

Collon National School

Special Educational Needs Policy



Special Educational Needs Policy
Scoil Naomh Fainche
Collon,
Co. Louth

June 2018

Ainm na Scoile: Scoil Naomh Fainche, Collann, Co. Lú

Uimhir Rolla: 14578N

Policy drawn up in line with guidelines for primary schools – supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools and SEN Circular 13/17.

Situation: As of February 2018 **Collon** National School has an administrative Principal, 9 classroom teachers, 2 full time SETs, Base school for one SET (Monday, Tuesday & Friday, spent in Collon NS, Wednesday and Thursday spent in Ballapousta National School), 2 SNAs, a secretary and a caretaker.

Belief Statement: Our wish is that each child be enabled to reach their full potential in a happy, secure and caring atmosphere, through an integrated and stimulating curriculum, in collaboration with parents, the local community and partners in education under the patronage of the Catholic Church.

Aims: We aim to optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy, before leaving primary school, through purposely and specifically planned collaboration between teachers, parents and all involved. We aim to meet the educational and social needs of children who present with S.E.N. We also aim to challenge our high achievers to enable them to reach their full potential.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Board of Management

- a) Oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on SEN.

- b) Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the Special Education team,
- c) Provide a secure facility for storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of Special Education teaching.

2. Principal

- a) Overall responsibility for the school's Special Education programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs.
- b) Work with teachers and parents in the development of the school plan on SEN.
- c) Monitor the implementation of the plan on an on-going basis
- d) Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- e) To identify teachers to assume direct responsibility for certain areas of SEN in Collon NS.
- f) Oversee the implementation of a whole school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and/or difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need.
- g) Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed initiating referrals.
- h) Help teachers increase their knowledge and skills in the area of SEN by providing guidance and advice with regard to teaching methods and materials and by encouraging in-career development.
- i) Coordinate and organise SNA duties and responsibilities and their timetables.

3. Class Teacher

- The class teacher has primary and overall responsibility for the progress of all pupils in their class including those selected for supplementary teaching and/or with special educational needs.
- 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, in collaboration with the SETs, by administering and scoring standardised tests and by discussing the outcomes with the SETs in the context of each pupil's general performance in class.
- Collaborate with SETs in developing a Student Support File for each pupil in receipt of supplementary teaching.
- Adjust the class programme in line with the agreed learning targets for each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching and maintain a record of progress towards achieving those targets.
- Differentiate class curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all within the class.
- Collaborate with parents of children in receipt of supplementary teaching.
- Draw up Classroom Support Plan showing classroom interventions that are in place for any child they are concerned about.

4. Special Education Teacher

- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies designed to enhance early learning and prevention of difficulties.
- Work closely with class teachers on the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, grouping and timetabling.
- Get written consent from parents of those in receipt of supplementary teaching.
- Develop a Student Support File for each pupil selected for supplementary teaching in consultation with class teacher.
- Draw up a Student Support File children who were in receipt of resource hours, with input from parents, class teacher and where appropriate the child themselves.
- Maintain continual planning and progress record for each group/pupil.
- Deliver intensive early intervention in Junior Infants in the form of in class support.

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the whole school policy procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Contribute to the development of policy on SEN at whole school level
- Provide advice to teachers in individual pupil assessment and planning, as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and maths for pupils experiencing difficulties.
- Contribute to decision making regarding purchases of learning resources, books, materials, ICT etc.
- If a pupil or group is absent or unavailable, SET teacher will make themselves available to another pupil or class for that slot, where possible.
- Phone calls to outside agencies will be made at 10:40, 12:20 or 2:30.

5. S.N.A.

Currently we have two SNAs working full days in Collon NS. The Principal is the primary co coordinator for SNA duties and responsibilities.

Child Protection

Where pupils are taken on their own, there will be clear glass in the door and/or the door will be left open, as per our Child Protection Policy.

Prevention Strategies and Parental Involvement:

- Development of agreed approaches to language development and to the whole school plans for Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from one class to the next.
- Provision of additional support in language development and early literacy and mathematical skills to pupils who require it.
- Implementation of shared reading programme throughout the school and paired reading between some infant and senior classes.
- On-going structured observation and assessment of language, literacy and numeracy skills.
- Permission sought from parents for all withdrawal and intervention by SET team.
- Parents to be alerted to teacher's concerns regarding their child as the earliest possible time.

Student Files

- From September 2018 onwards the Student Support File will be the main individual planning document in use for pupils receiving supplementary teaching.
- We have two instructional terms for Student Support Files Oct-Feb and Feb –Oct.
- Student files will be stored in locked filing cabinets in either of the SEN rooms. SET teachers will update files with relevant paperwork.
- Class teachers/Principal will ensure that any relevant paperwork received by them will be given to SET teacher to place in child's file.
- With regards to official reports on children by outside agencies, copies will be stored in the child's file; an additional copy will be stored in the Principal's office. No additional hard copies will be stored elsewhere.
- SET teachers will ensure that a copy of their end of year reports for the children on their caseload will also be placed in each child's file.

Early Intervention Strategies:

- Programmes are to be based on a shared expectation of success by everybody involved.
- They involve small group teaching, in class support or sometimes one to one.
- Lessons are regular and are intensive in terms of pace.
- They include a strong focus on development of oral language, laying the foundation for meaningful reading activities and further development of language and comprehension skills.
- They emphasise the development of phonemic awareness and a range of other word identification skills.
- They engage pupils in frequent, supervised oral and silent reading of texts at appropriate levels of difficulty, and monitor their comprehension of these texts.

- They stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing
- In Numeracy, they focus on language development of mathematical procedures and concepts.
- There will also be a strong emphasis on “real life” maths. It is imperative that children make the connections between maths in the classroom and maths in their everyday lives.

Assessment and Reporting:

1. Identification of children needing supplementary teaching

- Priority will be given to pupils performing at or below the 16th percentile in Literacy /Numeracy, in consultation with class teacher and taking into account continuous assessment by the class teacher.
- When forming Literacy/Numeracy groups from a particular class, priority will be given to children below the 16th percentile; if nobody is below the 16th percentile the children with the lowest four scores will form the group, depending on resources available.
- Priority will then be given to any children who have a diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty from an educational psychologist.
- Children who have screened with “strong evidence” in the DST-J will also be given support subject to review of their progress.
- Turnover of pupils is expected at the end of each instructional term, as some pupils will make significant progress during a term of supplementary teaching.
- Children who present with coordination/organisational/social difficulties may be considered for a Motor Skills/Social Skills group where time allows.

2. Preliminary Screening

In May each year, we screen the children from 1st -6th class using Micra and Sigma T tests. Senior Infants are screened using the Jolly Phonics reading assessment as well as Drumcondra Early Literacy and Drumcondra Early Numeracy. Junior Infants will be assessed for letter sounds, letter sounds, blending, tricky words and letter and number formation. We do NNRIT with 2nd and 5th classes and all of this information is logged.

Supplementary teaching will be offered to those scoring at or below the 16th percentile, in consultation with the class teacher.

Parents will be contacted to outline school practice regarding supplementary teaching. Written permission will be sought from parents before pupils are taken for any supplementary teaching, we will then take the Phased Approach and instruct parents as to what work they will be expected to reinforce with the child at home.

Phase 1: Classroom support. Class teacher puts specific targets in place for a defined period and differentiates where possible.

Phase 2: School Support. Involvement of SETs for in class help or withdrawal. Information will be gathered from parents and other involved agencies. Student Support File will be drawn up at this stage. Many children will continue in Phase 2 for several instructional terms.

If children are not seen to make progress despite interventions, support from NEPS will be sought.

Phase 3: School Support Plus. Children are likely to need intensive support at this stage and may need the implementation of a more detailed Student Support File.

3. Diagnostic Assessment:

- Identify the aspects of Literacy and/or Numeracy in which the pupil has either particular strengths or difficulties
- Identify the pupil's learning needs
- Generate information essential for completion of SSF.
- Identify the appropriate level and duration of learning support that should be provided and whether it should take place in the pupil's own classroom or whether they should be withdrawn.
- Identify and record short and medium term targets to be attained during the first instructional term
- If the child is showing signs of Dyslexia, we conduct the DST, keeping parents informed of results and review of targets. Some circumstances warrant the use of the NRIT which can shed light if there is no evidence of Dyslexia from the DST.

Supplementary Teaching:

Once a child has been identified as being in need of supplementary teaching, a SSF will be drawn up to record relevant information relating to their learning attainments and their strengths and needs. An inclusive approach will be taken in formulating the SSF, with input from class teacher, SET, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil themselves. There will be medium term targets set and short term records of progress and planning. The SSF will be reviewed at the end of each instructional term. Then decisions can be made about continuation at the same level of support or whether support can be reduced or discontinued. When

supplementary teaching for a pupil is discontinued, their progress is closely monitored by class teacher and parents.

Supplementary teaching will take place in one of the three Support Rooms or the child's classroom. Sometimes it can be more beneficial to implement collaborative approaches and direct interventions in the classroom.

Pupils will be encouraged to become independent and will be taught appropriate strategies and the application of these strategies in their day to day classroom work. Teachers will support learning by signalling the introduction of new ideas and by demonstrating how that new idea can be fitted into previous knowledge and applied in different contexts.

Individual lessons will be planned for each child or group of children therefore, lessons will vary in length.

Observations of a pupil's progress will be recorded by their SET teacher on their individual plan on a short term or long term basis in order to inform future planning and target setting. Diagnostic tests may be re-administered to provide information and progress will be recorded in the SSF. In the case of supplementary teaching continuing, new learning targets will be set, in consultation with class teacher. If, after a number of terms of supplementary teaching, it is found that a pupil has made little progress towards achieving their targets, a comprehensive review of the pupil's needs will be undertaken and NEPS involvement may begin.

High Ability Groups

Pupils who are identified as having exceptional ability in either Literacy or Numeracy may be offered a place in a High Ability Group. In the Middle and Senior classes children will be chosen based on their Standardised test results. In junior classes pupils will be chosen based on their class teacher's observations and in class assessments. Each of the SET teachers will have responsibility for one of these High Ability Groups.

The aim of such a group will be to challenge these pupils in ways that are not always possible in a mixed ability class. Pupils will be encouraged to play an active part in the planning and decision making within the group and activities will not place an extra burden on pupils. Participation will be optional and written permission will be sought from parents, as with all other supplementary teaching.

If information about outside opportunities for children with high levels of ability is received by the school, it will be passed on to the relevant children's parents.

Record Keeping:

Record keeping will be in the form of the SSF and the short term planning and progress records. At the end of the school year, SSF and any other relevant information will be stored under a file labelled with the pupil's name and kept in the secure filing cabinet until the child reaches the age of 18. Short term planning and progress reports will be destroyed at the end of the school year. Cuntasai Miosiul will be submitted to the office and stored there for a period of two years. Standardised test booklets will be kept for a period of two years and then the front cover containing the pupil's details will be removed and shredded.

SET teachers will keep a record of any meetings or communications with parents and add it to the pupil's file on Databiz. This will ensure a degree of continuity from year to year and will assist staff who join the SET team and new members of staff to the school.

Monitoring Progress

Monitoring will be accomplished through regular meetings between class teachers, SETs and Principal, and will address the following issues:

- Development and implementation of the school's prevention and early intervention programmes.
- Implementation of screening programme for selection of pupils for diagnostic assessment.
- Implementation of procedures that necessitate involvement of class teacher and parents.
- Implementation of appropriate criteria for continuing/reducing support levels at the end of each instructional term.
- Allocation of the Special Education team's time
- Progress of pupils with reference to their learning targets in their SSF
- Implementation of parental involvement programme.
- Involvement of class teachers in implementing suggested activities.
- Alignment of pupils' class and supplementary programmes
- Referral of pupils to NEPS
- Timetabling
- Adequacy of resources
- A weekly meeting takes place between the Special Education teachers and the Principal, at the discretion of the Principal.

Liaising with Parents

Parents will be encouraged to become actively involved in implementing elements of their child's SSF. Parents can contribute to the initial diagnostic assessment by sharing insights, discussing the outcomes and by participating in selecting targets and activities based on their child's needs. Meetings with School Support Plus parents will take place during the months of September and January in order to inform planning for their child.

Parents will be encouraged to contact the Special Education team should any difficulties arise during the term and will be invited, and strongly encouraged, to meet with SETs at the Parent-Teacher meetings in November of each year.

All children who receive supplementary teaching will receive a written report from their SET teacher in June.


Links with outside agencies

The Special Education team will oversee initial contact with parents, liaise with assessment services and make arrangements for additional educational provision for children diagnosed with special needs.

Review of Policy

A comprehensive review and revision of this document and of the elements of the school plan dealing with SEN will be undertaken in October 2020.

This policy was approved by the Board of Management on 11th Oct 2018 and will be reviewed in October 2020.

Signed:  Chairperson

Signed: Anne-Marie Martin Principal

Monthly Calendar for SEN in Collon N.S.

August/September

- First week of school is to be spent planning, drawing up timetables, gathering information and liaising with class teachers.
- Share information with class teachers about their new classes.
- Meet with School Support Plus parents to discuss targets etc.
- Write all Student Support Files ready for October start date.

November

- Parent/Teacher meetings for all on caseload.

January

- First week of term to be used as a planning week.
- Meet School Support Plus parents to discuss new targets
- Draw up new Student Support Files to start in February.

First week of Term 3

Liaise with Principal to choose dates for Standardised Testing and order all booklets for tests.

May

- Standardised testing 1st-6th
- Early Literacy and Numeracy SI
- Classroom Assessments II
- NNRIT 2nd and 5th (completed by SET teachers in the classrooms with whole class)
- Input results of standardised tests onto Databiz system. Distribute results to class teachers
- Write end of year reports for all pupils on caseload.

June

Assist with handover information of next year's teachers where relevant. Ensure pupils' files are up to date with end of year reports etc.