



KSP Support Policy for Pupils with Special Educational Needs 2023

Guiding Principles:

- All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community
- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be 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
- **Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support**

As far as possible, therefore, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles (below) that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum.

What is Inclusion?

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with SEN, children of different backgrounds and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The three principles for inclusion are:

1. **Setting Suitable Learning Challenges**
2. **Meeting Children's diverse learning needs**
3. **Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of children**

1. Setting suitable learning challenges:

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. Kilkenny School Project will use the 'Continuum of Support Process' as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils. Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at pupils' needs in context, and to use our resources to support this. The number of children who access support will depend on Department of Education guidelines, resources available and the varying needs of the children in the school. Any level of support is always under review depending on the needs of the child.

Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

<p>Classroom Support</p>	<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 may be 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, drawn up by the class teacher in consultation with SET, runs for an agreed period of time, no less than 8 weeks, and is subject to review. Children may move up or down the Continuum of Support.</p>
<p>School Support</p>	<p>At this level a School Support Plan is devised and may be informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation records • Teacher-designed measures/assessments • Parent and pupil consultation • Learning environment checklist • Standardised Testing • 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. It is devised and delivered by the SET in consultation with the class teacher.</p> <p>A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p> <p>Various types of school support offered in the KSP may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Recovery • Literacy Lift Off

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station Teaching • Team –Teaching • Phonological Awareness • Early Intervention • Well-being/Social/Friendship Programmes • Movement breaks • Sensory regulation
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 testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A School Support Plus Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation. Parents are asked to sign up to the plan during/after the consultation process.</p> <p>School Support and School Support plus may include team-teaching, group work or individual tuition.</p>

2. Meeting Children’s Diverse Learning Needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning our support, the ‘Planning Template’ outlining the 6 point action plan below will be utilised.

Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Primary Guidelines, P19-20)

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. 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	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each

	pupil at each level of the continuum of support.
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	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 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.
Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	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 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	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.

3. Overcoming Potential Barriers to Learning and Assessment for Individuals and Groups of Children

We recognise that a minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements. Our SEN policy envisages a whole school approach that takes into account the roles of the Board of Management, the principal, class teacher, special education teachers and the parents.

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the BOM, principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

4. Exceptional Circumstances when a reduced school day might be used

In exceptional circumstances, a reduced school day may be put in place. The school will work in partnership with the parents/guardians whereby it is agreed that a shorter school day is in the best interests of the child. Any such arrangement should be short term and transitional, and designed

to assist the student for the full school day along with his/her peers'. Further detail available in Circular 0047/2021 'Guidelines for the use of Reduced School Days in Schools'.

Board of Management

The BOM will strive to fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with special educational needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be knowledgeable about the school's SEN provision – funding, equipment and personnel. The BOM:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on support for children with extra needs
- Provides adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provides a secure facility for storage of records.

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. She will:

- Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Communicate with the SENO e.g submitting applications
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure 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

The Role of the Class Teacher

Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes. Accordingly, classroom teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom. This will include adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern. This may require **targeted interventions** to develop relevant adaptive skills related to these needs. All mainstream class teachers will implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. These include:

- Providing Classroom Support (Stage 1) which includes the Classroom Support Plan document in collaboration with SET
- Collaborate with the SET to complete a School Support or School Support Plus plan if necessary (Stages 2 and 3)
- Effective teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Differentiation of various forms
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Communicating concerns with parents

Every pupil needs to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level. Pupils' levels of interest, attention, concentration and persistence should be gradually developed, extended and rewarded, using appropriate teaching strategies. To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, mainstream class teachers will regularly need to differentiate their lessons. This can be achieved by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly

Teachers can make lessons accessible to a broad range of pupils through the use of a variety of appropriate teaching approaches and methodologies, including active learning, small-group tuition, individual teaching, and scaffolded instruction. This may also require environmental adaptations to promote curricular access.

The Role of the Special Education Teacher

The Special Education Teachers (SETs) will have responsibility for:

- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Organising the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeping a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
- Keeping teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Advising parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Selecting children for psychological assessment in consultation with class teachers and with NEPS
- Liaising with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Storing confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and sharing same with principal, class teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.
- Overseeing the drafting of classroom support plans with the class teacher
- Observing children with possible SEN to help support the class teacher in the development of a classroom support plan
- Drawing up/Overseeing PPP (Personal Pupil Plan) in liaison with the SNA and the class teacher
- Screening for, and setting appropriate time frames for, early intervention

The type of support offered depends on the child's individual needs and takes the form of:

- curriculum support
- life and/or social skills training
- physical training/gross motor development
- speech training/communication and/or language development
- behaviour modification programmes
- assistance with sensory modulation

- development of anger management strategies
- a combination of some/all of the above

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.

The Role of the SNA

Some children with SEN will have access to the support of an SNA at times during the school day. These may include (see Circular 30/2014):

- Assistance with feeding
- Administration of medicine
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene
- Assistance with mobility and orientation
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class and playground
- Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential
- Assistance with moving and lifting of pupils, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties
- Contribution to the Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)
- Making out frequency checklists pertaining to pupil's care needs

Parental Involvement

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parents of children in KSP will be informed as to the type of support their child is receiving. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress. 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. There may also be opportunities for parents to work collaboratively with the school through initiatives such as Literacy Lift Off.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of Kilkenny School Project 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.

Enrolment

The school aims to meet the needs of any child whom the parent wishes to register at the school as long as a place is available and the admission criteria are fulfilled. The Education For Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that 'A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs'.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's special needs in advance of enrolment*. The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child will be refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school as provided by the Department of Education and Skills.

*See Admissions Policy for further detail

Stages of Assessment and Provision

Stage One:

The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher.

Access to the curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher identifies a child with SEN the class teacher provides interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.

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

The class teacher completes a Classroom Support Plan and will inform the parents that their child is in receipt of this level of support. The class teacher collaborates with the SET on this document, which may or may not follow a session of observation (where the SET observes the child at the request of the class teacher). Observation of the child in the classroom context can be very informative. The classroom support plan is implemented for a period of no less than 8 weeks, at which point it is reviewed by the class teacher with the SET.

Stage Two:

In cases where the review of the classroom support plan indicates that progress has not been made, or if the results of standardised tests and teacher observation of behaviour indicate this to be the case, intervention in the form of access to SET. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and the SET will collaborate on the most effective interventions for that child. This may take the form of in-class support, withdrawal in a group, station teaching.
- The SET will complete a School Support Plan for the child in collaboration with the class teacher.
- The School Support Plan will be reviewed regularly.
- 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.
- Where progress is not observed, and both the class teacher and the SET feel that the child needs further support, the child will move on to Stage Three.

Stage Three:

When it has been identified that a child is making little or no progress over a period of time, the class teacher with the SET will consider moving the child on to the third stage of the Continuum of Support – School Support Plus, and they will:

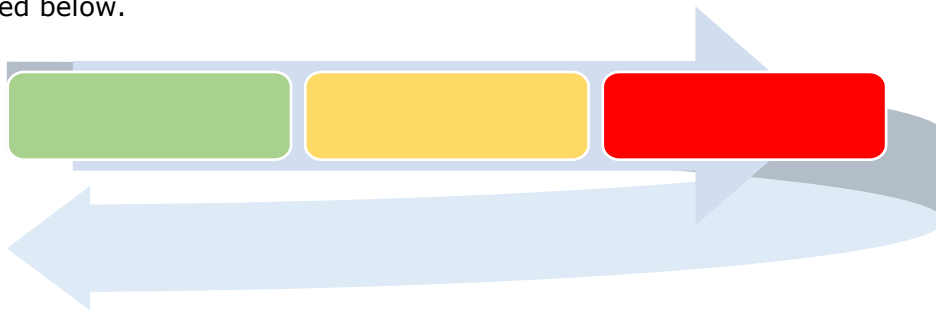
- collaborate on the most effective interventions for that child. This may take the form of in-class support, withdrawal in a group, withdrawal one-to-one and station teaching.
- The SET will complete a School Support Plus Plan for the child in collaboration with the class teacher and parents
- The School Support Plus Plan will be reviewed regularly.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the previous stage on the continuum.

Other considerations might include:

1. A psychological assessment might be sought (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
2. Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provisions including targets and strategies.
3. If it is felt by the psychologist that a child has care needs, SNA support may be needed.
4. In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate, to at least two SNAs and either the class or SET, how the equipment is to be used.
5. Courses will be provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
6. If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Education.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils’ progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process 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 will lead to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe as outlined below.



Monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File provides schools with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils. Such monitoring of progress, and subsequent adaptation of support plans, are key drivers of effective practice.

In addition to monitoring outcomes at the individual level, it is also important to review outcomes at group, class and whole-school level, in terms of attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being (for example, sense of belonging and connectedness to school) for pupils with special educational needs.

The BoM will ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of school development and will evaluate the effectiveness and success of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required.

Policy was ratified by the KSP Board of Management on 12 December 2022

Signed by Chairperson: Sonya Lanigan