



Roxboro National School Special Educational Needs Policy

Introductory Statement:

Roxboro N.S. is a co-educational, Catholic primary school with four full time Special Education posts and five Special Needs Assistants. In the 23/24 school year we have been allocated 15 hours EAL teaching per week.

We strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral, emotional and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and nurtured. We strive to create positive circumstances for pupils and adults to achieve their full potential and to develop the capacity to face life with confidence and to be respectful of others and the world.

Rationale:

Roxboro N.S. needs a policy in line with legislation and Department circulars. The purpose of this Special Educational Needs policy is:

- To provide a safe and caring environment where all levels and types of abilities are encouraged and valued.
- To provide an inclusive and learning environment where all pupils are catered for and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- To enable each pupil to develop their social skills, life skills and self-esteem, enhancing self confidence.
- To ensure that pupils develop a wide range of skills including oral, aural, written, IT, musical, artistic and sporting.
- To ensure that pupils with special needs are included in all school activities.
- To be aware that all pupils are gifted and that pupils special talents are recognised and celebrated.
- Pupils with special educational needs are entitled to access, participate in and benefit from education in Roxboro N.S.

Principles:

- Provision of early intervention – Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 1st and 2nd classes

- Resources to be directed towards pupils in greatest need
- High priority to be placed on the enhancement of classroom based learning
- Team approach – pupils, teachers and parents/guardians – to address learning difficulties
- Pupils performing at or below the 10th percentile on nationally standardised tests will receive the most intensive help
- Development and implementation of a support plan for each pupil/group in receipt of supplementary teaching

Aims and Objectives:

That the staff, pupils and parents/guardians of Roxboro N.S. will work towards the full inclusion of all children both academically and socially.

- To optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils to achieve adequate levels of proficiency socially, emotionally and intellectually before leaving primary school.
- To enable all pupils who require support to participate in the full curriculum
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils
- To enable these pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners
- To involve parents/guardians in supporting their children's learning through regular contact and advising them on the help they can provide at home
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies for these pupils.
- To establish early intervention programmes and other programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.
- To ensure there is equality of access to this school for pupils with additional educational needs/disability.
- To ensure the school is physically able to provide for such pupils through use of ramps, wide doors, suitable toilet facilities and assistive technology.

- To identify clearly the strengths and needs of each pupil through information systematically gathered from parents/guardians, psychological reports, occupational therapy reports etc., meetings with the pupil and informal assessments and regular feedback from the class teacher.
- To address the holistic (social, emotional, physical, behavioural, cognitive, linguistic) development of the child.
- To address the needs of numeracy, literacy and social skills by providing supplementary teaching, additional support and resources where possible including, speech & language programmes, occupational therapy programmes, emotional & behavioural regulation, sensory regulation, EAL teaching.
- To devise a suitable programme of learning based on identified needs and keep progress records to ensure consistency and continuity to cater for the educational needs of the child.
- To review and evaluate learning programmes and methodologies, adjust as necessary and store all relevant records and reports.
- To promote a policy of early intervention to support younger classes on a whole class basis.

Key Personnel involved in Special Needs Education

1. Board of Management

- To oversee the development, implementation and review of the Special Educational Needs Policy.
- To ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the support teaching and for implementation of programmes
- To provide a secure facility for storage and records relating to pupils in receipt of support.
- Arrange for classroom accommodation and resources.

2. SENCO & The Principal

- Overall responsibility for overseeing and managing plan
- Applies for additional supports
- Allocates Special Needs hours to teachers and assigns S.N.A.s to children according to their needs.
- Keep a record of the pupils' receipt of support on a yearly basis incorporating the curriculum area where support was received, the amount of time received and the stage of support.
- Consult with class teachers, support teachers, parents/guardians, SNA's and external agencies in the preparation and implementation of learning programmes for children with additional needs.
- Monitor the selection of pupils, ensuring that the services are focused on the pupils with the greatest needs.
- Oversee whole-school assessment and screening
- Keep teachers informed about external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed when initiating referrals.
- Help and advise teachers on teaching methods and materials and encourage teachers to attend relevant courses
- Advise parents/guardians on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Consult with class teachers on the implementations of the school plan with particular attention to the following:
 1. Preventions of learning difficulties
 2. Screening and identification of pupils who may need supplementary teaching
 3. Participation in the development of a support plan.
 4. Identification of pupils who may have general or specific learning disabilities
- Discuss the implementation of the school plan with the support teachers
- Help and encourage class teachers and support teachers to discuss with parents/guardians specific help that they could give their child
- The principal will liaise with other school principals where there is shared support teacher to agree on timetabling

3. Class Teacher

- Primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class, including those selected for supplementary teaching.
- Implement teaching programmes which maximise the learning of all pupils.
- Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and Mathematics by administering and scoring standardised tests, namely Micra T and Sigma T. (<15th percentile) Other standardised test or rating scales may be used in addition to those named.
- Implement Classroom Support Plan for all children showing signs of difficulties and review progress after six weeks.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, collaborate with the support teacher in the development of a support plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets
- Reinforce and consolidate work done by support teacher in class and document progress. A portion of Croke Park hours is designated for this purpose in Sep/Oct and Jan/Feb.
- Record observations of pupils in class to inform future planning and evaluation of progress
- With regard to teaching pupils of low achievement, the following general approaches and methods may be used:
 1. Group teaching
 2. Modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils by providing learning activities and materials that are suitable and challenging but which also ensure success and progress.
 3. Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
 4. Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
 5. Setting learning targets at an appropriate level
 6. Carrying out error analysis of a pupil's work in order to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty for particular attentions in subsequent lessons.
 7. Maintaining a high level of consultation and co-operation with the support teacher and, where applicable, the SNA, in developing, implementing and reviewing the Support Plan. (Croke Park hours – formally. Informally as required.)
 8. Establish and maintain a regular and open line of communication with the parents/guardians of pupils receiving supplementary teaching

9. Homework: The class teacher will bear in mind the learning difficulties of the children, as relevant, when planning homework. If a child is receiving supplementary teaching, the class teacher must consult with the support teacher and parents/guardians to avoid giving the child too much homework.

4. Support Teacher

- Responsible for the provision of supplementary teaching to pupils either in the pupils' own classrooms or in a support room.
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to identify learning difficulties.
- Co-ordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Works in consultation with parents/guardians, principal, class teacher, S.N.A.s, external agencies and child to draw up and implement a programme suitable to their needs
- Consult with class teachers on the identification of pupils who may need diagnostic assessment.
- Carry out comprehensive diagnostic assessment for each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement.
- In consultation with the teacher, identify the type and level of support needed to meet the pupil's needs.
- Develop a Support Plan for each pupil who is selected for supplementary teaching in consultation with class teachers and parents/guardians (and SNA, where applicable).
- Review the Support Plan at the end of term 1 and term 3 (Christmas, Summer) in consultation with the class teacher and SENCO.
- Maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support.
- Monitor and review progress of individual pupils in relation to the attainment of targets and keeping of records on the pupils' Support Plan.
- Contributing to decision-making regarding the purchase of learning resources to be made available to pupils.
- Meet with the SENCO, at least once every school term, to discuss issues relating to the development and implementation of the school plan on support.
- Advise the SENCO, who in turn advises the Principal, on issues that arise in the day-to-day implementation of the support programme in the school.

- Complete an end of year report on each child in receipt of support if support is to be continued for the following year.
- Keep a record of assessments sought and received (if any) for each pupil.
- Discuss child's progress with parents/guardians on a regular basis.

5. Special Needs Assistants

- Assists class teacher in the implementation of the learning programme.
- Supporting pupils in day-to-day class activities.
- To contribute to the quality of care and welfare of pupils.
- To support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum.
- To contribute to the effective organisation and use of resources.

6. Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/Guardians will have an opportunity to discuss learning targets outlined in their child's support plan and progress made by their child at Parent/Teacher meetings and termly phone calls.
- At the discontinuation of supplementary teaching parents/guardians are given the opportunity to discuss with their child's teachers how the child's future learning needs can continue to be met at school and at home. Parents/guardians will be informed about the proposed discontinuation and also offered the opportunity to meet with the support teacher.
- Participate in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents/guardians in their child's learning.
- Become familiar with the school plan on Special Education.

7. Pupils

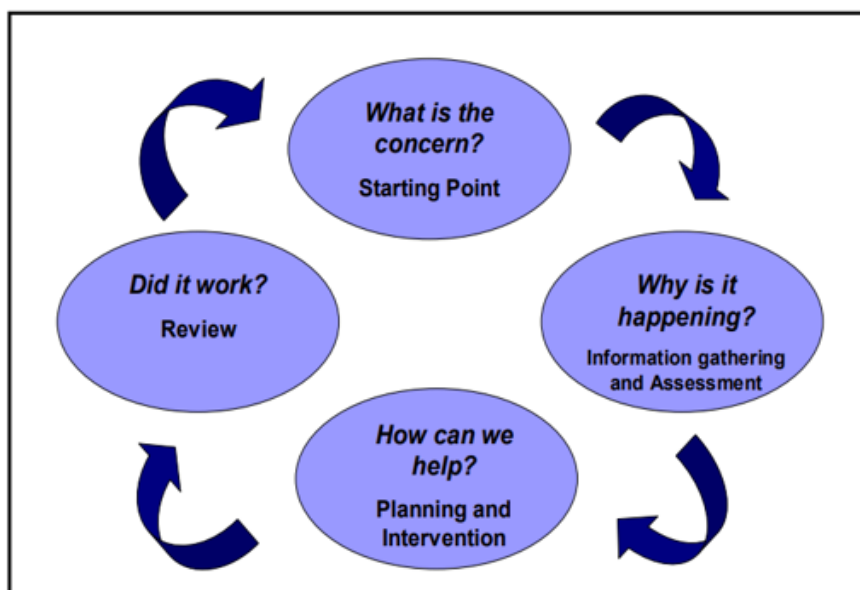
- Contribute to and become familiar with the medium and short term learning targets that have been set for them.

- Contribute to the selection of texts and other learning materials that are relevant to the attainment of their learning targets.
- Develop ‘ownership’ of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning.
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.

Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs: The Continuum of Support

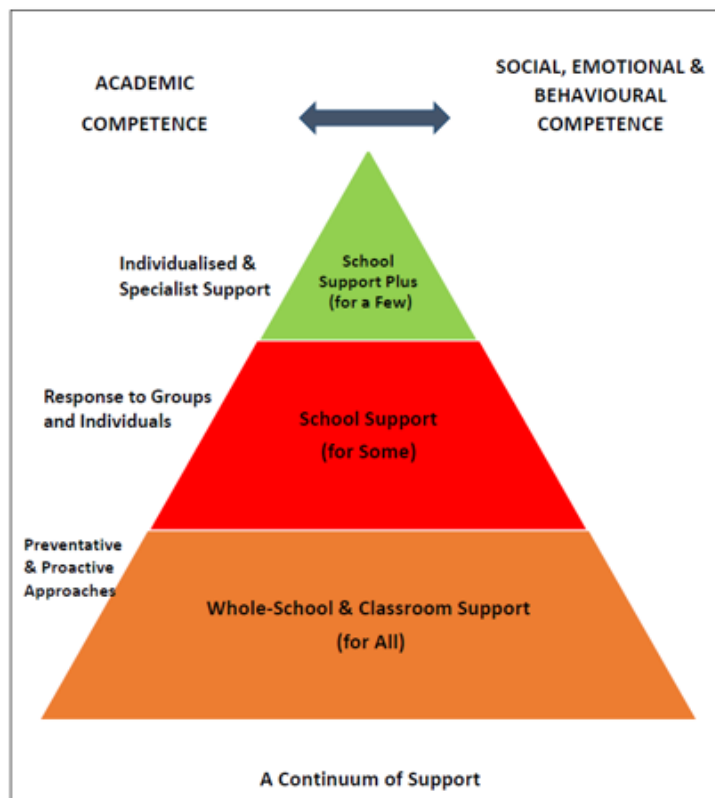
- We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs.
- Like this framework, we recognise that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs.
- By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental; moving from class based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring and progress.
- The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables us to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual pupils.

This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Classroom Support is typically the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are additional to or different from those required by other pupils in their class. Problem-solving at this level typically begins when a parent/guardian or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The teacher, support teacher and parents/guardians/guardians discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs. *See appendix one for the 'student support file' used by the class teacher in the classroom support stage*

SCHOOL SUPPORT

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education Teacher Team (SET Team) in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a Support Plan.

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

If a pupil's special educational needs are severe and/or persistent, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of his/her Support Plan. *See appendix two for a template of the 'Support Plan' used by the Support Teacher in the School Support and School Support Plus stages.*

Whole School Strategies for Co-ordinating Support and Special Needs Services.

- Children in 2nd & 5th classes who have not been assessed by an educational psychologist, are administered N.R.I.T. by Class Teachers. Pupils who score below Q.80 on this test, or pupils for whom there is a substantial discrepancy between the standard score of the standardised test and the N.R.I.T., will be considered for referral for Psychological Assessment and/or assessment by other agencies.
- Parent/guardians of children identified by the Dyslexia Screening Test and/or the TEST 2R as 'at risk' will be notified and may be referred for psychological assessment.
- Children identified by Teacher, Support Teacher, parents/guardians with speech and language difficulties to be referred for Speech and Language Assessment.
- Children experiencing serious difficulty with behaviour/social and emotional and OT difficulties in school, in consultation with parents/guardians may be referred to HSE for psychological/behavioural assessment.
- All referrals will be discussed with and approved by parents/guardians prior to referral.

Whole School Interventions

- Structured phonics programme - Jolly Phonics is used with children in the lower classes. The Newell Literacy Programme is used as an early intervention phonics programme with Senior Infants and First class.

- Ongoing structured observations and assessments of the language, literacy and numerical skills of pupils in Junior and Senior Infants to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Implementation of the Whole School Oral language plan (SSE).
- Different genres of writing are used to encourage our children to write, including both functional and creative forms. There is an emphasis on the process of writing.
- A structured approach to spellings is used. Children are using the Spellwell programme from first to sixth class. The spellings are differentiated for the pupils with learning difficulties. Spellings for Me/SNIP are also used as differentiated programmes.
- Implementation of paired reading programmes and DEAR time.
- Provision of a well-stocked graded library.
- The development and implementation of whole school approaches to the teaching of aspects of Maths e.g. whole school approaches to the language of Maths. Maths programme used: Planet Maths (Folens).
- Regular contact with parents/guardians, especially parents/guardians of those with learning difficulties. Class teachers and SEN teachers will give such parents/guardians advice on how best to help their children at home.
- Use of relevant and helpful I.T. resources.
- Programmes & Resources used in our school:

Letters & Sounds Decodable Readers	Typing Club
Zoom Boom – Brain Calm	Doorways
Toe by toe	Fizzy Training
Stareway to Spelling	Move Write
Hornet & Wasp	Topmarks
Edmark	Social Stories
Power of 2	Dyscalculia Solution
Eyewords	Wordshark/Numbershark
Easylearn	Linguisticsystems
Weaving Wellbeing	PM Readers
Times Tables Rockstars	Black Sheep

Whole-School Strategies for Implementing Early Intervention Programme

- In class team teaching, small group teaching or one-to-one teaching.
- Strong focus on oral language. See SSE plan.
- Focus on the building of a bank of sight vocabulary.
- Emphasis on phonemic awareness.
- Implementation of the Newell Literacy Program
- Implementation of PM Reading Programme
- Team teaching –Maths Stations 1st & 2nd class
- Early intervention phonological awareness programme with Junior Infants early in Term 2.

Criteria for considering/selecting pupils for supplementary teaching

Junior and Senior Infants

- Inability to carry out specific and simple instructions in a class/large group.
- Showing an inability to work independently.
- Inability to recognise, to sound and to form the 26 letters of the alphabet and a low level of sight vocabulary by the end of Junior Infants.
- Difficulty blending CVCs.
- Inability to recognise, name and form the applicable Jolly Phonics letter groups by the end of Senior Infants/1st class. Inability to read and write words and sentences containing these sounds. A low level of sight vocabulary.
- Inability to repeat rhymes and songs.
- Test 2R during second term of Senior Infants/before 7 years of age.
- Drumcondra test of early numeracy for children at the end of Senior Infants.
- Showing difficulties with Speech and Language, OT and Concentration levels.

Late Senior Infants upwards:

- Once selected from the above criteria, the support teacher may administer further diagnostic tests e.g. Neale Analysis (NARA), Aston Index, BIAP, ACE, Test 2R diagnostic, WIAT to identify specific learning needs and to generate information essential for the completion of the individual profile and learning programme.

These diagnostic tests may include the following:

a) Senior Infants and early First class: (i.e. early reading and emerging literacy stage)

- i. Phonological and phonemic awareness and ability to identify rhyming words
- ii. Letter identification (upper and lower case)
- iii. Knowledge of letter sounds
- iv. Word recognition (sight words)
- v. Visual discrimination
- vi. Word identification skills
- vii. Understanding of the meanings of words and sentences
- viii. Spelling (including the quality of approximate spelling)
- ix. Writing (penmanship)

b) First Class upwards (pupils who have moved beyond the early stages of learning to read)

- i. Reading accuracy
- ii. Sentence and Passage Comprehension
- iii. Word recognition
- iv. Knowledge of word meanings
- v. Word identification skills
- vi. Systematic analysis of pupils' difficulties in oral reading
- vii. Reading rate and fluency
- viii. Information location and study skills
- ix. Spelling
- x. Writing (composition)

c) All classes

- i. Oral language proficiency
- ii. Receptive vocabulary
- iii. Social adjustment

d) Mathematics

- i. Conservation of numbers
- ii. Understanding of mathematical concepts
- iii. Number sense
- iv. Computational skills
- v. Ability to use numbers in realistic situations
- vi. Problem solving strategies
- vii. Recall of number facts (tables)
- viii. Mathematical reasoning skills

Summarising the Results of Diagnostic Assessment

All assessments carried out on the pupils will be compiled in an individual testing record for each child in receipt of support. *See appendix three for a list of tests available for use in the school.*

To be recorded on the individual support programme by the support teacher.

- 1. Names of most recent formal tests and summary of results i.e. before the commencement of supplementary teaching and at the end of instructional terms.
- 2. Outcomes of relevant informal assessments or observations.
- 3. Relevant information provided by class teacher, parents/guardians, psychologists etc.
- 4. An indication of the pupils learning strengths and priority needs
- 5. Learning targets for the instructional period.
- 6. Support activities - support teacher, class teacher and home.
- 7. Times and location of support to be received.

Criteria and Procedure for Continuing/Discontinuing Pupils in Receipt of Supplementary Teaching

Children with the highest level of need will receive the greatest level of support.

If there are pupils who are deemed to be in greater need of supplementary teaching, these will receive priority at the end of any instructional terms. This decision will be based on the review of progress for the pupils receiving supplementary teaching, the results of standardised tests and the general progress of those who may need help. Children may receive blocks of instruction during the school year. The provision of support for the full school year should be prioritised to those at the highest level of the Continuum.

Strategies for Communicating Information

The Class Teacher and Support Teacher shall maintain regular communication through informal discussion, the support plan and formal bi-annual meetings.

The Support Teacher shall communicate with the parents/guardians after diagnostic assessment and fully inform them on the results and interpretations. He/she will also advise the parents/guardians on the programme planned and how the parents/guardians can assist in its implementation. Regular communication throughout the instructional term will be maintained with full consultations to take place at the start of the school year or when a pupil is to begin receiving supplementary support. Also, parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet the Support Teacher at the annual Parent/Teacher meetings and also if the supplementary teaching is to be discontinued. The Support Teacher will also complete the relevant section of the end-of-year report which goes to all the children in the school.

Parents/guardians are informed when a child begins receiving support and when it ends. In addition, each child may have a folder of work to bring home to involve parents/guardians in this support.

Approaches to involving parents/guardians:

We promote the active involvement of parents/guardians in the planning, implementation and review of programmes for children in receipt of support. Parents/guardians are asked to contribute to the Support Plan by sharing insights into their child's development and learning strengths and difficulties. Parent/guardian will be asked to complete homework activities to aid the child in achievement of learning targets. Parents/guardians will be informed on a regular basis on the achievement of targets set.

Other activities to increase the involvement of parents/guardians in their child's learning:

- Paired/ shared reading programmes: Children bring home a parallel reader and parents/guardians are encouraged to read with and for their child.
- Motivating children to read more. Parents/guardians are asked to encourage their children to read more and to become members of the local library. They are also

encouraged to select books that are appropriate to the age, stage and interest of the child.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to create a home environment in which literacy can thrive.
- Parents/guardians are asked to help their children with their homework and to communicate with the teacher where the child is experiencing difficulties.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to aid in the development of their children's reasoning and problem solving abilities through homework tasks.
- Parents/guardians are advised to aid in the development of their children's mathematical knowledge through homework activities.

Parent/Guardian Consent for Assessments and Support

Written permission from all parents/guardians is sought as part of the enrolment process. This is the responsibility of the Principal.

In addition, parents/guardians are informed if and when their child/children need(s) support. This is the responsibility of the Support Teachers.

Procedure for Referring Pupils to Out of School Agencies:

The class teacher, in consultation with the principal, shall make initial contact with parents/guardians in relation to proposed referrals. The class teacher/principal will liaise with assessment services and, where appropriate, make arrangements for additional educational provision for children with diagnosed special needs.

Monitoring the progress of individual pupils:

Reviewing the Progress of Individual Pupils:

- Day to day observations of pupil's progress as recorded in the fortnightly plan under assessment
- At the end of each instructional term, the support teacher will review records of pupils ongoing development and progress
- Administer or re-administer tests
- Discuss the pupil's progress with the class teacher and parents/guardians
- Decide in consultation with the class teacher, the level (if any) of supplementary teaching for the next instructional term

- Establish new learning targets for the next instructional term

Record Keeping:

The Support Teacher will maintain the following records

- Compile and update a Support Plan and save on Aladdin.
- Update a record of learning for each child attending support.
- Compile and update an individual breakdown of all tests carried out on the child while in receipt of support.
- Compile and keep a breakdown of the end of year diagnostic window incorporating the children who will be in receipt of support for the following year.
- Complete a pupil progress review at the end of each year for each child who will continue to require support the following year.

Procedures for the Provision of Resources for Support

- Resources, tests and teaching materials will be available for all class teachers and support teachers. A summary of all tests in the school will be available to each teacher and these tests will be stored in a filing cabinet in the SET corridor.
- Purchase of additional or replacement of these resources will be made through the principal.

Time Tabling for Supplementary Teaching

The following timetabling principles will apply:

- Supplementary Teaching that the pupils receive will be in addition to their regular class programme in English and Mathematics
- Pupils will not miss out on the same curricular area each time they receive supplementary teaching
- Pupils may be withdrawn from the classroom or the support teacher may work in the classroom for supplementary teaching
- The support teacher may assist the class teacher when a child/children are having difficulties with topics or concepts, especially in Maths.

Monitoring Implementation of the Special Needs School Plan

Monitoring of the school plan is accomplished through termly meetings between the SENCO, class teacher and the support teacher. The SENCO reports relevant information to the Principal. The meetings will address the following issues as appropriate:

- Development and implementation of the school's prevention and early intervention programmes.
- Implementation of the school's screening programme for the selection of pupils for diagnostic assessment.
- Implementation of the various procedures that necessitate the involvement of the class teacher and the parents/guardians e.g. Diagnostic assessment, the selection of pupils for support teaching and programme planning.
- Implementation of appropriate criteria for continuing/reducing support levels for pupils at the end of a term of supplementary teaching.
- Allocation of the support teacher's time across various teaching and consultative activities.
- Progress of pupils in receipt of support.
- Implementation of parent/guardian involvement programmes.
- Referral of pupils for additional support.
- Co-ordination of the support service and other support services.
- Time-tabling of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Adequacy of resources for supplementary teaching.

Strategies for Review Policy on Support

- Support provision is reviewed at the end of each school year and is dependent on SET hours allocated by the NCSE. Our allocation in the 2024/2025 year is 100 hours per week.
- At any occasion during the school year where the Class Teacher, Support Teacher or Principal identifies a need for review of specific areas.

This reviewed policy was approved by the B.O.M. in Term 2 2023/2024

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if deemed necessary

Next review: School Year 2026/2027

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson B.O.M