

St Paul's National School,
Irishtown,
Mountmellick,
Co. Laois.
R32 WK79
(057) 8624781
Roll No: 19369G
E-mail: stpauls1ns@gmail.com

Special Education Needs Policy

Introduction:

In devising the Special Education Needs Policy for St Paul's National School, Mountmellick, careful consideration has been given to the Learning Support Guidelines 2000, The Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 and to the varying needs of the pupils of this school.

Guiding Principles:

All children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all the pupils in the school to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. As far as possible therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum.

Three principles for inclusion

1. Setting suitable learning challenges

We aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

2. Responding to children's diverse learning needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which pupils learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning.

3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of children

We recognise that a minority of pupils will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements.

In making provision for children with special needs, our policy objectives are:

- To ensure that our duties, as set out in The Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 are fully met
- To enable pupils with special educational needs to join in the normal activities of the school along with children who do not have special educational needs
- To ensure that all pupils gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have an equal opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs
- To identify and assess pupils with special needs as early as possible – Belfield Infant Screening Test in Junior Infants and the Middle Infant Screening Test in Senior Infants
- To use our resources as efficiently and equitably as possible when assessing and meeting the special educational needs of our pupils
- To provide a graduated approach in order to match educational provision to pupil's needs;
- To develop a partnership with parents/ carers in order that their knowledge, views and experience can assist us in assessing and providing for their children
- To take into account the ascertainable wishes of the pupils concerned and, whenever possible, directly involve them in decision making in order to provide more effectively for them
- To ensure collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills in order to take effective action on behalf of pupils with special needs
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities towards pupils with special needs and are able to exercise them
- To monitor our effectiveness in achieving the above objectives.

Roles and Responsibilities:

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the Board of Management, Principal and Staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

Board of Management:

The Board of Management will fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for special educational needs funding, equipment and personnel for St Paul's National School.

Principal:

The principal has overall responsibility for the day- to- day management of provision. She will work closely with the Special Education Needs Teacher/Co-ordinator . She will encourage members of staff to participate in training to help them meet the objectives of this policy. In consultation with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, she will liaise with the SENO with regard to support hours and is responsible for clustering arrangements as part of the Central Allocation Model.

Special Needs Teacher/ Co-ordinator:

The Special Needs Teacher/Co-ordinator in our school will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the Special Education Needs policy
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- Liaising with Inclusion Support Assistants with regard to supporting pupils with special needs
- Liaising with parents of pupils with special needs
- Monitoring and reviewing Special Educational Needs provision

Principal and Special Needs Co-Ordinator will jointly:

- Oversee the records of all pupils with special needs
- Liaise with external agencies including the psychology services and health and social services

Enrolment:

The Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that “A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs”. Children with special educational needs who qualify under the school’s enrolment criteria will be considered for enrolment providing appropriate resources are in place prior to proposed date of enrolment. Parents are required to notify the school of their child’s special needs in advance of enrolment. The Board of Management will request a copy of the child’s medical or psychological report. No child can be refused admission solely on the grounds that he/she has special educational needs except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

Special Facilities:

St Paul’s N.S. is a single storey building with ramps where appropriate. It has a universal access toilet and wheelchair accessible doors.

Resources:

A selection of Screening and Diagnostic tests is available in the school (Appendix 1) along with Literacy and Numeracy Programmes devised for pupils with Special Educational Needs (Appendix 2).

Stages of Assessment and Provision:

The three main stages of assessment are classroom screening, individual diagnostic assessment and formal assessment by outside agencies.

1. Access to the school’s broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most pupils by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. Class teachers differentiate on a daily basis using formative assessment (Assessment for Learning) to meet the wide and varying needs of pupils. Class teachers are encouraged to review previous day’s work, guide pupil practice through provision of feedback, adjust questioning to different ability levels and present materials at the appropriate level of difficulty.

2. In cases where the results of screening tests (Appendix 1), summative assessment or differentiated classroom support indicate that progress is not being made, the class teacher should consult with the Special Education Needs Teacher. Further intervention is necessary if:
 - The pupil makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness
 - The pupil shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment
 - The pupil displays persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school
 - The pupil has sensory or physical difficulties
 - The pupil has communication and / or relationship difficulties.
3. Under the terms of the Continuum of Support, the class teacher and SEN teacher will complete a Classroom Support Checklist in consultation with parents. A Classroom Support Plan with a review date will then be devised and provide interventions that are additional to those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.
4. As part of the review process, the SEN teacher and class teacher may deem it necessary to initiate a School Support Plus Plan in consultation with parents and the pupil where possible.

SEN Teaching Intervention:

Classroom Support:

The SEN teacher works closely with each class teacher providing in-class support for literacy and numeracy with emphasis being placed on Early Intervention. Co-teaching, Parallel teaching and Station teaching are prioritised within the Early Intervention Programme in the school. Parallel teaching is the focus in the Senior years. A Student Support File will be opened by the SEN teacher in consultation with class teacher for any pupil identified as being in need of differentiated support. The Student Support File (Appendix 3) allows the school to track the pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. This Support File contains a log of actions and can be continued or closed as deemed appropriate.

School Support:

School Support Plans (SSPs) are devised for pupils who will be withdrawn for individual or small group support in specific areas of individual need. The special education needs co-ordinator will perform diagnostic tests on pupils who are struggling to access the curriculum within the classroom. These tests will include the Neale Analysis Reading Test, Aston Index Spelling and Word recognition test, Non Reading Intelligence test, Dyslexia Screening Test, Schonell Reading and Spelling Test, Assessment for Comprehension and Expression.

These plans will be reviewed and updated biannually. Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum or Classroom Support Plan.

The SEN teacher will review the SSP biannually in consultation with the class teacher. Targets are discussed with parents at the Parent-Teacher Meeting in November. A copy of reviewed SSP is provided to parents and parents are welcome to discuss progress at any time.

School Support Plus:

A School Support Plus Plan will be devised if a pupil is still struggling and/or performing below the tenth percentile despite school support intervention. A school support checklist will be completed in consultation with parents. A psychological assessment may be arranged.

Advice may be sought by outside agencies such as the NEPS Psychologist, Speech Therapy or Occupational Therapy services. Outside agencies may devise a school programme which will advise SSPP Smart Targets.

If a Psychologist/ Occupational Therapist/SENO recommends access to an Inclusion Support Assistant, then appropriate applications will be made.

If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish, the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Education and Skills.

School Support Plan Plus:

The special education needs co-ordinator in consultation with the principal, class teacher, parents and I.S.A. (where appropriate) will devise a School Support Plan Plus(see Appendix 3).

These SSPPs which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that is made in school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, it is ensured that the pupil experiences success.

This plan includes:

- the nature and degree of the pupil's abilities and skills and the degree of the pupil's special needs
- the present level of performance
- services to be provided
- the targets which the pupil is to achieve during the school year which will be reviewed twice yearly-usually September and February.

The implementation of the SSPP will be the responsibility of the SEN teacher, the class teacher and parents.

Review of SSPPs:

The SEN teacher will review the SSPP biannually in consultation with the class teacher, the ISA if applicable and the parents. The review which will ascertain targets achieved and targets yet to be achieved will be discussed with parents at the Parent-Teacher Meeting in November. Parents will also be consulted in March as part of the biannual review.

Timetabling:

Timetabling for SEN teaching is done through a collaborative approach between the SEN co-ordinator, the class teacher and the Principal.

Monitoring and Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the Special Education Needs Policy in the school. This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the three-year School Development Plan.

Modification Clause

The Board of Management reserve the right to modify details of the Special Education Needs Policy at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever-changing environment and social context.

Policy Ratified on: _____

Signed by: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____

Appendix 1:

Screening Tests

Belfield Infant Screening test

Middle Infant Screening test

Sigma T

Micra T

Early Literacy Test

Diagnostic Tests

Non Reading Intelligence Test

Dyslexia screening Test

Neale Analysis Test

Schonell Reading and Spelling Test

Aston Index Test

Appendix 2:

Literacy:

Newell Literacy Programme 1-7, Learning Horizons, 2004
Toe by Toe programme, Cowling, 1993
Sounds O.K.-Word Building Approach, Folens, 1990
S.N.I.P. Literacy Programme 1, www.snip-newsletter.co.uk, 2000
Dolch Word Lists, Pre-Primer-Grade 3, No Glamour Reading, Linguisystems, 2001
Medium Frequency Word Lists-S.N.I.P., www.snip-newsletter.co.uk, 2000
My Spelling Workbook A, C.D. Rom, Prim-Ed, 2001
My First 1000 Words, Parragon, 2004

Numeracy:

Maths Together Programme 3, 4, 5
Maths Matters 2
Interactive Maths Games: www.teachingideas.co.uk

Board Games:

The Socially Speaking Game, L.D.A
CVC Spelling Board Game, Smartkids
Rhyme Match Lotto, Galt
Initial Sounds Lotto, Galt
Sight Words Bingo, Galt
Word Castle, Galt
Dominoes
Number Lotto
What Comes Next, Early Learning Centre
Sneaky Sharks, Orchard
Threading Games, Henbea

Typing Skills (C.D. Roms and On-Line)

Speedy Keys
www.freetypinggame.net
www.learninggamesforkids.net

On-Line Talking Books:

www.rockfordsrockopera.com
www.inklesstales.com
Little Tiger Press Picture Book and C.D. Set

Appendix 3:

STUDENT SUPPORT FILE

Name of Student	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	

Rationale for the use of the Student Support File:

- The Student Support File allows the school to track the student's pathway through the Continuum of Support – right from the start of the support process, and onwards, if necessary, through to the School Support (for Some) and School Support Plus (for a Few) levels.
- The Student Support File allows the school to document progress and needs over time.
- The Student Support File ensures continuity of support for a student, including transition from early years to primary and through to post-primary school and beyond.
- The Student Support File may encourage parental collaboration and parental engagement in the student's learning.
- The Student Support File assists schools in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need.
- The Student Support File contains all the information about the support the student receives, information gathered, plans and interventions, consultations and review and includes the Student Support Plan.

STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN- PRIMARY

Classroom Support/ School Support / School Support Plus (Delete as appropriate)

Name:	Date of Birth:	Class:	Chronological Age
Parent(s)/ Guardian(s):	Home Address:		Telephone Number:
Class Teacher:		Lead Support Plan Teacher:	
Special Education Teacher(s) <i>(please enclose the student's timetable in the SSF):</i>		SNA Support:	
Support Services and external professionals (if relevant):			
Date of Planning Meeting:			
In Attendance:			
Key Persons Involved in Implementing and Reviewing the SSP:			
Start Date of the Plan:			
Review Date of the Plan:			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s):			
Signature of lead teacher:			

Nature of SEN:

Additional supports including any classroom accommodations necessary *(e.g. seating arrangements/ visual supports/ movement and rest breaks):*

PRESENT LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE: STUDENT PROFILE

Formal Assessment Outside Agencies (if relevant)

Date	Name of Test	Administrator	Outcomes

School-based Assessment

--	--	--	--

Informal Assessment - Observations from:

Social and Emotional Skills:

Self-management Skills:

Ability to Keep to Class Rules and Routines:

Motivation:

Motor Skills:

Language Skills:

Receptive:

Expressive

Literacy Skills:

Accuracy & Fluency

Sight Vocabulary

Word Attack Skills & Phonics

Comprehension

Writing

Mathematical Skills:

Computation skills

Problem-solving

Social Maths

Access to Curriculum:

ICT:

Attendance:

STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

LEARNING NEEDS

ADDITIONAL CARE NEEDS: *(for students with SNA support)*

PRIORITY LEARNING NEEDS:

Targets for the Student	Strategies and Resources to help the student achieve the targets	Personnel Involved	Monitoring Arrangements Start/Review Dates Progress / Outcomes Key: ⇨ = Emerging ✓ = Achieved ✗ = Not Achieved

NOTES:

STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN REVIEW RECORD

Classroom Support/ School Support / School Support Plus (Delete as appropriate)

To be completed by the teacher(s) involved in devising and implementing the plan in consultation with parent(s)/ guardian(s), student and relevant personnel as a guide for future actions.

Student's name	Class	
Names of those present at review	Date of Review	
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?		
Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?		
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?		
Recommended future actions – <i>what, how, who, when?</i>		
Any comments from the student?		
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s)?		
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)		
Signature of lead teacher(s)		

- **Please note that you will not be required to complete the Review Record**





