



# Policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN)

## Introductory Statement

Rathpeacon National School is a mixed, rural, national school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Cloyne. It is a mainstream primary school, catering for a full cross section of children from the locality.

This Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy was drawn up by the principal and Special Education Team (SET) of Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon at a series of consultative meetings in 2014 to cater for children with SEN attending our school. It was updated and revised in 2018 and again in 2021, taking cognisance of directives contained in the Learning Support Guidelines (2000), Continuum of Support (NEPS/DES, 2007) and Department of Education and Skills Circulars 02/2005, 13/2017, 14/2017 and The Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017). On behalf of the parent body, members of the school's Parents' Association were consulted for their input and feedback.

## Rationale

The Continuum of Support staged approach, guides this SEN policy and school staff in catering for children with SEN. Parents/guardians are encouraged to refer to the Continuum of Support (Appendices 1 and 2) for detailed information.

This policy provides practical guidance for teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), parents/guardians and other interested parties on the provision of effective SEN teaching support to pupils experiencing low achievement and/or additional needs. An explanation of the abbreviations used in this policy can be found in Appendix 11.

The school recognises that effective learning is based on the following principles:

- Effective whole-school policies
- Whole school involvement
- Direction of resources towards pupils with greatest needs
- Prevention of failure at infant level
- Provision of intensive early intervention

### **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School**

Our school, Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, cherishes all pupils equally and values the uniqueness of the child. All children have the right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all of the children attending our school to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. As far as possible, it is our aim to minimise the difficulties that children may experience. We are dedicated to helping each child to achieve his/her individual potential in an inclusive environment.

We aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil. These aspects include intellectual, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual, cultivating a living relationship with God and other people in line with our Catholic ethos.

The provision of a quality system of Special Education and an inclusive curriculum is integral to this commitment. 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 throughout the school.

### **Other Relevant Policies and Procedures**

- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Enrolment Policy
- Home Use of School-Owned Assistive Technology
- Intimate Care
- One-to-One Teaching and One-to-One Activities
- Physical Restraint and Intervention
- School Tours and Outings

### **Aims of our School Special Education Programme**

- To support the inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- To ensure that the Continuum of Support staged approach is implemented
- To encourage differentiation in the classroom
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in Literacy and/or Mathematics
- To enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum, as much as possible
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes to school and learning
- To support behavioural, social and emotional functioning
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and move towards becoming independent learners
- To encourage parents/guardians to support the school in supporting their child.
- To promote the implementation of whole-school policies on SEN support for pupils
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties

### **Admission of Children with Special Education Needs to Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire**

Parents/guardians of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are welcome to apply for admission to Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon. Our school is a mainstream school and pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are catered for by their mainstream class teacher with the support of the SEN team. The school does not have a Special Class or a section for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

When parents/ guardians of pupils are offered, and subsequently accept a place in the school, the Principal will meet the parents/guardians of any child with SEN to discuss the child's needs and the schools suitability or capability in meeting those needs. The Principal will request a copy of any medical and/or psychological reports that might be available. Where such a report is not available the Principal may request that the child be assessed at the earliest possible opportunity. The purpose of an assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational or other needs of the child relevant to his/her disability or additional needs and to profile the support services required.

Following receipt of the report the Principal, in consultation with the SEN team, will assess how the school can meet the child's needs specified in the report. Where necessary, other professionals, including the class teacher, the school's NEPS Psychologist, SENO or other relevant agencies may be contacted for advice. This may also include these professionals meeting with the Principal and parents/guardians.

Where the Principal deems that further resources are required, she will, prior to admission, request the Department of Education to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child outlined in the psychological and/or medical report. These resources may include for example, access to or the provision of any or a combination of the following: Visiting Teacher service, Special Education Teacher, Special Needs Assistant, specialised equipment or furniture, assistive technology, transport services or other resources. The school will endeavour to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that all provisions are made to cater for the needs of the pupil and will keep parents/guardians informed.

Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents of children with SEN who are unsatisfied with the level of educational provision in our school, are advised to consider a special school or class which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for children with SEN and which is consistent with the best interests of the child and meeting the nature and degree of his/her needs.

#### **Department of Education's Allocation to Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon - September 2017 to June 2021**

The allocation for our school has been calculated using the following information:

- Baseline: number of children enrolled as per the Pupil Online Database (POD)
- Complex Needs: NCSE low incidence Resource Teacher Allocations
- Achievement: Standardised Test results held by the Department of Education and Skills
- Social Context including disadvantage: from Primary Schools Data Survey
- Gender: as per enrolment data on POD

The table below provides the breakdown of the allocation to our school.

	National	Our School Breakdown in Hours
Baseline Component	20%	29.41
Complex Needs	50%	62.48
Standardised Test Results	23%	7.54 (English) 4.46 (Mathematics)
Social Context	3.5%	3.75
Gender	3.5%	4.67
Total (Rounded)		112.50

#### **Personnel**

In September 2021, our allocation was: 128.5 teaching hours for SEN. In terms of SEN teachers this equates to 5 full-time SETs and one SET who works 3.5 hours per week in Rathpeacon N.S. The Department of Education also allocated 375 CLASS

(COVID Learning and Support Scheme) hours to our school from 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This equates to approximately 15 weeks of full time extra SET support due to teacher-pupil contact time lost as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In September 2021 our school was allocated 7.33 SNAs assigned by our SENO as 5 full-time and 3 part-time SNAs.

### **Our Approach to Special Education Intervention**

Depending on the needs of the individual child and based on the Continuum of Support staged process, the SEN teacher will provide help through:

- Effective whole-school policies
- Direction of resources towards pupils in greatest need
- Implementation of the Continuum of Support's staged approach to support provision at Class Support, School Support and School Support Plus levels (See Appendices 1 and 2)
- Provision of the model of intervention appropriate for the pupil and the difficulty they are experiencing to include:

**Withdrawal Model:** For example: 1:1 interventions, when pupils' needs do not match to form a small group e.g. for Reading Recovery, Toe by Toe etc. or small group interventions where pupils with similar needs may be grouped for support.

**In-Class Model:** For example: Station Teaching/Team Teaching/Peer Tutoring etc.

- Collaboration between teachers
- Parental involvement
- Maintenance of Support Plans as set out in the Continuum of Support
- Assessment procedures
- Provision of Early Intervention Programmes
- Collaboration with outside agencies
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

### **Outline of the Continuum of Support Staged Approach (Appendix 1)**

#### **Stage 1: Classroom Support**

Once a pupil has come to the attention of the school because he/she is experiencing additional needs, the class teacher contacts the child's parents/guardians to make them aware of the child's difficulties and needs. The teacher also ascertains the parent's/guardian's views about the child's performance at school.

The class teacher devises a Classroom Support Plan (Stage 1) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines, aiming to meet pupil's identified needs within the normal classroom setting. The success of this plan is reviewed in consultation with parents/guardians. If concern remains after the review time, the SEN team in the school may be consulted about the possible necessity for a move to Stage 2 of the Continuum of Support: the School Support Plan.

### **Stage 2: School Support**

The SEN teacher seeks the parent's/guardian's permission to proceed with diagnostic assessment, which may lead to supplementary teaching. When a child is selected for supplementary teaching the parents/guardians must accept or decline the place in writing. A draft letter is provided by the school to assist with this (Appendix 8). Parents/guardians, class teacher and SEN teacher(s) collaborate in devising, implementing and reviewing Stage 2 the pupil's School Support Plan.

### **Stage 3: School Support Plus**

If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews at Stage 2, it may be necessary for the school to move to Stage 3 of the Continuum of Support: School Support Plus, and formally request a consultation with an appropriate outside agency or agencies e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, HSE etc. Parents/guardians are always kept informed and their consent in writing is required for any such consultation or referral.

**Note:** In the case of pupils with significant learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties, the Continuum of Support Staged Approach may be expedited. The school may move directly to stage 2 or stage 3, at the school's discretion, always in consultation with the parents/guardians.

### **Process for Selection of Pupils for Special Education**

The school will select pupils in accordance with the criteria set out below, starting at point no.1 and continuing on through the selection criteria until caseloads/timetables are full. *“Those with the highest level of need should have the greatest level of support”* (Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools 2017 p.19). This

criteria is not definitive and is subject to change at the discretion of the teaching staff and the Board of Management. This selection process has been in use since September 2018.

### **Who we select:**

1. Pupils allocated 'Resource hours' by the D.E.S (pre 2017/18), who continue to experience significant learning difficulties
2. Pupils diagnosed as having low incidence learning disabilities e.g. physical disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, emotional disturbance, severe emotional disturbance, autism, specific speech and language disorder, multiple disabilities or complex needs
3. Pupils whose behaviour is a danger to themselves or others and are awaiting an assessment/diagnosis
4. Pupils referred to the H.S.E./outside agency who are experiencing significant learning/behaviour/communication needs.
5. Pupils diagnosed as having high incidence learning disabilities (e.g. specific learning disability, significant sensory difficulties, borderline mild general learning disability and mild general learning disability)
6. Pupils who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) e.g. pupils who arrive to our school without any English
7. Pupils who score on or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile on standard assessments in literacy
8. Pupils who score on or below the 12<sup>th</sup> percentile on standard assessments in literacy (to allow for a margin of error)
9. Pupils who score critically low on Reading Recovery Tests as per Reading Recovery selection criteria
10. Pupils who have discontinued the Reading Recovery Programme and not achieved the required reading level as per Reading Recovery Guidelines
11. Pupils who score on or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile on standard assessments in Mathematics
12. Pupils who score on or below the 12<sup>th</sup> percentile on standard assessments in Mathematics (to allow for a margin of error)
13. Pupils experiencing serious difficulty with oral language/ social interaction/ behaviour/ emotional development/ fine and gross motor skills/application to learning, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Stage 1 - Classroom Support Level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded interventions in it.
14. Pupils who have lived in Ireland less than two years and whose English needs further support.
15. Pupils from the travelling community who score between 12<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> percentiles (Standard Score 81-88) will undergo further screening on standard assessments in Literacy and/ Mathematics.

16. Pupils who score between 12<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> percentiles (Standard Score 81-88) on standardised literacy assessments will undergo further screening to determine access to SEN teaching.
17. Pupils who score between 12<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> percentiles (Standard Score 81-88) on standardised Mathematics assessments will undergo further screening to determine access to support teaching.
18. Early In-class Intervention in literacy or numeracy (depending on the learning needs of the class).
19. Pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30<sup>th</sup> percentile/Standard Score 92) on **standardised assessments in Literacy** and who continue to experience difficulty despite interventions made by the class teacher at Classroom Support level (Stage 1) of the NEPS Continuum of Support. All interventions by the class teacher will have been recorded at Stage 1 of the Support Plan.
20. Pupils scoring at or below STEN 4 (30<sup>th</sup> percentile/Standard Score 92) on **standardised assessments in Mathematics** who continue to experience difficulty despite interventions made by the class teacher at Classroom Support level (Stage 1) of the NEPS Continuum of Support. All interventions by the class teacher will have been recorded at stage 1 of the Support Plan.
21. Gifted Pupils i.e. those scoring above the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile (Standard Score 130) in literacy or Mathematics on standardised assessments and/or have been diagnosed by an Educational Psychologist as having a 'superior IQ'. Interventions will be made in the first instance by the class teacher as set out in Stage 1 of the Support Plan. All interventions at Stage 1 will be recorded by the class teacher.

**Note:** From the Report of the Special Educational Review Committee 1993: 'Insofar as a score on an intelligence test can be regarded as an indicator, we suggest that the description "exceptionally able" be used to denote pupils with an IQ score in the range 130+ and above. It is our opinion, however, that adopting a precise cut-off point can have little practical application.'

In our school we use the NRIT to test IQ. Pupils who meet the criteria for exceptional ability (IQ 130+) will be offered information regarding relevant outside agencies such as the Centre for Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI).

The intensity of additional support that is provided for students with low achievement and students with SEN is based on their needs and is provided differentially through the Continuum of Support process.

### **In- School Assessment**

The school adopts an early identification policy, based on teacher's observations and testing. Children who are experiencing difficulties are identified and efforts are made to include them on the SEN Programme as early as possible.



The Reading Recovery programme is offered to children aged between 5.9-6.6 years who are experiencing literacy difficulties. Jolly Phonics Assessment Tests for Junior and Senior infants are administered in the final term. The MIST is administered to Senior Infants each year by the SEN team. The NRIT is administered in February to all pupils in second class by the SEN team. Class teachers administer the Drumcondra Reading Test and the SIGMA-T (Mathematical Attainment Test) each year as recommended.

The results of these tests are used to screen pupils. Pupils who score at the lower end of the scale are then selected to undergo a series of individual tests in reading, spelling, phonics and Mathematics administered by the SEN team. The records of new pupils are requested from the previous school and where necessary, further screening or diagnostic tests are administered.

## **Tests that maybe used for Screening Pupils**

### **1. Screening Tests**

- Drumcondra Reading Test (May),
- M.I.S.T. (Feb.),
- Jolly Phonics Assessment Test (Final term)
- Sigma-T (May),
- Basic Number screening test.
- N.R.I.T. (Feb.),
- N.F.E.R. Verbal and Non-Verbal Intelligence Tests.
- Quest Test
- Drumcondra Spelling Test

### **2. Diagnostic Tests**

- Reading Recovery Observation Survey Tests
- N.A.R.A.
- Harcourt Assessment
- Quest
- Sound Linkage: Phonological Awareness
- Aston Index
- Dolch List- First 200 words
- Developmental Checklists from the Special Education Support Service (SESS)
- Schonell Reading Tests
- Rain Reading Tests
- Jackson Phonics Test
- Literacy Probe

- Basic Number Diagnostic test
- The Four Rules of Number Test
- Maths Tracker
- Teacher designed tests, samples of work, observations
- Toe by Toe Reading Age Test
- Mata Sa Rang Diagnostic Test
- Diagnostic Spelling Test 1-3 (For use with Irish Exemption)

### **Referral for Psychological Assessment**

Where an individual SEN programme has been implemented and reviewed and it is clear that a child is still not making satisfactory progress, then consideration will be given to commissioning an Educational Psychological Assessment. The principal, in consultation with the class teacher and the SEN teacher will approach the parents/guardians with a view to referring the child for an educational psychological assessment. Parents/guardians may be encouraged to arrange a check up on general health, hearing and sight of the child. When a child is selected for NEPS referral the parents/guardians must accept or decline the referral in writing, in line with NEPS procedures.

Should a parent/guardian commission a private Educational Psychological assessment, we are happy to liaise with any agencies involved.

### **Recording the Support Plan Process**

The SEN teacher will maintain records of pupil progress, diagnostic test results and assessments and will set out a School Support Plan for each child with SEN. In the case of pupils with similar educational needs a Group Support Plan will be drawn up for SEN teaching.

Each pupil's School Support Plan will include and record the following, where appropriate:

- Relevant background information
- Standardised screening test results
- Diagnostic test results
- Involvement with outside agencies-copies of Educational Psychologists reports etc
- My Thoughts About School - template completed by pupil with SEN, where appropriate (Appendix 4.1)

- Getting To Know Your Child - template completed by parent/guardian of pupil with SEN (Appendix 4.2)
- Appropriate performance targets
- Procedures for regular review of progress
- Participation in in-class interventions
- Parent/guardian involvement and support for the plan
- Pupil involvement in the plan, where appropriate
- Other relevant information/records/recommendations as outlined earlier (Appendix 4)
- Log of Actions - template attached to the front of the pupil's school file for completion by class and SEN teachers (Appendix 4.3)
- Behaviour Plan (Appendix 12)
  - ~Learning Environment Checklist
  - ~Learning Behavioural Checklist
  - ~Recording Disruptive Behaviour
  - ~ABC Chart
  - ~Behaviour Plan Targets
  - ~Behaviour Targets for Independence.

Pupils' progress is continuously monitored in the following ways:

- Teacher observation
- Results on standardised tests
- Evidence in copybooks and worksheets
- Progression through a series of graded reading books with regular implementation of running records
- Checklists (sight vocabulary/phonics/fine and gross motor/speech and language/sensory development etc.)
- Communication with parents/guardians
- Maths assessments
- Parent observations
- Self-assessment by pupil
- Meetings between SEN teacher and the class teacher regarding pupil's progress.

Yearly standardised test results are logged onto the Aladdin School Data System and also forwarded to the Department of Education each June, as required.

### **Reporting**

Each member of teaching staff will actively familiarise themselves with appropriate information regarding children with SEN in his/her class grouping. This includes regular updates and reviews with the SEN teacher (where relevant).

Parents/guardians of a child with SEN are invited to a Support Plan meeting in October. Reporting and review of the Support Plan takes place at a meeting in term 2.

Children's progress is reported and discussed with parents at parent/teacher meetings in November (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class) and in January (infant classes) or at the invitation/request of teachers or parents/guardians at any other time during the school year

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

To facilitate the effective implementation of our school policy on SEN and SEN services, we at Rathpeacon National School recognise the importance of school partnership in establishing this policy. The roles of the different partners - the Board of Management, the principal, class teachers, SEN teachers, parents/guardians and pupils - are outlined below.

#### **1. Role of the Board of Management**

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the provision of teaching of pupils with SEN in the school
- Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the SEN Teachers
- Provide a secure facility for storage of records in relation to pupils in receipt of SEN teaching
- Approve ongoing support for Professional Development in SEN for staff where appropriate e.g. sanctioning time to attend courses or provide funding for courses
- Approve release time for SEN teachers to undertake CPD/attend courses in SEN during school hours when necessary

#### **2. Role of the Principal Teacher**

*While some of these activities will be delegated to, or shared with, other staff members/post-holders, the principal retains overall responsibility for the school's provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs.*

- Assume overall responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of an inclusive whole-school policy on SEN in co-operation with SEN teachers and class teachers
- Work with teachers in the development, implementation and monitoring of the school plan regarding SEN teaching
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify children with SEN and that progress is monitored
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to ensure effective involvement of teachers, parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Assign staff strategically to SEN roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Encourage and facilitate staff members to attend CPD courses
- Organise the funding and provision of appropriate assessment tests
- Liaise with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) and appropriate outside agencies and oversee that suitable recommendations are being implemented
- With assistance from SEN teachers, complete applications/referral forms for SNA access, HSE Assessment of Need, HSE Early Intervention Team, Speech and Language therapy, Occupational therapy, NEPS, CAMHS, Springboard, Family Services, TUSLA, private psychological services, Irish Exemptions, applications for assistive technology etc.
- Maintain a list of pupils receiving supplementary teaching
- Advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- With assistance from SEN teachers and SNAs, update Pupil Personal Plans (PPPs) for pupils in receipt of SNA access (Appendix 3)
- Return SNA allocation forms to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Return NTS forms to Department of Education Payroll Department
- Apply to the Department of Education and Skills with help from the SEN teachers for resources, grants, supports etc.
- Co-ordinate and organise SNAs' work and timetabling.
- Report to the Board of Management on exemptions from Irish and other SEN matters

### **3. Role of the Class Teacher**

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class, including those selected for supplementary teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of the school's policy on SEN, the class teacher should implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and to the greatest extent possible prevent the emergence of learning difficulties.

This can be achieved by:

- Prioritising lower-achieving pupils when accessing information from previous teacher
- Grouping pupils for instruction
- Providing lower-achieving pupils with strategies for reading, spelling and problem solving
- Adapting learning materials for lower-achieving and higher-achieving pupils through differentiation
- Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with lower achievement in class activities
- Liaising closely with parents and implementing a Classroom Support Plan where necessary
- Set learning targets at an appropriate level and assess and review these targets on a regular basis
- Liaising with SEN teachers for guidance and strategies to deal with pupils with additional needs

**The class teacher plays an important role in the initial identification of pupils who may have general or specific learning difficulties as set out below:**

- In supporting the development and implementation of the school SEN policy, the class teacher will administer and score appropriate screening measures, and then discuss the outcomes with the SEN teachers
- The class teacher will liaise with parents and elicit relevant information from them regarding hearing/vision/general medical checks etc.
- Stage 1 of the Staged Approach and NEPS' Classroom Support requires class teachers to support their pupils' learning in the first instance. This requires the class teacher to meet with parents to devise a Classroom Support Plan for the pupil at Stage 1. The class teacher records all actions onto the Log of Actions template. (Appendix 4.3). This Classroom Support Plan is reviewed before possibly referring the pupil to Stage 2 interventions.
- For each pupil who is in receipt of SEN teaching at School Support/School Support Plus stages, the class teacher will collaborate with the SEN teacher in the development of the Support Plan by helping to identify appropriate targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets
- The class teacher will consult with the SEN teacher(s) at least once per term and, through informal consultation as the need arises to review the Support Plan
- At the end of the school year, the class teacher will complete, the End of Year Review template for each pupil in receipt of supplementary support (Appendix 5)

#### 4. Role of the Special Education Needs Teacher

The SEN teacher's role comprises of both teaching and non-teaching duties. Duties may include:

- Organising and ordering standardised tests for the whole school (e.g. Drumcondra Reading Test, MIST, SIGMA-T, NRIT, Jolly Phonics Tests etc)
- Assisting with the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching
- Implementing school policies on preventing learning difficulties, screening pupils for learning difficulties and interpreting outcomes of diagnostic assessments
- Providing supplementary teaching in line with the child's particular and individual needs
- Researching the pupil's learning difficulty/SEN and choosing the correct methodologies and resources to cater for the pupil's learning style and variety of needs
- Liaising with appropriate outside agencies and implement suitable recommendations
- Assist the principal with applications/referral forms for: SNA access, HSE Assessment of Need, HSE Early Intervention Team, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, NEPS, CAMHS, private psychological services, Irish exemptions and applications for assistive technology, grant aid, etc
- Assist the principal with updating Pupil Personal Plans (PPPs) for pupils in receipt of SNA access
- Developing a Support Plan for each pupil who is selected for SEN teaching in consultation with class teachers and parents
- Consulting with class teacher and parents of each pupil who is in receipt of support, at least once per instructional term to review the pupil's attainment of agreed targets and revise their Support Plan where necessary
- Maintaining a forward planner and progress record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support
- Providing supplementary teaching in English and/or Mathematics to pupils who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties at Stage 2: School Support or Stage 3: School Support Plus (as per selection criteria)
- Delivering Early Intervention programmes in Literacy and Numeracy e.g. Literacy Lift Off and Mata Sa Rang and programmes such as Fun Friends/Friends for Life as well as fine and gross motor programmes, baking, sensory garden, sensory walk etc. (caseload and selection criteria permitting)
- Pre-testing and post-testing regarding literacy and numeracy intervention programmes
- Contributing to the development of policy on SEN at whole school level
- Providing advice to the class teacher on:
  - Individual pupil assessment

- Programme planning
- Curriculum differentiation
- Approaches to reading, language, development, spelling, writing, mathematics, behaviour difficulties
- Contributing at school level to decision making regarding purchasing of resources
- Assisting the principal with applications for exemptions from the study of Irish

**Below is a list of non-teaching duties undertaken by SEN teachers at various times of the school year:**

### **Term 1: Non-Teaching Duties**

- Reviewing each class list with regard to low/ high incident disabilities, children's standardised test results, recent professional reports and previous school year's 'End of Year Review' reports
- Reading through files of children who are newly enrolled in the school and contacting previous schools for standardised test scores and any other relevant information
- Administering further screening tests where necessary
- Listing all pupils who are eligible for SEN teaching
- Designating SEN teachers to each pupil and establishing priority learning needs for each individual
- Ensuring that all relevant teachers have necessary copies of completed End of Year Review sheets from the previous school year
- Recording which stage each pupil is at on the 'Pupils with SEN who are in Receipt of Interventions Through the Continuum of Support Framework' template (Appendix 6)
- Completing NCSE Student Attendance Confirmation Form
- Ascertaining which diagnostic tests need to be administered
- Contacting parents/guardians and asking them to sign parental consent letter where necessary
- Asking parents/guardians to complete the Getting To Know Your Child template (Appendix 4.2)
- Supporting pupils to complete My Thoughts about School template (Appendix 4.1)
- Assigning dates for intervention programmes for term one
- Drawing up prospective list of pupils for initial NEPS visit and compiling necessary information on each listed pupil
- Attending initial meeting with NEPS psychologist to discuss prospective pupils for NEPS assessment/intervention
- Confirming all pupils that have an exemption from the study of Irish



- Co-ordinating and comparing Special Education timetables, classroom timetables and school timetables to ensure that each pupil is receiving support at an optimal time, where possible
- Reviewing Special Education Planning and Progress templates for the coming year in regular collaboration with the class teacher
- Where pupils are receiving supplementary support from more than one SEN teacher, assigning one SEN teacher to co-ordinate gathering of information for each child's Support Plan
- Determine which pupils will require a Transfer to Secondary School Form (Appendix 7)
- Pre-testing if literacy intervention programme is to be implemented (caseload and selection criteria permitting)
- Liaise with SNA/class teachers/other staff to implement new technology/resources/programmes.

### **Term 2: Non-Teaching Duties**

- Reviewing progress of pupils at Stage 1: Classroom Support Plan, with class teacher and parents/guardians and moving pupils to Stage 2: School Support Plan, where necessary
- Setting new targets on Support Plans where necessary
- Liaising with outside agencies where necessary
- Assigning dates for intervention programmes for Term 2
- Administering MIST test to Senior Infants
- Administering NRIT to 2<sup>nd</sup> Class
- Pre-testing and post-testing if literacy/numeracy interventions are to be implemented (caseload and selection criteria permitting)
- Completing Transfer To Secondary School Forms, where necessary
- Completing NCSE School Leavers Form
- Continue to liaise with NEPS and parents/guardians of pupils who were selected for NEPS assessment/intervention (and CAMHS where appropriate).

### **Term 3: Non-Teaching Duties**

- Reviewing progress of children at the various stages of the Continuum of Support with class teacher and parents
- Setting new targets where necessary
- Liaising with outside agencies where necessary
- Pre-testing and post-testing if literacy/numeracy interventions are to be implemented (caseload and selection criteria permitting)
- Organising end of year standardised testing
- Administering Jolly Phonics Testing to Junior and Senior Infants

- Administering standardised tests to pupils from 1<sup>st</sup> - 6th class who were absent on original administration day
- Updating test results profile sheet for each pupil in the school
- Completing End of Year Review template (Appendix 5) for each pupil in receipt of SEN teaching
- Reviewing Standardised Test results for each class.
- Continue to liaise with NEPS and parents of pupils who were selected for NEPS assessment/intervention (and CAMHS, where appropriate)

## **5. Role of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) as set out in Circular 0030/2014**

<b>Pupil Primary Care Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assistance with feeding:</b></li> <li>• <b>Assistance with toileting and general hygiene:</b></li> <li>• <b>Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds at recreation, assembly and dispersal times:</b></li> <li>• <b>Non-nursing care needs associated with medical condition:</b></li> <li>• <b>Care needs requiring frequent interventions</b> including withdrawal of pupil from the classroom when essential (for safety or personal care reasons, or where pupil may be required to leave the class due to distress on a frequent basis)</li> </ul>
<b>Pupil Secondary Care Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms</b>, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another:</li> <li>• <b>Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans</b>, with particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.</li> <li>• <b>Assist teachers and/or principal in maintaining a journal or care monitoring system</b> for pupil including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by pupil.</li> <li>• <b>Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities:</b> such as swimming, gymnastics school trips etc.</li> <li>• <b>Assistance with enabling pupil access therapy or psycho-educational programmes</b> such as anger management or social skills classes</li> <li>• <b>Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities:</b> where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.</li> </ul>

## **6. Role of Parents/Guardians**

Close links with parents/guardians are established and maintained through scheduled review meetings with class teachers and SEN teachers. Parents/guardians can supplement the work of the school in supporting their child by:

- Completing a Getting to Know Your Child template to facilitate target planning for their Support Plan as set out in the Continuum of Support
- Meeting with SEN teachers and class teachers to draw-up and review Support Plans
- Providing a literacy rich environment at home and listening to their child reading on a daily basis
- Discussing books and life experiences to develop oral language/literacy and mathematical skills
- Talking positively about school and school work
- Work on agreed Support Plan targets at home

Standardised screening tests are carried out in the school on all children from Infants to Sixth class. Parents/guardians give their consent for this when they complete the Application for Enrolment Form on entry to the school. Parents/guardians also give consent for diagnostic testing on this form. Parents are informed again by the SEN teachers if diagnostic testing is necessary as the child progresses through school.

## **7. Role of Pupils**

The pupil is actively involved in the development, implementation and review of their own learning to the best of their ability. Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should, as appropriate:

- Outline his/her interests and strengths
- Contribute to the evaluation of their programme by participating in appropriate assessment, including self-assessment
- Contribute to their Support Plan by:
  - Completing Thoughts about School template
  - Becoming familiar with some targets that have been set for them
  - Contributing to setting of some such targets
  - Contributing to the selection of some texts/ resources

## **8. Role of External Bodies and Agencies**

The school monitors pupils for any signs of difficulty or supplementary needs, which may require specialist attention. The principal and teachers liaise with external professionals including the SENO, NEPS psychologists, NCSE support service, the inspectorate, HSE officials, speech therapists, educational and clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and other professionals as required. Teachers endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations, from external professionals, when developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support.

## **9. Assistive Technology**

Applications may be made for Assistive Technology (A.T.) for pupils with SEN when recommended by NEPS or other outside agencies. Under Circular 0010/2013, the A.T. equipment, which pupils have been granted by the D.E.S., remains the property of the school and must normally be kept and used in the school. However the Board of Management may, in certain circumstances, allow the use of the equipment in the pupil's home. Such a circumstance might be where it is agreed that the pupil could potentially benefit from, or achieve a degree of improvement to their academic and educational performance, their learning and their completion of homework through the use of technical support or equipment such as a laptop. It is at the discretion of the school whether the equipment can be transferred to second level with the pupil. Please refer to the school's Policy re Home Use of School-Owned Assistive Technology. (Appendix 10)

## **10. Ratification and Communication**

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2021. It has been communicated to all staff. It is available to parents and the wider school community on our school website [www.rathpeaconns.com](http://www.rathpeaconns.com). It will be reviewed after there has been a material change in any matter to which this document refers.

The original signed copy is kept in the school.

**Signed:** *Fiona Monahan*

Chairperson of Board of Management

**Signed:** *Susanna O'Neill*

Principal

## **List of Appendices**

**Appendices 1-7 are with the original policy kept in the school and are available on request.**

- **Appendix 1:** The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Programme Planning (Appendix 3 of Circular 02/05)
- **Appendix 2:** The 2017 Guideline Presentation of the NEPS Continuum of Support.
- **Appendix 3:** Template: Personal Pupil Plan (PPP)
- **Appendix 4:** Template: Pupil Support File (Previously known as IEP or IPLP)
- **Appendix 4.1:** Template: Thoughts about School (NEPS)
- **Appendix 4.2:** Getting to Know your Child
- **Appendix 4.3:** Template: Log of Actions
- **Appendix 5:** Template: End of Year Review
- **Appendix 6:** Template: Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework.
- **Appendix 7:** Template: Transfer to Secondary School (NEPS)
- **Appendix 8:** Template: Parental Consent Letter
- **Appendix 9:** Template: Parental Refusal Letter.
- **Appendix 10:** Policy re: Home Use of School-Owned Assistive Technology
- **Appendix 11:** Glossary of Abbreviations
- **Appendix 12:** Behaviour Plan

## Appendix 8



SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA MHUIRE RÁTHPÉACÁIN

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Re: Consent of Parent/Guardian for their Child to Receive SEN Teaching

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mrs. O'Neill,

Following a review of the progress of my child named above, and having consulted with the class teacher/SEN teacher, I hereby give my consent for my child to receive SEN teaching in Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

## Appendix 9



SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA MHUIRE RÁTHPÉACÁIN

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Re: Acknowledgment of Parent/Guardian to Decline SEN Teaching for their Child

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mrs. O'Neill,

Following a review of the progress of my child named above, and having consulted with the class teacher/SEN teacher, I wish to inform you that I decline the offer for my child to receive SEN teaching in Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Rathpeacon.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian

## Appendix 10



SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA MHUIRE RÁTHPÉACÁIN

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Re: Special Education Teaching

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Following a review of the progress of your child, along with satisfactory standardised test results, we wish to inform you that for now, your child will not be receiving SEN teaching in the area(s) of \_\_\_\_\_. This is in line with the school's SEN Policy and is subject to regular review by the class teacher who will continue to monitor his/her progress in the classroom.

We thank you for all your support to date with the SEN teaching for your child.

Kind regards,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Príomhoide

\_\_\_\_\_  
Special Education Teacher



## **Appendix 11: Glossary of Abbreviations**

- ASD: Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- AT: Assistive Technology
- CAMHS: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- CPD: Continuous Professional Development
- CTYI: Centre for Talented Youth Ireland
- DES: Department of Education and Skills
- EAL: English as a Foreign Language
- HSE: Health Service Executive
- IEP: Individualised Education Plan
- IPLP: Individualised Pupil Learning Profile
- MIST: Middle Infant Screening Test
- NEPS: National Educational Psychological Service
- NRIT: Non Reading Intelligence Test
- NTS: Non Teaching Staff
- POD: Pupil Online Database
- PPP: Pupil Personal Profile
- SEN: Special Educational Needs
- SENO: Special Educational Needs Organiser
- SIGMA-T: Standardised Irish Mathematical Attainment Test
- SNA: Special Needs Assistant