

St John the Baptist Infant Girls' School
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Scoil Eoin Baisde Cailíní Naoidh
Bóthar Ghort na Mara
Cluain Tarbh
Baile Átha Cliath 3

Principal: Dearbhla O'Driscoll
Acting Deputy Principal: Fiona Gearty
Chair, Board of Management: Paul Nolan

Whole School Policy for Special Educational Needs Provision

Aims of the Policy Document

The aim of this policy document is to inform the Board of Management, teachers and parents of the procedures which are followed by the school in identifying and catering for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).

Mission Statement

St. John the Baptist Infant Girls' School is a parish school and is guided in all its work by the Catholic ethos. We share with our community the responsibility for providing a rich, challenging and secure learning environment for all the children in our care. The values of truth, justice and compassion are modelled, promoted and celebrated.

As a community of learners, we recognise the diversity of learning styles, talents and needs amongst our pupils. We encourage their efforts and celebrate their success believing this is the key to developing positive attitudes, self-esteem and confidence in our students.

Beliefs and Principles

Our school is committed to a policy of inclusive education, in accordance with the Education Act 1998, the Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN) 2004. As a school community, we recognise that there is a continuum of special educational needs, ranging from mild to severe and from transient to long term. In response to the continuum of SEN we implement the staged approach to assessment and intervention as outlined in Special Educational Circular 02/05 and the Special Educational Needs, Guidelines for Teachers (NEPS, 07).

The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning

Stage I

If a class teacher or parent has concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of certain pupils, they should draw up a classroom support plan for extra help to be implemented within a 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 class teacher should then organise for the administration of diagnostic screening, which may include standard checklists, profiles and standardised, norm-referenced tests as well as behavioural checklists where appropriate. A member of the special education support team will be consulted at this stage.

Stage II

If intervention is considered necessary at stage II, then the pupil should be referred to the SET, for further diagnostic testing. If this diagnostic assessment suggests that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this should be arranged with parental permission.(Appendix 4). The parents and the class teacher should be involved with the learning support/resource teacher in the implementation of the learning programme.

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.

The learning support/resource teacher and the class teacher in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a 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 teacher.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Stage I – Classroom Support

Class Teacher – The class teacher liaises with the parents regarding the decision to initiate the classroom support process. She should maintain a record of relevant information which will be used should more detailed intervention be required at stage II, (school support level). She will also keep the supporting teachers and principal informed.

Learning support / Resource Teacher – The supporting teacher will provide advice and resources to the class teacher, which will assist her in the assessment process and in the development of a classroom support plan.

Other Professionals e.g. educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, speech and language therapists, visiting teachers etc., may be involved indirectly at this stage offering consultation and advice in relation to appropriate approaches for pupils presenting with early difficulties.

Stage II – School Support

Class Teacher - The class teacher consults with the supporting teacher/s, principal and pupil's parents about initiating the school support process. She will continue to provide classroom support as agreed in the school support plan.

Learning Support / Resource Teacher – The learning support/ resource teacher will provide additional support to the pupil as agreed in the school support plan. She will maintain a record of relevant information, which would provide a basis for more detailed intervention if required at stage III (school support plus level). The learning support/ resource teacher will liaise with class teacher and parents on a regular basis.

Other professionals - At this stage other professionals may provide a consultation service to teachers. They may also give advice in relation to appropriate assessment and intervention approaches for particular pupils.

Stage III – School Support Plus

Class Teacher – The class teacher contributes to assessment and planning and continues to provide support at classroom level as agreed in the school support plus plan.

Co-ordinating teacher – Once stage III is initiated the co-ordinating teacher takes on the lead responsibility for the school support plus process. Her duties involve,

- Reviewing the outcomes of interventions detailed in the classroom and school support plans.
- Co-ordinating the assessment of the pupils learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and identification of special educational needs involving, as appropriate, and with parental consent, relevant other agencies in the process.
- Liaising with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENO) as appropriate.

Supporting Teacher/s – The support teacher/s will be involved in both the assessment and intervention process. They may provide additional support as agreed in school support plus plan (IEP). They co-ordinate the development of the school support plus plan (IEP). They monitor and support interventions and review the IEP, working alongside the class teacher, support teachers, other professionals and involving the pupil's parents.

The Special Needs Assistant – In some cases the SENO will sanction a special needs assistant (SNA) to work with a pupil/ pupils and the class teacher. The special needs assistant will provide support to a child with SEN or offer wider support in the classroom. The role of the SNA will change depending on the individual needs of the pupils who are being supported.

Other professionals - At this stage other professionals may provide a consultation service to teachers, pupils and parents. They may also give advice in relation to appropriate assessment and intervention approaches for particular pupils.

Parental Roles and Responsibilities

As parents are the primary educators of their children, we recognise they play a significant role in their children's education and development. Thus, parents will be expected to:

- Liaise with the school on a regular basis
- Provide information regarding their child's special educational needs
- Inform the school of any intervention from other professionals e.g. speech and language therapist, psychologist, neurologist etc.
- Provide additional help at home to support their child's SEN, as agreed in the classroom support plan (stage I) or the school support plan (stage II) or the school support plus plan (stage III – IEP).

Allocation of Additional Teaching Support

In response to the continuum of SEN in our school, we implement the staged approach to identification, assessment and intervention of special educational needs. When children go beyond stage I on the staged approach the following criteria for additional teaching support apply in our school.

Criteria for additional support

1. Pupils with significant special educational needs arising from low incidence disabilities for whom the school has been given specific individual allocations of resource teaching hours. (Appendix 1)
2. Pupils with significant special educational needs who have been identified as being at stage III through the application of the staged approach to intervention.
3. Pupils whose achievement is at or below the 12th percentile on a standardised reading or mathematics test. (Appendix 5)
4. Infant pupils scoring below the critical level on checklists.
5. Pupils with special educational needs including mild language difficulties, mild downs syndrome, social and emotional difficulties, mild coordination and attention control difficulties e.g. dyspraxia, ADD, ADHD and ODD, who have been identified as being at stage II of the staged approach. (Pupils with moderate to severe incidence of the above conditions may be included in the low incidence category and receive individual allocation of support through the SENO)

6. Pupils who have special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities such as borderline mild general learning disability, mild general learning disability and specific learning disability, who have been identified as being at stage II of the staged approach.
7. Pupils who experience difficulties in Literacy and Numeracy and are identified as being at stage II of the stage approach.

Information Gathering and Assessment

Whole School Procedure for Identification/Screening/Referral of Pupils

- Phonics/ Literacy

Assessment of Junior Infants

There is ongoing assessment throughout the year for all Junior Infant children. This assessment takes the form of teacher observation, the use of checklists and regular testing of numbers, letters, sounds, words etc.

December: The children are tested on their first ten letters and sounds and are then grouped according to ability.

June: The children are tested on numbers 1-5, all 26 letters and their sounds and the sight words from the reading programme.

Assessment of Senior Infants

September: There is an initial assessment in September for all Senior Infant children.

Children who are experiencing difficulties, or are new to the school, are placed in two small groups for phonics lessons, according to ability. The remainder of the children are grouped by ability.

October: Naming the letters and their sounds and writing these letters are tested again in October. Groups are then rearranged into four groups for phonics according to results and teacher observation.

February: Senior Infants are retested in February. The test is based on basic CVC words (written). The children write a three word and a five word sentence. Once again the groups are rearranged according to test results.

June: In June the Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) is administered. Girls who experience difficulty with this test will receive extra help in First Class.

All children in Senior Infants are tested on an ongoing basis throughout the year using checklists for word recognition from the class readers and teacher observation for language development and mathematical ability. Children who are experiencing difficulty will receive help as per the staged approach.

Standardised Tests:

At the end of May each year the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test and the Sigma-T Primary Maths Test are administered to all children in first by the class teachers. The results will be used to guide teacher planning in class. The results will also be used to screen pupils for learning support.

Writing and Storing Records of Tests: The class teacher scores the tests and writes up the results. One copy of these results is kept on file in the filing cabinet in the office and another is kept in the Learning Support Room. The Principal, class teacher, National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) psychologist and the learning support teacher may access these results at any time. Parents may have access to their own child's results. The results are kept in the school until the child is 21 years of age.

Reporting to Parents: The Principal will contact the child's parents when it is considered that a child would benefit from learning support. The learning support /resource teacher will meet the parents of their pupils at the annual parent/teacher meetings. The learning support/resource teacher may contribute to the pupil's end of year report.

Initial Assessment- Stage I

The class teacher will gather information to make an initial assessment of the pupil's additional or special educational needs, including the pupil's strengths and needs. This information will be used to inform planning at classroom support level.

Types of assessment:

- Classroom support checklist (Appendix 2)
- Samples of Work
- Observations of pupil's learning and behaviour
- Results from screening tests

- Results from other class tests

School Support- Stage II

The school support process involves further assessment and information gathering which will inform the development of a school support plan

Types of assessment:

- Information gathered for classroom support plan
- Results of standardised screening tests
- Results of diagnostic assessments
- Observations of pupil's learning styles
- Observations of pupil's behaviour in the classroom and on yard.
- Information from parents on pupil's health and development, pupil's learning and behaviour at home and any other factors which may be contributing to child's difficulties.
- Information from other professionals including health and social services, voluntary agencies and educational welfare board.

School Support Plus- Stage III

The school support plus process may involve gathering further information to inform the assessment process and develop a school support plan (IEP). The co-ordinating teacher with parental consent may request the involvement of appropriate external professionals e.g. educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, psychiatrists, visiting teachers, occupational therapist or speech and language therapist).

The NEPS psychologist can play a key role in the intervention process at this level. S/he may collaborate with teachers and parents in clarifying problems through consultation and further joint assessment.

Types of Intervention

Stage I

Classroom teacher develops classroom support plan to meet child's special educational needs. They may adapt the child's learning environment and /or differentiate the curriculum as necessary. (Appendix 3)

Stage II

A school support plan is developed and depending on the nature of the needs, the additional teaching might be within a small group or individual or a combination of both, either in class or on a withdrawal basis.

Stage III

A school support plus plan (IEP) is drawn up based on the information gathered and depending on the nature of the needs, the additional teaching might be within a small group or individually or a combination of both, either in class or on a withdrawal basis.

Other professionals external to school, with parental consent, may be involved in working with the pupil directly or in an advisory capacity.

One to One Teaching

- It is the policy of the school that one teaching is only undertaken if it is the best interest of the child
- Every effort will be made to ensure that this teaching takes place in an open environment. The support room will have a glass panel in the door and if there is not a glass panel the classroom door will remain open allowing the occupants to be visible at all times
- Parents of the children who are to be involved in one-to-one teaching will be informed and their agreement sought

Monitoring and Reviewing

Stage I

The classroom support plan should include a review date. The review process may involve the class teacher and parents and should focus on,

- The pupils response to learning/behavioural interventions
- Progress made by the pupil
- The effectiveness of the action taken
- Suggested next steps

If the teacher and parents consider that the pupil is making progress towards the targets set it may be decided to continue with the same plan. If progress remains satisfactory after the review no further classroom support plans may be necessary. If it is agreed that the pupil is not making adequate progress it may be decided to implement an alternative classroom support plan or to initiate the school support process (stage II).

Stage II

The coordinating teacher will arrange a review meeting between the teacher/s and parents. The review process should focus on

- The progress the pupil has made
- The effectiveness of the school support strategies
- The parents views on progress made at home
- Agreed next steps

If the pupil's progress is considered to be satisfactory, additional targets and a review date may be agreed or it may be decided that the pupil no longer requires a school support plan and a classroom support plan may be agreed. If pupil's progress is less than expected revised targets and strategies are agreed and a date for further review arranged. If the pupil's SEN continue to create a significant barrier to his/her learning and/or socialisation then the school support plus process (stage III) should be initiated.

Stage III

The co-ordinating teacher should organise a review meeting with teacher/s, parents, and other professionals as necessary. The review process should focus on

- Pupil's progress towards targets agreed
- Any new information and assessment results
- Effectiveness of the strategies used
- Effectiveness of the equipment/material provided
- Future action

If the pupil's progress has been satisfactory an updated school support plus plan (IEP) may be drawn up and a review date agreed. If progress remains satisfactory all concerned may decide that the pupil no longer needs such an intensive level of support and it may be decided that the pupil's needs may be met by having a school support plan in place (stage II). If the pupil's progress has not been satisfactory a new or adapted plan should be drawn up.

Outside Agency Reports:

Outside Agency Reports will not be released from this school to any other school without a signed release form from parents / guardians.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Appendix 1

Templates for Classroom Support

PUPIL SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Pupil	
Date of Birth	
School	
Classes and class teachers to date	
Support teachers to date	
Assessment results to date (school year &	

standard score)	
Diagnosis	
Information from outside agencies	
Exemption from Irish	
Date File Opened	
Date File Suspended/Closed	

Sample Document

PUPIL SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Pupil	Mary Other
Date of Birth	00.00.'00
School	A Nother school
Classes and class teachers to date	J. Inf. & Sen. Inf. (Mr. Murphy) 1 st (Ms. Kelly)
Support teachers to date	None
Assessment results to date (school year & standard score)	MICRA-T (June 2017) - 82 SIGMA-T (June 2017) - 79
Diagnosis	None
Information from outside agencies	Refer to confidential file re. involvement of Barnardos

Exemption from Irish	No
Date File Opened	
Date File Suspended/Closed	

Log of Actions / Meetings	
Date	Actions / Meetings

Notes:

“The ‘Log of Actions / Meetings’ page is a very beneficial page to have a look back on. For example, if the class teacher recommends a speech and language referral to parents, that should be logged, along with follow up actions. If that is done, the next teacher will be able to see what is done and know what to do next and therefore information can be built up in a single file.”

Classroom Support Checklist	
Name:	Class:
General Information	Comments
1. Parents/ Guardians consulted	
2. Information from previous preschool/school/teacher gathered	
3. Hearing	
4. Vision	
5. Medical Needs	
6. Observation of learning style/approach to learning	
7. Observation of behaviour	
8. Interview with pupil	
9. Classroom work differentiated?	
10. Learning environment adapted?	
11. Yard/school environments adapted?	
12. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?	
Action needed	

Notes:

“The checklist is very useful. You will probably ask all the questions the first time it is used with any individual pupil. The responses can be used to good effect each school year. However, some questions may not need to be asked every year (e.g. Q. 2). It might be useful for clarity to identify the source of the information provided in the comments section, i.e. from the class teacher, the parent, etc.”

Sample Document

Classroom Support Checklist	
Name: Maria Other	Class: Second
General Information	Comments
1. Parents/ Guardians consulted	Attended language therapist before starting school. Date(s) unknown. No reports available.
2. Information from previous preschool/school/teacher gathered	None.
3. Hearing	Appears to be fine (parents).
4. Vision	Appears to be fine (parents).
5. Medical Needs	None reported
6. Observation of learning style/approach to learning	Listening and concentration poor. Doesn't contribute in class (class teacher). Unable to follow basic instructions (class teacher & parents).
7. Observation of behaviour	Cooperative. Little interaction with her peers. Appears happy in class and yard (class teacher).
8. Interview with pupil	N/A
9. Classroom work differentiated?	Visual cues used. Instructions repeated to her on one to one basis (class teacher).
10. Learning environment adapted?	Moved her to front of class facing teacher.
11. Yard/school environments adapted?	N/A
12 Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?	Parents to request information from speech & language therapist.
Action needed	Classroom Support Plan

Notes:

Support Plan			
Pupil's name		DOB	
Lead teacher		Class	
Start date of plan			
Review date of plan			
Pupil's strengths and interests:			
Our priority concerns are:			
Possible reasons for concerns:			
Target(s) for the pupil:			
Strategies to help the pupil achieve the targets:			
Staff involved and resources needed:			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher(s)			

“The Support Plan is the learning plan part of the Support File. It can be called a ‘Classroom Support Plan’ (involving the child, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the class teacher) or a ‘School Support Plan’ (involving the class teacher and support teacher) or a ‘School Support Plus’ (involving the class teacher, support teacher, NEPs etc.).”

Sample Priority Concerns and Targets

Sample Priority Concern: Spelling

Sample Targets

- Pupil X will be enabled to **spell Dolch List 1**, assessed as spelling the words correctly on 3 consecutive occasions.
- Pupil X will be enabled to use the following **spelling strategy** Look, Cover, Write, Check assessed through teacher/parent observation of X successfully using this strategy.”

Sample Document

Classroom Support Plan

Pupil's name	Mary Other	DOB	00/00/'00
Lead teacher	Mr. Price (class teacher)	Class	2 nd
Start date of plan	07.11.2017		
Review date of plan	17.12.2017 (Mr. Price + parent(s)/guardian(s))		
Our concerns are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mary has difficulty following instructions.- Mary is reluctant to speak in class.			
Possible reasons for concerns: <p>Mary doesn't understand some of what teacher is saying. Maybe she doesn't realise/understand teacher is speaking to her as well as the rest of the class.</p>			
Target(s) for the pupil: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understand simple instructions.2. Volunteer information in class.			
Strategies to help the pupil achieve the targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaking slowly, calling Mary's name, using visual clues.• Use of home-school scrapbook with pictures to stimulate discussion and understanding of 'wh' questions and categories of words, e.g. where is...?, What do we do with...?, clothes, school things etc.			
Staff involved and resources needed:			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			

Review 1 Record Sheet

Pupil's name		Class	
Persons present at review		Date	
Our original concerns were:			
Where are we now?			
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when?			
Outcome of review (tick as appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revert to previous level of support – Support for All / Classroom Support OR Support for Some / School Support.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue at current level of support.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress to next level of support – Support for Some / School Support OR Support for a Few / School Support Plus.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request consultation with other professionals.		
Signature of parent(s) / guardian (s)			
Signature of teacher(s)			

Appendix 2

Standardised Tests

Senior Infants

- **Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)**

This is administered during the child's fifth term in school January / February of Senior Infants.

First Class

- **Quest Screening Test**

This is administered in September of First Class

- **MICRA-T SIGMA-T**

These are administered in May of First Class.

Appendix 3

Release Letter

Dear Mrs. O Driscoll,

I _____, give permission for all reports relating to my daughter
_____ (as ticked below) to be released to Belgrove Senior Girls'
School.

Signed _____
(Parent / Guardian)

Educational Psychological Report	
Clinical Psychological Report	
Speech and Language Therapy Report	
Occupational Therapy Report	
Physiotherapy Report	
Any Other Outside Agency Report	