



M A L A H I D E
P O R T M A R N O C K
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N a t i o n a l S c h o o l

Special Educational Needs Policy

November 2024

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1. Rationale

The inclusive ethos and philosophy of MALAHIDE/PORTMARNOCK EDUCATE TOGETHER NS is to cherish all pupils equally and to aid and support them in achieving their true potential. Therefore, the school recognises the pivotal role of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in pursuing its educational goals.

2. Aims

The principle aim of Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents/guardians and the school community on the provision of effective Learning Support and Resource Teaching (LSRT) to pupils diagnosed with Low Incidence Special Educational Needs (Circular 02/05) and/or children who are experiencing low achievement as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Welfare Act 1998 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004. In addition, the policy will set out procedures for the enrolment of children with SEN.

In supporting pupils with special educational needs our aims are:

- To enable all pupils to participate fully in the curriculum for their class level. This is done through implementation of a differentiated curriculum for their specific class level.
- To ensure that those with the highest level of need have access to the greatest level of support.
'In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the overriding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. Importantly, those with the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning.' (2017 Guidelines: P.19)
- To provide/support supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Mathematics.
"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).
- To develop self-esteem and positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To involve parents/guardians and other Outside Agencies (Department of Education and Skills Personnel/Psychologists/Occupational Therapists/Speech and Language Therapists etc.) in supporting children's learning.
- To recognise the key role of class teachers.
- To establish specific models of support (See Appendix 1) that are specifically designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.

3. The Continuum of Support and Selection of Pupils for Support Teaching

3.1 Selection of pupils for Support Teaching

In the allocation of places for support teaching prioritization is influenced by Circular 13/2017 which states that:

"Pupils under the new allocation model will be identified by schools for additional teaching support in accordance with the Continuum of Support Guidelines, and the Guidelines which accompany this Circular" (p. 13).

and

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" (p. 15 and 16).

In identifying pupils for support, MPETNS will consider the following:

- Pupils with significant Special Educational Needs including pupils with significant learning, behavioural,

emotional, physical and sensory needs. This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of

attainment, behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. MPETNS also considers needs set out in professional reports, where available. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.

- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social, emotional or behaviour difficulties, coordination difficulties and attention control difficulties.
- Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit- hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.
- Pupils performing below the 10th percentile on standardised tests will be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy
- Pupils presenting with difficulties in literacy and/or numeracy e.g. difficulties that present a barrier to learning and full access to the curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils who need English Additional language Support.
- Gifted Pupils (those scoring above the 95th%ile in both English and Mathematics on Standardised Assessments and / or have been diagnosed by a NEPS Educational Psychologist as having a "superior IQ"). Interventions will be made in the first instance by the Class Teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support.
- Due consideration will be given to the overall needs of the school and all its pupils.

3.2 Provision of Supplementary Teaching

The primary work of the Special Education Teacher (SET) is the provision of supplementary teaching to the pupils identified above.

Allocating Additional Teaching Supports:

Step 1: Identify Needs

- **Identification:** Using the Continuum of Support Framework, MPETNS identifies pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.
Ref: Appendix 3: Table 1 from the 2017 Guidelines: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process
- **Planning:** A Student Support File has been developed by MPETNS to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.
- **Support List:** A list of pupils who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework is maintained
Ref: (Appendix 6): Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the continuum of support Guidelines

Step 2: Meeting Needs Intervention and Prevention:

This step focuses on the importance of effective teaching and learning strategies and the benefits of early-intervention and prevention programmes

Ref: Appendix 7 (Educational Planning from the 2017 Guidelines are outlined in Appendix 7).

- **Target Setting:** Targets are informed by priority learning needs and linked to suitable interventions (Ref: Appendix 5: Appendix 1 of the 2017 Guidelines: Target setting as part of the problem-solving framework).

Step 3: Monitor and Record Progress

- **Monitor Progress:** Pupils' progress is regularly monitored. Progress is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This progress review may include measures of communication, independence, social inclusion and well-being as appropriate.
- **Record Progress:** Results of such monitoring will be recorded in the student support file/plan and will inform planning.

3.3. Screening and Diagnostic Assessment:

- Class Teachers will carry out initial screening tests and standardised assessments. The Special Educational Needs Teacher (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 selection process.
- Parental permissions for school-based tests / individual assessments are sought when the child enrolls in Malahide Portmarnock ETNS.

3.4 Levels of Support:

- Support may be provided to pupils at Classroom Support / School Support / School Support Plus level of the NEPS' Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010).
- Support involves collaboration between Class Teachers and the SET Team in the formulation and implementation of programmes of work for children with specific needs and those experiencing difficulty in specific areas of learning and development.

Classroom Support:

- Pupils deemed to need additional support with their learning (literacy & numeracy) and / or specific needs (oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning) will be supported in the classroom by the Class Teacher.
- At this stage the class teacher will open a Support File and a brief support Plan and record the specific interventions in it.

School Support and School Support Plus:

- The SET Team may provide additional support for identified pupils, through withdrawal (1:1 or in a small group) and/or in-class support (e.g. station teaching / team teaching / in-class support / peer tutoring), depending on the pupil's needs.
- The SET and Class Teacher, in consultation with the Principal and with reference to guidelines issued by the DES, determines the size of groups, taking into account the individual needs of pupils and the overall caseload.
- Review of Support provision will take place regularly.
- Classes will be intensive in terms of frequency

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Board of Management

The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting and monitoring school policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Board of Management should:

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the SEN policy
- Ensure that adequate classroom accommodation, teaching resources are provided for the SEN team.
- Ensure a secure facility for storage of records relating to pupils.

4.2 Principal

The Principal teacher has overall responsibility for the schools SEN program and for the provision of services for children with Special Educational Needs.

The Principal will:

- Help teachers/SNAs to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of Special Educational Needs teaching by encouraging them and providing opportunities for them to avail of relevant professional development.
- Meet regularly with the SEN Coordinator/Special Education Teacher (SET) team.
- In conjunction with the SEN Coordinator, the principal will;
 - *Liaise with outside agencies on SEN related matters*
 - *Review/monitor and apply for adequate resources for SEN children.*
 - *Review applications to outside Agencies for Special Educational Needs support.*
 - *Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with low achievement so that such pupils can be provided with the support that they need.*
- Oversee SEN related policies and procedures.
- Be responsible for the allocation of SET/SNA positions and class allocation within the SET Department.

4.3 SEN Co-ordinator

The SEN Co-ordinator:

- Works on the development of the school plan for Special Educational Needs.
- Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening program to identify pupils with very low achievement and/or learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need. (See Assessment Policy)
- Collaborates with Principal, SET Team, Class Teachers, SNAs, External Agencies and parents/guardians of SEN children.
- Keeps SEN Teachers/Class Teachers/SNAs and parents informed about relevant external assessment and Special Needs services that are available.
- Maintains a list of pupils who are receiving SEN support.
- Helps to coordinate the caseloads / work schedules of the SET Team.
- Liaises with external agencies such as Psychologists/Family Doctors/Speech and Language therapists/NEPS/SENO to arrange assessments and special provisions for pupils with Special Needs.
- Collaborates with SET Team/Class teachers in the identification, screening and referral procedures.
- Maintains records and disseminates information to relevant school personnel.
- Orders, purchases, distributes, and informs staff on class screening materials and procedures. (See Assessment policy)
- Ensures that all documentation relating to children who receive Special Education Teaching is properly filed and secured.

4.4 The Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all the pupils in his/her class including those receiving Special Education Teaching. The class teacher:

- Liaises regularly with parents on children's progress.
- Facilitates the implementation of various models of support provided by the SET Team (See Appendix 1)
- Liaises initially with parents to make them aware of the difficulties their child may be experiencing.

- In conjunction with the SET Team, uses class observations, standardised and diagnostic test results to highlight children's specific required level of support.

- Collaborates with the SET Team/teacher/SNA on a Student Support File for children with access to SET hours.
- In conjunction with the SET Teachers/SNA/parents creates and updates Student Support File and attends Student Support File Meetings.
- Meets with the SET Team/Teacher on a regular basis to monitor progress and adapt the learning program as necessary.
- Purchases relevant/recommended Learning Support/Resource materials.
- Liaises with outside agencies (Psychologists/Occupational Therapists/Speech and Language Therapists) on providing support and input on the teaching of children with Special Educational Needs.
- Team teaches with the SET team, rotating learning stations to ensure a knowledge of all progress of all pupils.

4.5 Special Education Teacher

SET refers to any teacher employed by the Board of Management in a Special Education Teacher role. The Special Education Teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of children assessed as having a specific disability as outlined in Circular 02/05 and/or children who are experiencing low achievement as documented in standardised/diagnostic test results.

The role of the SET Teacher includes:

- Maintaining a file for each child with SEN containing, as appropriate: psychological reports, reports by other agent, diagnostic tests and work samples.
- Developing a Student Support File with the class teacher to address the needs of children with specific disabilities (Circular 02/05) and/or children experiencing low achievement as reported in relevant standardised/diagnostic test results.
- Maintaining relevant monthly progress reports on children/groups of children in receipt of Support Teaching.
- In conjunction with the class teacher, implementing various in-class models of support as referred to in Appendix 1
- In collaboration with the class teacher, gathering information/data on children to create a profile of children experiencing difficulties. (See SEN Continuum of Support)
- In consultation with the class teacher, administering relevant diagnostic tests to children who have been identified by the class teacher as experiencing difficulties.
- Liaising with outside agencies (Psychologists/Occupational Therapists/Speech and Language Therapists) on providing support and input on the teaching of children with Special Educational Needs.
- Setting specific targets for specific children and/or groups of children and agreeing these with the class teacher and parents.

4.6 Special Needs Assistant SNA

The role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA) is to provide schools with additional support in assisting children with Special Educational Needs who also have additional and significant care needs (Circular 07/02, Circular 0030/2014). Applications for SNA are based on recommendations from the professional who assessed the child and who diagnosed the child's special educational needs. The Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO) is responsible for SNA allocation.

The role of the SNA includes;

- Preparation and tidying up of classrooms in which the pupils with Special Educational Needs is/are being taught.

- Assisting children to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary, travel as an escort on school buses may be required.
- Special assistance as necessary for pupils with particular difficulties e.g. helping physically disabled pupils with typing/writing, including assistance with assistive technology where applicable
- Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene.
- Assisting on out of school visits, walks and similar activities.
- Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils with Special Educational Needs during assembly/recreational, dispersal periods and transitions.
- Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom.
- General assistance to the class teachers, under the discretion of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (SNA's may not act either as substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class)
- Where a SNA has been appointed to assist a school in catering for a specific pupil, duties should be modified to support the particular needs of the pupil concerned.
- Attend and provide input into Student Support File meetings regarding specific child/children with whom they are assigned to.
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans (PPP: See Appendix 7) 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. (Care Needs: See Appendix 8)
- Development and ongoing review of Sensory Diet's for pupils with sensory needs in their care. (See appendix 9)
- Liaise regularly with the class teacher/s who teach the specific children with whom they are assigned to.

4.7 Parents/Guardians

The role of the parent/guardian of a child with Special Educational Needs is important to their education. Specifically, parents contribute through;

- Regular communication with the Class Teacher and SEN Teacher.
- Creating a home environment where literacy/numeracy can thrive
- Fostering positive attitudes about school and learning in the child
- Attending Student Support File and Parent Teacher Meetings and providing input/feedback to Class Teacher/SEN Teacher/SNA.
- Collaborating with SEN/Class Teacher and SNA in writing and implementing a Student Support File and establishing specific goals and targets for their child.
- Sharing insights and feedback on their child's development and learning difficulties. This information is obtained through school enrolment form information and consultation with parents.
- Collaborating in the generating of pupil profiles through Diagnostic Windows etc.

4.8 The Role of the Pupil

In recognition of the child-centred nature of the school's ethos, we recognise the importance of the child's own role in the provision of Special Education Support.

A child-centred approach will enable the SEN team to work with the child to:

- Help him/her to understand his/her own learning.
- Take ownership of his/her own learning – making it real and memorable.
- Recognise his/her own needs and strengths.
- Take on a responsibility for his/her achievements and work hard to succeed.
- Work together from a shared understanding of the difficulties the child is experiencing.

- Set clear realistic and achievable goals so that the child experiences a sense of achievement.

4.9 The Role of External Agencies and Bodies

"Support and guidance is available to teachers from external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate, and allied health professionals. It is important that schools have established procedures / protocols for liaising with these services and bodies to optimise the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs at the individual, group or whole-school level. This is especially important for those pupils with more significant and enduring needs who benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach to identification of need and the development of interventions.

The needs of many pupils span both health and education services. Health services (HSE and HSE-funded services) will continue to play an important role in early identification, assessment and diagnosis, intervention and review for pupils with special educational needs. It is important that schools are familiar with the range of health services in their locality, including referral pathways. Coordination is enhanced when schools liaise with and contribute to health-led assessment and delivery of interventions and when they facilitate meetings between parents and various support services. Schools should endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support"
(2017 Guidelines: p. 25).

5. Enrolment of children with identified SEN

In keeping with Section 2 of the EPSEN Act (2004), a SEN child is welcomed to the school and educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have SEN where this serves the best interests of all children involved.

Prior to a child's enrolment, relevant staff in the school will familiarise themselves with the child's particular needs as required, by:

- obtaining copies of reports, assessments, etc. from parents
- meeting with parents/principal/class teacher/special needs staff
- contacting the SENO, NEPS psychologist or other therapists or agencies where applicable

To ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school the following steps will be taken as appropriate:

Parental visit/s to the school, pupil visits to school and staff visits to special schools/special units.

Where health and safety issues may arise in relation to mobility, care or other needs, these will be identified, and strategies developed to address them.

6. Prevention Strategies/Models of Support

Within the school there are a number of successful prevention strategies/models of support in operation. The school will implement various models of support in order to assist in the prevention of various learning difficulties. The table below outlines the models of support prioritised in our school. (See Appendix 1)

Class	Model of Support
Junior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● Aistear● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● Aistear● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
1 st Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● Early Intervention● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
2 nd Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
3 rd Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● Peer Tutoring● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
4 th Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● Peer Tutoring● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
5 th Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary
6 th Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiation● In class support (Literacy/Numeracy)● Withdrawal if necessary

7. Integration of Children with a Disability and/or Special Education Needs in Malahide/Portmarnock Educate Together National School

Malahide/Portmarnock Educate Together National School is committed to providing the best possible educational service to pupils with Special educational needs. To ensure this, we require:

- A close level of cooperation between parents, the Class Teacher, SEN Teacher, SNA 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.

8. Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology provided under the Department of Education and Skills Scheme of grants (Circular 10/2013) towards the purchase of essential assistive technology equipment is for students who have been diagnosed as:

- having a serious physical disability
- and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed.
- where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs without unduly depriving other children of access to the equipment
- where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum.

Provision under this scheme is made for those pupils whose degree of physical and/or communicative disability is such that without technological support it will not be possible for them to access the school curriculum.

Section 4 from the DES Circular 10/2013 outlines the categories of disability or need for which assistive technology support will be provided, subject to application by the school and a medical recommendation.

Malahide Portmarnock Educate Together National School, may apply to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) under the terms of this scheme for essential assistive technology equipment for individual students when required and when recommended by relevant professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists etc. Parents of children with such recommendations in professional reports should contact the school with regards to making an application. Supporting documentation must also be submitted. Professional reports should also clearly identify how, when, and in what way the recommended equipment will be used.

Sections 13 and 14 from the DES Circular 10/2013 outline the school's responsibility in relation to equipment purchased under this scheme and matters relating to use of and transfer of such equipment between schools. Parents/Guardians of pupils with Assistive Technology granted under the scheme will be asked to read and sign the School Device User Agreement, prior to the allocation of devices.

Transfer of Equipment

In accordance with DES Circular 10/2013 Section 14, although equipment is sanctioned to support a particular pupil, the equipment is sanctioned to a school and will, as a general rule, remain the property of the school and be available for allocation to other or subsequent students with similar disabilities.

Where the equipment is of a specialised and individualised nature and may not be suitable for other students in the school, it is not efficient that such equipment be retained in the school.

Should the student in respect of whom the technology is sanctioned change school, including proceeding to post-primary school, Malahide Portmarnock Educate Together National School will consult with the SENO/ Visiting Teacher with regard to its transfer with the student where it is still appropriate for the students'

assessed needs. This will ensure there is no gap in support for the student and enable the student to continue to use suitable and familiar resources in their new setting. Retention of technology in the school may be considered in certain circumstances outlined in Circular 10/2013.

9. Positive Handling

There are many times when physical contact is used in our school, such as patting a child in affirmation, administering first aid and meeting intimate care needs. Our duty of care to others means that it may on occasion also be necessary to use physical contact to restrain a child who is putting themselves or another person at risk. The following examples, which are not exhaustive, outline the circumstances where physical contact may be used in the school:

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding or pushing
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of their back
- in extreme cases using more restrictive holds.

The following principles are followed by staff who find themselves in a situation where they feel a restrictive physical intervention is necessary. Action by staff will:

- be in best interests of the child
- use maximum care, minimum force
- be reasonable, proportionate and necessary
- be for reasons of safety

Positive handling may be part of an agreed plan with parents and the pupil where appropriate. If this is the case plans will be viewed regularly with a view to reducing the need for intervention.

10. Four Point Scale

This is the whole school strategy to help children recognise their emotions and feelings. We devised a numbered colour scheme, so all children from Junior Infants can use the scale effectively. Each colour/number on the scale represents how a child is coping with a situation:

1 Green – Everything is OK

2 Blue – Something is bothering me. I might need some

help. 3 Yellow – I'm losing control. I need help.

4 Red – I've lost control

This scale should help children not only recognise their emotions in different situations, but with teacher's guidance we would hope that they will learn how to regulate their emotions too.

There are also help buttons which children are encouraged to get if they require adult help immediately.

11. Assessment and selection of children with Special Educational Needs

Children with access to Learning Support:

- Where in-class support is available, all children will have access to learning support.

- Special Education Teacher support will be prioritised for children who score on or below the 10th Percentile on Standardised Tests in Literacy/Numeracy.
- Where a child scores on or below the 10th Percentile on Standardised Tests, the child may receive in-class support where appropriate or withdrawal as part of a smaller group, subject to permission from parent/guardian.
- If a child scores on or below the 10th Percentile the SET/Class Teacher will seek written parental consent for further diagnostic assessment to take place. This will be kept on file.
- Parents must communicate their wishes in writing should they **not** wish their child to avail of Special Education Teacher Support. In the event of a parent refusing consent to Special Education Teacher Support, their choice will be respected, and the letter signed by the parents will be kept on file.
- The level of support given will be determined by the pupils' needs.
- Following a review, and in consultation with class teachers and parents, supplementary teaching may be discontinued. These pupils will continue to be monitored by the Class Teacher and SET Teacher.

12. Old model of Resource and Learning Support teaching allocation:

Children who have been previously assessed by external agencies such as Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist etc., and where LITH (Low Incident Teaching Hours) have been presented and sanctioned by the SENO (Special Educational Needs Officer) are eligible for access to Resource Teaching.

- Resource Teaching Hours may include in-class support, inclusion in group withdrawal and/or withdrawal on a one to one basis, depending on the recommendations contained within specific reports, consultation with parents and class teacher.
- All children will require written consent to be withdrawn from class to avail of Resource Teaching. This will be kept on file.

13. Drafting and Implementing a Student Support File

The purpose of a Student Support File is to formulate a child-centred plan of action for the educational, social, emotional and physical needs for the individual child who is receiving school support.

The individual learning plan will be in accordance with criteria as advised in the Learning Support Guidelines (2000). The plan will address a pupil's full range of needs and will be devised between the class teacher, SET teacher and SNA (if applicable). Teacher's observations are paramount to this process and are taken into careful consideration in the Student Support File. Once the plan is in place, it will be monitored by teacher observations, the keeping of planning and progress records and through the pupil's own feedback. A review will take place at the end of the instructional term. Teachers may meet parents, psychologists and SNAs to discuss the child's progress throughout the school year. The class teacher has the responsibility of ensuring the pupil's learning needs are met. This is achieved through collaboration with the SET team, through in-class support as well as out of class support.

14. Record Keeping

Files for each child with SEN containing, as appropriate; psychological reports, reports by other agents (S&L etc.), Student Support Files and reviews, diagnostic tests and work samples are stored in a locked filing cabinet. The SET teacher working with a child is responsible for updating the child's file and the class teacher will contribute to this. While records are secure to ensure confidentiality, they can be made available to relevant parties, Class teacher, SENO, psychologist, inspector or parents, on a need-to-know basis, via a member of the SET team. In the case of personnel shared among a cluster of schools the individual SET teacher is responsible for records of a child in their care and they will store these in their base school.

Records for each child are retained in the school according to the school's record retention schedule.

This Special Educational Needs Policy was ratified by the board of management of Malahide/ Portmarnock Educate Together NS on 28th November 2024.

Other Relevant Policies/Circulars

Relevant Policies	Relevant Circulars/Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Attendance Policy● Enrolment and Admissions Policy● Special Needs Policy Statement and Special Needs Assistant Contract● Data Protection Policy● Child Protection Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Education and Welfare Act 1998● Special Education Circular 02/05● Circular 07/02● Circular 0030/2014● NEPS Continuum of Support● Learning Support Guidelines● Assessment in the Primary School● The Disability Act 2005● The Data Protection Acts (1998, 2003)● Freedom of Information Act 1998● Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004

Appendix 1:

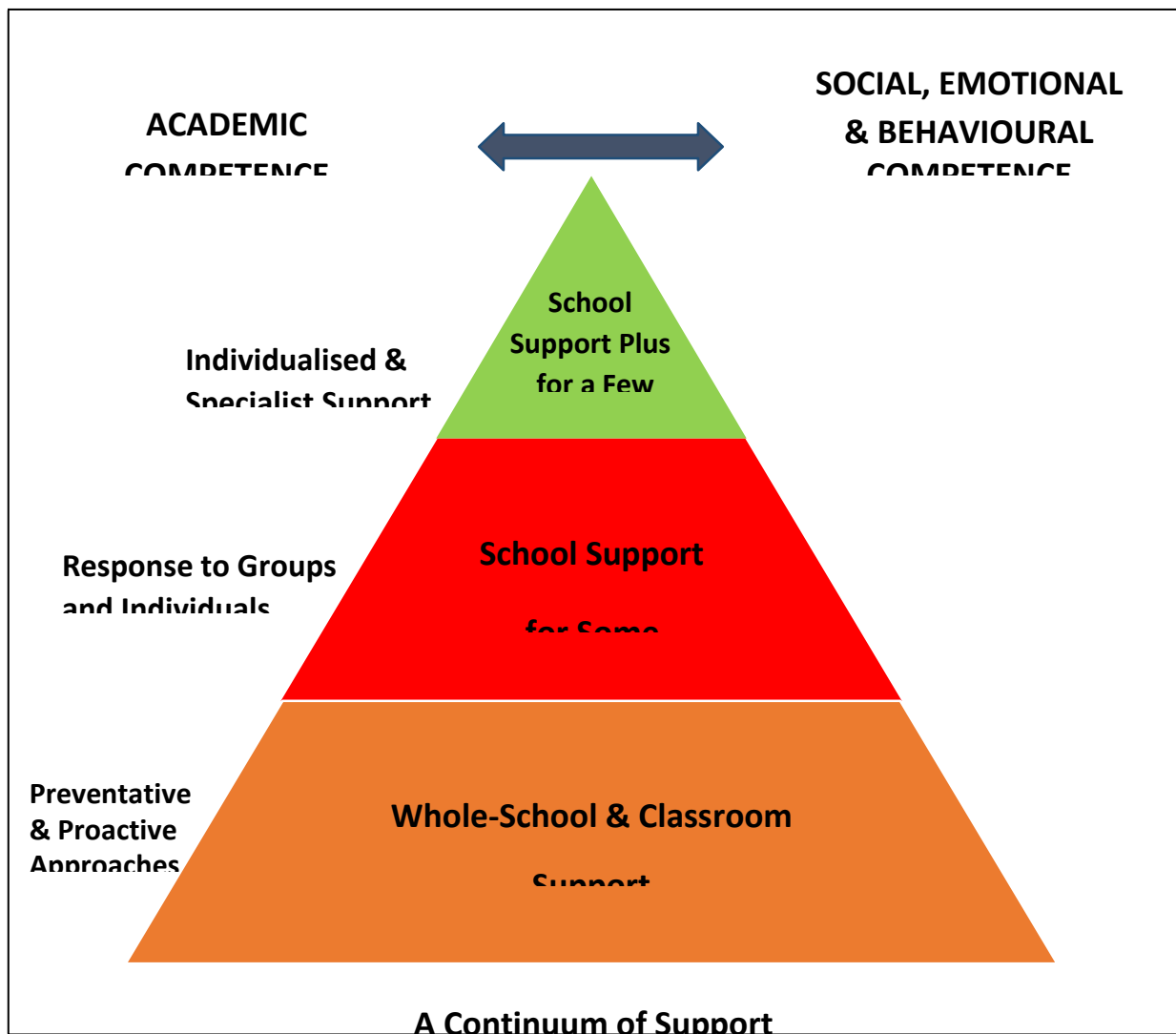
Current and future Models of Support available in Malahide/Portmarnock Educate Together National School

Aistear	<p>Following consultation with the early childhood sector, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has produced Aistear, a curriculum framework for children from birth to 6 years. This national curriculum framework establishes principles and themes or goals that all early childhood services in Ireland work towards. The aim of Aistear is to help every child to grow and develop as a competent and confident learner. Ultimately, according to Aistear, early childhood care and education must support a child's sense of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Well Being● Identity and Belonging● Exploring and Thinking● Communicating <p>These goals are achieved through the contexts of play and supported by caring, learning relationships with adults and peers. In this way Aistear makes very strong links between care and education in the early years and firmly establishes the child's right to a safe, stimulating, nurturing and play-based environment.</p>
Early Intervention	<p>Early Intervention is the process of providing support in our school to children in the Junior Classes (Junior Infant-2nd Class). It is a model of support that encompasses various methodologies such as <i>First Steps Strategies</i> and <i>Station Teaching Methodologies</i>. First Steps: is a research-based literacy resource that offers teachers an accurate means of assessing and monitoring children's competencies and progress in reading, writing, spelling and oral language. It then links this assessment to appropriate classroom-based activities and strategies. Station Teaching: is the process of teaching several lessons at one time. Student's move from one station to the next, within a specific time frame, to engage in all activities! Teacher Assisted Station- teacher is available to work with students at this station.</p>
Peer Tutoring	<p>Peer tutoring is a flexible, peer-mediated strategy that involves students serving as academic tutors and tutees. Typically, a higher performing student is paired with a lower performing student to engage with curricular areas such as Literacy and Numeracy. In Malahide/Portmarnock Educate Together we use Peer Tutoring as an in-class support for all children to explore Literacy in an interactive way. Peer Tutoring helps us move away from an exclusive reliance on withdrawal teaching for pupils with learning difficulties and address specific needs on a whole class/in-class support level.</p>

Appendix 2:

The 2017 Guidelines (p. 8) present the NEPS Continuum of Support as follows -

The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



The 2017 Guidelines (p. 11-12) describe the NEPS' three tiers of support as follows - "As special educational needs can vary from mild to transient to significant and enduring, educational planning should reflect the level of need of the individual pupil. In this regard, the Student Support File facilitates a graduated response across the different levels of the Continuum: Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. For pupils with significant, enduring and complex needs, collaboration with external professionals, including multi-disciplinary teams, is advised (for example, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist and psychologist)".

Appendix 3:

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

Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process	
Classroom Support	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental consultation Teacher observation records Teacher-designed measures /assessments Basic needs checklist * Learning environment checklist* Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist Literacy and numeracy tests Screening tests of language skills <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
School Support	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher observation records Teacher-designed measures / assessments Parent and pupil interviews Learning environment checklist Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition.</p> <p>A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
School Support Plus	<p>This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures Parent and pupil interviews Functional assessment Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc. <p>Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p>

*These checklists are available in the *Continuum of Support Guidelines for Teachers*

Appendix 4:

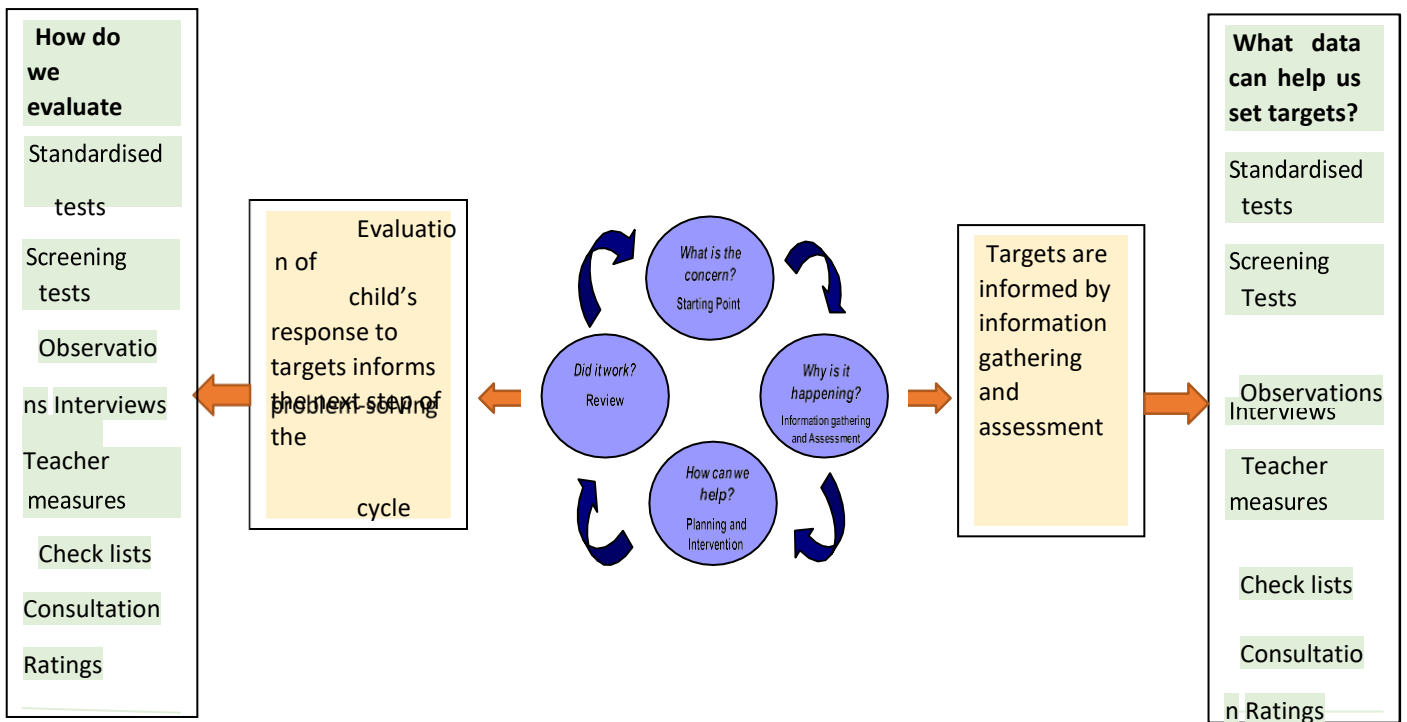
Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework

Classroom Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Supports Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	Focus of Support In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard
School Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Supports Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	Focus of Support In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard
School Support Plus				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Supports Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	Focus of Support In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard

5 Schools may hold information on pupils and level of support on a class basis, as an integral part of classroom planning.

Appendix 5:

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



**Targets are written as desired skills which are: Specific
Measurable Achievable Relevant Time Limited**



Targets should be written in definitive language to facilitate monitoring and review of progress, for example:

John will correctly identify the first 50 Dolch Words with 80% accuracy

Sean will speak in a full sentence which includes a subject, verb and object

Anne will use her PECS to request an activity break

Appendix 6:

Table 2: from the 2017 Guidelines - Planning the allocation of special education teaching supports

Table 2: Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs	
Action Identification of pupils with special educational needs	1: Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data, and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests). Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
Action Setting targets	2: Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the Continuum of Support.
Action Planning teaching methods and approaches	3: Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the Continuum of Support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
Action Organising early-intervention and prevention programmes	4: Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early- intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
Action Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	5: Cross-reference the needs of pupils at School Support and School Support Plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place. Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.
Action Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	6: Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At Whole-school and Classroom Support level by all teachers ● At the School Support and School Support Plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers

Appendix 7:

Educational Planning (2017 Guidelines).

Educational planning

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process. The process involves the class teacher, special education teachers, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals. Interventions should draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers. These interventions should reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests. Support plans should set out the agreed targets, the resources required, the strategies for implementation and a time-frame for review.

Student Support File

A Student Support File has been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress and needs over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the pupil. This may result in a decision to discontinue support, to continue the same level of support, or move to a higher or lower level of support.

Appendix 8:
Care Needs of Pupils

1. Primary Care Needs SNA Tasks (as per Circular 30/2014):	v
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with feeding: Where a pupil with special needs requires adult assistance & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of medicine: Where a pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine & where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with toileting & general hygiene: Where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, & until such time as they are able to do so. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with mobility & 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.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground & school grounds: At recreation, assembly, & dispersal times including assistance with arriving & departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: Such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with moving & lifting of pupils, operation of hoists & equipment. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs & those with significant, & identified social & 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. 	
2. Secondary Care Associated Tasks (SNA Tasks) (as per Circular 30/2014):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation & tidying of workspaces & classrooms or assisting a pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare & tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 & the review of such plans. 	

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist teachers & / or Principal in maintaining a journal & care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance & care needs. Assist in preparation of school files & materials relating to care & assistance required in class by students with special needs. | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for activities & classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with Class Teachers & other Teachers such as the Resource Teacher & School Principal, attending meetings with Parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement & guidance of class 	
Teacher/Principal.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 personnel, including class teachers or support teachers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff. 	
3. Other Vital SNA Tasks:	
Preventing the child from harming self	
Preventing the child from harming other children	
Preventing the child from harming staff	
Preventing the child from destroying property	
Careful supervision of the child to prevent the child from climbing / squeezing into tight spaces etc...	
Supervising the child who is a flight risk	
Accompanying the child to and from Learning Support / Resource	
Removing the child from whole school activities, if the child becomes distressed / overwhelmed	
Removing the child from the classroom when meltdowns occur	
Assisting the class teacher to raise the alarm if dangerous situations occur (children cannot be left alone)	
Assisting the class teacher to comfort other children who are injured / frightened by explosive behaviour	

Appendix 9:

Personal Pupil Plan Template (PPP)

Personal Pupil Planning			
Student name	•	DOB	
Disability/medical condition			
Class			
Level of SNA access assigned to pupils in the class, i.e. will access be shared?			
Student primary care needs	•		
How SNA support will be deployed to assist the student	<p>Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
How the school intends to actively reduce, and where appropriate, eliminate dependency on SNA support	•		
Timeframe	•		
Targets for the development of independence skills	•		
Additional information	Changes since this was originally written are in green.		

Appendix 10:
Sensory Diet Template

Time/Daily Activity	Challenges	Sensory Activity	Helpful?
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

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