



Gaelscoil na Cruaiche

(Bunaithe: 1995. Príomhoide: Mairéad Ní Ruáin)

Cathair na Mart, Contae Mhaigheo

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Polasaí i Leith Riachtanais Oideachais Speisialta

Special Educational Needs Teaching Allocation: 48.5 hours (Meán Fómhair 2021) Tá 1.5 sa bhreis roinnte le S. N. Cnoc Rúscaigh.

Principles:

- 1 We celebrate the uniqueness of each child and his/her special abilities.
- 2 Resources provided to support children with special educational needs (SEN), will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school.
- 3 Pupils with the greatest level of identified needs will have access to the greatest level of support.
- 4 Teachers, parents and children are partners in this process with the assistance of outside agencies where appropriate.
- 5 We provide effective early intervention.

Aims:

- 1 To provide a wide curriculum to allow for the inclusion and development of children of differing talents and abilities.
- 2 To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils experiencing educational and behavioural difficulties.
- 3 To allow each child reach the highest levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy possible for him/her.
- 4 To provide appropriate education to cater for the child's needs with the provision of adequate resources.
- 5 To seek the help of outside agencies where appropriate.
- 6 To involve parents in helping their children.
- 7 To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies.
- 8 The SEN plan is part of the broader school plan. Many other policies make a contribution to SEN provision such as
 - Atmaisféar agus ethos na scoile
 - Anti-bullying
 - Provision of extra-curricular activities
 - SPHE policy
 - Admissions Policy

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Role of Board of Management

1. Oversee the development, implementation and review of the provision of resources in our school.
2. Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the special education teachers (SET).
3. Provide a secure facility for the storage of records in relation to pupils with SEN in receipt of additional support.

Role of the Principal

The principal teacher has overall responsibility for the school's learning support programme and for the operation of services for children with special educational needs.

1. Oversee formation and implementation of SEN policy and programme throughout the school in conjunction with teachers and parents.
2. Monitors the provision of resources for SEN.
3. She decides on the allocation of psychological assessments.
4. She oversees 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.
5. She assumes direct responsibility for co-ordinating learning support and special needs services ***(or identifies a teacher to perform this role)***
6. She helps teachers to increase their knowledge and skill in the area of SEN.
7. She facilitates collaboration between SEN and class teachers by allowing meetings between the above.
8. She keeps teachers informed of external assessment services that are available and the procedures that are to be followed in initiating referrals.
9. She will report results of standardised tests of 2nd, 4th and 6th classes to the Dept. of Education and Science (DES).

Role of Class Teacher

9. The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in his or/her class including those with special educational needs.
10. He/she creates a classroom environment in which all pupils feel equal and valued.
11. Learning difficulties can be prevented or at least alleviated using the following ***methods***:
 - facilitate different learning styles
 - group pupils for instructions
 - differentiate the curriculum
 - modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise involvement of pupils with low achievement
 - place emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum.
 - where pupils have an identified difficulty with reading / writing in English or Gaeilge, the emphasis will be on oral /alternative learning strategies.
 - provide pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
 - set learning targets at an appropriate level.
12. Class teacher will make specific accommodations for a pupil within the class as a result of concerns about a pupil's progress and develop a programme of differentiated instruction for that pupil.
13. Collaborate with SET in developing a support plan where necessary, identifying targets and organising activities to achieve them.
14. Class teacher administers screening tests annually.

15 Maintain checklists and notes of observations of pupils needs. Refer to SET and Principal.

Role of Special Education Teacher

- 1 Assist in implementing whole school strategies to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties.
- 2 Co-ordinate the implementation of whole school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- 3 Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching, using the Continuum of Support.
- 4 Carry out comprehensive diagnostic assessments of pupils identified as experiencing learning difficulties.
- 5 Develop a support plan for each pupil or for each group of pupils selected for supplementary teaching in consultation with class teachers and parents.
- 6 Maintain weekly record for pupils in receipt of learning support.
- 7 Revise each pupil's support plan at end of each instructional term.
- 8 Meet with parents of each pupil in receipt of additional support to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of targets can be supported at home and to reviews progress at the end of the instructional term.
- 9 Provide advice to class teachers in such areas as individual assessment and programme planning as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and maths for pupils experiencing difficulties.
- 10 Liaise with outside agencies pertinent to children in their care.

Role of Parents

1. When children are being identified as needing varying degrees of support, parental observation is one of the major factors taken into consideration. Parents may be advised to consult with other professionals also, e.g. hearing tests, G.P., tests for ADHD,
2. Support is always discussed with parents in advance. Support plans are devised for each pupil with parental input.
3. Parents' role in supporting this work at home is crucial. Teachers will outline the specific ways in which parents can help to implement the programme.
4. Any possible referral for additional assessment is discussed with parents and their permission obtained.
5. All parents are asked to sign this policy showing that they have read it and agree to its' implementation.

Liaising with Parents

Effective communication with parents is critically important to the success of a learning support programme. The school operates an open-door school policy. Teachers consult with parents regularly

about their children's progress. Parents of any child experiencing on-going difficulties are consulted regularly, included in the compilation of a support plan and informed of their child's progress. Parents are free to make an appointment through the office to meet with teachers at any suitable time.

We have written an outline policy for parents which is explained to them during the first term meeting in Junior Infants. All parents of pupils receiving additional support are asked to sign this policy showing that they have read it and agree to its' implementation.

Activities that may be recommended to increase the involvement of parents in supporting their children's learning:

- 1 Paired-shared reading.
- 2 Develop children's oral language through discussion.
- 3 Motivate children to read more.
- 4 Create a home environment where literacy can thrive.
- 5 Select books that interest children.
- 6 Develop children's reasoning and problem- solving abilities.
- 7 Counting, measuring and other activities involving number.

Guidelines and Procedures

All necessary resources should be put in place before enrolment of a child with diagnosed special needs. **Where special needs arise during the course of pupil's education the principal will assume responsibility for organising provision of appropriate services.**

Early Intervention at infant level

Naíonáin

- 1 In the Naíonáin classes, special education teachers and the Class teacher work together with small flexible groups. Children are regularly offered the opportunity to work in a quiet place inside or outside the classroom, usually in groups and sometimes 1-1.
- 2 Numicon - a hands-on system, is used to enhance early learning in math.
- 3 We follow the Sound Linkage and Sounds Abound Programmes to develop phonological (sound) awareness. Newell Literacy and Primary Phonics are also used.
- 4 If children are identified as needing frequent extra support within small groups, parents will be contacted for discussion. In the 5th Infant term, the Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) will be administered between Christmas and Easter. The Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy (DTEL) and the Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy (DTEN) – screening and diagnostic tests, may also be used in the 3rd term of senior infants. Based on the outcome of these tests, The

Forward Together programme may be recommended for some children. This programme is delivered by both special education teachers and parents. The programme will be discussed fully with parents in advance.

Identification Procedures:

- 1 Standardised tests will 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.
- 2 Pupils 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).
- 3 Any problems brought to principal/s attention
- 4 Discussion with SET team.
- 5 Responses will be informed and assisted by collaboration with parents/guardians, colleagues and other professionals such as the school's NEPS psychologist, speech and language therapist, etc.
- 6 Needs set out in professional reports, where available, will be taken into account.
- 7 Staged Approach will be followed.

Screening.

- 1 Teacher Observation
- 2 Teacher-devised checklists and tests
- 3 B.I.A.P.. administered to Naíonáin Bheaga, 3rd term
- 4 M.I.S.T administered in Naíonáin Mhóra, 2nd term
- 5 DTEL and DTEN in Naíonáin Mhóra, 3rd term
- 6 Rang a 1 onwards screening tests (Micra T, Drumcondra Spelling Test and SigmaT for classes 1-6) administered in May each year. This decision was taken after research and consultation with the Inspectorate. We review appropriate tests on a yearly basis.
- 7 NRIT administered to Rang 1 and Rang 4 in the third term.
- 8 Scrúdú Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach tugtha do Rang 2, 4 agus 6, tríú téarma.

General advice re. testing

- Children should not be coached for testing. However, they do need to be broadly familiar with the type of test format.
- Parents need to be informed of the importance of children attending school during the month of testing.
- Undue pressure ought not be put on children prior to testing.
- Teachers and parents need to be aware that Standardised Tests are only one of a number of forms of assessment and need to be considered in the overall context of the child's performance.
- Parents are free to enquire about their child's performance in these tests. However, teachers only contact parents if the results and class performance indicate that a child is experiencing any difficulties.

System : THE STAGED APPROACH is followed .
(in accordance with DES Circular 0013/2017). Brief Outline:

Stage 1:

- 1 Difficulties are identified by the class teacher through observation, screening and assessment.
- 2 Parents and principal are informed.
- 3 A support plan is developed and monitored over time to support child within the class.
- 4 Following review, if pupil is not making sufficient progress, pass to Stage 2.

Stage 2:

- 1 Further information gathering and assessment including diagnostic testing of child by SET
- 2 Classroom teacher and SET involves all parties in drawing up a support plan. Outside agencies may be involved in an advisory role.
- 3 Plan will be implemented in class, during supplementary teaching and at home.
- 4 Regular monitoring and reviews of progress.
- 5 Support may be withdrawn when monitoring indicates need has been met. It may continue at this level or progress to Stage 3 if significant need is identified.

Stage 3:

- 1 Specialist advice is needed- refer to psychologist, speech therapist, OT, etc.
- 2 Draw up a detailed support plan (IEP) with all parties including the voice of the child and external agencies.
- 3 Progress is monitored and reviewed after one instructional term.
- 4 Decision is made to continue at stage 3 and redefine targets or to revert to stage 2.

Diagnostic & Screening Tests & checklists that may be used:

Test of Word Reading Efficiency 2nd edition (TOWRE 2)
 Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)
 York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC)
 Wechsler Individual Achievement Test 111UK For Teachers (WIATT 111 – T)
 The Neale Analysis of Reading Ability(NARA)
 Aston Index.
 Jackson’s Phonics Test.
 Dolch List
 Free Writing Assessment
 British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS III)
 Mathematics Assessment for Learning and Teaching (MaLT)
 Tests from Dyslexia Screening Test or Dyslexia Early Screening Test
 Lucid Rapid
 My Thoughts About School
 Reading behaviours – Miscue Analysis
 Non Reading Intelligence Test
 Social Skills Checklist
 Child’s attitude to learning and school
 Child’s personal interests and hobbies
 Observation of child’s learning strengths and weaknesses (Input from child, parents/carers and class teacher as well as observation during diagnostic assessment by learning support teacher).

We implement this policy in the following ways:

Early Intervention

Support Teachers work regularly in the Infant classrooms with the class teacher and take small groups for more focused work. We teach the Numicon Maths Programme and the Sound Linkage/Sound Abound Programmes.

Stage 1: When the class teacher identifies, through observation or testing that a child is experiencing difficulties, she will discuss this with the parents and SET. The class teacher draws up a classroom support plan in consultation with the above to help the child. If after a term the child is still experiencing difficulties, he/she will be offered school support. See below:

Stage 2: School Support

- 1) School support will involve the SET working with the class teacher on a support plan for children in groups preferably inside the classroom where possible.

Criterion for selection:

1. Children who have scored at or below the 10th percentile on the standardised tests listed above.
2. Children whose class teachers deem support necessary because of learning/social/emotional/behavioural difficulties, (see checklist).
3. If the size of an appropriate group permits, children experiencing difficulties who do not meet the above criteria may be included

Stage 3: School Support Plus

1. Children whose needs are enduring and severe/complex whose progress is considered inadequate despite carefully planned and reviewed interventions at stage 1 and 2. This stage will generally involve outside professionals and support services in a more detailed problem-solving process to help the child.
2. These children will have individualised support plans with detailed interventions.

Spelling

Based on the Drumcondra Spelling Test and SWST, teachers create spelling groups. The S.E.T.s may help deliver this curriculum to one of these groups. SNIP, Spellings For Me, Culligans and Alpha To Omega is used with children who have severe spelling difficulties.

Extending the curriculum

- Where possible we offer additional support to children who require extended educational opportunities.
- These strategies also help to ensure that the special education teacher is seen as answering the needs of a wide spectrum of ability within the school.

Planning and Recording

Student Support Files will be maintained and regularly updated for pupils with SEN.

Individual/Group Support file to include

- general information

- Support checklist
- record of information gathered at meetings with parents/other agencies (Log of actions)
- record of test results (screening and diagnostic) administered by SET over the years
- summary of professional reports from psychologist etc. if applicable.
- Support plan
- Monitoring & Progress record

Support Plans –Stages 1,2, & 3

To be drawn up and regularly monitored, reviewed and revised where necessary.

They will include

- Learning strengths and needs for current year
- Specific Targets to be met
- Class activities and strategies to help meet targets
- Supplementary support activities, strategies and resources to help reach target
- Ideas for home activities to help meet targets
- Review

Timetabling:

Class teachers of children with SEN are asked to timetable subjects so that the children leaving class miss as little as possible...including music, art, P.E. etc.

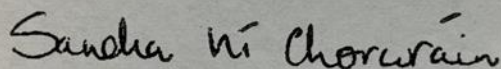
Resources/Documents:

Some of the books and documents that were used in the drawing up of this policy include:

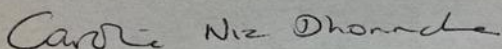
- Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools.
- Circular No 0013/2017 re: Special Education Teaching Allocation
- 'Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of Support' Guidelines for Teachers & Resource Pack for Teachers (DES)
- 'Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process' by the National Council for Special Education.
- 'Measúnú i gCuraclam na Bunscoile TreoirÍnte do Scoileanna (NCCA)
- Learning-Support Guidelines (DES)
- 'Exceptionally Able Students' Draft Guidelines for Teachers (NCCA)

This Policy was revised by Caroline, Julie and Celine in September 2021.

Síniú:



Síniú:



Príomhoide

Appendix 1

Some early at risk indicators that are used in the selection of students for

Learning Support:

- * Poor pencil grip
- * Ability to copy basic shapes
- * Use of scissors
- * Expressive language
- * Vocabulary
- * Repeating sentences
- * Writing own name
- * Auditory discrimination
- * Phonemic awareness
- * Word matching
- * Letter names & sounds
- * Naming five shapes & naming of five colours
- * Auditory & visual memory
- * Speech delay
- * Limited concentration span & distractibility
- * Low threshold of frustration
- * Hyperactivity
- * Family history of learning difficulties
- * Birth difficulties and/or low birth weight

Appendix 2

Children with learning disabilities/difficulties may face some of the following challenges:

- Delayed conceptual development and limited ability to generalise
- Difficulty expressing ideas and feelings in words
- Hyperactive- constantly in motion, restless, tapping of finger or foot, jumping out of seat or skipping from task to task
- Hypoactive- fails to react or seems to do everything in slow motion
- Limited attention span and retention
- Clumsiness and difficulties with motor skills
- Tactile-kinaesthetic- poor tactile discrimination, an excessive need to touch, poor writing and drawing performance.
- Auditory discrimination – finds it difficult to distinguish between sounds.
- Auditory comprehension- poor ability to get meaning from the spoken word
- Visual discrimination- finds it difficult to distinguish between visual stimuli
- Visual closure- find it difficult to fill in missing parts when only part of the word or object is seen
- Visual memory- has difficulty remembering and revisualising images or sequences
- Auditory memory- has difficulty remembering and reauditorising auditory stimuli or sequences
- Speech development- delayed or slow development of speech articulation
- Formulation and syntax- unable to organise words to form phrases, clauses or sentences which follow standard English grammar.
- May organise work poorly, work slowly, frequently confuse direction, or rush through work carelessly

Appendix 3

- Social emotional behaviour problems- impulsive, explosive, poor social competence, adjust to change more slowly than others, mood varies
- Academic difficulties in reading, maths, writing and spelling
- Underdeveloped sense of spatial awareness
- Difficulties adapting to new situations
- Poor self-esteem or fear of failure.

Behavioural problems may include:

- Constantly seeking help
- Refusing to proceed with tasks
- Engaging in challenging behaviour

Every child with learning difficulties does not obviously manifest all of these characteristics, but rather a unique combination of such traits.

Checklists for specific learning difficulties, language, social and behavioural difficulties are kept in the Learning Support Teacher's office and are available to teachers and parents.

Appendix 4

Extending the Curriculum

The Education Act, 1998 makes provision for the education of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational need. 'Special educational needs' are defined in the Act as referring to the needs of students who have a disability and the educational needs of exceptionally able students. The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004, does not explicitly refer to such needs. No single agreed international definition of 'exceptionally able' exists. A range of terms is used interchangeably in the literature and includes 'gifted', 'talented', 'exceptionally able' and 'exceptional'.

The Report of the Special Education Review Committee (SERC) (1993, p.160) defines students who are exceptionally gifted or talented. In Gaelscoil na Cruaiche, we use the criteria below to help us to select children when space/time allows.

Criteria for the selection of pupils for extended educational challenges

- Children who consistently finish their work both at school and at home to a high standard at a rate that is significantly quicker than his/her peers and
- who score a Sten of 10 in the Standardised English Test.
- who score at or above the 95th Percentile in the Standardised English Test.
- who score a Sten of 10 in the Standardised Maths Test.
- who score at or above the 95th Percentile in the Standardised Maths Test.

Children whom the teachers deem to show needs evident in the following checklist (issued by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) may be considered before or after the above.

General Checklist for identifying exceptionally able students across the curriculum

(Taken from the NCCA's Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Exceptionally Able Students)

Exceptionally able students may:

	Possess extensive general knowledge, often know more than the teacher and find the usual reference books superficial
	Easily grasp underlying principles and need the minimum of explanation
	Have mental speeds faster than physical capabilities and so are often reluctant to write at length.
	Be reluctant to practice skills already mastered, finding such practice futile
	Be inventive and original when interested
	Often see the unusual rather than the conventional relationships
	Display intellectual playfulness, fantasies and imagine and be quick to see connections and to manipulate ideas
	Show good insight into cause-effect relationships

	Quickly make generalisations and extract the relevant points from complex material
	Prefer to talk rather than write and often talk at speed with fluency and expression
	Have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why
	Ask searching questions which tend to be unlike other students' questions
	Be able to pose problems and solve ingeniously
	Read rapidly, retain what is read and recall detail
	Listen only to part of the explanation and appear to lack concentration or even interest but always know what is going on
	Leap from concrete examples to abstract rules and general principles
	Be keen and alert observers, note detail and be quick to see similarities and differences
	See problems quickly and take the initiative
	Become absorbed for long periods when interested and may be impatient with interference and abrupt change
	Often set very high personal standards-be perfectionists
	Want to adapt and improve institutions, objects, systems, e.g. can be particularly critical at school
	Be perceptive in discussion about people's motives, needs and frailties
	Show sensitivity and react strongly to things causing distress or injustice
	Jump stages in learning and often be frustrated by having to fill in the stages missed
	Have quick absorption and recall of information, seem to need no revision and be impatient with repetition
	See greater significance in a story or film and continue the story
	Have advanced understanding and use of language but sometimes be hesitant as they search for and use the correct word
	Persist in completing activities when motivated
	Be more than usually interested in 'adult' problems such as important issues in current affairs (local and world), evolution, justice, the universe, etc
	Be philosophical about everyday problems and common sense issues
	Daydream and seem lost in another world
	Often take a leadership role

	Empathise with others and be very understanding and sympathetic
	Express their own feelings
	Be self-effacing
	Give inventive responses to open-ended questions
	Appreciate verbal puns, cartoons, jokes and often enjoy bizarre humour, satire and irony
	Be unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination and want to debate and find reasons to justify the why and the wherefore
	Be confident and competent
	Attribute ideas to others
	Reflect on their own performance
	Have a keen sense of humour in the unusual and be quick to appreciate nuances and hidden meanings
	Criticise constructively, even if sometimes argumentatively