

Plean Scoile
St Fiacc's NS

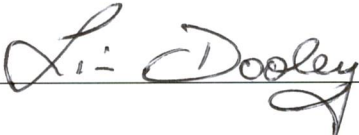
Special Needs Policy



St. Fiacc's N.S.
Fírinne le Misneach

Formulated/Ratified/Reviewed	By
Reviewed 01/03/2017	Staff
Ratified 15/03/2017	BOM

Signed Chairperson BOM



St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

Guiding Principles

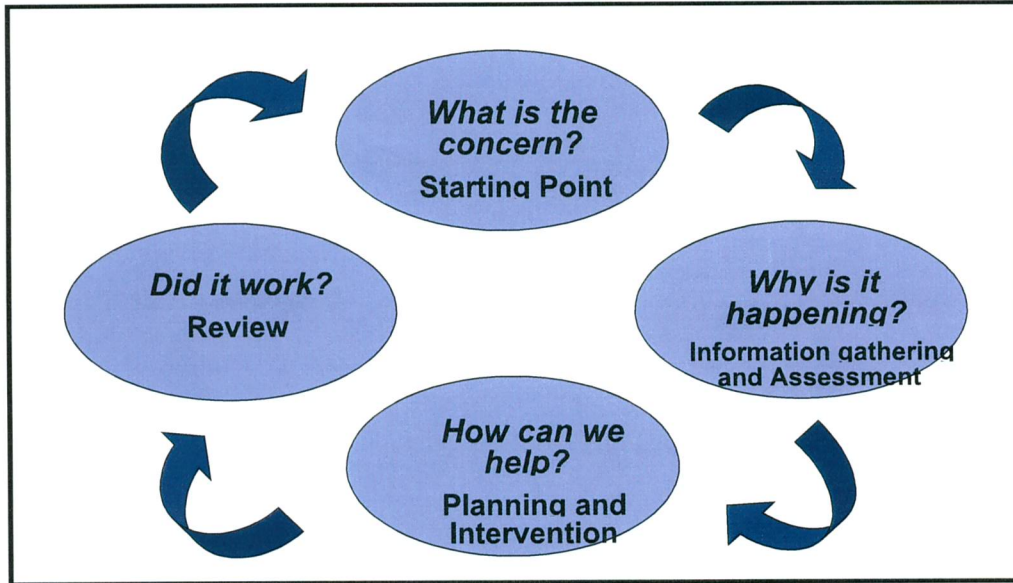
- Resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs are used to facilitate the development of truly inclusive schools.
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs are based on identified needs and are informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Special education teaching supports provided to schools are used solely for the support of pupils with identified special educational needs, including those pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL).
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils are supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.
- St. Fiacc's maintains a core team of teachers to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. All members should have the necessary experience and access to continuing professional development to support the diverse needs of pupils with special educational needs.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

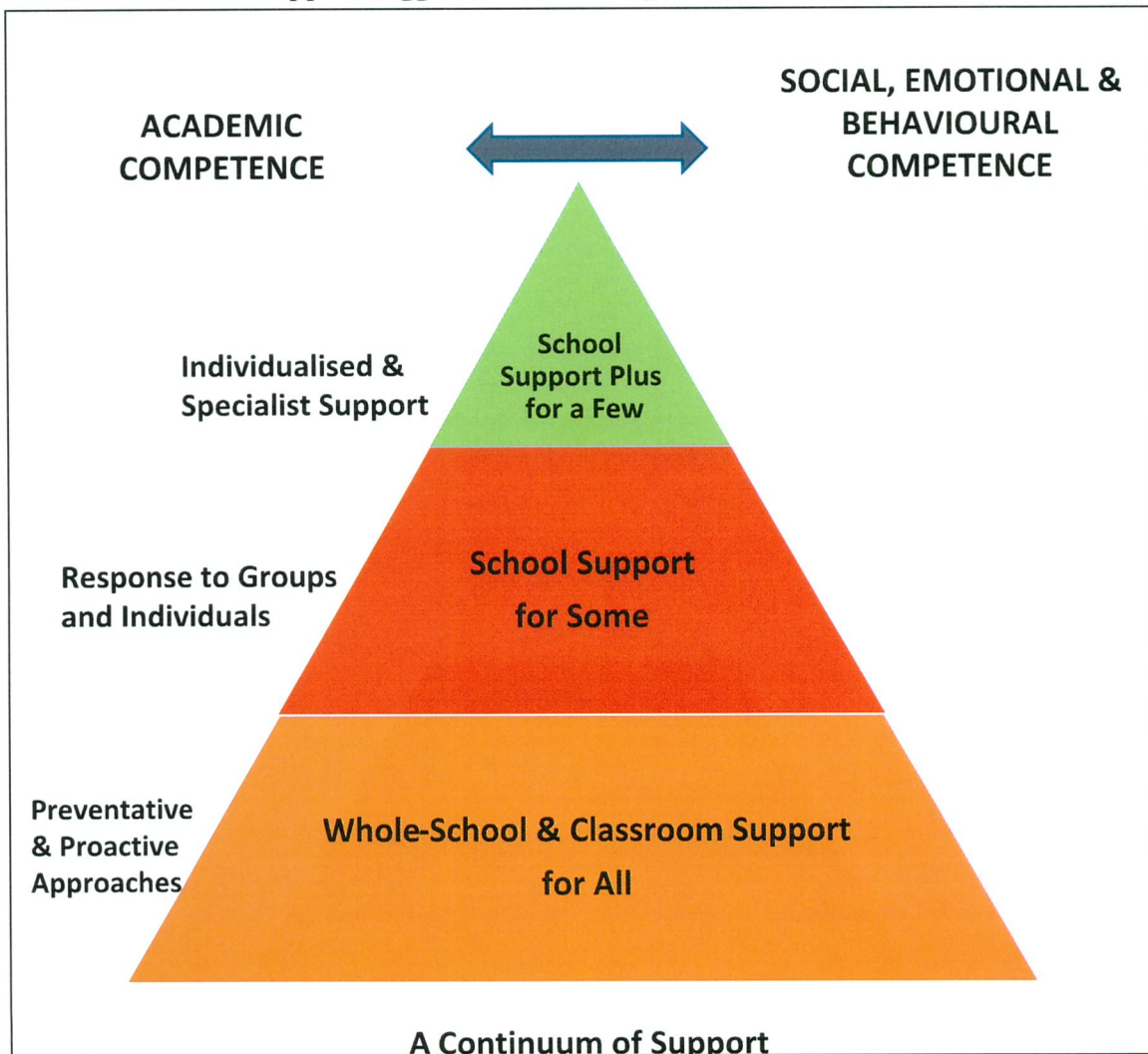
This policy relates strongly to the school's mission statement:

Our school embodies Christian, Catholic values which emphasises compassion, care, good work ethos, striving for excellence and respect for all, irrespective of race, religion or social status

1. How we identify Needs



The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:



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 measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups 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

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy
 Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.

A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.

Record of Differentiated Support in class

Register of 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 Support	Focus of Support
School Support Plus				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of SEN	Nature of Support	Focus of Support

Children with emerging special educational needs: The Staged Approach

Stage 1/Class Support: Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of the SEN of certain children.

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

Teachers identify concerns re the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child by using the following strategies:

Teacher observation, parental observations, use of simple teacher designed checklists (reference: Common Sense Methods for Children with Special Needs, Westwood p. 22), Infant profiling, or screening measures etc.

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents.

The triggers for this intervention could be;

- The child makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school
- Has sensory or physical difficulties
- Has communication and/ or relationship difficulties

Concerns are documented using a Class Support File (Yellow) for at least half a Term.

The following are a list of agreed screening measures that are used to assess Literacy/Numeracy Development in the school: *Jolly Phonics Assessment; Drumcondra Reading standardised test, Sigma T Mathematics Assessment; Drumcondra profiles; BIAP; Special Educational Needs – A Continuum of Support*. The Booklet *Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties – A Continuum of Support* is used to assess social and emotional development The *NRIT* is also used.

Teacher arranges to meet parent to express concerns and gain further background information on pupil with a view to setting agreed goals for progress.

SET can support class teachers at Stage 1. This is facilitated by informing SET teacher for advice and the Principal if necessary.

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. Parents, principal, SEN teacher(s) as well as class teacher are involved in this decision (See Appendix 1 below)

If concerns seem to warrant the provision of support at Stage 3 level referral will be made to other agencies e.g. Psychologist.

Stage 2/School Support. Referral to Special Educational Support Teacher

The factors to be considered in determining a child's need for supplementary teaching may include the following: *assessment results, teacher recommendation, parents' concerns and availability of resources*

The Learning Support teacher seeks parental consent for further diagnostic testing. Written consent is deemed most appropriate.

The sensitivities of parents be addressed through early and regular contact with parent to explain how learning support can address their child's learning need through a meeting

The school will respond to the reluctance or refusal of a parent to consent to further testing by making the case based on the best possible outcome for the child.

There is a standard consent form in use in the school. There is a section to indicate refusal of service. Refusals are recorded and kept on file.

The diagnostic tests in use in the school are: YARC; Neale Analysis, Bangor Dyslexic Test; Jackson Phonics. The SET teachers administer and interpret them.

Children with similar needs are grouped. Teaching may include a mixture of withdrawal and in-class support. The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support teacher. While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

of the programme in a SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited

Preparation of a *School Support File (Red)*

- *Principal, SET, Classroom teacher, Parents, Pupils* have input for drawing up of a child's Support File. SEN teacher is responsible for gathering of information and finalising of document.
- Weekly plans are prepared for groups where appropriate.

There are two instructional terms for SET are in the school year. Instructional term one runs from end of September to end of January and instructional term two runs from end of February to mid June. This allows for diagnostic testing and planning for IPLP at the beginning and review of targets set at end.

Pupil progress is reviewed at the end of each instructional term by examining whether or not success criteria were reached. Parents and class teachers are involved in this.

Decisions for reducing or discontinuing supplementary teaching are based on scores from most recent Standardised tests

Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

Order of children to receive learning support based on assessment:

1. Children performing on or below the 10th percentile in standardised test of achievement in reading or equivalent in *Jolly Phonics Assessment*.
2. Senior Infants – 2nd class – early intervention programmes for low achievers in English based on class teacher's observations and recommendations.
3. Pupils who have special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities (borderline mild general learning disability, mild general learning disability and specific learning disability).
4. Children performing below the 10th percentile in standardised test of achievement in Mathematics.
5. Senior Infants / First class – early intervention programmes for low achievers in Mathematics based on class teacher's observations and recommendations.
6. Pupils performing below the 20th percentile in standardised test of achievement in reading.
7. Pupils performing below the 20th percentile in standardised test of achievement in Mathematics.
8. Children above the 25th percentile are not normally entitled to Learning support.
9. Arrangements for providing supplementary teaching to pupils in the middle/senior section who experience very low achievement.

*EAL teacher takes EAL pupils for a maximum of 2 years.

**Pupils who have an assessed low incidence need. (eg Speech and Language disorder; hearing impairment; ASD; EBD; ADD; DCD) will also be prioritised (See Stage Three).

- The maximum number of pupils in the cluster is approximately 30 pupils. Priority will be given to those pupils whose achievement is lowest in agreed standardised tests. If the targets have been met and the pupil is performing above the percentile laid down in the criteria learning support will be discontinued
- If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews, it may be necessary to implement Stage 3. Pupils are prioritised at regular SET meetings involving Principal and SEN staff. The Learning Support/Resource teacher will complete the referral form in conjunction with the class teacher and parent but overall responsibility will lie with the Deputy & Principal.

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

Stage 3/School Support Plus. Consultation or referral for assessment to outside specialist (See Special Educational Needs A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers, NEPS, 2007)

- The procedures for involving parents in a decision to request an assessment by an outside specialist are: to meet with the parent and seek written permission. Concerns will have been expressed at an earlier stage.
- St Fiacc's refers to an Educational Psychologist under the NEPs scheme.
- The Deputy and SEN staff has responsibility for making the referral and liaison with the specialist.
- The documentation that needs to be collected would include: IPLPs, relevant reports and assessments. The Deputy and SEN staff will co-ordinate this.
- Assessments take place in the Deputy Principal's office as it is deemed the most appropriate setting.
- In the event of limited availability of assessments through NEPS, decisions are reached by the SET. Prioritisation is based on: Pupils in Sixth; Pupils who have moved through the Staged Approach without success, early intervention; Recommendations from Professional Reports.
- If parents have had assessments carried out privately the school will seek to follow the recommendations of the Report.

Drafting and implementing an Individual Education Plan/School Support Plus File (for pupils at Stage 3 – Green File)

The purposes of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is to identify the Priority learning needs of the pupil and set specific targets for each instructional term.

IEP Meetings

- The SEN teacher has responsibility for co-ordination of the IEP.
- Parents, teachers, pupils, SNAs (where appropriate) participates in the preparation of education plans.
- Participation is facilitated through meetings.
- The pupil may included in the process by identifying their learning styles and interests.
- The class teacher and parents receive a copy of the plan and a copy is placed on file.

Progress is reviewed periodically with the class teacher and at the end of each instructional term with parents

If the education plan identifies resources over and above those normally available in a mainstream school setting, the Principal and Deputy will bring this to the attention of the SENO and/or the NCSE.

- Procedures for co-ordination of education plans from class to class and, sharing relevant information between staff, school and parents: All Reports are filed in Principal's Office and Recommendations and IEPs are available for viewing on *Aladdin*.

2. How can we meet needs?

Through effective teaching and learning strategies.
Through early-intervention and prevention programmes
Through Specific target-setting.

The role of the class teacher

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

All mainstream class teachers should implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. These include:

Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
Collaborative problem-solving activities
Heterogeneous group work
Differentiation
Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
Embedding Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment

The class teachers are expected to cooperate and collaborate with SEN staff and abide by this policy. Class teachers are responsible for reading recommendations on Professional Reports and updating pupil frequency charts and Personal Pupil Plans in respect of pupils with SNA access.

Duties and Role of the Special Needs Assistant.

Their duties are assigned by the principal teacher in accordance with Circular 10/76:

Duties and responsibilities of the SNA are sanctioned by the BOM. The class teacher will supervise their work.

Those duties involve tasks of a non-teaching nature such as:

1. Preparation and tidying up of classrooms in which the pupil with special needs is being taught.
2. Assisting children to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary, travel as escort on school buses may be required.
3. Special assistance as necessary for pupils with particular difficulties e.g. helping physically disabled pupils with typing or writing.
4. Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene.
5. Assisting on out of school visits, walks and similar activities.
6. Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils with special needs during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods.
7. Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom.

General assistance to the teacher, under the direction of the principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (special needs assistants may not act either as substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class).

The role of the special education teacher

Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, cooperative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support.

Some pupils with more complex and enduring needs may require specific methodologies, teaching approaches and/or learning activities. Such interventions should be based on careful identification of strengths and needs, including multi-disciplinary assessment, when necessary.

Special education teachers, in consultation with class teachers, should plan their interventions carefully to address pupils' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant Continuum of Support plan. Short-term planning should reflect the Support Plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each pupil's specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for pupils should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.

Early intervention and prevention

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

Schools have the flexibility to innovate by developing and trialling new approaches and by using assessment data to evaluate the efficacy of these interventions.

Additional teaching resources are deployed from infants to second to strengthen station teaching approaches which target the promotion of language, literacy and numeracy skills. The use of early-intervention and prevention programmes helps mitigate the development of learning, social and emotional difficulties.

St. Fiacc's also uses *FRIENDS for Life* as a means of preventing anxiety and building resilience, or similar evidence-based programmes.

Other programmes cover such issues as bullying, transition and behaviour management

Target-setting

Targets should be:

Linked to assessment

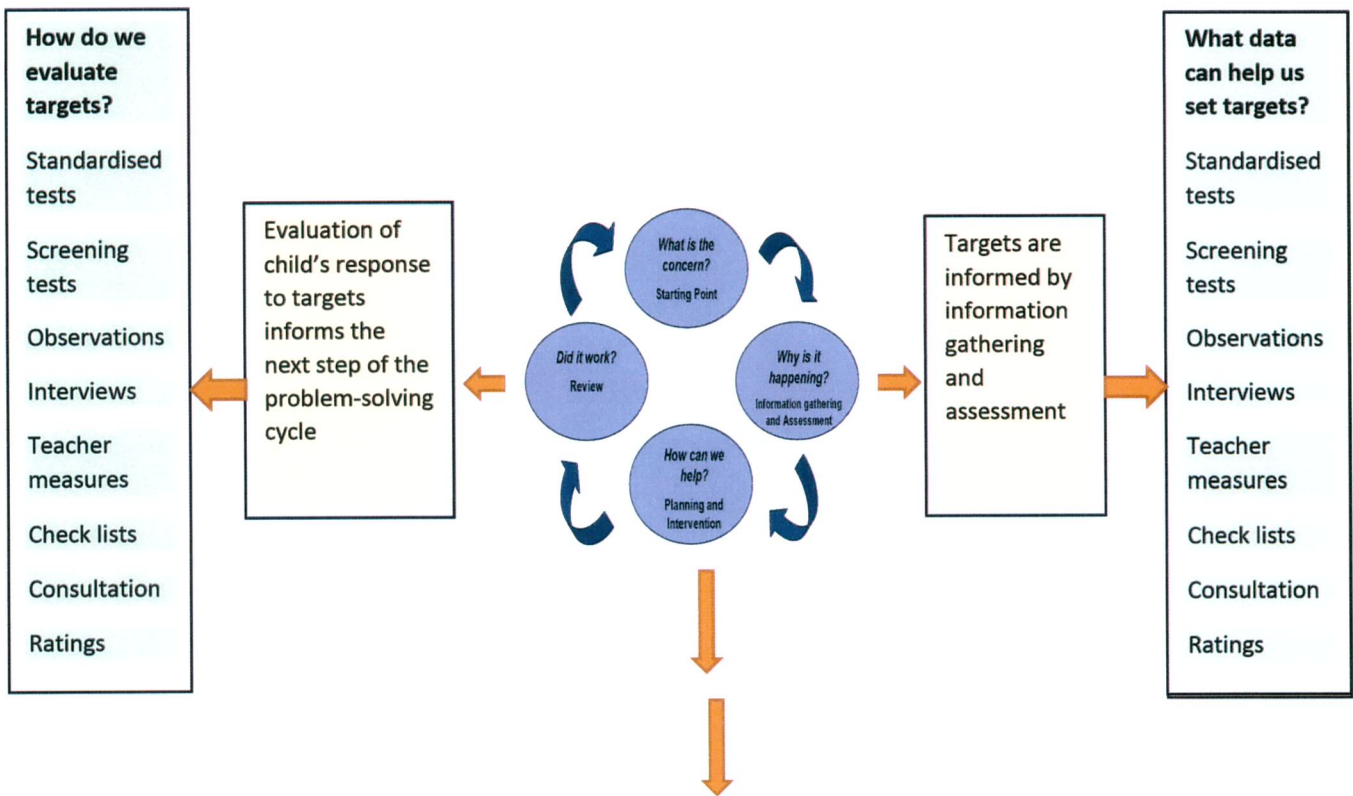
Strengths-based

Linked to interventions

Developed collaboratively

Few in number

Target-setting as part of the problem-solving framework

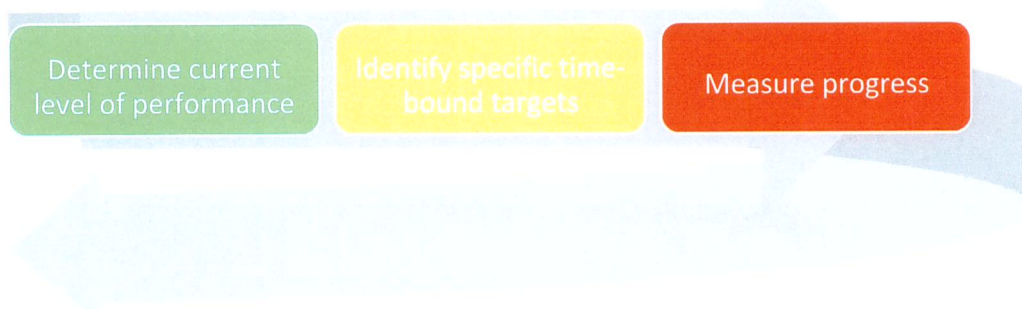


Targets should be expressed in definitive language to facilitate monitoring and review of progress, for example:

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

3. How can we record progress?

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy



The Student Support File provides our school with a useful resource to support and record progress. It includes a Support Review record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils.

4. How can we allocate special education teaching resources to effectively meet needs?

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs	
Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	<p>Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data, and any information from parents and external professionals.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
Action 2: Setting targets	<p>Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the Continuum of Support.</p>
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	<p>Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the Continuum of Support.</p> <p>Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching.</p> <p>They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.</p>
Action 4: Organising early-intervention and prevention programmes	<p>Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early-intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	<p>Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <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

5. How can a whole-school approach enhance provision for pupils with special educational needs?

Inclusion

Practical steps that are in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom include:

- Group teaching
- Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
- Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
- Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
- Setting learning targets at an appropriate level. This includes Homework.
- Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
- Carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty
- Setting up "buddy systems" in class [high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers – peer tutoring- paired reading]
- in-class support.
- Blocks of intervention programmes for struggling readers at whole class level through team teaching.

In class support is implemented throughout the school.

Procedure for identification of pupils with Exceptional Ability

Criteria for Assessment:

1. A range of strategies may be used to identify exceptionally able pupils:

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

- Annual standardised tests
- NRIT
- Psychological Assessments
- Teacher observation
- Parental requests
- Referral by other individuals, schools or organisations.

2. From first class onwards, pupils who score on or above the 98th percentile in the Drumcondra **and** Sigma tests will be cross referenced with the NRIT to gain a more definitive guide of their ability.

3. Where a teacher observes children displaying exceptional ability in a specific academic area, then further assessment may be carried out to establish giftedness. Where it is a non-academic area, the parent will be informed of outside agencies more suited to the development of the pupil's giftedness.

Catering for Pupils with Exceptional Ability:

Pupils who meet the criteria for exceptionally able (IQ of 130+) will be catered for within the classroom based on a differentiated programme of work **or** if deemed possible by the Principal may be offered extension classes on a withdrawal basis, subject to the approval of the pupil and their parents. These classes will form part of each SET's timetable where feasible.

Responsibility and Management:

1. The class teacher is responsible for differentiation within the classroom, including acquisition and distribution of teaching resources for differentiation.

2. The SET team will be responsible for the assessment stage of this process, organisation of extension classes including timetabling (where applicable), acquisition and distribution of information regarding referral and assessment by outside agencies.

3. The Principal will liaise with parents, SETs and class teachers throughout the process.

Role of the Principal

Under the new allocation model the principal's leadership role is central and includes the following:

- Developing inclusive whole-school policies and monitoring their implementation
- Assigning staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinating teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals / agencies
- Ensuring that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
- Some of these actions will be delegated to the Deputy and SEN team while the principal retains overall responsibility for the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Other Aspects

Parental Involvement

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support File provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of St. Fiacc's can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework.
- Reading and telling stories to their child/children.
- Listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading.
- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Signing and returning consent forms to the school regarding withdrawal for support teaching.
- Talking positively about school and school work.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors which may be affecting their child's progress.
- Participating in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Helping children to develop their organisational skills.
- Helping children to look after school books and other resources which are loaned to the children for use at home.
- Supporting programmes and initiatives implemented by the school.

Whole school planning

- Whole school promotion of DEAR time and visits to the school library
- Building Bridges Comprehension Strategies
- Genre Writing
- Use of PM Books from senior infants to Second during team teaching.
- Print rich environment
- Peer Tutoring
- Story time, Library time, DEAR time, Book Week, Book Fair
- Access to Literacy apps on school I pads and at home
- Regular communication between class teacher and SEN teacher.

Enrolment of children with identified special educational needs

Prior to the child's enrolment, the school will acquaint themselves with a child's special needs and whether these are categorised as High Incidence or Low Incidence by:

- Arranging a meeting between parents/principal/class teacher/special needs staff and SENO, as appropriate.
- Obtaining copies/details of reports, assessments etc. from SENO/ parents.

A decision will be reached as to where the pupil should receive support on the continuum of support. The decision will be based on information from parents and relevant documentation accompanying the child and professional opinions of teacher/principal, support staff of transferring school.

The following steps may be taken to ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school:

- Parental visits to school
- Pupil visits to school
- Staff visits to special schools/special units where appropriate

St. Fiacc's Special Educational Needs Policy

- Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act)
- Liaison with SENO to arrange for additional personnel, resources, training
- Establish a "Buddy" system to support pupils with special needs

Other related policies

Admissions & Participation; Inclusion; Data Protection; Child Safeguarding Statement; Code of Behaviour; Anti Bullying; Safety Statement; Curricular Policies; Assessment