

Whole School Plan for Special Education Teaching

Situation:

St. Joseph's National School has 16 mainstream teachers an ASD class and as a special education team made up of 4 Special Needs teachers and 5 Special Needs Assistants.

Hours for 2016-2017

Low Incidence 28 hrs

G.A.-.2 / 5 hrs x 15= 75 hrs 3 posts [16th assistant won't count until 2017-2018]

Aims of Special Education Teaching and Resource

The principal aim of Special Education Teaching is 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 in accordance with their ability.

Subsidiary aims

- To enable these pupils to participate in the full curriculum for their class level
- To develop positive self esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in these pupils
- To enable those pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English and maths
- To involve parents in supporting their children through effective parent-support programmed
- To promote collaboration among teacher in the implementation of whole-school policies on Special Education Teaching for these pupils.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent / reduce difficulties in learning and increase pro social behaviour.
- To support EAL pupils with English

Principles

Effective Learning programmes are based on the following principles:

- Effective whole-school policies and parental involvement
- Prevention of failure
- Provision of intensive early intervention
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need.

Staff roles and Responsibilities

The role of our Special Education Teachers is a collaborative responsibility shared by all- The Board of Management, Principal, Special Education Teaching Teacher, Class teachers, and Resource Teachers, Special Education Officer, Education Psychologist and other professionals involved with special education and parents and children. It is important that everyone contributes in the planning and implementation of our school plan on Special Education Teaching .

Board of Management

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- ❑ Oversee the development, implementation and review of the provision of Learning Support in the school
- ❑ Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the Learning Support Teachers
- ❑ Provide a secure facility for storage or records in relation to pupils in receipt of Learning Support
- ❑ Budget for ongoing support for Professional Development in Learning Support for staff.

Principal

The role of the principal is to :

- ❑ Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policy on Learning Support in co-operation with the Board of Management, Teachers, parents and children
- ❑ Work with teachers and parents in the development of the school plan on learning support in the context of Special Needs Education
- ❑ Monitor the implementation of the school plan on Learning Support on an ongoing basis
- ❑ Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with lowest levels of achievement
- ❑ Assume direct responsibility for co-ordination learning support in the context of Special Needs Services
- ❑ 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 service that are available and the procedure to be followed in initiation referrals
- ❑ Help teachers increase their knowledge and skills in the area of learning support.

A staged approach to assessment intervention and review for the area of Special needs as per Circular 24/03

Stage 1 – intervention by class teacher and plan objectives and work based on test results and needs

Stage 2-If objectives are not met, assessment by Special Education Teaching Teacher if deemed to be of help with permission of parents and plan objectives and work based on test results

Stage 3- School formally requests a consultation where appropriate an assessment on needs form a specialist form outside the school. New plan based on new information in consultation with parents and for regular review.

- These stages can be skipped in cases where children have serious emotional behavioural difficulties.
- Children with Borderline Mild G.L.D. have a full scale IQ 70 –79. It is expected that such pupils would be catered in the main by the class teacher and the Special Education Teacher under General Allocation. Evidence of the staged approach must accompany all additional resources for such children and for pupils with Dyslexia.

Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her class including those selected for supplementary teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of the school plan on Special Education Teaching the class teacher should:

- Implement teaching programmes, which optimise the learning of all pupils and to the greatest extent possible prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.
- Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and in mathematics from 1st to 6th class by administering and scoring appropriate screening measures-[Drumcondra Reading Tests/ Sigma –T/ Profiles and rating scales] and Non Reading Intelligence Test for 1st and third classes and Micra T and Mist administered at end of Senior Infants.
- For each pupils who is in receipt of supplementary teaching collaborate with the Special Education Teaching teacher in the development of an individual profile and learning programme by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets.
- For each pupils who is in receipt of supplementary teaching, adjust the classroom programmes in line with the agreed learning targets and activities.
- With regard to teaching pupils with low-achievement , the following general approaches and methods are recommended
 - Group teaching
 - Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
 - Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
 - Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
 - Setting learning targets at an appropriate level

- *Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress*
 - *Carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty*
 - *Setting up "buddy systems" in class [high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers – peer tutoring- paired reading*
- *A key role of successful Special Education Teaching is a very high level of consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and the Special Education Teaching teacher. Central to this consultation is the development, implementation and review of Individual Profile and Learning Programmes*

With regard to teaching pupils with low achievement, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:

- ❑ *Such children should be prioritised when accessing information from previous class teacher*
- ❑ *Priority when establishing parental contact*
- ❑ *Group teaching*
- ❑ *Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities*
- ❑ *Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum*
- ❑ *Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy*
- ❑ *Setting learning targets at an appropriate level*
- ❑ *Providing learning activities and material which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress*
- ❑ *Carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty*
- ❑ *Setting up 'buddy systems' in class (high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers, e.g. peer tutoring / paired reading*
- ❑ *Applying assessments and tests which offer challenge and opportunities for success to children of all levels of achievement.*

Learning Support Teacher

The role of the Learning Support Teacher is to:

- ❑ *Develop an individual profile and learning programme for each pupil who is selected for supplementary teaching in consultation with the Class Teacher and parents*
- ❑ *Maintain and plan and progress record or equivalent for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of Learning Support*
- ❑ *Provide teaching in English and Maths to pupils in the school who experience low achievement, in accordance with the school's selection criteria*
- ❑ *Contribute to the development of policy on Learning Support at whole school level*
- ❑ *Provide advice to the Class Teachers in such areas as individual pupil assessment and programme planning, as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and mathematics for pupils experiencing difficulties*
- ❑ *Contribute at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resource books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the Learning Support room*
- ❑ *Perform a defined role in co-ordinating the provision of Special Needs and Learning Support services in the school*
- ❑ *Liaise with external agencies such as psychologist to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs*
- ❑ *Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching and special education support*
- ❑ *Track the progress of pupils who have discontinued Learning Support.*
- ❑ *Support EAL pupils who have little or no English who have moved to the school*
- ❑ *Organise prevention programmes in literacy and Numeracy [Literacy Lift Off, Ready Set Maths, Mata sa Rang, PDST Fractions Booklet]*

Parents

The role of parents supporting the Learning Support for their children is vital to its success. Specifically, parents contribute through:

- ❑ *Regular communication with the Class Teacher and Learning Support Teacher*
- ❑ *Creating a home environment where literacy can thrive*

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- ❑ *Fostering positive attitudes about school and learning in the child*
- ❑ *Participation in shared reading programme*
- ❑ *Encouraging the child to visit library*
- ❑ *Developing the child's oral language*
- ❑ *Developing the child's social mathematics*

Communication Strategies

The operation of an effective communication system between all the parties involved in meeting the learning needs of the child is considered essential. The various strands of the system include:

- ❑ *Class Teacher and the Learning Support Teacher following a low score on a screening test*
- ❑ *Principal and/or Learning Support Teacher and/or Class Teacher and parents following a low score on a screening test, including the seeking of approval of further diagnostic assessment and/or provision of supplementary teaching*
- ❑ *Regular communication between the Learning Support Teacher and the Class Teacher, through the weekly completion of the Classroom Work Schedule in English and Maths and the participation in formal and informal meetings*
- ❑ *Regular communication between the Learning Support Teacher and parents*

Internal Provision

Prevention Strategies

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties are

- *Development of agreed approaches to language development and to teaching other aspects of English and mathematics in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.[See Plean Scoile for English and Mathematics and Literacy and Numeracy 3 years strategy plans for 2013-2017]*
- *Provision of additional support in language development and relevant early literacy using Jolly phonics and large stock of graded supplementary readers.*
- *Early Intervention Programmes Implementation of intensive early intervention programmes in the early primary classes as an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. Programmes to be used.*
- ✓ *Early intervention team teaching through Literacy Lift Off [6 weeks September/ October Rang a 1],[6 weeks November December Rang a 1]*

Children are divided up into small groups (max 7 per group). There are 5 stations and children spend 10 minutes at each. By the end of the hour they will have visited each activity and will take home their "new read" for homework.

Station 1: Familiar Reading

Pupils read previously seen Connect readers.

Purpose: Development of enjoyment, fluency, comprehension and speed.

Station 2: New Reading

Children will explore and then take home a new reader each day. This challenges the pupils to discover new ways to go beyond their current operating ability and lift their literacy processing.

Purpose: Pupils learn to use strategic activities to read new texts.

Station 3: Phonics

Children are supported to improve their abilities in blending & segmenting words (to make and break words) through lots of games and activities.

Purpose: To show children how words work, so that they can make a fast visual analysis of their reading

Station 4: Writing

Pupils write sentences using words that they encounter in their readers and the high frequency words that they are studying.

Purpose: That they will learn how they can write their own messages by hearing and recording sounds in words, using analogy and learning unusual words.

Station 5: High Frequency Words

Through games and small group instruction pupils learn to read the most common HFW appropriate to their age

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Purpose: Children become aware of “tricky words” that allow them to access text with greater ease and to increase their reading fluency and accuracy.

- *Early intervention Team Teaching for Mathematics – Ready Set Go*
- ✓ *Junior Infants -Term 3 -5 weeks*
- ✓ *Senior Infants - Term 1 -5 weeks*
- ✓ *1st Class – Mata sa Rang 1 Term 2- 5 weeks*
- ✓ *2nd Class- Mata sa Rang Term 3 – 5 weeks*
- *Introduction of mathematical skills and games using Mata sa Rang 1,2 strategies.*

- *Implementation of paired reading programmes involving different classes and timetabled use of the school library*

- *Reading Recovery*
Reading Recovery is highly successful early intervention programme designed to reduce literacy problems that we are committed to in our schools. The term “recovery” implies a clear objective to help children acquire efficient patterns of learning which enable them by the end of their supplementary programme to work at the average level of their classmates and to continue to progress satisfactorily. It is designed to provide intensive individual help for any children who have not responded to classroom teaching in reading and writing after their first two years at school. It is set within a specified time frame [13-20 weeks]. Our Special Education Teacher Margaret Duff is also a fully trained Reading Recovery Teacher and will take children for this programme on an ongoing basis. Time allocation and her remit of pupils will be adjusted in order that this programme involving one to one teaching can be implemented in our schools.

Cluster Arrangements -Assessment and Reporting

Identification and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching under General Allocation

Annual Cluster meeting of the principals of the schools and the Special Education Teaching Teacher to be organised in June. On the basis of the results of the Drumcondra Reading test and Drumcondra Maths/Sigma T the caseload of children for the next year will be organised using the criteria as set down below.

Order of children to receive Special Education Teaching based on assessment

1. *Children performing below the 10th percentile in standardised test of achievement in English .*
2. *Senior Infants / first class – early intervention programmes for low achievers in English based on class teacher’s observations and recommendations.*
3. *Children performing below the 10th percentile in standardised test of achievement in mathematics.*
4. *Senior Infants / first class – early intervention programmes for low achievers in Mathematics based on class teacher’s observations and recommendations..*
5. *Pupils performing below the 20th percentile in standardised test of achievement in English .*
6. *Pupils performing below the 20th percentile in standardised test of achievement in English.*
7. *Children above the 25th percentile are not entitled to Special Education Teaching*
8. *Arrangements for providing supplementary teaching to pupils in the senior section who experience very low achievement.*
9. *The duration of supplementary teaching should not exceed two to three years.*
10. *Children diagnosed with a General Learning Difficulty by a qualified psychologist will be facilitated for attention under the General Allocation quota. The hours available and the number of pupils who qualify in this category will determine this allocation. If there is not sufficient hours available under the General Allocation quota , a waiting list of priority for this category of pupils will be drawn up by the school.*
11. *Children with autism*
12. *Children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties [Guidelines as per NEPS BESD Continuum of Support] may need to be taken in small groups or individually. Supports may include anger management strategies, resilience building, social stories and working on building a positive rapport , teaching pro social behaviour and increasing self esteem through games, role play, given responsibility for tasks i.e.gardening, and liaising with home and other agencies. There are occasions where the resource teacher will take the class and give*

the class teacher an opportunity to engage in these activities with the EBD pupil. As there are an increase in difficulties with BESD pupils the Friends for Life programme will be offered to pupils after training is given to staff. A time needs to be allocated at staff meetings for EBD pupils to build up staff support understanding and positive relationships with these pupils to maximise engagement and minimise alienation.

The maximum number of pupils in the cluster is approximately 30 pupils. Priority will be given to those pupils whose achievement is lowest in agreed standardised tests and to those with Emotional Behavioural difficulties. Arrangements for providing frequent intensive supplementary teaching to the junior end of our school is a priority with 4/5 sessions each week. Time will also be set aside for early intervention programme through Reading Recovery, Ready Set Maths, Literacy Lift Off, and Pro Social Programmes Friends For Life [5th] Fun Friends [2nd]

Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

- *A meeting at the end of each instructional term with the parents in cases where supplementary teaching is to be continued discuss the revised learning targets and activities in the pupil's Individual Plan.*
- *A meeting at the end of each instructional term where the targets have been met and the pupils on assessment is performing above the percentile laid down in the criteria for receiving Special Education Teaching and supplementary teaching is to be discontinued*

Resource Teaching Policy

Entitlement to Resource Teaching

When a child continues to experience difficulty and is not making progress above the 12th percentile in literacy and numeracy, the child will normally be referred for psychological assessment, in consultation with parents, and may then be supported by a Resource Teacher. [Exceptions are pupils on low IQ whose standardised test results are in line with their IQ

Pupils who display major behavioural or emotional difficulties may be referred for assessment and may be allocated resource hours.

Children with learning difficulties who are integrated into mainstream education may also be allocated resource time.

Children who have physical difficulties, e.g. deafness, sight impairment, cerebral palsy are usually allocated resource hours.

The Role of the Resource Teacher

The Resource Teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of children assessed as having difficulties. In addition, the Resource Teacher should advise and liaise with other teachers, parents and other professionals in the children's interests. More specifically, the Resource Teacher has responsibility for:

- *Developing an individual learning programme for each pupil in consultation with other partners in education*
- *Assessing and recording the child's needs and progress*
- *Setting specific, time-related targets for each child and agreeing these with the class teacher and principal*
- *Direct teaching of the child, either in a separate room or within the mainstream class*
- *Team teaching when the child concerned will derive benefit from it*
- *Advising class teachers in regard to adapting the curriculum, teaching strategies, textbooks, ICT and other related matters*
- *Meeting and advising parents, when necessary, accompanied by the class teacher as necessary*
- *Meeting with other relevant professionals, in the child's interests, eg psychologist, speech and language therapist, visiting teachers.*

Role of Class Teacher, Parents, Principal, Board of Management

The role of all the above in the education of children who have been allocated resource teaching is as in the preceding section, i.e. the section on Learning Support.

Integration of Children with Autism or Special Education Needs in St. Joseph's NS

Enrolment of children with a disability and/or special education need

Application for all children, including children with a disability and/or other special education needs, is governed at all times by the school's current Enrolment Policy for Mainstream and for the Enrolment Policy for ASD Unit/Cairde.

- ❑ *The rationale for the attachment of autism units to mainstream schools is based on research findings which highlighted that children with ASD progress better in a structured mainstream learning setting and that implementing a policy of 'reverse integration' is a very effective method of teaching social skills. During 'reverse integration' children from the mainstream classroom join the children in the Cairde class for music, drama, storytime and play. This method of teaching is mutually beneficial for both the children in the mainstream and those in Cairde. Our Cairde pupils are given the opportunity to interact with and learn appropriate behaviours from typically developing children while the children from mainstream gain greater tolerance and understanding of difference. See our Integration Policy*
- ❑ *The school has some facilities specially adapted for pupils with autism i.e Sensory Room. The school is fully committed to more provisions as needed subject to funding by the DES*
- ❑ *A child with special needs integrated into an ordinary mainstream class will by the nature of such integration experience the normal day to day happenings, determined by the reality of school life, and the existing customs and practices. Every child in the school, including those with a disability and /or special educational needs is bound by school policies both in existence and those developed from time to time by the Staff and Board of Management. The school cannot offer any additional tuition, support and supervision beyond that which is offered to any other pupil in the school, at times other than when the school is in operation during the normal school year. The Class Teacher, Resource Teacher Special Needs Assistant will periodically be required to participated at Staff Development and Curriculum Training Courses, Such professional development events take place within the existing school year, and all the children, including pupils with a disability and/or special educational needs are in the care of their parents at these times. Such extraordinary closures will be notified to parents of all pupils through the medium of the school newsletter, and school text.*
- ❑ *A close level of co-operation between parents, the Class Teacher, and any other school personnel assigned to support the child.*
- ❑ *To enable us to provide the best services for the pupil, and to access any additional support/s that may be available, we require parents to supply the school with copies of the most recent psychological and medical reports prior to enrolment. These will be treated in the utmost confidence at all times*
- ❑ *Copies of all relevant assessments and reports should be supplied to the school as these become available, on an ongoing basis*
- ❑ *An assurance from parents that they understand that our responsibility as a school is primarily to ALL the children in our care, and that therefore if it becomes apparent to either/both the teachers and parents that the integration of an individual child with a disability and/or special educational needs is having an ongoing detrimental effect on the education of the other children in the class or school, the Board of Management reserves the right to review the enrolment of the individual child.*

Low Incidence Pupils

Pupils with assessed special education Needs in the lower incidence disabilities as set out in circular SP.ED. 01/05 will receive resource support. The support of the SENO and other agencies Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy will be sought in order to help put an I.E.P. that meets the needs of these pupils. The parents of these pupils should provide the school with the necessary reports in advance of the pupil being enrolled in order that the resources may be put in place in the school See enrolment policy.

Monitoring Progress

- 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 by class teacher.
- Formative testing and observation of work by class teacher [See Assessment and Recording Policy]
- Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and in mathematics by administering and scoring appropriate screening measures-[Micra –T/ Drumcondra reading test /Sigma –T/ Profiles and rating scales] each year in May.
- Standardised and diagnostic testing by Special Education Teaching teacher
- Record keeping- Children have a personalised file where records test results and assessments are kept in a secure filing cabinet
- General Wellbeing and EBD pupils – Review at staff meetings – Whole school structures and supports- systematic approach to developing pro social behaviour- Friends for Life Programme will be done by SET teachers for 5th classes with booster sessions for 6th class. Fun Friends programme for 2nd Classes in September/ October 10 weeks programme with initial meeting for parents to explain programme.
- Ongoing communication with home for EBD pupils

Monitoring and reviewing of policy

Monitoring of Special Education Teaching and Resource is an ongoing procedure. A meeting will be held in the last term of each year with Special Education Team in order to review this policy.

Barbara Jaynes

Chairperson of the BOM:

Mairéad Corbally

Principal:

21st December 2016