventions or based on concerns from parent/ teacher or test results, the classroom teacher in consultation with the support teacher will arrange to meet with parents/guardians. At this meeting, a Classroom Support Checklist will be completed. This will be used to inform the next stage of the process. The Student Support File will be opened at the Classroom Support stage.

Three, one month support plans should be created, before moving to Stage 2.

Stage 2: School Support (Support for Some)

If intervention is considered necessary at Stage II, then the student will be referred to the support teacher, for further assessment and/or diagnostic testing. A range of diagnostic tests are noted in our Assessment Policy. If this assessment suggests that support teaching would be beneficial, this will be arranged. The parents and the classroom teacher will be involved with the support teacher in drawing up the School Support Plan which will include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom and during support teaching. Reviews will be carried out in January and June each year by the support teacher in consultation with the classroom teacher, in consultation with parents/guardians, will review the rate of progress of each student receiving support teaching.

If significant concerns remain, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at Stage III.

In the case of students with emotional or behavioural difficulties it is recognised that, in certain circumstances, more urgent action may be required. In these cases the student's needs will, with parents' permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case will 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 a referral for further specialist assessment (Stage III).

Stage 3: School Support Plus (Support for a few)

Some students who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at Stage 3. The school may formally request specialist advice from psychologists, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.

The support teacher, in consultation with the class teacher, relevant specialists and parents, will then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. This programme will be the subject of reviews at January and June each year.

One Plan

There should be one plan for each child, even if they attend various types of support.

Student Support File

Each child in the school has a file on Aladdin which contains student details, results of tests. When a child starts on the Continuum of Support, this support plan is uploaded to Aladdin. Instead of writing the log of actions on the support plan, the log is kept using the notes section of Aladdin, and this adjustment to the Support File template has been noted within the template. All professional reports were scanned and uploaded to Aladdin in 2020/2021. For future reports, the person who receives them should ask the school secretary to scan it, alert the relevant teachers to its presence and store the original in the principal's office. A hard copy file is kept in the principal's office and support teachers must store all continuum of support plans and professional reports there. Details on professional reports, the log of actions on Aladdin etc. do not need to be copied into the support plan.

Class Teacher and Support Teacher Roles in Support Plans

Support teachers organise the planning records for team teaching and class teachers should keep these in their assessment data. Pre and post testing must take place for all team teaching initiatives and details are noted later in this document. Evidence must be available for the reasoning behind how children are grouped, moved between groups and progress being made through team teaching.

Class teachers write the classroom support plans in consultation with the parents and may get advice from their support teacher.

Support teachers write School Support and School Support Plus Plans in consultation with teachers, parents, and where applicable, special needs assistants and relevant professionals e.g. occupational therapist, educational psychologists.

While class teachers are ultimately responsible for all children in their class, the support teacher has a key role to play in supporting children along the Continuum of Support. The class teacher must differentiate appropriately.

Coordination

The Principal and Deputy Principal Coordinate special education.

The Deputy Principal has specific responsibility for the following: Irish Exemptions, assistive technology applications, coordinating NEPS advice, coordinating standardised and diagnostic testing and managing tests/ resources.

The Principal has specific responsibility for the following: Deciding on the amount of support teaching hours for each class and SNA hours for each child, creating draft support teacher timetables, creating SNA timetables, CPD, allocating children to the relevant support teacher and organising access on Aladdin, SNA Reviews, gathering SNA Care Need Reports monthly, coordinating support teacher team meetings and keeping minutes, organising support teacher training, advising the support team on a day-to-day basis and advises class teachers on the continuum of support.

Short and Long Term Planning

For support teachers, the support plan is their long term plan. The agreed short term planning template must also be used. All documents are available on Aladdin in the 'Support' file. On the 10th of the month, support teachers mark the completed short-term targets onto the shared network as their Cuntas Míósúil. SNAs complete a Care Needs questionnaire sent by the principal via email monthly.

Consultation

The support teacher must consult with the current class teacher, previous class teacher or support teacher if relevant, any other professionals involved with the pupil in question and the parents/ guardians when drawing up a support plan.

Pupil Voice

The support teacher should, as appropriate, consult with the child on their needs. The NEPS Document 'My Thoughts About School Checklist' can be used and is available on p.13 here:

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_resource_pack.pdf

Alternatively, the following may be considered or other resources that are widely available online.

A sheet in their support paperwork written in child-friendly language which has:

Pupils own assessment of their strengths and things they are proud of.

Pupils own assessment of their needs- things they find difficult/do not like etc

Pupils own thoughts around their learning and targets

A section from their family about their strengths and things they like /admire about them

A section written by friends/teacher etc.

Pre and Post testing for Team Teaching

When team teaching is taking place, pre testing and post testing must take place to justify the pitching of the content and the progress made.

The Principal, when timetabling, will allocate two support teachers to Literacy-Lift-Off in SI-2nd. For Literacy-Lift Off in SI-2nd the following pre and post-assessments are completed: Burt word reading, Running record, 10 minute writing. The week prior to and after the intervention is given for assessment and planning. While this will be lead by the Lift-Off team (assigned by the principal for a full year each June) they should rotate taking the class with the class teacher to allow for the class teacher to be involved in planning.

For Graded Reading in 3rd-6th: The Principal, when timetabling, will allocate one support teacher to graded reading for 3rd-6th. At the start of September, this teacher will organise, with the class teachers, for the YARC to be administered in 3rd-6th. This will inform station

teaching groups as well as graded reading groups. The week before and after the intervention will be allocated for planning and post assessments. YARK. The following score conversion tool will make the YARK less labour intensive. https://rgt.testwise.net/YARC_index.htm.

For Mata sa Rang, the pre and post test for Senior Infants is the Mata sa Rang Pupil Assessment Summary and for 2nd Class we use a test designed for Parteen National School – this is available in the maths section on Aladdin.

Schedule of Standardised Testing

1st-6th complete Drumcondra Maths, English, Irish and Spelling in May. Senior Infants complete the Micra-T. NRIT is completed at the end of 1st and CAT 4 is completed in 3rd Class.

Screening

Screening for all children for withdrawal will have taken place in June. All children on Sten 1-4 will be withdrawn for Support from the following September, unless a teacher and parent agree that it may not be necessary. A Classroom Support Plan is not necessary if a child scores a STen of 1-4 and support should start in September, although in-class support can also be used depending on the context – see ‘In-Class Support’ below. Any children who were in learning support but recently graduated will be monitored and can be supported through in-class support. If they need to return to support teaching, they do not have to start i=on the classroom support plan stage.

Assessments

A full list of all Diagnostic Assessments is outlined in the Parteen National School Assessment Policy. All assessments are available in the resource cupboard in the new building.

Resources

Resources for Literacy, Numeracy, Fine and Gross Motor Development, Speech and Language, Social Skills and Emotional Events are available in the resource cupboard.

Analysis of Tests

We can assess if a child is academically performing at their ability by comparing the NRIT/ CAT 4 with the standard score of the standardised test. At the start of each year, the principal creates an internal report using Aladdin to compare NRIT/ CAT 4 with performance in standardised test results and highlights significant gaps. This will be triangulated with the teacher’s professional opinion from last year. Common reasons for a significant gap may be: Pupil absence/ disruption due to life events/ poor performance on tests which does not match with teacher opinion, self-assessment and teacher tests. This data can be used for targeted team teaching.

If the gap cannot be explained, after support has been given, they may be referred to NEPS for advice.

NEPS Advice

The Deputy Principal compiles the list of children to be referred for NEPS for advice. Before asking for a child to be referred to NEPS, the teacher should seek advice from colleagues and the principal and deputy principal. Significant resources are available here:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Resources-Publications.html>

Procedure for Identifying Students Requiring Support

The following identification procedure encompasses all current guidelines and general good practice which are informed by Circular 0013/2017 and the *Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (2017).

Circular 0013/2017 states that additional teaching supports are allocated according to identified needs rather than being based on a diagnosis. The level and type of support reflects the specific targets of individual students as set out in their School Support Plan and is informed by careful monitoring and regular review of progress. Following a period of intervention, some students may no longer require additional teaching supports; some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive support.

The principal, in consultation with each class and support teacher will identify students in the following groups who require support teaching:

- Students with complex special educational and additional needs (e.g. students with ASD, dyspraxia, an assessed syndrome, etc.) where such support is deemed necessary.
- Students with a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.).
- Students with a physical impairment (visual, auditory, etc.).
- Students with social, emotional and/or behavioural needs, where such support is deemed necessary.
- Students identified as requiring support in literacy and numeracy, informed by standardised test results, teacher observations and diagnostic tests, where appropriate.
- Students identified as exceptionally able, informed by standardised test results and teacher observations, where there are sufficient resources available to cater for this group.

The principal will update the Class Tracker Document and this will profile each class outlining what children are on Stage 1, 2 and 3 of the continuum of support. The principal will then decide on an allocation of hours and make a recommendation on how this allocation should be divided.

Support Teaching

Support teaching will be implemented in the most appropriate way, taking into account the needs of the student and/or group. This may include co-teaching and/or support through

withdrawal. This decision will be made by the classroom teacher, the SET following consultation with the school principal and deputy principal.

School support through co-teaching

Several approaches to co-teaching are employed in order to support students. These include, but are not limited to:

- Team teaching
- Parallel teaching
- Station teaching
- Lead and support teaching

Effective co-teaching requires the classroom teacher and the SET to co-plan, co-teach and co-assess. Regular professional conversations and reflections must take place between the classroom teacher and the SET to inform planning and teaching.

School support through withdrawal

Where appropriate, students will be withdrawn to receive support teaching. Students will receive support in small groups. If deemed necessary, students may receive individual support.

Tracking and Recording

DES Guidelines (2017) state that monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in School Support Plans.

Each student's progress is monitored using the Support Review Record (contained in the Student Support File) so that class teaching and support teaching continue to be responsive to the student's needs at all times.

Record Keeping

Records are maintained by the Special Education Team and classroom teachers in respect of each student who is in receipt of support teaching. These include a Student Support File and a monthly record (i.e. Cúntas Míosúil) of work completed.

Other records that provide evidence of the student's progress towards agreed learning targets include checklists, running records, samples of written work, etc. All records of this nature are stored in the SET's classroom. Records of a sensitive nature such as professional reports and standardised test results are stored securely on Aladdin and the principal's office, as per data protection regulations. Access to such professional reports is restricted to those who directly support the student.

Continuing/Discontinuing Support Teaching

Where support teaching is to be extended after the agreed period, an updated School Support Plan will be developed. This is done in consultation with the Special Education Co-ordinator, classroom teacher, parents and SET and will reflect any changes that result from the Support Review Record.

Support teaching may be discontinued in the following circumstances:

- The student, on assessment, performs above a STen of 4 or their performance matches their ability.
- Learning targets have been sufficiently met.
- It is considered to be in the student's best interests.

Support will only be withdrawn after consultation with the parents, classroom teacher, SET, principal and student, where appropriate.

Special Needs Assistants

Circular 0030/2014 <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2014/30.pdf> gives specific guidance on the Special Needs Assistant Scheme and this circular is implemented in the school. Special Needs Assistant, the support teacher and class teacher meet at the start of the year and discuss the topics on the 'SNA Discussion Document' available on Aladdin. All special needs assistants and teachers contributed to the topics for discussion and given that all professionals have different styles, it is important to agree on expectations at the start of the year. Special needs assistants complete a monthly care needs questionnaire using Google Forms.

Parental Engagement

We recognise the vital role of parents/ guardians as primary educators in supporting their child and appreciate that parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for students with special educational and additional needs. Parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and the strategies being implemented to support them. They are also involved in reviewing their child's progress. We recognise and respect the parent/guardian's right to choose not to avail of the recommended support for their child. In such circumstances, parents will be requested to inform the principal in writing confirming their position.

If a child, who is already in the school, will be starting support, the class teacher must call the parents/ guardians in June to let them know why support is required.

Support teachers must call the parents/ guardians in June to inform them that they will be the support teacher next year.

All parents/ guardians of children on School Support Plus, will be called to a meeting in September on input for the school support plus plan. The class teacher should be present as

should the special needs assistant. Meetings may take place via Zoom but it is recommended that when a child comes to us we should meet in person to get to know each other.

Irish Exemptions

All applications are examined carefully by the Deputy Principal, all necessary paperwork is prepared and discussed with the Principal before reaching a final decision. A file and copy of all documents is kept in the principal's office. All applications for Irish exemption are as per terms and conditions Circular 52/2019: https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0052_2019.pdf

June Consultations

Standardised testing typically takes place at the end of May and beginning of June. At that stage, the principal can update the class tracker sheets and identify who should avail of support for the following year. The principal will then create draft timetables and allocate the support teachers their caseloads. The principal will allocate specific teachers to Literacy-Lift-Off, Graded Reading and Mata sa Rang for the year ahead and these teachers will create a timetable for the year ahead based on the number of classes in the school. Support teachers must consult with their class teachers on their individual timetable in June so the timetable can be finalised and support teaching can start without delay in the new school year. Also, in June, support teachers should consult with the existing class teacher, support teacher and SNA on the child's new support plan as this is when they will have the most up-to-date information.

Signed: pp Deirdre Goode Date:5/5/21

Chairperson of BOM

Review Date:5/5/22