



Special Education Needs Policy 2021 (incl Irish Exemption) Contents

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This policy on Special Education Needs provision was amended in 2018 in compliance with the New Model on Special Education Need (Cir 13/17), taking into account all other Educational Acts, Circulars and guidelines that preceded it.

Introduction

Scoil Chroí Íosa is co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Diocese of Cloyne. It is a mainstream primary school with a Special Language Class, catering for a full cross section of children. The purpose of this SEN policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other interested parents on the provision of effective support to pupils with special education needs and to pupils experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties, as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998.

This Special Educational Needs policy was reviewed and updated in June 2019 by the Special Education Team and the Principal in consultation with the staff and the Board of Management. The policy was revised in line with the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000), the Disability Bill (2002) and the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (E.P.S.E.N) 2004. The school adheres to the terms of current circulars on special education provision published by the Department of Education and Skills including the most recent Cir 13/17 on the New Model of Special Education Needs.

The Policy on SEN Provision in Scoil Chroí Íosa N.S., was discussed and further developed by the teaching staff of Scoil Chroí Íosa N.S. during the school year of 2019/2020 and discussed, accepted and ratified by the Board of Management (see date below).

This Policy on SEN Provision in Scoil Chroí Íosa N.S. contains the following elements:

1. Aims of SEN Support

- To support the inclusion of SEN pupils in primary schools.
- To ensure that the NEPS Continuum of Support / Staged Approach is implemented.
- 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”* (Learning-Support Guidelines [LSG]: p. 15). This support may be provided by the Class Teacher and / or the Support Teacher (Appendix 1: The Staged Approach, described in Circular 02/05).
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English and / or Mathematics
- To enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum
- To encourage differentiation in the classroom
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils
- To support attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning

- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners
- To involve parents in supporting their children through effective parent-support programmes
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for pupils
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning
- To guard the self-esteem and self-image of the learner.

2. Guiding Principles

"The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process" (Circular 13/17: p.16).

and

"Pupils with the greatest levels of need should have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils should be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support." (DES 2017, p.5)

2.1 Effective learning programmes in Scoil Chroí Íosa are based on the following principles:

- Quality of teaching. *"Research has consistently shown that the quality of teaching is the most critical factor in enhancing pupils' learning and educational experiences"* (2017 Guidelines: p. 27).
- Effective whole-school policies
- Whole School Involvement /working as Teams
- Prevention of failure at Infant level
- Provision of intensive early intervention up to and including second class
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need
- Implementation of a staged approach to support provision at Class Support / School Support / School Support Plus
- Provision of the Model of intervention appropriate for the pupil and the difficulty they are experiencing, meeting complex needs e.g

1. Withdrawal Model:

- ☐ 1:1 intervention, only where difficulties are very significant/when pupil needs do not match to form a small group (for Child Protection purposes, all staff are aware that another adult or pupil should be present in the room).
- ☐ Small group interventions

2. In-Class Support Model, using a variety of team teaching and peer assisted models, for

example:

- Station teaching
- Lead and Support
- Alternative teaching
- Parallel teaching
- Teaming
- Peer tutoring and peer assisted learning

3. Parental involvement
4. Collaboration between Teachers and SNA's working as a team
5. Maintenance of Student Support Files by Class Teachers and Special Education
6. Teacher at Class Support / School Support / School Support Plus
7. Thorough Assessment procedures
8. Regular contact with SEN pupils
9. Manageable caseloads / timetables
10. Support from Outside Agencies (NEPS, CAMHS, Speech & Language Therapists, Occupational Therapist, Visiting Teacher Services, SESS, PDST etc.)
11. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Scoil Chroí Íosa currently has the following provisions to cater for children with Special Education Needs (2019/2020):

- 6 Special Education Needs Teachers (one of which is shared with a local school)
- 1 Special Language Class Teacher
- 7 Special Needs Assistants (three full time and four part time as of May 2020).

Access to and participation in the above facilities is governed by the following policies:

- Enrolment Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Speech and Language Class Policy
- Special Needs Assistant Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Irish Exemption Policy (see Section 13 of this policy for details)
- Assistive Technology Policy

3.0 Prevention Strategies

Prevention / early intervention is a cornerstone of supporting learning.

As a means of preventing the occurrence of learning difficulties as far as possible, the following strategies are being implemented:

- The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches to language development, e.g. phonological awareness and to the teaching of all strands of English Curriculum including the Language Curriculum (See Plean Scoile / School Improvement Plan)
- Careful development of phonological awareness and rhyming skills in the classroom, before the introduction of formal reading of words and books.
- The use of concrete materials at every opportunity.

- Implementation of whole school parental involvement programmes e.g. developing children's oral language skills; shared reading at home; developing early mathematical skills etc.
- Delay in introducing the formal process of reading as per the Revised Curriculum
- The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches to the teaching of aspects of Maths, e.g. our whole school approach to the teaching of Maths / Language of Tables and Subtraction/ RUDE strategy etc., Whole School Comprehension and Writing Schemes.
- Promotion of parental understanding and involvement through their attendance at an Induction Meeting for the parents of incoming Junior Infants, the provision of the "Tips for Parents" booklet, the arrangement of formal and informal Parent-Teacher Meetings, and provision of regular school newsletter as well as ongoing collaboration with Parents' Association and the start of the year whole group parent teacher information meetings with Class Teacher, SET and Principal present.
- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties
- Close collaboration and consultation between the Infant Teachers and the Special Education Teachers (SETs).
- Thorough Assessment procedures throughout the school
- Provision of additional support in language development / early literacy / early mathematical skills to pupils who need it
- Implementation of Shared Reading Programme/ CAPER/ Literacy Lift-Off/ In-Class Support from Junior Infants upwards.
- Class based early intervention by the SEN Special Education Teacher from Infants resulting in the provision of additional support.
- Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils by the Class Teacher.

4.0 Selection Criteria:

The selection criteria in Scoil Chroí Íosa is guided by the following principle:

"Pupils with the greatest levels of need should have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils should be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support." (DES 2017, p.5)

Our school will take the following into account when identifying pupils for support, as per DES Guidelines:

- Standardised tests can be used to screen and identify pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. Those pupils performing **below the 10th percentile** will be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy. If capacity allows, children above this percentile will also be considered for support based on the individual child's needs.
- Where standardised tests results are not available e.g. at infant level, we endeavour to identify needs through teacher observations, checklists and assessment results. Assessments and checklists can be undertaken by class and support teachers and reviewed after an appropriate period of interventions. Test results should be viewed in

relation to how the pupil is performing in relation to their peers at that time. At all times, we aim to ensure that those with the greatest level of need receive the greatest level of support.

We endeavour to complete diagnostic and other assessments/ checklists throughout the school year so as to avoid long periods of interruptions to support teaching time.

- Pupils who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Pupils who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. The school will also take into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.
- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Pupils who have specific learning disabilities/ difficulties (SLD): support offered to pupils with an SLD is determined on a case by case basis. We endeavour to meet these needs through the principle of effective differentiated teaching which can in many cases be achieved by the class teacher.
- Pupils with significant Special Educational Needs. For example, pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These pupils may need additional teaching support because they may require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Our school also carefully considers the needs of other pupils who may present with a range of learning profiles whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the pupils' learning and ability to access the curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils who need additional English as an additional language support.

Support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (see NEPS Guidelines 2010).

The three steps from the 2017 Guidelines are used in identifying and support children at school within the Continuum of Support Model:

Step 1: Identify Needs

Step 2: Meeting Needs

Step 3: Monitor and Record Progress

We also use the *NEPS Problem Solving Framework* as a guide of good practice:

- ☐ What is the concern?
- ☐ Why is it happening?

- ❓ How can we help?
- ❓ Did it work?

4.1 Selection of Pupils for Special Education Teaching

- The principle of Early Intervention applies, therefore pupils from Junior Infants to Second Class are given priority in the allocation of Special Education Teaching (SET)
- In Junior Infants, pupils are screened using class teacher and SET observation, using appropriate screening instruments and checklists
- From Senior Infants upwards, all pupils are screened annually, using appropriate standardised tests e.g. Drumcondra Early Literacy / Reading A-Z.
- Priority for Special Education Teacher is given to those pupils who perform at or below the 10th Percentile
- In the case of pupils performing at or below the 10th percentile, the screening process is followed by a consultative meeting between the Class Teacher, the Special Education Teacher and the parents concerning the pupil's performance, and supplementary teaching is offered
- Teaching may also be guided by outside agency professionals, if provided.

In the allocation of places for Special Education Teaching, the following are prioritised:

- Junior Infants identified by Class Teacher and SET through Teacher Observation / Checklists/ Screening Instruments / using the Continuum of Support and parent teacher consultation
- Senior Infants identified by the Class Teacher and SET, using teacher Observation and/or Drumcondra Early Literacy Test or other screening instruments (e.g. NEPS Balanced Literacy Framework Checklist), as having difficulty in literacy or numeracy
- Children from Rang 1 – Rang 6 at or below the 10th percentile in literacy and numeracy
- In class support for children presenting at 10th percentile (and above, if capacity allows) in literacy and numeracy in all classes up to Rang 6, through Team Teaching.

4.2 Referral to out of School Agencies

- The Special Education Teacher (SET) supports the referral of pupils to outside agencies, e.g. Educational Psychologist
- The Principal and/or SET and/or Class Teacher meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent
- The Class Teacher completes the necessary referral form in consultation with the appropriate school personnel.
- The external professional may visit the school to meet with the pupil, parents, principal, Class Teacher and the SET as appropriate, and the assessment is conducted
- This may be followed by a return visit at which findings are discussed, recommendations are considered and an appropriate response is agreed.
- Where concern arises regarding the manner of speed of the follow-through post-assessment, such concern should be pursued by the Principal, Class Teacher or SET with the out of school agency concerned.

5.0. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all of the school

community: The Board of Management; Principal Teacher; Class Teachers; Special Education Teachers; Special Class Teacher; SNAs; Parents; Pupils and External Bodies & Agencies. It is important that everyone contributes to the implementation of our school plan on SEN Provision.

5.1 Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management shall:

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the SEN policy.
- Ensure that satisfactory classroom accommodation is provided for the Special Education Teachers.
- Ensure that teaching resources are provided for the Special Education Teachers.
- Provide secure facilities for the storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of SEN.

5.2 Role of the Principal Teacher

The Principal Teacher shall:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on special needs in cooperation with the Special Education Teachers.
- Monitor the implementation of the school plan on SEN and special needs on an ongoing basis.
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with very low achievement.
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need.
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
- Help teachers to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of Special Education.
- Encourage and facilitate staff members to attend CPD courses.
- Advise Parents on procedures for availing of special needs services.
- Liaise with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Coordinate and organise Special Speech and Language Class and oversee the provision available therein.
- Coordinate and organise SNAs' work and timetabling.
- Developing inclusive whole-school policies and monitoring their implementation
- Assigning staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education teaching roles
- Coordinating teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals / agencies
- Ensuring that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff have opportunity to learn from colleagues.

5.3 Role of the Class Teacher

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her/his class, including those selected for supplementary teaching, which can be achieved by:

- Grouping pupils for instruction
- Providing lower-achieving pupils with strategies for reading, spelling and problem solving
- Adapting learning materials for lower-achieving pupils and higher achieving pupils (through differentiation)
- Liaising closely with their Parents.
- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology

Identification of Learning Difficulties:

- The Class Teacher plays an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have general or specific learning disabilities/ difficulties.
- In supporting the development and implementation of the school SEN Policy, the Class Teacher will administer and score appropriate screening measures and discuss the outcomes with the link SET assigned to the class.
- The Class Teacher will liaise closely with Parents and elicit relevant information from them regarding e.g. hearing / vision checks.
- Extra input, consideration and time is given every June and September in completing our *Whole School Overview of Provision of SEN (WSO)*. All teachers analysis test results and in class progress to help determine and decide what level of support is needed going forward. This document is fluid in nature and is reviewed in line with our IPLP/ IEP review stage (i.e. September, February and June) for pupils on Stage 2 and 3 of the Continuum of Support.

Classroom Support/Stage 1:

- The NEPS' Classroom Support/ Stage 1 of the Staged Approach requires class teachers to support their pupils' learning, in the first instance.
- When a pupil is deemed to require less support i.e. no longer needs support at Stage 2 or 3, they may revert back to either Classroom Support or our Watch List on the WSO.

Support Plans:

- The Classroom Support Staged Approach requires Class Teachers to construct a simple, individual plan of support, to implement the plan and review its success regularly, before referring the child for School Support interventions. The Class Teacher will open a Support

Plan for the pupil at Classroom Support level of interventions, including targets, interventions and progress.

- Log actions in the Support Plan.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching at School Support / School Support Plus, the Class Teacher will collaborate with the SET in the development of a Support Plan by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, the Class Teacher will adjust the class programme in line with the agreed learning targets and activities in the pupil's Student Support File and maintain a record of the pupil's progress towards achieving those learning targets.
- A key role of successful support is a high level of consultation and cooperation between the Class Teacher and the Special Education Teacher. Central to this consultation is the development, implementation and review of the Student Support File. This consultation is achieved both through formal timetabling and informal consultation as the need arises.

Communicating with Parents:

- It is accepted practice for Class Teachers to consult with the Parents of all pupils in the class from time to time. However, for Parents of pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching, additional time should be devoted to consultation and collaborative planning.
- In the case of each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or a learning difficulty following administration of an appropriate screening measure, the Class Teacher should:
 - Make Parents aware of concerns about their child's progress.
 - Outline the support that is available to pupils who experience low achievement and / or learning difficulties (Classroom Support / School Support or School Support Plus).
 - Inform Parents that a meeting with the Special Education Teacher and / or the Class Teacher will follow diagnostic assessments.
 - Attend, if possible, the meeting between the pupil's parents and the support Teacher. Collaborate with Parents and SET on the formation of a Support Plan.
 - Indicate to Parents how the pupil's class programme will be modified in order to achieve the agreed learning targets in the pupil's Support Plan.
- Parental permissions for school-based tests / assessments is sought when the child enrolls in our school and is retained by the Class Teacher in the pupils' drop files in the classroom.

We seek consent annually for pupils on School Support and School Support Plus of the Continuum of Support, for withdrawal support and additional assessments. This form is kept in the pupil's SEN drop file.

5.4 Role of the Special Education Teacher (SET):

Members of the SEN Team undertake the following duties, delegated to him/her by the Principal Teacher:

- Providing supplementary teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs.
- Researching the pupil's learning difficulty / SEN, to become *au fait* with this impediment to learning.
- Being "*familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs*" (2017 Guidelines p.13).
- Implementing suitable recommendations from outside agencies, wherever possible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the children on their caseload.
- Developing a Support Plan for each pupil who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with Class Teachers and Parents.
- Maintaining a Long-Term Support Plan within the Student Support Files:
 - Individual Education Plan (IEP) for pupils on School Support Plus of the Continuum of Support
 - Individual Pupil Learning Profile (IPLP) for pupils on School Support of the Continuum of Support for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support.
 - Review of same occurs in September, February and June each year. School Support PLUS Parents are given a copy of the previous IEP, showing progress made with the educational targets.
 - We seek signatures on our IEPs (September and February) and IEP review sheets (February).
 - Parents are invited to view IPLPs during our annual Parent Teacher meetings, either in the class room or the SEN room. We do not seek parental signatures on IPLPs.
 - All Support Plans are available to parents upon request.
 - We store these plans within the pupil's profile in Aladdin.
- Providing supplementary teaching in English and / or Mathematics to pupils who experience low achievement and / or learning difficulties at School Support / School Support Plus (as per Selection Criteria) e.g. Literacy Lift Off, Station Teaching, Maths Stations, Team Teaching, in-Class Support etc.
- Assisting the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Contributing to the development of policy on SEN at the whole school level / at the cluster level.
- Providing advice to the Class Teacher (if requested) about pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties.
- Communication and collaboration with Class Teachers of each pupil who is in receipt of Classroom Support/ School Support / School Support Plus, to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported throughout the school day.
- Contributing at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in

their mainstream classrooms and in the Support Teacher's room.

- Liaising with external agencies such as Speech and Language therapists, CAMHS etc
- In addition to providing supplementary teaching to pupils, the SET is involved in administering a range of formal and informal assessments and in maintaining records of the outcomes of those assessments.

The Special Education Teachers shall support:

- Overseeing the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need.
- Coordinating the administration by Class Teachers of a whole-school screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and / or learning difficulties in English and Mathematics, taking into account:
 - the pupils' scores on an appropriate standardised screening measure agreed criteria for identifying pupils
 - teachers' own views of the pupils' difficulties and needs
 - Support Teacher caseload.
- Conduct an initial diagnostic assessment of each pupil who has been identified as having low achievement and / or a learning difficulty, based on results of an appropriate screening measure and record the findings of the assessment in the pupil's Student Support File.
- Monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in receipt of supplementary teaching in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives that arise from them, and record the observations in the Short Term Plans and Progress Record.
- Regular review the progress of each pupil at School Support and School Support Plus on the Continuum of Support and record same in the pupil's Student Support File.
- Filling the Log of Actions in the Student Support File, in consultation with the Class Teacher.
- Consulting with Class Teachers on the identification of pupils who may need diagnostic assessment.
- Coordinating comprehensive diagnostic assessment for each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties and recording of same on our *Whole School SEN Assessment Record*.
- Keeping teachers informed about external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals, when requested. Researching current assessments for primary schools.
- Maintaining assessment tests.
- Ordering standardised assessment scripts each year.
- Distributing standardised assessment scripts to Class Teachers each year.
- Maintaining the results of standardised assessment each year and sharing the results with the Principal Teacher.
- Advising Class Teachers about baseline and screening assessments in September each

year, when requested. Please refer to our *Standardised Testing Time in Scoil Chroí Íosa* document for further details.

Policy:

- Formulating and updating the school's SEN policy.
- Collaborating with the Principal Teacher and meeting with her regularly (SEN Meetings) to discuss issues relating to the development and implementation of the school plan on SEN, and to the provision of SEN.

Selection:

- Monitoring the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching with the Principal, ensuring that support is focused on the pupils with very low achievement.
- Identifying the level of support that is needed to meet the pupil's needs, in conjunction with the Principal, Class Teacher and Parents.
- Assisting the Principal Teacher to co-ordinate the caseloads / work schedules of the Support Teachers, when requested.

Support Plans:

- Complete Student Support Plans at School Support and School Support Plus as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers in collaboration with Class Teachers, Parents, SNAs, outside agencies and children, where appropriate.

Coordination Activities:

- Maintaining a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching at each stage of support - Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus (WSO document).
- Advising Class Teachers and Parents on procedures for availing of special needs services, when requested.
- Liaising with external agencies such as psychological services to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Supporting the Principal Teacher to implement a tracking system at whole-school level to monitor the progress of children with learning difficulties.
- Advising the Principal Teacher about pupils who have been allocated SEN provision, when requested.
- Completing application forms for outside agencies such as NCSE; NEPS; CAMH, in collaboration with Class Teachers, parents and the Principal Teacher, as required.
- Advising on "*effective timetabling practices that ensures continuity*" (Circular 13/17), when requested.
- Advising on Transition, when requested.

Scoil Chroí Íosa Speech and Language Class/ Developmental Language Disorder

A Specific Speech and Language Disorder / Development Language Disorder Class was established in Scoil Chroí Íosa in 2004.

A 'Special Language Class' is a class in a mainstream primary school which caters for the educational and speech and language needs of children with a diagnosis of Specific Speech and Language Disorder/Impairment. The classes are staffed by a primary school teacher. A HSE Speech and Language Therapist works in the class for a set number of days per week. There is a

maximum of seven children in the Language Class in any one year, as per DES and HSE requirements. Language Classes follow the regular Primary School Curriculum. Children attending a Special Language Class may integrate with their peers from mainstream classes for some subjects, during Break Times and for school activities such as concerts/school tours. The teacher and Speech and Language Therapist work closely together to help promote each child's speech, language and communication skills integrated in the educational setting.

Criteria for Enrolment in a 'Special Language Class':

Enrolment criteria for Special Language Classes have been set by the Department of Education and Skills

(DES Circular 0038/2007: see www.education.ie):

- a) The pupil has been assessed by a psychologist on a standardised test of intellectual ability that places non-verbal ability within the average range or above (i.e. non-verbal IQ of 90, or above).
- b) The pupil has been assessed by a Speech and Language Therapist on a standardised test of language development that places performance in one or more of the main areas of speech and language development at two standard deviations or more below the mean, or at a generally equivalent level. (i.e. 2 standard deviations or below, at or below a standard score of 70).
- c) The pupil's difficulties are not attributable to hearing impairment; where the pupil is affected to some degree by hearing impairment, the hearing threshold for the speech-related frequencies should be 40Db.
- d) Emotional and behavioural disorders or a physical disability are not considered to be primary causes.

Enrolment Procedures for Speech & Language /Developmental Language Disorder Class:

Once a diagnosis of DLD is established a child may be referred for Language Class placement. Typically, it is a child's Speech and Language Therapist who makes the recommendation for referral to a Language Class. The referral is brought to the annual North Lee Advisory Admissions Board Meeting which usually occurs during Term 2/3 of the school year. Advisory Board members include some or all of the following:

- Language Class Speech and Language Therapists
- Speech and Language Therapy Manager/Clinical Specialist
- Language Class Teachers
- School Principals
- Psychologists

Reports on each child from a Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, preschool/school teacher and other professionals, where relevant, are circulated to the Board members. The Advisory Admissions Board considers all the referrals for Language Class placement. It makes its recommendation to Scoil Chroí Íosa Board of Management for enrolment in the available places

in Language Classes for the eligible and suitable referrals. The recommendation is based on agreed criteria:

- Severity of the DLD
- Age of the child
- The degree to which the DLD impacts on the child's academic performance and social functioning.
- Suitability of Language Class placement for the child at that time.

Duration of Enrolment in a Language Class:

The typical placement duration is for two academic years. For some children only one year in a Language Class is necessary, other children may need longer. Each child's placement in a Language Class is reviewed at the end of the school year and decisions made on the most appropriate placement for the following year. Upon discharge from the Speech & Language Class, the pupil (re-) enrolls in his/her local primary school. Enrolment in Scoil Chroí Íosa's Special Language Class bestows no entitlement/advantage to enrolment in a mainstream class in Scoil Chroí Íosa upon discharge from the Speech & Language /DLD) Class.

Parental Involvement:

Once a child is offered a place in the Language Class parents are welcome to arrange a visit to the class. Parents are expected to attend meetings with the Language Class Teacher and Speech and Language Therapist as required during the school year. Parents are encouraged to be involved with setting speech and language goals and implementing speech and language therapy programmes while their child is attending the class. Parental support is important to ensure that a child benefits fully from his/her time in the class.

Please note: Not all children with DLD will need to attend a Language Class. Other placement models may be appropriate to meet a child's educational and speech and language needs. Further information regarding the operation of, and application for enrolment in, the SSL/ DLD Class is available from Ms. Anne Horgan (North Lee Speech and Language Therapy Manager, HSE).

5.5 Role of the Speech and Language Class Teacher

Our school has one Special Speech and Language Class. The role of the Special Class Teacher is similar to the role of other Class Teachers and incorporates many of the roles of the Support Teacher:

- Work closely with Speech & Language therapist, outside agencies and parents in devising an individual education plan designed to meet specific needs.
- Provide the children with a range of opportunities for integration.
- Provide the children with an opportunity to benefit from a well-planned comprehensive curriculum programme to enable them to derive maximum benefit from their placement in the language class.
- Plan curriculum activities and tasks appropriate to the abilities of the pupils.
- Create a variety of learning situations including a balance of individual, pair, small group

work and whole class work.

- Implement suitable recommendations from outside agencies, wherever possible, and liaise with outside agencies.
- Meet with parents three times a year regarding their child's progress.
- Attend Speech + Language Business meeting, Discharge meeting and Admissions board meeting during the academic year.
- Complete school based assessment and compile end of year reports.
- Organise transition plans for children entering/ leaving the Speech + Language class.
- Organise school visits to provide schools with information regarding children leaving the Unit.

5.6 Role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNAs)

The purpose of the SNA scheme is to provide for the significant additional care needs, which some pupils with special educational needs may have.

1. Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks:

An SNA's role is to carry out duties based on the Primary Care Needs of the pupil. These may include:

- **Assistance with feeding:** Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.
- **Administration of medicine:** Where a pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.
- **Assistance with toileting and general hygiene:** Where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so.
- **Assistance with mobility and orientation:** On an ongoing basis including assisting a pupil or pupils to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a pupil to access school transport), or to help a pupil to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards).
- **Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds:** At recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.
- **Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions:** Such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.
- **Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential:** This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a pupil may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.
- **Assistance with moving and lifting of pupils, operation of hoists and equipment.**
- **Assistance with severe communication difficulties** including enabling curriculum access

for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc...

The tasks noted above are the primary care support tasks for which access to SNA support is provided.

2. Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks):

The following tasks are the type of secondary care associated tasks which SNAs will often perform:

- **Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a pupil** who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.
- **Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with Special Educational Needs**, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.
- **Assist Teachers and / or Principal in maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs.** Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.
- **Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities**, liaising with Class Teachers and other Teachers such as the Resource Teacher and School Principal, attending meetings with Parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of Class Teacher/Principal.
- **Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes** such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel¹, including Class Teachers or support teachers.
- **Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities:** walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

5.7 Role of Parents.

Parents can support the work of the school in supporting their child by:

- Supporting the work of the school by participating with their child in such activities as:
 - Book sharing / reading stories
 - Storytelling
 - Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
 - Discussions about school and other activities to build vocabulary and thinking skills
 - Writing lists and short accounts about children's experiences
 - Counting and measuring and other activities involving number

- Visits to the zoo, museum, library etc... to broaden the range of their child's experiences
- Using Information and Communications Technology (ICTs), where available, to support learning in English and / or Mathematics
- Talking positively about school and school work.
- Availing of real-life situations to discuss the importance of language, literacy and mathematics.
- Modelling involvement in language, literacy and mathematical activities at home by engaging in and talking about these activities.
- Working on agreed Targets at home.
- Parents should keep the Class Teacher informed of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. They should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home.

If, following diagnostic assessment, the child has been identified as requiring supplementary teaching, the Parents should attend a meeting with the SET to discuss:

- The results of the assessment
- The learning targets in the child's Support Plan
- The ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home.

Where a child is in receipt of supplementary teaching from the learning-support teacher, the Parents should:

- Discuss their child's progress with the Support Teacher at the end of the instructional term, and, in cases where supplementary teaching is to be continued, discuss the revised learning targets and activities in their child's Support Plan.
- At the discontinuation of supplementary teaching, discuss with their child's teachers how the child's future learning needs can continue to be met at school and at home.

5.8 Role of Pupils

Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should, as appropriate:

- Outline his / her interests, aspirations, strengths.
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.
- Contribute to the Support Plan.
- Become familiar with the medium and short-term learning targets that have been set for them and they should be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of such targets.
- 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.

6 Early Intervention Programme:

Early intervention programmes may be provided by the Class Teacher and / or by the SET, in accordance with the Staged Approach and the NEPS Continuum.

Close collaboration and consultation between the Class Teachers and the SETs, should identify pupils who may be in need of early intervention. Teacher observation and professional opinion will be given due consideration in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes at Classroom Support / School Support level.

Intensive early intervention programmes in the early primary classes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement (e.g. Incredible Years, Zippy's Friends, Friends for Life).

7.0 Policy regarding Permissions; Screening; Assessment; Selection; Allocating Additional Teaching Supports; Time Management and Review

7.1 Parental Permissions:

- (a) Written parental permissions are required for children to receive School Support/School Support Plus, early in Term 1, annually.
- (b) Written parental permissions for school-based/diagnostic assessments are given to parents on school entry.

7.2 Initial Screening: Class Teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessments. The SETs will administer further screening tests, if deemed necessary.

7.3 Diagnostic Assessment: The SET will discuss each class's recorded results with the Class Teacher and carry out further screening tests and/or diagnostic assessments where it is deemed necessary. The results of these tests will inform the caseload selection process. The Principal Teacher will be kept informed at all times during this process.

8.0 Staff Meetings.

SEN provision in our school will be included on the agenda for staff meetings at least once per instructional term. Any shared Support Teachers attend staff meetings at their base schools.

9.0 Parent-Teacher Meetings

The nature of SEN support means that communication and meetings with parents are on-going and regular.

10.0 Travelling Time

The shared SETs will ensure that the time spent travelling between schools is kept to the minimum possible, while providing regular support to pupils.

11.0 Monitoring Progress.

Monitoring the academic progress of the pupils in this school will be accomplished by:

Implementing Step 3 of the 2017 Guidelines, as previously mentioned in this policy. Each pupil in our school has a 'Log of Actions' on Aladdin, editable and viewable by relevant teachers and the principal. These adults can all record significant actions for the pupils, thus ensuring a solid record of actions for the pupil during primary school.

11.1. Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the targets have been met and the pupil (on assessment) is performing above the percentile laid down in the selection criteria for receiving support.

- Following the review, a decision is made to continue/discontinue the provision of Supplementary Teaching.
- The decision making process involves consultation between the Class Teacher, the Support Teacher, and the pupil's parents, and account is also taken of the overall Learning Support demands in the school.
- The criteria on which the decision will be made include:
 1. A consideration as to whether the pupil has achieved some/all of the learning targets set
 2. A consideration as to whether the pupil will be able to cope independently/semi independently in the classroom learning context
- A decision to continue the provision of supplementary teaching will result in a revision of the pupil's IPLP or IEP.

12. Success Criteria

The school wide implementation of this policy will result in enhancement of pupils learning in the following ways:

- Improved standards of academic achievement with the pupil's individual learning programme
- Enabling the discontinuation of the provision of extra support (withdrawal or in-class) based on positive assessment results
- Enhanced parental involvement in supporting their child's learning needs
- Increased opportunities for effective communication between school personnel in relation to pupil's progress
- Learning Support provision continuously focused on children from Junior Infants to 6th Class.
- The children achieving their learning objectives / targets.
- Inclusion of pupils with special needs into our school.

- Confident children who feel that they are part of the whole school community.
- Positive feedback from the teaching staff, SNA s, pupils, psychologists and parents.
- Inspector's Report.

13 Irish Exemption Policy and Guidelines

Introduction:

Our Irish Exemption policy was drafted by staff and Board of Management (BoM) of Scoil Chroí Íosa in response to circular 0052/2019. Our school adheres to the granting of an Irish exemption under the guidelines within circular 0052/2019.

Rationale: Relationship to the school Ethos:

This policy is in keeping with the mission statement of the school, which strives to enhance the self-esteem of all through providing for the intellectual, physical, moral and cultural needs of all.

Aims and Objectives:

- To allow for pupils of differing abilities, interests and circumstances
- To enhance inclusivity within the school
- To enable children of all abilities to access the curriculum in a learner friendly, inclusive manner

Policy Content:

Before granting an exemption from Irish, the school must follow the step-by-step process as outlined in the guidelines for granting an exemption from the study of Irish.

Roles and Responsibilities:

In-school Management, class teachers, special education teachers and Board of Management will contribute to the implementation of school procedures.

Procedures:

- The school requires a written application for exemption from the parents/guardians of the particular child. This request may be accompanied by a report from an outside professional to help support the application e.g. from an educational psychologist.
- The principal, in consultation with staff, class teachers and BoM will grant an exemption if warranted and will present a certificate of exemption to the parents in accordance with Circular 0052/2019.
- Note: The school is required to record the granting of an exemption to the study of Irish on POD.
- A copy of the certificate is forwarded to parents to give to the pupil's Secondary School when the child is leaving Rang V1.

Success Criteria of our Irish Exemption Policy:

- Seamless integration of non-nationals and pupils with learning difficulties

- Happy school learning environment
- Positive teacher/parental feedback
- **That all pupils in our school are included and encouraged to participate in oral and aural Irish activities and lessons.**

Monitoring and Reviewing of Scoil Chroí Íosa Special Education Needs Policy.

The SEN Team and Principal Teacher have overall responsibility currently for Monitoring and Reviewing this SEN Policy.

It is an ongoing and developmental process. Staff and Board of Management will engage in the developmental process, and the policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____

List of Supporting Documents

The following documents are available upon request from the SETs and principal. They are stored in the SEN shared drive.

The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of Circular 02/05).

The 2017 Guidelines presentation of the NEPS Continuum of Support levels of support.

Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) template.

Transition from Primary to Post-Primary School.

Table 1: from the 2017 Guidelines. Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process.

WSO Template: Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework.

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

Appendix 1 from the 2017 Guidelines: Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework.

Table 2: from the 2017 Guidelines Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs.

School Support and School Support Plus consent forms

SENCO calendar

Team Teaching in Scoil Chroí Íosa document

