

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

INTRODUCTION

This policy was discussed and reviewed by the whole staff at Navan Educate Together NS (NETNS) in September 2019, circulated to staff and families, finalised, and then ratified by the Board of Management in October 2019. It is the policy of this school to regard and include each child as an equally valued member of the school community.

RATIONALE

This review was carried out in order to:

- cater for the enrolment of pupils with special education needs in a mainstream setting;
- discuss and review inclusive practices in the school;
- streamline the provision of Special Education Needs (SEN) support in the school; and
- Monitor and cater for the needs of all children on the SEN register, e.g. those who traditionally attend Learning support and exceptionally able children.

Additionally we aim to fulfil our obligations under the following Acts:

- Education Act (1998)
- Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- Disability Act (2005)
- Education for Persons with Special Education Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004)

SITUATION

NETNS is an equality based primary school catering for children from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers and parents and other interested parties on the provision of effective learning support to pupils; experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties or who are deemed as high achievers.

NETNS is a mainstream school with three primary age units for children with ASD.

The number of staff on the SEN team varies from year to year. Currently, for the 2019/2020 school year we have 4 full time Special Education Teachers (SETs). Please see the staff section in the School Plan for up to date details.

AIMS AND ETHOS

As an Educate Together school, we believe in a child-centred, fully inclusive approach. This is done in conjunction with the core values of Educate Together, namely co-education, equality based, child-centeredness and democracy. Our vision is to create an environment where every member of our community feels happy, safe and able to learn. We aim to help each student develop his or her potential to the full. We aim to ensure all students feel valued and value others equally within the school community. We aim to provide regular opportunities for our staff to attend professional development courses in the domain of Special Educational Needs so that they may bring back new knowledge and expertise that should benefit the our students.

This policy will help us to:

- enable pupils of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education;
- outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to pupils with special needs;
- outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to supporting the learning of pupils with special needs; and
- Establish communication structures for the involvement of all the partners (parents, class teachers, SEN team and SNA) in the education of pupils with special needs.

ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN WITH IDENTIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In keeping with the EPSEN Act 2004, section 2, a SEN child will be in an inclusive environment with children who do not have SEN where this is in the best interests of all of the children involved.

Prior to a child's enrolment, relevant staff in the school will familiarise themselves with the child's particular needs as required, by:

- meeting with parents/principal/class teacher/special needs staff;
- obtaining copies of reports, assessments, etc. from parents;
- Contacting SENO, NEPS psychologist or other therapist or agency.

In determining whether the pupil should receive support at the level of Stage 1, 2 or 3, the above (meetings, reports, standardised tests, etc.) as well as further testing by class teacher and SET will inform decision (See Provision For Children With Emerging Special Educational Needs (The Staged Approach / Continuum Of Support section).

To ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school the following steps will be taken as appropriate:

Parental visit/s to the school, pupil visits to school, staff visits to special schools/special units. At school employees and pupils will be made aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act). Liaison with SENO to arrange additional resources may be necessary.

Where health and safety issues may arise in relation to mobility, care or other needs, these will be identified and strategies developed to address them.

PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH EMERGING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (THE STAGED APPROACH / CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT)

- Early intervention: Children in Junior Infants and Senior Infants are supported in class as per Stage 1 of the Staged Approach. For example, a child with poor attention/listening skills or presenting misbehaviours will be positively reinforced through an individual behaviour plan. This aims to monitor behaviour and motivate positive learning. The class teacher and the parents work together to develop a written Stage 1 Classroom Support Plan.
- The Special Education Teacher provides support for less able children in Infants as per Stage 2
 of the Staged Approach School Support. This may be in class or in small groups or one to
 one outside the classroom environment depending on the children's needs. In class support
 by a SET may involve group work or team teaching the whole class with additional support
 given to specific groups.
- The SEN team may carry out social group activities/sessions e.g. Fun Friends or Friends for Life, including children who may not yet be officially at stage 1 of the SEN register.
- Team teaching: Where it meets the needs of the child/children with SEN, a Special Education
 Teacher may team teach with a class teacher. This may occur at any class group from Junior
 Infants to Sixth class. All of the children work toward the same objectives with less able
 children receiving additional support (resources/visuals/concrete materials/increased teacher
 input) and more able children receiving additional challenges e.g. problem solving activities
 which extend learning objectives.

There are three stages of support provided, and parents of SEN children will be consulted at every stage along the way. Please see Appendix 1 for details.

<u>Stage 1: Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of the SEN of certain children.</u>

The class teacher will discuss issues with the parent/s of the child they are concerned about. In some cases the parent may approach staff, initiating concern about a child. Concerns are discussed, background and possible factors may be shared, and possible strategies or solutions suggested, that may apply to both home and school.

See Appendix 2 for the Continuum of Support document which includes the classroom support planning template. This will be used by class teachers to plan for children on Stage 1 of the SEN register.

Concerns, strengths, targets and strategies are documented on the classroom support plan. All parties receive a copy signed by all involved. This is reviewed when needed by the class teacher and parent/s.

The SEN team will be available to offer support to the class teacher when devising a stage 1 plan.

The principal, class teacher and SEN team primarily decide if a child from Stage 1 should be moved onto Stage 2, guided by test results and teacher observations, then consult with parents.

Stage 2: Referral to Special Educational Support Teacher

The SEN team, in consultation with the principal, use standardised test results to determine who needs supplementary teaching. Class teacher recommendations and parents' concerns are also considered. It may be necessary for the Special Education Teacher to carry out further diagnostic testing. Please refer to our Assessment Policy for a list of tests used by the whole school and SEN team

The children who score the below the cut off point in the Early Drumcondra Literacy and Numeracy tests, taken at the end of Senior Infants, receive support in First Class.

A standard letter is sent to parents to inform them that we will be offering support to their child with the Special Education Teacher. See Appendix 3. In some cases, the Special Education Teacher will meet/speak with the parents. In the event of a parent refusing to consent to further testing or service, their choice is respected, and the letter signed by parents refusing the support is stored. The child's name remains on the register of children with SEN. The register of children with SEN is reviewed termly by the SEN team, and in the event of any changes occurring in the following term, parents are informed. All children on the register are monitored on an ongoing basis.

Children with similar needs are grouped together. Stage 2 learning plans may be prepared for the group, rather than individual plans. All parties receive a copy signed by all involved. See Appendix 2. The plan will be reviewed when needed, (depending on the set targets), by the SEN team, class teacher and parents. Teachers within the SEN team evaluate the children's progress on an ongoing basis. The SEN team meets to discuss results from standardised tests in June or early September. If assessment results indicate that a child has improved and has achieved set targets they may have supplementary teaching reduced or discontinued. In this case the child will be recorded in Stage 1 of the SEN register where they will continue to be monitored and supported in the classroom.

If a child is considered more eligible for Stage 3 his or her name will be forwarded to NEPS psychologist.

Stage 3: Consultation or referral for assessment to outside specialist

When requesting an assessment by an outside agent or the NEPS psychologist, parental consent is necessary first. The principal and possibly members of SEN team and class teacher meet with the parents, discuss the child's needs and request consent.

The principal and SEN post-holder (in consultation with the SEN team), meet with the NEPS psychologist at the beginning of the school year to discuss all of the children with SEN and prioritise children for assessment. Priority is given to the child perceived as having the highest degree of need, and to the early years. Children in the 6th class may have their diagnoses reviewed by the NEPS psychologist in order to retain resources or support in post primary school. The principal and/or SEN post-holder (in consultation with the SEN team) is responsible for making referrals and liaising with specialists and collecting relevant documentation.

If a psychologist assesses the child as having SEN, an application for SNA access, where applicable, is made to the SENO.

When an assessment and application has been administered then the following procedure for writing a Stage 3 is carried out. School Support Plus – Stage 3 is also known as an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The purpose of the IEP is to formulate a child-centred plan of action for the educational, social, emotional and physical needs for the individual child who is receiving school support plus.

See Appendix 2 for our Continuum of Support document, which includes the School Support Plus, Stage 3, IEP template.

The SEN post-holder coordinates the IEP meeting in which, parents, principal, class teacher, SNA, SET and outside agencies may participate in the preparation of an IEP. The IEP template headings guide the meeting. Following the meeting, the IEP is written up by the post-holder or other SET. The class teacher, parents, principal and relevant SET receive a copy of the IEP, signed by all involved. Progress is reviewed informally on an on-going basis. Targets are reset as appropriate, and reviewed in consultation with relevant members of staff and parents. IEPs are written at least twice a year, ideally September and February, but this can be flexible depending on the individual child and their targets.

The Principal and Special Education Teacher are responsible for ongoing consultations with psychologists, SENO and other agents.

At the start of a new school year the Special Education Teacher will share previous IEPs with class teachers when reviewing and devising a new plan for the child with SEN.

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

- All children get the chance to participate in all curricular areas, differentiating by task, questioning, outcome, extension.
- All children take part in whole school activities as suits their needs.
- Where the curriculum is adapted to suit individual needs this is not highlighted and all children
 are still challenged and given the opportunity to experience perseverance, progression and
 success.
- We recognise that the Social Personal and Health Education programme supports inclusive
 practice, raising awareness and understanding around areas such as, friendship, assertiveness and
 bullying.
- Whole Class drama lessons and Circle Time are used to develop social skills and encourage integration and inclusion of SEN pupils in the mainstream classes.
- Yard breaks: All pupils are entitled to their breaks and playtimes. Special Needs pupils are supported and monitored by teachers and SNAs on yard duty.

DEPLOYMENT OF STAFF

To ensure the most effective deployment of staff in meeting the overall SEN requirements of the school we take into account the experience and expertise of teachers, part-time teachers, newly qualified teachers and SNAs. For example, an SEN team member may support children from both

Stage 2 as well as those at stage 3 and may share working with a child so as: to use expertise from training in SEN or ASD, to ensure continuity for the children in the case of a job-share, to ensure support for newly qualified teachers.

ROLES DEFINED

Special Needs Assistant

- The primary focus of the SNA's work is to attend to the care needs of the pupil or pupils to
 whom he/she has been assigned. (See circular 0030/2014 for care needs categories) SNAs can
 support the pupils by developing background knowledge of the specific needs of the pupils,
 fostering independent learning skills, assisting positive social integration and providing
 positive feedback.
- The SNA contributes greatly to the development of IEPs, sharing information about the child's
 progress and social behaviour and helping to set targets, and to monitor and evaluate
 programmes, e.g. behaviour programmes. The SNA will attend the IEP meeting where
 possible.
- The SNA will support the teacher by providing regular feedback about the child, participating
 in teacher-led activities. The SNA provides care to each child with special needs, under the
 direction of the teacher.
- The SNA will support the school by engaging in yard supervision, in-service training, day-today duties assigned by the principal, working as part of a team and supporting the teacher in his/her role.
- All duties of the SNA are carried out within the context of the school ethos, and with respect for the confidentiality of the child.

Class Teacher

The Class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class, including those selected for supplementary teaching.

The class teacher:

- Implements teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- Will create a positive learning environment within the classroom.
- Will differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class.
- Initiates the classroom support stage by identifying and assessing a potential pupil for special educational support.
- Is involved in implementation of a classroom support plan drawn up by the Class teacher (see Circular 0013/2017, the Guidelines for supporting Pupils with SEN in Mainstream Schools and Staged Approach-appendix 1).

- Acquires knowledge of the educational difficulties of their pupils in collaboration with the SET to enable them to integrate and differentiate the curriculum for those with special educational needs.
- Establishes a support network between the class, and SETs and SNAs in implementing the programmes.
- Will be involved in the drawing up and implementation of the IEP.

Special Needs Post Holder

The role of the Special Needs Post Holder is to:

- Liaise with, advise and support colleagues in order to facilitate planning for Special Needs pupils.
- Liaise with and advise SNAs with regard to supporting the pupils.
- Liaise with and support parents.
- Oversee and store the records, assessments, tests, PPPs and IEPs of all children with Special Needs.
- Liaise with external agencies concerned with the pupils.
- Monitor and evaluate SEN provision regularly.
- Contribute to in-service training of staff, such as updating staff on new terminology, eg. 'Continuum of support', Special Education Teachers, etc.
- Provide support to new Special Education Teachers.
- Facilitate regular meetings of the Special Education Team within school.
- Organise meetings between class teachers and the SEN team to discuss progress.
- Maintaining and reviewing pupil records including scores from standardised assessments.

Special Education Teachers

The Special Education Teacher's role involves:

- Familiarising themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs.
- Assisting with the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent and manage learning difficulties.
- Development, where appropriate, of school support stage and learning programmes for pupils who are selected for supplementary teaching in consultation with the class teacher and parents/guardians.
- Maintaining planning for each group of pupils in receipt of supplementary teaching.
- Delivering intensive early intervention programmes to pupils in Junior Classes, for example Reading Recovery.
- Conducting meetings with parents when necessary to discuss pupils' progress.
- Providing teaching in English and/or Mathematics to pupils who experience low achievement.

- Liaising with class teachers on individual pupils' needs and progress.
- Maintaining a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and have special educational needs.
- Conducting screening and diagnostic assessment.
- Liaising with the school principal, teachers and parents in referring children for further assessments.
- Modifying the curriculum for students using a variety of techniques and technologies, e.g. magnifier in the case of a visually impaired child.
- Meeting with parents/guardians, principal and sometimes other agents (psychologist, specialist teacher etc.) to discuss child's needs and establish an IEP.
- Liaising on an on-going basis with class teacher and home to maintain communication and promote consistency and progress.
- Maintaining accurate student records and preparing reports on children as required, for example, by psychologist or transition school.
- Employing specific strategies as identified in the IEP to fulfil targets.

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

We have devised the following timetable to facilitate collaboration between all those involved in a child's education. SEN team supervise classes to accommodate meetings.

Overview for the year:

Sept: Devising timetables and cluster meeting

SEN post-holder and principal meet with NEPs Psychologist

SEN team members meet with class teachers

Screening and diagnostic testing by SEN team

SEN team carry out NRIT with 2nd and 5th class

IEPs devised

Nov/Dec: Parent-Teacher Meetings

Feb: IEPs reviewed

May: Standardised Testing (1st to 6th classes inclusive)

Early Drumcondra Literacy and Numeracy Tests (Senior Infants)

June: Diagnostic testing by SEN team

Liaison between class teachers and SEN team

Final review of stage 1s, stage 2s and stage 3s

RESOURCES

The SEN team is responsible for sourcing and acquiring resources. The post-holder is responsible for maintaining and organising the resources, which are shared by the SEN team. All SETs have access to the resources and in some cases they are available for class use. Where schools share staff, it is the responsibility of individual teachers to ensure that when using resources in different schools they are stored in the school that they belong to.

TRANSFER TO POST-PRIMARY

To assist a smooth transition for pupils with special needs to post primary, the school liaises with the SENO who ensures that the children will continue to access resources, SNA, assistive technology, etc.

The SEN team liaise with the NEPS psychologist to carry out Transfer Meetings. The SEN team, NEPS psychologist, parents and SEN team from the post primary school attend these meetings. Any necessary strategies to ensure a smooth transition are discussed at these meetings and school visits may be arranged.

The SEN team run a transition programme for SEN children in 6th class if needed, working in small groups or one to one. Resources used include Black Sheep Press – Talking about Secondary School, Arfur Moe's Transition Booklet, SESS Transition Booklet and any transition work provided by the post primary school.

The principal forwards relevant information e.g., psychological assessments, IEP's and teacher assessments to the post-primary schools at the end of the school year. End of school reports including standardised test results for all pupils in 6^{th} classes are also forwarded.

RECORD KEEPING

A file for each child with SEN containing, as appropriate; psychological reports, reports by other agencies (S&L etc.), Stage 1s, 2s, IEPs and reviews, are stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room. A folder assigned to each class, containing current Continuum of Support documents, will be securely stored in a locked filing cabinet by the relevant member of the SEN team. The SET working with a child is responsible for updating the child's section within the class folder, and the class teacher will contribute to this. A register of children with SEN is maintained and stored by the post-holder. School reports and Drumcondra test results for all children are also stored. While records are secure to ensure confidentiality, they can be made available to relevant parties, with parental consent. In the case of personnel shared among a cluster of schools the individual SEN teacher is responsible for records of a child in their care and they will store these in the school the child attends.

Records for each child are retained in the school indefinitely.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES

School Plan.

Enrolment policy.

Health and Safety Policy.

Data Protection Policy.

Assessment Policy.

Positive Behaviour policy and Anti-Bullying policy for more information on the area of behavioural and emotional difficulties.

All curricular policies for reference to differentiation of content and methodologies in curriculum.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

See Roles Defined section

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

This policy will apply once ratified by the BOM.

REVIEW

This policy will be subjected to periodic review.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

This policy is circulated to all staff members and displayed on the school website.

Ratified by Board of Management on: 4th September 2019

(Date)

Signed: Anthony Mackey

Chairperson, Board of Management

STAGE 1

Observation	Process	Personnel Involved
Class teacher and/or parent have	Class teacher administers	Class teacher
concerns about a pupil's academic,	appropriate screening measures.	 Parents
physical, social, behavioural or	Class teacher devises a plan which	
emotional development.	aims to meet pupil's identified	
	needs within the normal classroom	
	setting. This is agreed by the	
	parents. The success of this plan is	
	regularly reviewed in consultation	
	with parents.	

If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews, the SEN team in the school may be consulted about the desirability of a move to Stage 2.

STAGE 2

Observation	Process	Personnel Involved
Child is referred to Special	If diagnostic testing indicates that	Class teacher
Education Teacher, with parental	supplementary teaching would be	• Parents
permission for further diagnostic	beneficial, this is arranged. Class	Special Education Teacher
testing.	teacher and Special Education	
	Teacher collaborate in devising,	
	implementing and reviewing the	
	pupil's learning plan. Parents are	
	consulted.	

If assessment results indicate that a child has improved they may have supplementary teaching reduced or discontinued. In this case the child will be recorded in Stage 1 of the SEN register. If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews of Stage 2s, it may be necessary to implement Stage 3.

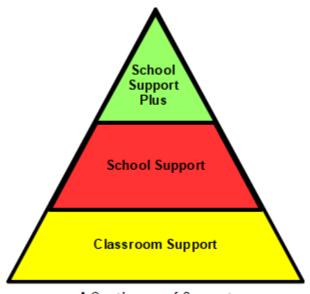
STAGE 3

Observation	Process	Personnel Involved		
School formally requests consultation, and where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school.	An IEP is devised in consultation with parents, identifying resources used and regularly reviewed, referring to specialists as required. Private practitioners should have relevant DES circulars and guidance notes drawn to their attention.	 Class teacher Parents Special Education Teacher Relevant specialists NEPS psychologist Scheme for commissioning psychological assessments Speech & Language Therapists Occupational Therapists Psychiatrist Audiologist Paediatrician 		



CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT STUDENT SUPPORT FILE

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



A Continuum of Support

Student Support File, Log of Actions			
DATE	ACTIONS		

Support Checklist				
Name:	Age:	Class:		
General Information	Date Checked	Comments		
Parents/ Guardians Consulted				
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				

CLASSROOM SUPPORT PLAN			
<u>Name</u>	<u>DoB</u>	Class	<u>Date</u>
Pupil Strengths		Our Concerns	
Targets	Strategies	Resources	Responsibility
A review of this plan will	take place in weeks,	or earlier if needed. Parer	nts will be consulted.
Signed: Teacher			
Review Date	In Attendance		
Signed: Teacher		Signed: Parents	

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLAN			
<u>Name</u>	<u>DoB</u>	Class	<u>Date</u>
Pupil Strengths		Priority Concerns	
Targets	Strategies	Resources	Responsibility
A review of this plan will	take place in weeks,	or earlier if needed. Parei	nts will be consulted.
Signed: Teacher		Signed: Parents	

Current Needs: Recommended Actions:	st Successful:
Recommended Actions:	
Parents Comments:	
raterits comments.	
Signed: Teacher Sign	ned: Parents
Date: Date	

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS - IEP		
Profile of pupil with SEN		
Pupil Name: Address: DoB: Parents Names: Contact Tel No:	School: Tel No: Support Team:	
Provision for SEN: (SET Access and SNA Access)		
Social Skills: Self esteem	Language Skills: Oral Language	
Interaction with peers	Comprehension	
·	Phonological Awareness	
Interaction with staff	Reading Fluency	
Behaviour	Penmanship	
	Writing	
Mathematical Skills: Number	Motor Skills: Gross Motor Skills	
Measures	Fine Motor Skills	

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS – IEP				
Pupil Name :		DoB:		
Class teacher: Special Education Teacher: SNA: Parents:				
Provision Commenced:		Provision Review:		
Pupils Strength:		Pupils Needs:		
Priority Need A:	Priority Need B	<u>.</u>	Priority Need C:	

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS – IEP				
Target A:		Target to be reviewed by:		
Strategies:		Resources:	Responsibility:	
-				
Target B:		Target to be reviewed	l by:	
			•	
Strategies:		Resources:	Responsibility:	
		nessur ees.	nesponsibility.	
Target C:		Target to be reviewed	l bv:	
		ranger to be reviewed by.		
Strategies:		Resources:	Responsibility:	
Strategies.		Resources.	Responsibility.	
Signed: Teachers:	Sign	ned: Parents:		

APPENDIX 3

STANDARD LETTER FOR OBTAINING PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHING

Dear Parents/Guardians,

In order to provide for the educational needs of the children, there may be times when children are given the opportunity to avail of support from the New Model for Allocating Special Education Teaching Support from the Department of Education. This support can be provided through extra support in the classroom, extra support from a Special Education Teacher, small group teaching or one to one support. The sole purpose is to devote extra time and attention to a specific area that teachers believe would benefit the child.

In order to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and to draw up effective plans to meet these educational needs we will sometimes need to carry out age appropriate assessments to monitor aspects of progress. The results will be discussed with parents and may be shared with other relevant personnel on a needs to know basis. The results will be securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and all assessment data will be destroyed when your child reaches the age of 25

25.	
Please fill in the consent form below should your child requi Navan Educate Together NS. Return to school by	
Regards	
Special Education Team	
Please tick ✓ the appropriate box:	
I wish my child to avail of Special Education Teaching Support and I give permission for the school to use a range of age appropriate assessments with my child.	
I do not wish my child to avail of Special Education Teaching Support and I do not give permission for the school to use a range of age appropriate assessments with my child.	
Name of Child:	
Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date: