

Special Educational Needs Policy

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys National School

Introduction

The purpose of this SEN policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other interested parties on the provision of effective learning support to pupils experiencing low achievement and / or learning difficulties, as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998. The focus of the policy is on the process the teachers may use to identify and cater for the special educational needs of individual pupils in proportion to the impact of those needs on their learning and socialisation. **The process moves from simple classroom based interventions to a completely new system of in-class support whereby 1 SEN is assigned to each class grouping to cater for children with LITH, children requiring Learning Support, Travellers and also to provide in-class support in the classrooms**

The continuum of support encompasses a graduated problem-solving model of assessment and intervention comprised of three distinct processes:

Classroom Support is an intervention process coordinated by the class teacher and carried out within the regular classroom.

School Support or In-class Support is an assessment and intervention process, which will be coordinated by the learning support/resource teacher (SEN teacher) planning and working alongside the class teacher. Interventions at this stage will be additional to those provided through classroom support. In September 08 we introduced in-class Support in Literacy and Numeracy in a 'Team-teaching' model' "Team teaching occurs when two or more teachers jointly deliver instruction to a diverse group of pupils in a single physical space" (Cook and Friend, 1995,1).

The Most Common Approaches are:

- Lead and Support
- Parallel Teaching
- Station Teaching
- Alternative Teaching
- Team Teaching.

In September 08 all classes embraced Lead and Support process, which was very successful. Teachers then moved through the various approaches and most classes, if not all, are now successfully incorporating 'Team Teaching' in Literacy and Numeracy classes.

School Support Plus is when the SEN coordinator Mrs Regan requests the involvement of relevant external services in more detailed assessment and development of intervention programmes. This level of intervention is for children

with complex and/or enduring needs and whose progress is considered inadequate despite carefully planned interventions at the previous levels.

The school currently has the following provisions to cater for children with Special Education Needs :

- ❑ 8 SEN teachers
- ❑ 3 Resource Teachers to support the language needs of overseas pupils
- ❑ 1 Special Speech and Language Class
- ❑ 1 Special Class for children with MGLD
- ❑ 9 Special Needs Assistants

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

- ❑ Enrolment Policy
- ❑ SEN Policy
- ❑ Policy on the Integration of Children with Special Educational and/or Physical Needs
- ❑ Language Class Policy
- ❑ Overseas Pupils Policy
- ❑ Exceptionally Able Students Policy

Implementation and Review

The implementation of this Policy will commence in January 2008. It will be reviewed at the end of every third school year, or as circumstances may warrant. **This Policy has been reviewed in December 2011**

Communication

A copy of this policy will be made available to teachers, parents of SEN pupils and other parents on request. It is also available on school website.

Guiding Principles

We want all children particularly those with disabilities to feel that they are a valued part of the School Community. We do this through inclusion, which has at its core, the following principals

- Effective whole-school policies
- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to children's diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming barriers to learning and assessment.

Rationale

The rationale for this policy is to ensure compliance with the Education Act (1998) the Education Welfare Act (2000), The Equal Status Act (2000), Disability Bill (2002), and the E.P.S.E.N. Act (2004).

Relationship to School Ethos

St. Patrick's De La Salle strives to create learning opportunities for all children and that commitment underpins all school planning and policy documents. We particularly strive to cater for the most challenged children as their presence in the school enriches the entire school community.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure all children gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have opportunity of access to an appropriate education.
- To set out the whole school approach to teaching and learning re pupils with Special Needs.
- To set out procedures for the enrolment of children with special needs in the school
- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school
- To develop a partnership with parents/carers.
- To outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to supporting the learning of pupils with special educational needs
- To use all resources efficiently and equitably so that these children develop as learners, engage meaningfully with the curriculum and develop the skills and competencies necessary to lead an independent life.
- To enable all pupils with disabilities in the school to share with their peers as complete an educational experience as possible.
- To establish communication structures for the involvement of all the partners in the education of pupils with special educational needs

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

The B.O.M. fulfils its statutory duties towards pupils with Special Needs.

Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provisions, working closely with the S.E.N. co-coordinator Mrs Regan, liaising with the S.E.N.O., securing training for staff and reporting to the Board.

Classroom Support

The Class Teacher

The class teacher liaises with the parents regarding the decision to initiate the Classroom Support process. The class teacher may also seek advice from the Learning support/ resource teachers and will keep the SEN co-ordinator advised. The class teacher will keep a record of relevant information which will be used should more detailed problem solving be required at School Support level

Support Teachers

The support teachers will provide advice and resources to the class teachers, which will assist in the assessment process and the development of classroom and where appropriate, home based interventions for the pupil. The class and resource teachers identify and intervene while the S.N.A. attends to care needs, if necessary.

Parents

Parents consent to allow their children act as Buddies and engage in Reverse Integration and as such, play a very positive role in the implementation of the policy.

Other Professionals

Other professionals such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Behavioural Therapists, Visiting Teachers etc., may be involved indirectly, offering consultation and advice in relation to appropriate approaches for pupils presenting with early difficulties.

The Review Process

This will include the class teacher, parents and child (if appropriate) and will focus on

- The pupil's response to learning/behavioural interventions
- Progress made by pupil
- Effectiveness of actions
- Suggested next steps

Result of Review may be

1. The child continues to have a classroom support plan
2. The child no longer requires a classroom support plan
3. School support is initiated.

School Support and In-Class Support

Essentially School Support level involves all the components from the Classroom Support level plus additional support and focussed teaching time from SEN teacher which may include in-class support or withdrawal to SEN room.

The Class Teacher

The class teacher consults with the SEN co-ordinator Mrs Regan and parents to initiate school support. The class teacher contributes to problem solving process and remains responsible for working with child in classroom.

The SEN Co-ordinator

Following consultation with parents the SEN co-ordinator may seek additional advice or information from other professionals to supplement information from classroom support level.

Support Teacher

The support teacher co-ordinates further information and assessment. Then a School Support plan is agreed with parents and implemented by class and support teacher.

The Review Process

This will include meeting with Class teacher, support teacher and parents and will focus on

- Progress of pupil
- Extent to which pupil's needs are being met
- Parent's views on progress at home in supporting school plan
- Pupil's views on progress (if appropriate)

Result of Review may be

1. The child continues to have School Support plan
2. The child reverts to classroom with Classroom Support plan
3. The school Support Plus process is initiated

School Support Plus

This process will generally involve external professionals and support services in a more detailed problem solving to help the pupil. School Support Plus applies to those pupils whose needs are enduring and/or severe and complex and whose progress is considered inadequate despite carefully planned interventions in Classroom Support and School Support.

Students with Low Incidence Disabilities have their needs met automatically through the School Support Plus process.

The Class Teacher

The class teacher contributes to assessment and planning and remains responsible for working with the pupil in the classroom.

The SEN Co-ordinator

The SEN co-ordinator Mrs Regan will support the class teacher and any other supporting teachers in gathering further information. She will work closely with teachers and parents in considering

- Information previously gathered and reviews of Classroom and School Support Plans
- Pupil's response to earlier interventions
- Areas where more detailed school based assessments may be needed
- Co-ordinating the assessment of the pupil's learning/social, emotional, and behavioural difficulty and identification of special educational needs involving, as appropriate, and with parental consent, relevant external agencies.
- The co-ordination of the development of the IEP
- Liaising with SENO, Ms Maria Healy, as appropriate
- Monitoring and supporting interventions and reviewing IEP's, working with class teacher, support teachers and parents

Our NEPS psychologist Ms. Kathleen Gavin plays a key role at this level. She works in collaboration with teachers and parents in clarifying problems, through consultation and further joint assessment.

Support Teachers

Support teachers will be involved in both the assessment and intervention process. They will provide support both through in-class support and withdrawal system. At this level it is possible that there will be more than one supporting teacher involved with the pupil. Their responsibilities will include:

- 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, e.g. psychologist, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, behavioural therapists, visiting teachers etc.

A Staged Approach to Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Observation	Process	Personnel Involved
<p>Stage 1 Class teacher/parent has concerns regarding a pupil's academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development</p>	<p>Class teacher administers appropriate screening measures. Class teacher devises a plan, which aims to meet pupil's identified needs within the normal classroom setting. The success of this plan is regularly reviewed in consultation with parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Class teacher</i> • <i>Parent</i> <hr/> <p><i>Additional Supports Available</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SEN Teacher</i> • <i>NEPS Psychologist</i>
<p><i>If concern remains after a number of reviews, the Special Education Support Team in the School may be consulted about the desirability of a move to Stage 2</i></p>		
<p>Stage 2 Child is referred to learning support teacher, with parental permission for further diagnostic testing.</p>	<p>If diagnostic testing indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this is arranged. Parent, class teacher and learning support teacher collaborate in devising, implementing and reviewing the pupil's learning plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Class teacher</i> • <i>Parent</i> • <i>SEN Teacher</i> <hr/> <p><i>Additional Supports Available</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visiting Teacher</i> • <i>NEPS Psychologist</i> • <i>Other Support Staff /Speech Therapist</i>
<p><i>If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews, it may be necessary to implement Stage 3</i></p>		
<p>Stage 3 School formally requests a consultation, and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school.</p>	<p>A learning plan is devised by personnel involved, which includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the plan. Parents should be fully consulted throughout this process. This learning plan should be subject to regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning plan and referral for specialist review as necessary.</p> <p>Any private practitioner engaged by a school at Stage 3 should have the relevant Department of Education and Science Circulars and guidance notes drawn to their attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Class teacher</i> • <i>Parent</i> • <i>Learning Support Teacher</i> • <i>Resource Teacher (if available)</i> • <i>Relevant Specialist</i> <hr/> <p><i>Additional Supports Available</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NEPS Psychologist</i> • <i>Scheme for Commissioning Psychological Assessments</i> • <i>Speech and Language Therapist</i> • <i>Occupational Therapist</i> • <i>Psychiatrist</i> • <i>Audiologist</i> • <i>Paediatrician</i>

An Individual Education Plan is drawn up based on the assessment gathered

The I.E.P. will describe:

- The nature and degree of the pupil's special educational needs and how these affect his educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the pupil
- The special education and related support services to be provided to the pupil to enable the pupil to benefit from education including:
 - intervention programmes (small group or individual)
 - Specific methodologies/programmes to be implemented
 - Specific equipment/materials and /or IT supports needed to support learning and access to the curriculum
 - SNA support if required

The management of I.E.P's. is the responsibility of Class Teachers and Support Teachers. Three copies of I.E.P's are drawn up. One for class teacher, one for Support teacher and one to be stored in central location in Mrs Regan's room. Parents are invited to participate in meeting with class teacher, support teacher and any other relevant professionals in drawing up IEP. recommendations. A review is conducted twice yearly. If a child is reaching targets consistently he/she may revert to a classroom setting.

- The goals which will be reviewed twice yearly
 - o The pupils priority learning needs
 - o Long and short term targets to be achieved
- Monitoring and Review Arrangements

The Review Process

Review Process to be co-ordinated by Mrs Regan SEN co-ordinator. Parents, outside Professionals and the SENO should be involved as appropriate.

The Review will focus on

- Progress towards targets made by pupil
- Any new information and/or assessment results
- Effectiveness of strategies/methodologies/equipment and materials
- Effectiveness of supports provided

The Result of the Review maybe

- The child continues to need intervention at School Support Plus level

- ❑ The child no longer requires support at School Support Plus level and it may be decided that his needs may be met by having a School Support plan put in place.

Facilities and Resources

The Mainstream School has 8 SEN rooms + 1 language unit. All Special Needs children have access to Computers

Provision of Resources

- ❑ Resources for the provision of SEN teaching include a variety of textbooks, library books and ancillary materials and oral language development materials. A variety of testing materials are also in use, which include standardised, diagnostic, screening, reading experience, reading attainment, phonological awareness and Maths attainment.
- ❑ Following consultation between the Learning Support Teacher, Principal and Class Teacher, funding for materials may be provided from the learning support Grant, materials Grant, and/or funding that may be available through the Board of Management
- ❑ Learning Support resources will be primarily be used in the learning Support Room. These resources may be made available to Class Teachers following consultation with the Learning Support Teacher

Reading Recovery

In September 10, one of our staff, Neasa Burke undertook training in the Reading Recovery system. Reading recovery programme has been introduced to children in Senior Infants and Literacy Lift-off programme to children in 1st Class.

Policy Content

Enrolment

*“A child with special educational needs **shall** be educated in an **inclusive** environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with*

- a) The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or*
- b) The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated”*

The Ed. For Persons with Disabilities Act 2004.

A special enrolment policy pertains to the speech and language unit. A child will be admitted to the Special Class if a space is available, and all admission criteria are met.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's Special Needs in advance of enrolling in Mainstream. The B.O.M. will request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child will be refused permission solely on the grounds of S.E.N.

Screening

- Teacher Observation.
- Screening Tests – The Early Literacy and/or BIAP is administered to Senior Infant children who are experiencing problems in September.
- M.I.S.T. Screening test is administered to all Senior Infants just before Easter.
- Micra T and SigmaT are administered to all children from 1st Class to 6th every year in May followed by diagnostic testing by Support teachers in June.
- Class teacher liaises with L.S./R.T. as the staged approach develops.
- Mrs Regan SEN co-ordinator liaises with Assessment Services if necessary.

Differentiation

Access to the schools broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. The class teacher will liaise with L.S./R.T. and provide interventions that are additional to and different from those provided under the normal school curriculum. The school makes every effort to ensure a balance between withdrawal and in-class tuition.

Early Interventions

The triggers for intervention will be:-

- The child's makes little progress even when teaching approaches are directed at identified areas of weakness.
- The child is slow to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
- The child has social difficulties (communication, relationships etc.)
- The child has emotional/behavioural difficulties, which do not respond to behavioural management techniques.
- The child has physical difficulties.

If the strategy of differentiated support does not work, the class teacher will inform the parents that their child's needs might be better served in a small group with a support teacher. The Class Teacher and the Support Teacher will differentiate the curriculum with realistic targets being set. The Support Teacher will implement an educational plan for the child either as part of a small group, as part of the whole class or on an individual basis. Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern the child will revert to the class curriculum.

Prevention Strategies

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

- ❑ The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches to languages development, e.g. phonological awareness, and to the teaching of other aspects of English
- ❑ Delay in introducing the formal process of reading as per the Revised Curriculum
- ❑ The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches to the teaching of aspects of Maths, e.g. our whole school approach to the Language of Tables and Subtraction
- ❑ Promotion of parental understanding and involvement through their attendance at an induction meeting for the parents of incoming Junior Infants, the provision of the Tips for Parents booklet, the arrangement of formal and informal Parent-Teacher Meetings, and provision of regular school newsletter, as well as ongoing collaboration with Parents' Association
- ❑ Implementation of Shared Reading Programme from Junior Infants to Rang 1. (Junior Infants will do Shared Reading from the second term, all other classes do 2 - 6 week periods of shared reading, 1 in Nov.-Dec, the other in Feb.-Mar.)
- ❑ Buddy Reading in Jn. Infants from 2nd term, also in short periods of six weeks.
- ❑ Focus in Jn.& Sn Infants on Language experience approach and also U.S.R. (Unsustained Silent Reading) for early finishers of tasks.
- ❑ Class based early intervention by the Learning Support Teacher from Infants to Rang 2 resulting in the provision of additional individualised support. In JI this will be primarily focused at identification of pupils who may be in need of LS
- ❑ Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils by the Class Teacher

In the allocation of places for SEN teaching, the following are prioritised:

1. Senior Infants identified by the Class Teacher, through Teacher Observation/Early Literacy Test and/or MIST, as having difficulty in literacy
2. Children from Rang 1 and Rang 2, at or below the 12th percentile in literacy
3. Children from Rang 3-Rang 6 at or below the 12th percentile in literacy
4. Senior Infants, identified by the Class Teacher, through Teacher Observation or other screening instruments, as having difficulty in numeracy
5. Children from Rang 1 and Rang 2, at or below the 12th percentile in numeracy
6. Children from Rang 3 to Rang 6, at or below the 12th percentile in numeracy

7. In class support for children presenting at 12th to 20th percentile in literacy and numeracy in all classes up to Rang 6.

Outside Agencies

Children still giving cause for concern will undergo diagnostic testing with the Support Teacher. Tests administered in our school include the Neale Analysis, Aston Index, Phab, Jackson's Phonic tests and N.R.I T. If a child is identified as still struggling below the 12th percentile the school may refer the child for a Psychological Assessment, having consulted with parents through the Principal.

The Psychologist report will indicate if the child has special educational needs, and the local S.E.N.O. will determine whether the child is categorized as Low or High Incidence. Low Incidence will be awarded resource hours and High Incidence will be catered for under the schools General Allocation System. The Psychologist may also recommend a Special Needs Assistant and the S.E.N.O. will adjudicate on this issue. The Principal will secure exemptions from Irish from the D.E.S. if so recommended by the psychologist.

An I.E.P. is then formulated by breaking down the existing levels of attainment of the S.E.N. child into finely graded targets. This is a collaborative process between Class Teachers, Support Teachers, S.E.N.O., Parents and outside agencies.

The plan includes:-

- The nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills.
- The degree and nature of the child's Special Needs.
- The child's present level of performance.
- The services to be provided.
- Targets and goals twice annually

Inclusion

The goal of inclusion is to enable all pupils to belong within an educational community that values their individuality. This school attempts to promote inclusion through:-

- Modifying activities.
- Allowing all children participate in oral work.
- Allowing all children the opportunity to participate in group work.
- Providing appropriate tasks and practical work.

- Establishing a “Buddy System”.

Classroom Practices

“The teacher must be expert in monitoring performance at the level of each student in the class as corrective feedback is geared to individual needs and learning rate” –Westwood.

In this school teachers are encouraged to:-

- Review previous days work.
- Present clearly new skills and concepts.
- Guide student practice through provision of feedback.
- Provide modified instruction.
- Use age and ability appropriate written and oral work.
- Adjust questioning to different ability levels.
- Present materials at the appropriate level of difficulty.

The SEN Teachers will maintain the following documentation in individualised files:

1. Individual Profile and Learning programme
2. Short term planning and programme record
3. Monthly Progress Reports
4. Samples of written work
5. Reading analysis records

Communication

Communication in relation to Special Needs is ongoing with –

- Parents/Guardians
- Health Service Executive.
- Special Education Needs Officer.
- Speech and Language Therapists.
- Occupational Therapists.
- Educational Psychologists.

- Social Workers.

Timetabling

Timetabling for Resource and Learning Support is done through a collaborative approach between Class teachers, Support teachers and Principal. Every effort is made to ensure that children are not removed from the same curricular area each day. Due recognition is taken of the specific needs of each child.

Planning

In accordance with Croke Parke Agreement, Planning meetings take place for 1 hr every second Tuesday. Class teacher, Support teacher and Language Support teacher attend these meetings. A fortnightly plan is then drawn up for the following two weeks

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 SEN Teacher
- ❑ Creating a home environment where literacy can thrive
- ❑ 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

Success Criteria

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

- ❑ Improved standards of academic achievement with the pupil's individual learning programme
- ❑ Enabling the discontinuation of the provision of SEN teaching based on positive assessment results
- ❑ Enhanced parental involvement in supporting their child's learning needs
- ❑ Increased opportunities for effective communication between school personnel in relation to pupil's progress
- ❑ SEN provision continuously focused on children from Junior Infants to Rang 2

Other/Issues

1. The school has Safety Statement and An Administration of Medicines Policy.
2. The school promotes a positive school environment through S.P.H.E.

Integration of Children with a Disability and/or Special Education Needs in St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys National School

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.. However, the attention of parents of children with a disability and/or other special education needs is also drawn to the following points:

- ❑ In general, the teachers in our school are trained and qualified to teach in mainstream education. They do not, in general, have any Special Education Needs Teacher Training, experience, or Qualifications, such as teachers in special schools have
- ❑ While pupils with special needs can be integrated into a mainstream class, and may be supported by a Special Needs Assistant and Resource teaching, as allowed by the DES, this is not the same as the intensive one to one teaching s/he would enjoy in a special school
- ❑ An ordinary mainstream school does not have ancillary services enjoyed by special schools, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy
- ❑ The school does not currently have facilities specially adapted for pupils with physical disability, although the school is fully committed to the provision of these, should any pupil need same, and 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 form 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 (if any) and Special Needs Assistant (if any) 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 the times. Such extraordinary closures will be notified to parents of all pupils through the medium of the school newsletter, as well as through regular notices to parents.
- ❑ A child with a disability and/or special educational needs integrated into an ordinary mainstream class will not have any separate or additional provisions put into place from his peers in the event of staff illness, absences or whole school events such as school visits, parish liturgy etc
- ❑ From year to year the allocation of teachers to classes is focused on the needs of the whole school, and consequently the school cannot guarantee long-term continuity or predictability in personnel.

Notwithstanding the above points, the school is committed to providing the best possible educational service to pupils with a disability/special educational needs. To ensure this, we require:

- ❑ 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.

Language Class

Language Class

St Patrick's De La Salle Boy's National School has a Language Class, which caters for the needs of children with specific language disorder, from Junior Infants upwards, who are within the normal range of intelligence. The maximum enrolment in the class is 8 pupils, and the class is staffed by a full time teacher, and has a speech and language therapist 3 days per week. The pupils in the Language Class are integrated with the other pupils at playtime, during school trips and outings, and through integration during non-core subjects.

Pupils follow the normal primary school curriculum, but they do not study Irish. They receive intensive group and one to one Speech Therapy. There is a purpose built Language Therapy unit in the Special Language Class for this purpose.

Specific Language Disorder

Children with specific language disorders present with speech and language difficulties where skills are not developing in line with expected developmental sequence. These children may exhibit:

- ❑ Difficulty in understanding what is said to them
- ❑ Difficulty in expressing needs, thoughts and feelings, in developing vocabulary and using well formed sentences
- ❑ Poor concentration and listening skills, often preventing progress in the classroom
- ❑ Poor motor control which may affect a child's ability to produce the sounds necessary for speech
- ❑ Associated educational, emotional and behavioural difficulties

Pupils with specific speech and language disorders are those whose non-verbal ability is average or above, and whose skill in understanding and expressing themselves in spoken language is severely impaired. Their disability is not attributed to factors such as defective hearing, learning disabilities or primary social/emotional problems.

Referral Procedure

Children are referred to the class by their Speech and Language Therapist and/or psychologist. These professionals will recommend the Language Class if they feel it is appropriate to the child's needs. The parents of the child submit an Application Form, which must be accompanied by the following:

1. Speech and Language Therapy Report
2. Psychologist's Report
3. School Report

Each applicant is invited to visit the class for a 30-minute observation session in April. The parents get the opportunity then to visit the school and class, and meet the relevant staff.

The teacher and Speech and Language Therapist get the chance to meet the child, and observe how s/he gets on in the class.

Selection of Applicants for Admission

The Advisory Committee meets in Spring with regard to discharge. This decision is informed by the professional opinions of the school team. The Advisory Committee then meets in April to recommend admission for the following September. This will include the recommendation regarding which current pupils will stay in the class for a further year, and which pupils may return to their own primary schools. The Advisory Committee consists of:

1. Language Class Speech Therapist
2. Language Class Teacher
3. Principal
4. School Inspector
5. Principal Speech and Language Therapist SHB
6. Psychologist

On these days the children will not attend school.

A priority list is drawn up following standard selection criteria, as described underneath. Those children at the top of the list will be recommended the places in the class for the following academic year.

Selection Criteria

The numbers of new places becoming available each year will vary depending on the number of children discharged from the class. The maximum number of children of places available at any one time is 8. The Advisory Committee applies a rating scale, which considers a number of criteria, for each child referred. The purpose of the rating is to estimate each child's potential to benefit from placement in the Language Class. The Rating Scale is informed by

- Psychologist report
- Speech Therapist's Assessment
- Report from Class Teacher/Pre-School Director

Where the number of children referred exceeds the number of places available, names are placed on a waiting list for that admission year.

The recommendation of the Advisory Committee will be conveyed to the Board of Management, and if approved, will be conveyed in writing to parents as soon as possible by the school principal

Where a child is offered a place in the Language Class, parents are asked to return an acceptance/non-acceptance form to the school principal within one week of receipt of the offer.

Where an offer is declined, the next child on the wait list will be offered a place.

All relevant schools and referral agents will be notified in writing regarding the final placement decisions

All pupils are accepted on the understanding that they and their parents fully accept the school's Code of Discipline, and all other policies currently in place, or which the school's staff and/or Board of Management may draw up from time to time.

Pupils in the Special Language Class will 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 is bound by school policies, both in existences and those developed from time to time by the staff and/or 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 will periodically be required to participate at Staff Development and Curriculum Courses, Such professional development events take place within the existing school year, and all pupils are in the care of their parents at these times. Such extraordinary closures will be notified to parents to all pupils through the medium of the school newsletter, as well as through regular notices to parents.

A pupil in the Special Language Class will not have any separate or additional provisions put into place from other classes in the event of staff illness, absences or whole school events such as school visits, parish liturgy etc

From year to year, the allocation of teachers to classes is focused on the needs of the whole school, and consequently the school cannot guarantee long-term continuity or predictability in personnel.

Other professional personnel involved with the Language Class include the school psychologist and the occupational therapist.

Placement Reviews

Placement in the Language Class is normally for a maximum of two years, but this may be extended in exceptional circumstances.

The pupil's progress will be reviewed throughout each year, and the Language Class Teacher and the Speech and Language Therapist will give feedback to parents

The Language Class personnel, in consultation with parents, will carry out a review regarding suitability of placement, during the first term. Where difficulties arise, it may be necessary for the Advisory Committee to meet regarding the child's placement

When a child leaves the Language Class during the academic year, this is communicated in writing to the relevant parties by the school Principal

Where a placement is terminated, the place is then offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Discharge from the Language Class

A child may be discharged from the Language Class when any or some of the following apply:

- The child has come to the end of the 2 year period
- The child has reached the upper class limit for attendance in the Language Class

- ❑ The Advisory Committee considers the pupil able to return to mainstream education
- ❑ The Advisory Committee no longer considers the Language Class as the most suitable placement for the child's educational development
- ❑ The parents/guardian of the child request transfer from the Language Class
- ❑ The Advisory Committee deems that the child is no longer benefiting from Language Class placement
- ❑ In accordance with school guidelines on behaviour/non attendance

Prior to discharge, formal psychometric, speech and language and academic assessments will be carried out and reports forwarded to the relevant parties

The Language Class personnel will give feedback of assessment results and recommendations to parents on the pupil's discharge.

Parents have the opportunity to appeal the discharge decision through the DES.

School Transport

All children in the Special Language Class are entitled to free transport. The Schools Transport Service facilitates the children attending this class in the same manner as children attending other Special Classes/Schools. The school has responsibility for distribution of tickets and for provision of escorts. The contact for this service currently is :

Adrian Healy, Transport
DES
Tullamore
Co. Offaly
Telephone 0506 24353

Transition to Mainstream Education

The following recommendations are made with regard to Language Class pupils returning to mainstream:

- Prior to return, pupils attend the local school for a limited but regular time slot
- The Language Class teacher and the Speech Therapist will meet the local school personnel
- The possibility of Resource Hours for the returning child will be investigated in advance

Professional Development of Staff

As the work of the Language Class involves a very specific area of education, it is recommended that the teacher/s are facilitated to attend the Language Teacher Support Meeting and relevant conferences.

Educational Provision for Overseas Boys

Introduction

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boy's National School welcomes boys of all nationalities and cultures, and its current enrolment includes overseas boys. This document sets out our policy in relation to the enrolment and education of these children.

Principles

- Our school supports the principle of inclusiveness
- Our school respects the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life of all its boys
- All children have an equal right to education. In order to fulfil this right, differences will be respected and valued in our school.
- Our school will be pro-active in challenging racism
- Our school is committed to the principle of interculturalism, and seeks to actively promote an environment in which cultural differences can be explored and respected, where boys can learn from each other, and where cooperative learning activities are employed across the curriculum.

Enrolment of Overseas Pupils

- The school's Enrolment Policy governs enrolment of all boys.
- The enrolment procedure for non-national boys is exactly the same as that for Irish boys
- Overseas boys are welcome to enrol in our school, provided there is a place in the appropriate class, in line with our enrolment policy
- Parents of overseas boys will be afforded help in completion of enrolment documentation, should they require it
- Every effort will be made to create a warm and welcoming environment for overseas parents who approach the school to enrol their boys

Education of Overseas Pupils

- Overseas pupils will be placed in an age appropriate class as far as possible
- Every effort will be made to help the boys to settle socially in the class, and a 'buddy' will be appointed to help all new boys to settle in. Every effort will be made by all school personnel to help the boy settle in his new environment
- The child will not be required to study Religion, should the child be non – Catholic. However, for organisational reasons, the child may be required to remain in his class during Religion time
- In general, as per Circular 12/96, if English is not the first language of the child, he may qualify for exemption from the study of Irish, and the school will complete the necessary documentation to obtain this exemption. However, for organisational reasons, the child may be required to remain in his class during Irish time
- All relevant text books and stationery will be made available to boys who may not have adequate funding to purchase same
- Overseas children will not be excluded from school tours and outings for financial reasons

- While we recognise that all new boys need time to settle in and adjust, we require all pupils to adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour, in the interest of all. Overseas boys enjoy the same rights and privileges, and the same responsibilities, as all other pupils
- Home school liaison is central to the successful integration of overseas children into the school, and the school will be pro-active in promoting positive home school relations

Provision of Supplementary English Support for Overseas Children

- The school currently has three teachers to support the language needs of overseas boys
- The amount of resource time allocated to any child will depend on his current command of the language, and his age
- In general, older boys will be offered more Resource time, as there will be more pressure on them to attain mastery
- Resource time will be offered in the classroom or in a small group setting, depending on the needs of the child. This will be determined by the Support Teacher
- This resource time may be offered on a withdrawal basis, or by the Support Teacher working with the child in his classroom. This will be decided by the teachers, based on the needs of the child
- The DES allows two years of language support for each child, and in general, the child's supplementary support will be phased out after this period, if appropriate standard have been attained
- The Support Teachers will avail of in-service training in the provision of support to non national boys

Whole School Measures to ensure successful integration of overseas boys

We believe that schools with an inclusive curriculum, which reflects and affirms diversity of culture, ethnicity and religion, will help to ensure that children from ethnic minorities feel valued and accepted. To promote appreciation of diversity, our school is committed to

- The delivery of an intercultural education to all boys which is cross curricular, and which permeates the ethos of the school
- The provision of books that give a world view from a variety of perspectives and that portray characters from different ethnic backgrounds
- The provision of arts education experiences which reflects different experiences and cultures
- The effective delivery of the SPHE programme
- The affirmation of the languages and cultures which our overseas boys bring with them
- The annual celebration of an intercultural day
- The school will make every effort to combat racism, and this will be underpinned by the schools Code of Behaviour
- The school will encourage overseas parents to become actively involved in Parents' Association activities.
- Boys are also encouraged and facilitated in maintaining a connection with their own culture and language through curricular activities and displays.

Glossary

Overseas children

The school has opted to use the term ‘overseas ‘ rather than ‘non national’ or ‘foreign’, as these terms have negative implications

Assimilation v. integration

Assimilation : this is the continuous move towards the dominant culture, whereby one’s original cultural identity is relinquished and the non-dominant groups are absorbed into established dominant groups, creating a new society

Integration : this is the ability of a person from a minority group to participate to the extent that s/he needs and wishes in all of the major components of society, without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity.

Multiculture v. interculture

Multiculture represents the situation where cultures live side by side but there may not be social integration

Interculture means that different cultures live together with a mutual respect for each other with social integration

Source: Information booklet for schools on Asylum Seekers, DES, page 15

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys National School

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

This school acknowledges the right of children to communicate and socialise in the language of their home. The variety and diversity of the languages that the children bring to the classroom and to the school yard is respected.

The language of the Revised Curriculum is English (and Irish, both in the individual subject and informally throughout the school.) This school deems that a standard of English language competency, comparable to that of a child for whom English is the spoken in their own home, is desirable for the effective teaching of this curriculum. To this end, the aim of our EAL provision will be to successfully bridge any gap in fluency in English between children for whom English is the language of communication in all spheres of their life and those children for whom English is simply one of the languages of communication in their lives.

This policy sets forth the school's practice in providing this support on a planned and strategic basis. It covers:

- (a) recruitment of suitable teachers
- (b) assessment of pupil needs
- (c) aims of programme and
- (d) details of programme

Recruitment of Suitable Teachers

It is school policy to recruit only teachers for the sanctioned positions that have specific expertise and experiences in teaching English as an additional language to children of this age range. By experienced we mean that the teacher should have taught mainstream classes full-time for at least a period of one school year and that the teacher should have taught at some time in his/her career in a school where there were children with diverse languages. With regard to expertise the teacher must, in interview, be able to talk confidently of best practice in the field of EAL. The teacher must also display a genuine commitment to the inclusive, multi-denominational and intercultural aspects of the De La Salle philosophy.

Assessment of Pupil's Needs

Two methodologies will be used with regard to the identification of children with EAL needs.

Firstly, the parents will be surveyed and, if need be, interviewed with regard to the languages of communication used in their family and community. An identification of the dominant or frequent use of another language other than English means that this child will be identified as having EAL needs.

Secondly, the class teacher will, over the first month of the child being in the school, pay particular attention to make a formal and informal assessment of the child's English language capabilities and competencies. Then, a draft list will be

presented to the Principal, who will in turn make further formal and informal assessments before the child is identified as having EAL needs.

On the basis of this an application will be made to the DES for suitable human and monetary resources.

Records will be kept of the DES-approved candidates and durations for support as identified by them.

Aims of Programme

The aim of the school's EAL programme is the development of oral, reading and writing English-language competency for identified children to a standard that is comparable for that of children for whom English is their sole language of communication and in keeping with the capability of the child.

In addition to this primary aim, the school also aims to facilitate the child in English-language competence to assist in his/her integration into the life of the school and the English language community of his/her locality.

It is also expected to develop the child's sense of self-esteem and to encourage creativity in the child.

It is also aimed to use the programme as an effective means of home-school liaison.

It is also aimed at professionally developing the whole school staff in competence as EAL teachers.

Details of Programme

The EAL teachers will plan activities according to the EAL Template (Appendix 1). In the Infant classroom, these activities will be sophisticated English-language activities based on the Infant Primary Curriculum. In all classes, the EAL teacher will work primarily in the classroom, running as closely as possible with the class teacher's timetable and classroom management strategies. As appropriate, the EAL teacher will identify mixed-ability groups, EAL-pairs or individual work for work on the pre-designed activity sheet. The EAL Teacher will be timetabled according to the agreed timetable (Appendix 2). Work completed with each child shall be individually recorded according to the EAL Pupil Progress Record (Appendix 3).

The EAL teacher will attend all EAL in-service training opportunities offered by the DES and currently delivered by Integrate Ireland. In addition, all EAL resources required will be purchased as a matter of priority.

The EAL teachers will meet with class teachers and review the progress of each individual child frequently.

This mode of provision for EAL needs will be reviewed annually and revised according to future needs and DES provision.

ST. PATRICK'S DE LA SALLE BOYS NATIONAL SCHOOL

Policy for Special Class for children with MGLD

Enrolment in this class requires a psychological report stating that the child has a Mild General Learning Difficulty. The views of the parents, child and psychologist are considered before enrolment in the special class. The maximum number of children catered for is 12.

It is envisaged that the Educational personnel attached to this class would have additional academic qualifications in Special Education.

The teacher in the Special Class strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed in accordance with each pupil's level of difficulty. The mainstream curriculum will be accessed through strategies of teaching and learning characterised by high levels of differentiation.

Obtaining access to a broad and balanced curriculum allows possibilities for a wide range of experiences. These experiences can be used to develop the student's skills and abilities across a wide range of competencies and thereby enable them to communicate and function as independently as possible in school.

POLICY ON TRAVELLER INTERGRATION AND INCLUSIVENESS

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys National School has encouraged, promoted, developed and indeed often pioneered the integration of traveller children in mainstream Primary Education. This positive and open outlook and attitude has always been the hallmark of the Principal staff and pupils of St. Patrick's.

All children are obliged to comply with the regulations as laid out in the school handbook "Welcome to our School".

All children are obliged to comply with normal personal hygiene practice at all times. Respect and care for resources, books, copies etc is essential at all times, whether purchased by the individual or supplied.

Help, guidance and advice is given and always unavailable on a collective or individual basis to the parents of children entering for the first time or attending St. Patrick's N.S. no matter where they come from, settled community or traveller community.

Nominal contributions are required by school to such items as Educational Magazines, paper Art materials. This would alleviate the perception and misconception that everything is free – a practice which does generate, whether we like it or not, a latent attitude of a discriminatory nature among certain individuals.

Exceptionally Able Students

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys National School

Introduction

We are committed to providing an environment which encourages all students to maximise their potential and this clearly must include students who display some sort of exceptional ability

The aims of this policy are to :

- Raise awareness of the needs of exceptionally able students
- Support management and teachers to:
 - audit and review school policy and practice
 - differentiate the curriculum
 - develop effective strategies
 - further develop an inclusive school ethos
 - provide models of good practice which support and nurture the development of exceptionally able students

Definitions

Approximately 5-10% of the school population may be exceptionally able and may demonstrate very high levels of attainment in one or more of the following areas:

- general intellectual ability or talent
- specific academic aptitude or talent
- visual and performing arts and sports
- leadership ability
- creative and productive thinking
- mechanical ingenuity
- special abilities in empathy, understanding and negotiation

Although there is no single code that defines levels of exceptional intelligence one possible set of levels is as follows:

- able IQ range 120 to 129
- exceptionally able IQ range from 130-169
- profoundly exceptionally able IQ range 170+

Students who are classified as exceptionally able belong on a continuum of students with specific educational requirements.

Identification of the Exceptionally Able Students

Before identifying any students as exceptionally able in a particular area, we aim to ensure that all students have had the opportunity to learn and succeed in this area.

This makes the process of identification fair.

- Observation

- Parent/Guardian Referral
- Peer referral
- Self referral
- Referral by other individuals or organisations
- Identification by psychologists
- Teacher referral
- Assessment results

It is worth remembering that exceptionally able students can be :

- good all-rounders
- high achievers in one area
- of high ability but low motivation
- of good verbal ability but with poor writing skills
- exceptionally able but with a short attention span
- exceptionally able but with a learning difficulty or disability which masks their achievements
- exceptionally able with poor social skills
- keen to disguise their abilities (Eyre,1993)

Everyone on staff has a responsibility to recognise and value students' abilities.

We are aware that:

- unnecessary repetition of work is de-motivating and de-motivated students will not always demonstrate potential
- there is sometimes peer pressure to underachieve
- exceptionally able students are not always easier to reach than other students.

Record Keeping

A record is kept of all students who have been identified as exceptionally able which is available to staff. The area of ability is recorded with reference to which aspects the student has exceptional abilities in. Parents/Guardians are consulted and included in formation of such records. Records will be reviewed twice yearly by staff concerned. If a student is not reaching his potential, or has achieved the set targets, new arrangements and new targets will be set.

Provision for Exceptionally able

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into all our schemes of work. We will make sure that every curriculum area will have a reference to exceptionally able students. We aim to

- Maintain an ethos where it is acceptable to be bright
- Encourage all students to be independent learners
- Recognise achievement
- Be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender, religion and social circumstances on learning and high achievement
- Provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs

- ❑ Always provide work at an appropriate level
- ❑ Provide opportunities for all students to work with like-minded peers.

Types of Provision

Classroom differentiation

- Teachers adopt high expectations
- Tasks are designed to take account of levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding
- There are planned extension opportunities or open-ended tasks

School based provision

This will vary according to subject area and is covered using a variety of methods like:

- school based clubs
- enrichment opportunities
- opportunities for performance
- specialist teaching.

The school will endeavour to link with other providers of opportunities for students with exceptional abilities-local, national and international organisations, competitions, partnerships with secondary schools and businesses. Students will be encouraged to fulfil their potential in those areas in which they are exceptionally able without reducing the breadth of their curriculum and personal experience.

Personal Development

We aim to develop all the abilities of students, including their personal and social skills, especially if these are not strengths. We aim to create a climate in which students are taught to relate well to each other and where differences of all kinds, including ability, are accepted.

Leadership and Management Roles

The Principal and Senior management are responsible overall for the implementation of the exceptionally able policy.

Review

This policy has been reviewed in December 2011

Exemplars of Recording Templates can be found in 'Exceptionally Able Students, Draft Guidelines for Teachers p.85-87