

Whole School Policy for the Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Scoil Choca Naofa

Feb 2013

1. Aims and Objectives

The Mission Statement of Scoil Choca Naofa enshrines the right of all the pupils to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education. The aim of this policy is to outline our whole-school approach to supporting the teaching/learning of pupils with special educational needs in Scoil Choca Naofa and to provide information and guidance to staff and parents on the deployment and organisation of the teaching resources allocated to Scoil Choca Naofa

2. Background

Underpinning our policy are the following documents:

- The Education Act (1998) - the Board of Management of Scoil Choca Naofa is required to have and implement a policy that allows for maximum accessibility to the school. It requires that the educational needs of all students are identified and provided for by the school by means of support with teaching and learning 'appropriate to .. abilities and needs' (Part II, Section 9).
- DES guidelines on Learning Support (2000)
- Resources provided by the Department of Education and Science (Sp Ed 02/05)

3. Roles and Responsibilities of personnel within the school

The Board of Management whose role is to develop, support and monitor school policy on learning support and special needs. (LSG p. 38)

The principal – Breda Fay who has overall responsibility for the school's learning and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs. (LSG ps. 38 – 39)

Coordinator: one of the SETs will be appointed as coordinator of SEN education; he/she will work with the SEN team to

- (a) liaise between special education team, mainstream teachers and principal
- (b) oversee timetabling and resources
- (c) organise for the annual update of policy in consultation with all the partners in the school.

Class Teachers: *"First-Line responsibility for the progress of all children in her class, including those for supplementary teaching"*. (LSG ps. 42 – 45)

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her class including those selected for supplementary teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of the school plan on learning support the class teacher should:

- Implement teaching programmes, which optimise the learning of all pupils and to the greatest extent possible prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and in mathematics from 1st to 6th class by administering and scoring Standardised Tests.

For each pupils who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, the class teacher should

- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, adjust the classroom programmes to suit the needs of the child
- collaborate with the learning support teacher in the development of a learning programme.

With regard to teaching pupils with special needs, the following general approaches and methods are recommended

- Group teaching
- Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
- Place emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
- Provide pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy

- Set learning targets at an appropriate level
- Provide learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
- Carry out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty
- Setting up "buddy systems" in class [high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers, peer tutoring, paired reading]

A key feature of successful learning support is a high level of consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and SETs.

The DES sanctions staffing in Special Education

1. General Allocation (GA) which is dependent on enrolment
2. Allocation of support for children with particular categories of Low Incident Learning Difficulties

The SEN team will collectively allocate their time to the support of children with SEN and the teachers in whose classes there are children with SEN.

Special consideration will be given to

- **in-class support/intervention programmes, including team teaching and station teaching;**
- **class teacher providing support (especially in Infant classes) for children with SEN while support personnel class teach;**

SNAs

The role of the SNA is primarily to provide in-class support in order to facilitate the inclusion of special needs students in mainstream classes.

4. Internal Provisions

4.1 Prevention Strategies

The staff of Scoil Choca emphasise the importance of prevention. Our strategies of prevention include

- The provision of a STIMULATING and PRINT RICH environment;
- A comprehensive Language Programme;
- Small numbers in Infant Classes when enrolment figures allow;
- A wide variety of approaches to the teaching of reading – Language Experience approach, development of sight vocabulary, graded reading schemes, novels, peer tutoring, paired reading, audio presentation of books, etc.
- Whole school programmes on Phonological and phonemic awareness
- Early identification of difficulties.
- Implementing class programme designed to enhance learning and prevent learning difficulties
- Provision of support to whole class by SE Team prioritising Junior-Second Classes and multi-grade classes.
- Provision of appropriate support in the classroom for pupils for whom supplementary teaching has been discontinued/reduced
- Support and direction for parents with literacy and numeracy e.g. paired reading talk

4.2 Intervention

Team projects, including Aistear, peer tutoring, may be implemented in classes with attention focussed on children who require particular assistance in the area.

4.3 Assessment & Reporting

Identification of special needs i.e. the needs of children who have a disability and the educational needs of exceptionally able students (Education Act).

Concerns about children arise in a number of ways:

1. At enrolment, **parents** might inform the Principal of a concern. Any assessment of need or reports will be submitted. Parents are welcome at any time to discuss concerns and progress with class teacher or SET.
2. **Class Teacher** following day to day observation and/or class designed tasks or tests may have a concern regarding a child in their class.
3. Concerns may arise following **standardised testing**.
4. With regard to a child with special needs being enrolled, assessment recommendations or Assessment of Needs document will be forwarded to Mary McAuliff, Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) requesting the appropriate allocation of resources.

4.4 Recording and storage of records

We have decided to use the templates for all plans, questionnaires and report from continuum guidelines. At the end of every month each teacher is required to provide a written summary of the work covered in the various subjects (Rule 126 of Rules for Primary School)

4.5 Testing Procedure

Class	Time	Test
Junior Infants	Term 3	Reading Readiness screening test (devised by SEN team) BIAP
Senior Infants	Term 3	MIST Drumcondra Senior Infant Maths Test
First	Term 1 Term 3	DPRT DPMT QUEST Screening /Diagnostic
Second	May	NRIT Level 1 DPRT DPMT
Third	May	DPRT DPMT
Fourth	May	NRIT Level 2 DPRT DPMT
Fifth	May	DPRT DPMT
Sixth	May	DPRT DPMT

Children admitted to Scoil Choca during the school year may be assessed using a range of appropriate tests.

5. Staged Approach for Support for children with emerging special educational needs.

Stage 1(SP ED 02/05)

According to the Guidelines for Learning Support, initial identification by parent/class teacher observation will be based on observation, simple teacher-designed checklists, etc. Parents' sensibilities are addressed by involving parents at this earliest stage. The teacher will consult with the parent about aspects of literacy, numeracy and/or social/emotional development that might require attention. She will draw up a modified programme within her own classroom and the pupil's progress will be evaluated and reviewed at a date agreed between teacher and parent. If there is still concern, the parent will be advised that the child will see a support teacher for diagnostic testing and perhaps supplementary teaching. Supplementary teaching will also be reviewed at an agreed date.

Stage 2 (DES LS GUIDELINE p. 57)

Following Stage 1 support by Class teacher, it might be necessary for the SE Teacher to administer diagnostic tests and implement an intervention programme. This programme may be delivered in the class setting or in a small group situation in the LSRT Room. Parents will be consulted prior to delivery of any programme and their support will be requested.

The main impetus of the programme will be to facilitate access to a broad relevant curriculum through development of the child's self-esteem in her abilities as a learner. It may involve

- Modification of the curriculum;
- Modification of the learning environment;
- Integrating the child into an appropriate and perhaps less restrictive environment;
- Pre-empting, consolidating and revising what is happening in the classroom;
- Implementing specific class programmes to provide equal opportunities for all children to participate;
- Timetabling of creative and social activities for 'whole class' involvement;
- Implementing special programmes for children with specific needs e.g. ~~reading recovery~~, Toe By Toe, PAT programme, and auditory and/or visual discrimination programmes, IT, Motor skill development, social skill programmes, etc;
- Facilitating as far as we can programmes recommended by multi-disciplinary personnel;
- Being flexible in response to learning opportunities as they arise during the year; acquiring, replacing and updating materials and resources essential for good quality teaching;
- Encourage the development of independence, support pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour;

- Recognise that children have different talents and learning styles
 - Liaise with post-primary schools or services.
1. ***Priority for support will be given to children who fall below the 10th Percentile in English Standardised Tests throughout the school. Consideration will also be given to the class teacher's recommendation and/or results of class assessment tests: diagnostic tests will be administered to these children to ascertain their strengths and weakness and to inform future learning plans – they may not be selected for out-of-class support.**
 2. ***Priority for support in Maths will be given to children who fall below the 10th Percentile in Maths Standardised Tests throughout the school. Consideration will also be given to the class teacher's recommendation and/or results of class assessment tests: diagnostic tests will be administered to these children to ascertain their strengths and weakness and to inform future learning plans – they may not be selected for out-of-class support.**

Provision for support may be made in a combination of ways, depending on the needs of the child, class teachers' needs and the needs of other children:

- A pupil may work as a member of a mainstream class, supported by an additional member of staff within a mixed ability classroom.
- Specific Time Frames (instructional term 13/20 weeks)
- A pupil may work as a member of a small group of children supported by an additional member of staff within a mixed ability classroom.
- A pupil may be supported individually, carrying out her own programme of work within the classroom situation.
- A group of pupils with a common need may be withdrawn from the class for intensive tuition daily to work on a programme of remediation or support. This programme might be presented by a SET; the class teacher might present it while the SET pursues another programme with the class.
- In some circumstances and in accordance with recommended good practice, a teacher may withdraw a pupil individually for the delivery of a specialised intervention programme. It is important to remember that all programmes should prioritise the inclusion of the child within a mainstream class activities and withdrawal will not be a long-term method of support.

Stage 3 Following Assessment or consultation with NEPS

Having consulted with NEPS psychologist assigned to school, class teacher and parents, a psychological assessment may be arranged. The procedures laid down by the D.E.S. and N.E.P.S. will be strictly followed.

Following the receipt of the assessment report further assessment might be required e.g. Speech and Language Assessment, Medical Assessment, Psychiatric Evaluation. Results of these assessments will be forwarded with SER 1 and 2 and Application for Resources Form to SENO for appropriate resources.

6. Drafting and implementing an Individual Education Plans

CLASS TEACHER AND PARENT SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THIS PROCESS FROM START

Upon allocation of Resources Teaching hours to a pupil, a member of the Special Needs Team and class teacher will meet the parents to discuss the needs of the child and how they can be best supported at home and in school. This information, the information of the assessment report and any information provided by class teacher, psychologist, therapist, etc., will be used to draw up an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The aim of the IEP will be to support as far as possible the integration of the child with special needs into the mainstream setting.

The IEP Template from Continuum will be used

A copy of the IEP will be given/available to the class teacher to enable the continuation/reinforcement the work within the class setting. IEPs are reviewed regularly. Parents are invited to meet the SET regularly as continued input from home is vital if progress is to be made.

The Special Needs team will meet regularly to review all pupils and meeting of the team and the principal will take place monthly.

7. Monitoring Progress

Class teacher concerns should be noted in Report Book. Records, assessments and IEPs are evaluated and reviewed every term by the support team. Programmes are added to, modified or reapplied as required to ensure that children sense success

and achievement.

Current good practice recommends keeping **only one copy of a child's psychological assessment report** in the school. This will be held in the principal's office.

8. Liaison with Parents

The Parent/Guardian is important in the planning, implementation and review process and should keep school informed of any difficulties and of course successes they notice.

9. Communication Strategies

Regular communication between class teachers, support personnel and parents is important. The **SET** will set aside a time each week to discuss current provisions provided by the support personnel.

It is important to remember that the **class teacher** holds ultimate responsibility for the children in her class and any reports to parents should be firstly discussed with her. At the beginning of the school year, a timetable for the supervision of mainstream classes will be drawn up to allow class teachers to collaborate with Special needs personnel in the planning for special needs children in their class.

Parent/teacher meeting will allow for parents to be informed of their children's progress in class. However, any concern about a child will be discussed with parent at the earliest convenience.

Transfer to Second Level: annual meeting of 6th Class teacher and Principal with proposed Year Head and Principal of Scoil Dara

10. Continuing/Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

Support is currently allocated on the basis of diminishing needs as the child progresses through school (SNA): with this in mind we try to ensure that children are not withdrawn year after year for supplementary teaching and that we strive to develop maximum independence in all our children.

11. Staff Development

As stated in the opening paragraph of this policy, all teachers are teachers of Special Needs children. The Board of Management therefore encourages teachers to up-skill themselves and teachers are encouraged to pursue personal development through attendance at courses.

To allow all teachers the experience of teaching in a SET situation consideration will be given to rotating personnel between posts in mainstream and special education. In accordance with class allocation procedures, teachers are invited in Term 2/Term 3 to indicate their preference for class; the Principal who has overall responsibility for class allocation makes every effort to accommodate those choices.

12. Monitoring and Review of Policy

Monitoring of this policy is an ongoing procedure. School personnel will discuss year's work and collaborate in plans for the next year. Principal will provide a report to BOM on Special Ed. Based on the outcome of this discussion. A letter might be sent to parents in order to outline new guidelines e.g. on Learning Support so that they are aware of changes that might affect school policy

Review Date: January 2014

Signature of Chairperson BOM: _____.