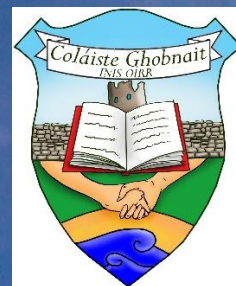


Coláiste Ghobnait Inis Oírr



Special Needs Policy 2023/2024

Adopted by the Board of Management on ??/??/20??
Approved by Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) on
??/??/20??

This policy has been prepared in consultation with Parents, Students, Staff, The Board of Management and GRETB

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

Pupils, School Staff, Parents, the school's Board of Management as well as Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Coláiste Ghobnait is to encourage the educational, intellectual, physical and cultural development of the school's students in a pleasant and healthy environment that prioritises the self-esteem, independence and development of all members of the school community.

SCHOOL VISION

"Growing and learning together diligently through the medium of Irish, in which balance, respect for well-being and integrity are given priority, with the spirit of co-operation among the whole school community."

ETHOS

Contents

Part 1: Special Needs

Part 2: Special Needs Assistant

Part 3: Individualized Teaching

Part 4: Student Support File - Guidelines

Principals

This policy sets out a framework for the effective co-ordination of the additional teaching resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in support of students with additional educational needs (ASB).

Central to the inclusive whole-school framework is the effective provision for SEN students - provision that emphasizes effective teaching and learning for all students as well as good partnerships between school, parents/guardians and students. This is a two-pronged policy and takes into account changes in practice as they occur at national policy level. In addition, the policy is in place to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to:

- Accurately and appropriately assess the needs of students with additional educational needs.
- Assess the school's ability to meet identified needs.
- Identify specifically what additional resources the students/school may need to accommodate those involved.

The aim of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to give an account of how supplementary educational support is provided in Coláiste Ghobnait for students with Special Educational Needs and also the philosophy behind it. This policy should be accepted as a work document and should be reviewed annually. Coláiste Ghobnait welcomes students with Special Educational Needs.

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, Section 2, specifies that "A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with a) the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or b) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

- To clarify the role of school staff in relation to Special Education
- To provide a safe environment where the self-confidence of every student can be encouraged
- Increase a student's capacity to learn independently
- To provide additional resources if required
- To gain the co-operation and support of the Parents/Guardians
- To set up a monitoring system to assess the students' progress.

Coláiste Ghobnait will make every effort, as far as is practicable, to give every student every opportunity to participate in every aspect and activity of school life.

In Coláiste Ghobnait we understand how important it is to recognize learning difficulties and Special Needs as soon as possible in the education system and therefore Coláiste Ghobnait will make every effort to ensure that the appropriate support is given to all students in our care, especially those with learning difficulties or Special Needs. Every student in Coláiste Ghobnait is precious and it's important that each student is given the opportunity to achieve their full potential according to their capability. Coláiste Ghobnait understands that students differ and that those differences add to the wealth and diversity of the school community.

We expect the effective and active policy in Coláiste Ghobnait to provide an organised learning environment thereby ensuring high quality, effective and complete education for all students.

We make every effort in Coláiste Ghobnait to provide an enjoyable, secure, safe environment where education through Irish is provided.

Coláiste Ghobnait believes that the best outcomes are achieved when students take ownership of their own learning. The continuum of education support gives students and teachers an opportunity to participate in skill inspections and discussions about the student's learning challenges.

Coláiste Ghobnait is a safe, inclusive environment, where all students and staff are respected. Everyone is welcome, everyone is accepted and respect is fostered. The school is committed to the vision that every student should reach his or her full potential in a considerate, positive environment. In keeping with the ethos of the school in Coláiste Ghobnait, the student is at the heart of the provision of SEN support. As teachers, we strive to meet a range of educational needs in our classes. We always aim for all students, including SEN students, to participate in a positive way in class. We use active learning methodologies that promote inclusion and learning. Coláiste Ghobnait welcomes students with SEN and we aim to achieve the principles of the EPSEN Act (2004):

- Wherever possible, people with SEN will be taught in an inclusive environment alongside others who do not have similar needs.
- People with SEN have the right to access and benefit from a suitable education.
- On leaving school, students with SEN should have the skills necessary to participate actively in their ability in the social and economic activities of society. They should have the skills to live independently and achieve a fulfilling life.

Criteria which ensure that the policy will be successful

1. The teacher's input and feedback
2. Better exam results (school assessment, state exams)
3. Better student attention and participation
4. Completion of post-primary education and a continuation to third level
5. Reaching potential in state exams
6. Keeping a link with Parents/Guardians
7. Reviewing the plan and keeping it updated
8. Staff Meetings.

Success Criteria

Special education will be a success ...

- If students with SEN achieve their expected goals, working with all stakeholders. (Formal and informal assessment will be used to assess this).
- If students succeed with SEN and no longer require additional support.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that each subject teacher is aware of the special educational needs of the students in their class and of the contribution they, as subject teachers, can provide to those students by using the Continuum of Support
- To give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children, including children who have a disability or who have other special educational needs, where these relate to education

- To provide, as far as is practicable and having regard to the resources available, a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of each student
- To ensure that students with special educational needs are educated in an inclusive environment by using the Continuum of Support
- To confirm that students with special educational needs have the same right to benefit from education as those students who do not have those needs
- To provide for the participation of Parents/Guardians in the education of their children and the decision making process relating to their children
- To co-operate with the National Council for Special Education and with other agencies in relation to the education of students with special educational needs
- To ensure that special educational needs are not dealt with separately but in the context of the school and the overall community
- To ensure that students with special educational needs are offered a broad, well considered and diverse curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive manner
- To set high standards for students with special educational needs and give them the appropriate guidance and encouragement to achieve their full potential
- To make sure all subject teachers develop their own expertise so as to support students with special educational needs as required
- To encourage and maintain positive partnerships with parents so as to achieve the appropriate level of support in the home and in school
- To co-ordinate advice, guidance and support from other agencies to support students with special educational needs
- To make sure that resources are used effectively
- To monitor and assess the effectiveness of practices used to support students with special educational needs.

Cognitive Ability Tests

- NGRT
- WRAT4
- CAT4

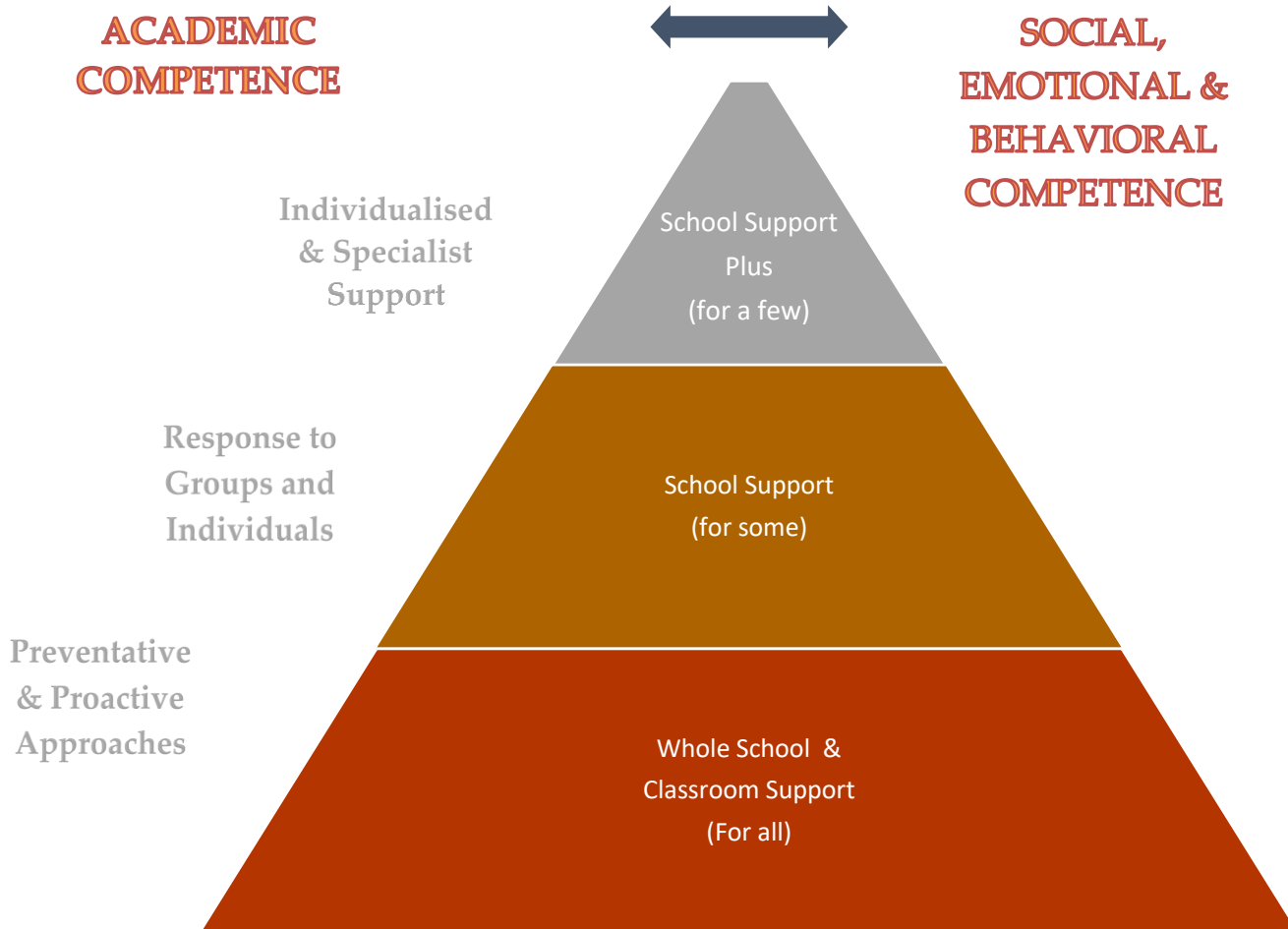
The CAT4 and NGRT are taken by all students starting in year 1.

The Legislative Framework

The policy takes into account the following legislation:

- Education Act (1998)
- Equal Status Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2004)
- Education (Welfare) Act (2000)
- Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998, 2003 and 2018)
- EPSEN (Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs) Act (2004)
- Children First Act (2015)
- Education (School Admissions) Act (2018)

CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT

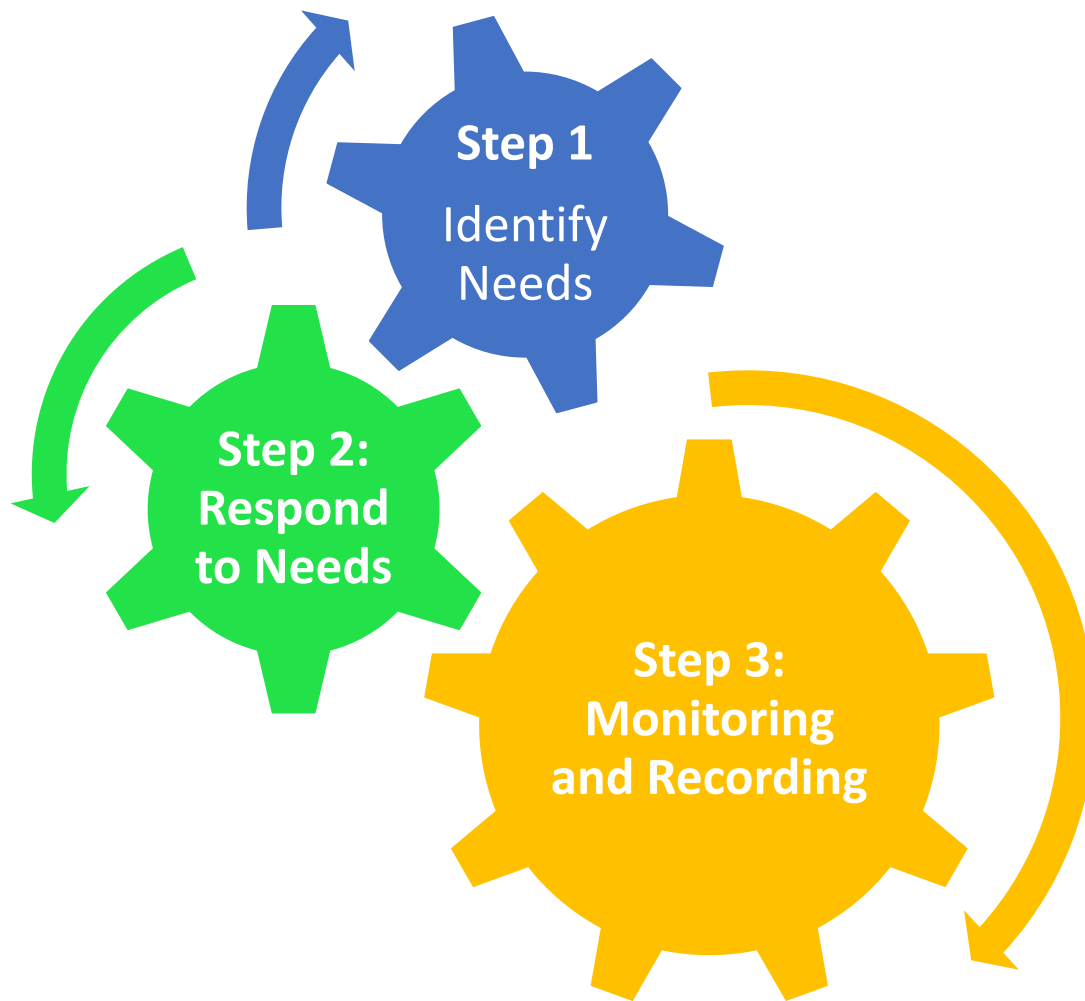


These are the levels of support provided through the Continuum of Support.

For additional reading information regarding the Continuum of Support provided in Coláiste Ghobnait see **Appendix 9**.

For the most part, students' primary needs can be catered for through interventions at classroom level. However a few students can have more significant problems, these can be identified immediately when they attend the school. In such instances, as a first step, a School Support Plan or a School Support Plan Plus would be more appropriate. This would mostly apply to newly arrived students but it could also apply to a student who experienced an event that impacts significantly on their schooling.

A THREE STEP PROCESS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS



Supporting students with Additional Educational Needs

In line with the NEPS Continuum of Support Framework, a 3-step process is recommended for students to identify and support additional educational needs. SEN is a continuum. There is a wide range of abilities - from mild to more severe, transient to long-term. Different students need different levels of support depending on their specific needs. This framework helps to ensure that the additional assistance is phased in, i.e. that the intervention is done incrementally. Intervention begins at class level and then as required, the individual student is given stronger support. Progress is closely monitored and the level of support is based on this. (DES Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with SEN in Mainstream Schools, p.6

<https://downsyndrome.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Guidelines-for-Post-Primary-Schools-Supporting-Students-with-Special-Educational-Needs-in-Mainstream-Schools-1.pdf>).

The Role of the Board of Management

The Education Act 1998 15. (2) d. states:

that the Board of Management will publish “the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, and ensure that, as regards that policy, principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents’ choice are respected.” Section 15 (2) g. states that “ Boards of Management will use resources provided to the school under Section 12, to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with special educational needs”.

- To make sure that the Continuum of Support is implemented in Coláiste Ghobnait
- To ensure that every student who requires learning support or have special educational needs are identified and assessed using the Continuum of Support
- That it is an effective policy
- To review the policy
- That Coláiste Ghobnait’s mission and ethos is reflected in the policy
- That the policy adheres to statutory requirements
- To make sure the school has a special needs educational policy, that the enforcement of this policy is monitored and is regularly assessed
- To ensure students with special educational needs are offered a broad, well considered and diverse curriculum and are catered for in an inclusive manner
- To ensure those essential resources required for students with special educational needs are sought
- To promote positive partnerships with parents and other appropriate agencies/personnel and make sure parents’ are made aware of their child’s special educational needs and of how this is being addressed
- To make sure that parents are consulted in relation to all important decisions to do with their child’s education and that they are invited to become involved in those decisions.

The Role of the Principal/Deputy Principal

The Principal, on behalf of Coláiste Ghobnait’s board of management, is responsible for every aspect of the policy’s daily management and for the provision made to students with special educational needs. The Principal could delegate certain functions to relevant teachers (as detailed in Section 18 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004)

- To make sure the Continuum of Support is implemented in Coláiste Ghobnait
- To implement the policy, support students and teachers to create a positive atmosphere
- To contact the Department of Education and Skills, in consultation with other relevant personnel, with regards to requirements and provisions. This also includes applications for adaptations and reasonable accommodations for state exams and assessments
- To ensure that the most effective use is made of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds
- To promote a whole school approach in relation to special educational needs, to inform every member of staff about their responsibilities in this area and facilitate appropriate staff development in this area
- To encourage positive partnerships with Parents/Guardians of students with special educational needs.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

The SEN teachers will assess the students in their care. They will mediate with other staff as appropriate. They will gather information from Education Passports, DEIS tests and other assessments. They will develop, implement and monitor Level 2 or 3 Support Plans.

- Meetings with teachers providing support will be co-ordinated by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

- SENC will represent and speak on behalf of the SEN Team at Pastoral Care Committee meetings. He/she will work with them to meet the care needs of all students in the school, including students with SEN. He/she will help those students with social/emotional difficulties.
- Conduct assessments for RACE, DARE, HEAR.
- Develop and implement a whole-school SEN policy under the direction of the Principal.
- Lead the Subject Teachers in providing support for students with SEN.
- Consult with parents of SEN students regarding their specific learning needs.
- Consult with external agencies to make arrangements for educational assessments and the provision of support for students with SEN.
- Facilitate the transfer from other primary and post-primary schools to students with SEN in conjunction with the Principal.
- Lead the 3-step process - identifying need, intervening, monitoring and keeping track of progress.
- In conjunction with the Principal and the special educational needs organizer (SENO), SENCO will allocate resources, such as additional teaching hours and information and communications technology (ICT) to SEN students.
- SENCO will arrange for the purchase of suitable ICT Technology for SEN students who are eligible for a Department of Education & Skills grant for Assistive Technology.
- Arrange for students with SEN to receive exemption from certain subjects as required.
- In conjunction with the Secretary of Examinations and the Deputy Principal, SENCOS will arrange for students with SEN to receive special assistance on Reasonable Accommodation in the School examinations.

Other Professionals

- Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists etc. can also be included indirectly, offering consultation or advice through the SEN Team.
- The Special Educational Needs Coordinator will be required to ensure that a student support file is in place for each student - information gathered, plans, counseling interventions and review.
- Assessment results from the standardised tests are shared with subject teachers on VS Ware (SEN tab) to plan for students' learning experiences and meet their needs.

The Careers Guidance Teacher

The Careers Guidance Teacher is part of the SEN team and should:

- Assist other members of the SEN Team in promoting the inclusion of SEN students in the school.
- Provide individual guidance and support for students with SEN and parental involvement as required.
- Assist students at different times in their school life choosing the right subjects and making career decisions. It is important that the Careers Guidance Teacher helps the SEN student to be realistic about their career goals.
- Work with the SEN Team in the assessment process.
- Assist SEN students to develop personally and socially.
- Refer a case or seek guidance or assistance from other professionals and agencies where necessary.
- Assist with career resolution i.e. interview skills, work experience etc.

The Role of the Subject Teacher:

- To implement the Continuum of Support in Coláiste Ghobnait
- Information is available on the SEN tab on VS Ware about student's educational needs. It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to read this information and to implement this information.
- To plan so as to meet the needs of each student in the class
- The subject teacher will make the relevant modifications to teaching strategies and learning objectives so that the students will achieve the progress that they are capable of

- **Differentiation** should be applied in the class so as to meet the needs of students in Coláiste Ghobnait. Differentiation is a method that subject teachers can apply to support the promotion of an inclusive environment in the school.
- The Subject Teacher seeks advice from the SEN Team
- Implements a Level 1 Support Plan where required
- Keeps the Year Teacher informed of the Classroom Support Plan
- Keeps a written record of relevant information and measures implemented.

(ROS Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with ROS in Mainstream Schools, pp.13,14)

The Subject Teachers have the first responsibility for the education of all students in their classes. Accordingly, Subject Teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully, addressing the various needs within the classroom. All Subject Teachers should implement a teaching approach and methodology that incorporates students with SEN in a meaningful way.

These include:

- Collaborative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms.
 - Collaborative problem-solving activities.
 - Differentiation
 - Interventions to promote social and emotional competence.
 - Use of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Differentiated Methods applied by teachers at Coláiste Ghobnait include:
- Exchanging the level, structure, method of teaching and pace of lessons to meet specific needs.
 - Provide lessons to suit students' interests
 - Matching tasks and processes to students' abilities and needs
 - Using and equipping resources, including the use of ICT
 - Setting challenging and challenging learning goals for students and assessing accordingly.

Subject Teachers are advised to:

- Be aware of the school's policy and procedures regarding students with SEN (as set out in this document).
- Seek advice from SEN staff on students with special needs and learning differences in their classes and if they have any concerns about any student, let the relevant people know.
- Take into account the learning needs and styles of all students and use appropriate teaching methods so that all students can access the curriculum at a level that suits them.
- Take responsibility for their own continuing professional development, especially in relation to common difficulties e.g. dyslexia & specific language difficulties
- Develop a positive attitude and take ownership of the education of students in their departments who have special needs and learning differences.
- When a SNA is with the student, the subject teacher, on the advice of COROS and the other learning-support teachers, should plan the most effective way to avail of this assistance.

Differentiation in the Mainstream Class

Through differentiation learning, teachers can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all the students in their classrooms. The term refers to the ways teachers accommodate student differences with regard to capability, ability, interest and experience.

Differentiation learning relates to the broad variety of strategies, techniques and approaches used in relation to learning and which helps every student to reach their potential and fulfil it.

It creates further opportunities for all students to access the curriculum, including those with additional learning needs. It is recognised, through differentiation learning, that students learn in different ways and at different paces. The learning can vary, for example, in relation to the difficulty level of the subject, the presentation style used in class, the speed of the lesson, structure of the lesson, the form of questioning, the sequence of learning activities to be applied and the amount of access every student has to further teaching support.

In relation to students with special learning needs the following general approach is recommended:

- To provide learning resources and activities that are suitably challenging and are also likely to be successful
- To alter questioning and presentation techniques so that students with special educational needs can be more participative
- To emphasise oral language development
- To promote literacy daily by using word walls, keyword magazines and important concepts
- To link the subject to the life experience and environment of the learner
- To use group teaching to facilitate the participation of students with special educational needs.

In differentiation learning the learning is personalised and a balanced range of strategies, techniques and approaches are used so that all students benefit from the education being provided.

- Subject teachers are asked to consider the requirements of special needs students when choosing textbooks, undertaking planning, setting out homework and devising class or end of term exams
- Coláiste Ghobnait recognises the role subject teachers play in the development and progress of each student in their class, including those with Special Educational Needs
- To use a dictionary of recognised terminology
- Subject teachers should look after, as appropriate, the rights of students with special educational needs. Coláiste Ghobnait recognises that each subject teacher has a professional duty to support these students through the use of the Continuum of Support
- To use technology as a resource to meet the needs of students
- To offer additional support to any student who is failing in a subject due to specific personal circumstances
- To provide a reading class when necessary and avail of magazines, newspapers and the school library
- To encourage using the library both inside and outside of class
- To encourage activities that promote and increase student self-confidence
- It is the class teacher's responsibility to make sure an appropriate environment and learning programme is available to each student, including those with special educational needs, so as to provide them with the opportunity to develop their learning and complete the curriculum
- Subject teachers have a very important role in promoting a supportive and considerate environment in the school for students with special educational needs which emphasizes their strengths and boosts their capability to fully participate in the school community
- It is essential for subject teachers to train themselves in relation to the needs of the specific students in their class and to participate in the planning of appropriate targets for those students
- Subject teachers, in conjunction with Parents/Guardians, have an important role in monitoring the progress of students with special needs
- It is the subject teacher's responsibility to keep Parents/Guardians informed of the progress of students with special needs through parent-teacher meetings, school reports and also be available from time to time to meet with Parents/Guardians as required.
- Set learning goals for SEN students at a level appropriate to their ability.
- Link topics to life experiences or concrete examples.
- Set up buddy learning systems in class to enable more able-bodied students to work with students with SEN in collaborative groups or peer tutoring arrangements.

- Provide learning activities that will ensure that these students achieve their goals. Fostering self-esteem and self-confidence is very important to these students.

Assessment

Assessment should always have a practical aim or goal. In Coláiste Ghobnait assessment is used for the following purposes:

- Obtain information that will assist in appropriate planning, learning and teaching at an appropriate level.
- To assess students' progress.
- To set a baseline for student achievement in literacy and numeracy.
- To identify students who need learning support.
- To inform consultations with external agencies i.e. NEPS.
- With a classroom setting to ensure true diversity of ability.

Assessment Methods

a). Formal Assessment

Standardised tests give the SEN Team a general idea of the student's ability. It allows them to understand the student's level of ability compared to other students of the same age or class. All children who enrol in the school undertake the formal assessment.

b). Informal Assessment

Informal assessment methods:

- Classroom tests
- Informal teacher observation
- Assessment of written work
- Informal analysis of students' language and social development
- Students enrolling in the school are given an optional and non-standard Scholarship Examination. It consists of an examination in English, Irish and Mathematics. This helps to identify the level of students in these subjects. Helps identify students who may need extra help early. It also provides information, so that a variety of abilities can be arranged in the class groups.

c). Information Gathering

SENCO liaises with primary schools regarding all First Year students in relation to potential needs.

- Primary schools provide the results of standardized tests i.e. Drumcondra Tests, Reading, Spelling and Mathematics.
- Primary schools provide reports on each student to the secondary school.
- SENCO attends transition meetings with the primary school principal, class teacher, parent of the beginning student and in some cases, with the school's NEPS psychologist.
- The enrolment application form asks parents to inform the school of any special educational needs that may arise. This has nothing to do with the child's enrolment rights but is used to identify any potential needs as early as practicable.
- SENCO liaises with parents and relevant external agencies should any special educational needs be identified.

SEN Year Events Calendar

The following timetable will be implemented as far as possible each year to meet the needs of DES students in the school.

September

- The SEN Program will be edited to include First Year students
- At a staff meeting all teachers will be informed of new students with SEN who have started school

- Additional support hours will be allocated according to the identified needs of the students.
- Support plans will be drafted for the new academic school year and will include timetables for students with SEN and timetables for Special Education teachers.
- The SEN Register will be made available to all teachers on the Teacher Public folder.
- Local primary schools will be contacted, as required, in the translation process for First Year students entering the school.
- A Student Translation Profile will be requested from any other post-primary school from which students with SEN transferred to Coláiste Ghobnait.
- In conjunction with the school secretary, the COROS will complete the list of certificates for language exemption.
- The process of compiling Student Support Files for students with SEN will begin. To this end, the SEN Team will co-operate with the Subject Teachers.

October

- RACE (Reasonable Compromise Certificate Examinations) applications will be made for 6th Year students applying for RACE for the Leaving Certificate Examination (Deadline mid-October).
- The 10-10-10 in-house examinations will be reviewed and students who may be struggling and in need of support will be identified.
- Subject Teachers will be consulted regarding students in their classes who are experiencing difficulties.
- The process of compiling Student Support Files for students with SEN will continue.
- Open Day.
- Applications for RACE (Reasonable Compromise on Certificate Examinations) for students with SEN for Junior Certificate will be completed.

November

- Consultation with Subject Teachers will continue, feedback will be provided on perceived difficulties for students with SEN in their classes and strategies will be reviewed.
- Student Support Files will be reviewed and updated.
- Potential students applying for RACE (Reasonable Compromise on Certificate Examinations) will be tested for the Junior Cycle examinations.
- RACE (Reasonable Compromise Certificate Examinations) applications for Junior Cycle (Deadline mid-December) will be resolved. January:
- Student progress with SEN will be reviewed.
- Meeting with Year 1 Parents (settling into year 1 - See Whole School Guidance Plan).

February

- Application Form to be sent to Parents/Guardians of 6th Class.
- Meetings will be arranged with parents of First Year SEN students starting next school year.

March

- Mock exam results will be reviewed.
- A list will be made of students who require further information and may have SEN.
- Primary schools will be contacted alternately. students with identified needs based on their application forms - Student Transfer Profile / Translation Meetings.
- Required for essential resources (technology, etc.)
- A new allocation of Special Needs Assistants will be applied for if required.
- A literacy and numeracy test will be conducted (NGRT2, WRAT4 in Spelling and Mathematics).
- The Special Needs Co-ordinator will arrange a visit for sixth class pupils. During this visit they will be attending a number of classes.

April

- Resource materials will be explored: List all Resource materials of the Special Education Team.
- Test materials will be identified, located and ordered and any other required Resource materials.
- Tests 10-10-10 will be reviewed.
- Letter to the Primary School seeking the Education Passport and STEN results.

May

- The SEN program will be compiled - a list of SEN students and details of their requirements - including First Year students starting the following school year.
- Meeting with Parents.

The Role of the Parent/Guardian

- The school recognises the role of Parents/Guardians in developing and implementing the Policy
- Coláiste Ghobnait welcomes any Parent/Guardian who are concerned about their son/daughter. See diagram.

Cá dtéann tú, má tá fadhb/imní/ceist agat/Where do you go if you have a problem/you are worried/you have a question:

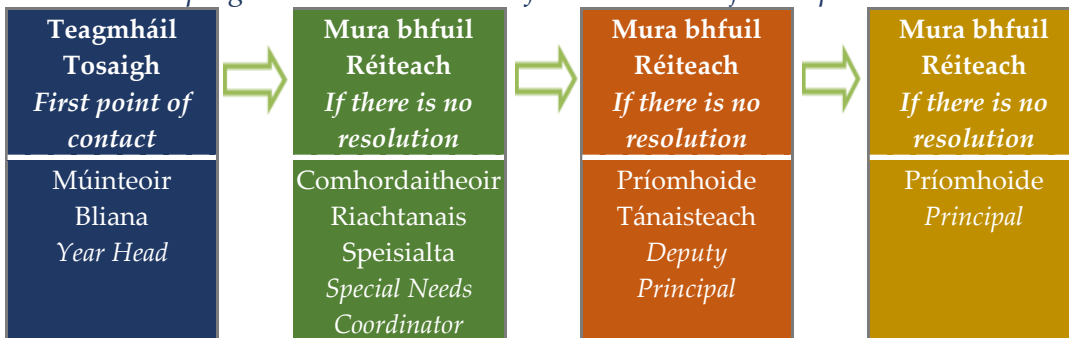
- Dul chun cinn **acadúil** in **ábhar áirithe** nó cur chuige teagaisc agus foghlama san ábhar sin/*Academic progression in certain subjects or the approach to teaching and learning in that subject:*

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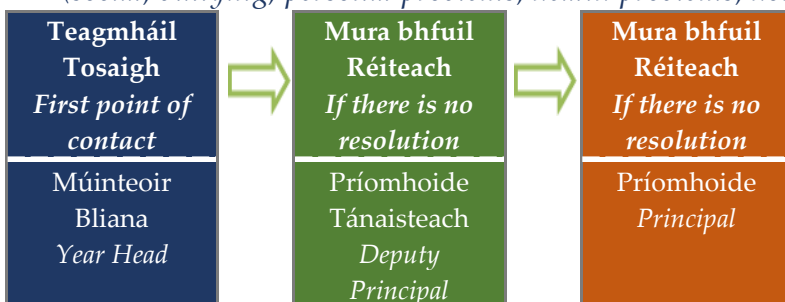
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- Dul chun cinn **acadúil go ginearálta**, nach mbaineann le hábhair amháin ar leith/*General academic progression that is not confined to one subject in particular:*



- Dul chun cinn go ginearálta, maidir le gnéithe seachas gnéithe acadúla (sóisialta, bulaíocht, fadhb phearsanta, fadhb sláinte, fadhb bhaile)/*General progression regarding non-academic aspects (social, bullying, personal problems, health problems, home problems):*



- We expect Parents/Guardians to support the school with the implementation of the Continuum of Support

- To inform the school of any problem students have
- That the student's continuum of support file is in place and the Parent's/Guardian's support will be extremely important in this process
- This is the file that will be used as a planning template for any student experiencing learning needs
- The co-operation of the Parents/Guardians will always be encouraged in Coláiste Ghobnait
- The family are the main educators, therefore the Parents/Guardians have a very important role in identifying, supporting and achieving their son's/daughter's targets
- When completing the entrance form for registration in Coláiste Ghobnait Parents/Guardians are asked to forward any information that would assist in meeting the learning needs of their son/daughter
- A Parent/Teacher meeting will take place twice a year where the subject teacher and parent can discuss the student's progress
- Meetings will be organised and together the subject teacher and Parent/Guardian will fill out a template of the Continuum of Support. The content of this file will be inputted by the subject teacher and the Parent/Guardian. A review date will have to be inserted on the template - in this case, the subject teacher is the expert where it relates to the subject, and the Parent/Guardian are best placed in knowing the student and their needs. Therefore, the Parent/Guardian and the subject teacher will decide and agree on the review date
- The partnership between subject teacher and Parent/Guardian is very important therefore in ensuring your son/daughter achieve their full potential in their learning challenges.

Parents

Parents can make a significant contribution to their children's learning. Coláiste Ghobnait encourages open communication between parents and teachers while their children are attending school. Parents can find out about the work of the school and support the work in the following ways:

- Provide the school with all relevant information and reports on their children's learning difficulties, learning needs and strengths and any other concerns they may have about them. This information will help the school begin an inclusive education plan for its children. It is very important to make the documents available in order to have a collaborative approach in setting out a learning plan for the student.
- Parents play an important role in the creation and implementation of their children's Student Support File.
- Parents are welcome to have open communication with the school at any time if they have concerns about their child's education.
- Parents help the school by keeping teachers informed of their child's progress or any difficulties they may have.
- Parents can support the work of the school. They can provide a home environment, with learning and engagement opportunities with the child in the following ways:
 - o Paired Reading;
 - o Homework help;
 - o Using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) if available, to support English and Mathematics.
 - o Implementing home-based activities outlined in the Student Support File and discussing the findings and progress with the student's teachers.
- It is very important that parents talk positively about school and schoolwork.
 - o Parents should keep the school informed of learning progress they notice in their children. They should tell the school about any learning difficulties they notice at home with their child. If, following a diagnostic assessment, the child is thought to require additional support, the parent should meet with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to discuss:
 - o Assessment Results
 - o The Learning Goals set for the student

- o How these goals can be supported at home.
- If goals are achieved and a decision is made not to continue with learning support, parents need to meet with the child's teachers. There should then be a discussion about how the child's future learning needs can continue to be met and how these needs can be met at school and at home.
- If it is decided to continue with the additional support for another term, parents must meet with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to discuss revised goals and how they can help at home to achieve and implement these goals.

The Student's Role:

Cá dtéann tú, má tá fadhb/imní/ceist agat/Where do you go if you have a problem/you are worried/you have a question:

- Dul chun cinn **acadúil** in **ábhar áirithe** nó cur chuige teagaisc agus foghlama san ábhar sin/*Academic progression in certain subjects or the approach to teaching and learning in that subject:*

Cá dtéann tú, má tá fadhb/imní/ceist agat/Where do you go if you have a problem/ you are worried/you have a question:

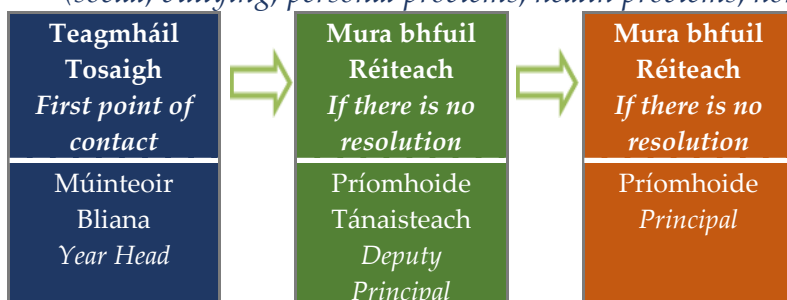
- Dul chun cinn **acadúil** in **ábhar áirithe** nó cur chuige teagaisc agus foghlama san ábhar sin/*Academic progression in certain subjects or the approach to teaching and learning in that subject:*



- Dul chun cinn **acadúil go ginearálta**, nach mbaineann le hábhair amháin ar leith/*General academic progression that is not confined to one subject in particular:*



- Dul chun cinn go ginearálta, maidir le gnéithe seachas gnéithe acadúla (sóisialta, bulaíocht, fadhb phearsanta, fadhb sláinte, fadhb bhaile)/*General progression regarding non-academic aspects (social, bullying, personal problems, health problems, home problems):*



- We expect every student to comply with the Special Needs Policy
- Coláiste Ghobnait believes that the best learning outcomes are achieved when students take ownership of, and responsibility for, their own learning
- We hope they will be interested in school work and will express their views in a positive and respectful manner
- That they co-operate with the subject teacher when the Student's Continuum of Support File is being implemented
- The subject teacher gives students an opportunity to participate in skill inspections and in discussions about their disability. Students in the Senior Cycle especially are encouraged to adopt a proactive and independent approach to their academic learning.

Students

Students receiving additional support should:

- Have a positive attitude towards participation in their learning.
- Be aware of their learning goals and be active in setting those goals.
- Participate in the selection of material relevant to the achievement of these goals.
- Participate fully in all assessments.
- "Own" the skills and strategies taught as part of the additional support they receive and learn to apply these to their own learning.

Transition from Primary School

Before the students start in Coláiste Ghobnait the Special Educational Needs Coordinator contacts the primary schools. The school sees this contact as an important step in accurately identifying those students with special educational needs and in providing for their ongoing care.

Where possible, prior to their move to Coláiste Ghobnait, visits are organised for students with special educational needs.

The information received from the Primary Schools and from parents, as well as results of Cognitive Ability tests, helps the school to identify those students who might need additional support at Post-Primary level.

Reasonable Accommodations

Applications will be made for students in compliance with the guidelines of the State Examinations Commission.

Staff

The SEN Team includes the school Principal, Deputy Principal, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), Learning Support Teachers, Resource Teachers and Special Needs Assistants. The Career Guidance Counsellor has a role in working with the SEN Team. SENCO, under the direction of the Principal, is responsible for managing the provision of support for students with SEN. He / she is responsible for organizing and monitoring the provision of such support.

Staff Meetings

There will be a staff meeting at the beginning of each school year to keep staff informed of all SEN students starting in the school and to make suggestions on how SEN students prefer to be as involved as possible. possible in classes.

PART 2:

The Role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA)

Special Needs Assistants are made available to post primary schools to help named students with special educational needs. Special Needs Assistants are recruited to help the school provide the relevant non-teaching services for students with assessed special needs.

The Principal needs to give special needs assistants clear guidelines and support in relation to the duties they will have to fulfil. Regular meetings between the Principal/Deputy Principal and Special Needs Assistants are good opportunities to discuss issues and deal with concerns.

They should work closely with teachers so as to help students with special educational needs, for example, with their personal care, mobility support or supervision of practical activities or recreation.

Special Needs Assistants generally do their work in the school building. It could happen, from time to time, though that students with special educational needs would have to attend other centres outside the school and the help of a special needs assistant would be required to help them in this centre and to travel there with them and back.

Coláiste Ghobnait expects special needs assistants to keep all of the school's business as well as their own work in the school strictly confidential.

The Special Needs Assistant provides care support to named students who have special educational needs. They make a valuable contribution to the school's ability in providing these students with an all-encompassing education.

The Special Needs Assistant has an important role in relation to the student's health and safety and also their social, emotional and educational development. It is important that, while not creating a dependency culture, the Special Needs Assistant supports the student's participation in school life.

The duties of Special Needs Assistants involve non-teaching tasks, such as:

- Helping students to function on school trips
- Giving special help, as required, to students who have special difficulties, for example, helping students who have special needs involving typing, writing or using other equipment
- Helping with their clothes, feeding, using the toilet and general health and being alert to the student's health and safety needs
- Helping with exams (if applicable)
- Helping teachers supervise students during assembly, recreation and when moving from one classroom to another
- Providing non-teaching general help to the subject teacher, under the supervision of the Principal/Deputy Principal. Special Needs Assistants are not permitted to function as substitute teachers or temporary teachers. It is not allowed, under any circumstances, to leave them in charge of a class on their own
- Participating, where appropriate, in school development planning and co-operating with any such policy or practice changes arising from the school development process
- Other relevant duties which will be determined according to the students and the school's needs
- Helping during trips outside of school - walks, exams and other such events
- Preparing work spaces and classrooms and keeping them tidy
- Making plans for activities
- Other duties appropriate to the job, as directed by the principal, when special needs students are absent or when urgent business arises
- Supporting the student and promoting independence
- Co-operating with the teacher

- Support with organising files
- Helping with subject preparation
- Providing support and being alert
- Helping students to remain focused, follow classroom procedures and interact appropriately
- Helping students to develop their self-confidence and independence
- Promoting the importance of personal health
- Being alert to early signs of bullying
- Helping the student to remain focused and directing them to concentrate on their work so they have a better opportunity to learn. This could be done by explaining a point quietly and repeating the teacher's instructions. The SNA helps with note-taking for the student while the teacher is talking
- Encouraging good attendance and punctuality
- Some students find it easier to talk to a Special Needs Assistant and the Assistant might be the first to hear of bullying. All such information should be taken seriously and immediately notified to the Principal.

Staff Meetings

- Special Needs Assistants could be required to attend Staff Meetings when issues of relevance to their own particular work are up for discussion.

Timetables and hours of work

- At the start of the year the Principal will provide Special Needs Assistants with a timetable
- The Department of Education and Skills guidelines on working hours will be followed and adhered to
- When teaching staff are attending in-service courses, Special Needs Assistants will report for work as usual. They will be assigned duties in helping with the organising of the absent teachers' classrooms, i.e. preparation of classroom displays, organisation of classroom libraries, preparation of teaching equipment, photocopying etc.

The Role of the Subject Teacher and the SNA in the classroom

- It is the teacher's duty to ensure that the Special Needs Assistant is clear about where help is needed. Planning together is essential
- It is also the teacher's duty to support the role the Special Needs Assistant and show that they are a valuable asset in Coláiste Ghobnait
- An atmosphere of mutual understanding and mutual respect should be fostered
- Special Needs Assistants who work with students with a physical disability will support these students both inside and outside the classroom as the need arises. It might involve keeping a close eye on the student in the play area or helping them to enter or exit the school.

Part 3:

Teaching Individual Students

These procedures will apply when a teacher is in class teaching an individual student:

- The classroom door shall remain open during class
- For the duration of the class there will be a desk between the teacher and the student
- If the school environment is noisy the door may be closed on confirmation of the door having a glass panel
- Sometimes a teacher might be steering and helping the student's/students learning in conjunction with their year-group, depending on the learning needs of the student and on classroom inclusion.

Student Support File

The school can keep a record of the student's course through the Continuum of Support with the Student Support File. The student's course can be followed from the beginning of the support process and thereafter, if required, to the level of School Support (for some students) and to the level of School Support Plus (for a small number of students).

- The Student Support File allows the school to record progress and needs over time.
- The Student Support File ensures continuity of support for the student, including the transition from primary to post-primary school
- The Student Support File can encourage parental involvement and co-operation in student learning.
- The Student Support File assists schools in providing an appropriate level of support for students, commensurate with their level of need.
- The Student Support File holds all the information on student support together: information gathered, plans, interventions, consultations and reviews

CONTINUATION OF SUPPORT OF STUDENTS FILE	
NAME OF STUDENT	
DATE OF BIRTH	
SCHOOL	
DATE OF OPENING OF FILE	
DATE OF CLOSING OF FILE	

Level 1 Support: Support for All

If a student has difficulties (learning difficulties, behavioural difficulties, organisational difficulties, motivational difficulties etc.), the class teacher will support that student to the best of his / her ability through differentiation etc. If this does not work, the teacher will then speak to the Head of Year. The Head of Year will assess the situation and communicate with the home or arrange for the home to be contacted. The Head of Year will then return to the class teacher (s) with any additional feedback. At this point the class teacher will keep a written record of any action (and dates) or intervention implemented within the Student Support File. In addition, the class teacher will compile a Level 1 Support Plan for that student. If the student continues to experience difficulties after a certain period of time (which has been discussed and agreed with the Head of Year) the Head of Year will refer the matter to the Pastoral Care Committee for consideration for level 2 support.

Level 2: Support for Some Students

The Pastoral Care Committee will consider any case referred to it and refer the case to one of the following:

- The Careers Teacher
- The Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- The principal

Whichever of the above is given to him / her the case will further assess the case and gather more information on the student. They will then keep a written record of the measures implemented and compile a level 2 support plan for that student. This plan will be implemented by all student teachers and support staff. This plan will be monitored by the Pastoral Care Committee.

Level 3: Support for a Small Number of Students

After a period of time set with the nominated contact from the Pastoral Care Committee, if the student is still experiencing difficulties, the contact may refer the matter to the Pastoral Care Committee for the commencement of Level 3 Support. The Pastoral Care Committee may decide to seek the advice of an external expert (i.e. Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, CAHMS, NEPS etc.). This may also involve a more comprehensive assessment, with parental consent. Under the guidance of the expert and again with parental consent, the designated contact will compile a level 3 support plan, keep a written record in the Student Support File of the actions taken and monitor the measures applied.

Implementation of the Continuum of Support in Coláiste Ghobnait

The Student's Continuum of Support File: Classroom Support

Identifying Needs:

- Classroom Support is the most common and typically the first response to emerging needs and it's the first response in Coláiste Ghobnait
- This step applies to the subject teacher. It is the subject teacher's duty to identify the academic, social and emotional challenges and needs so that they may be responded to. The subject teacher needs to complete a classroom support checklist and have it signed by the Parent. A copy of the **classroom support checklist (Appendix 1)** has to go to the school's Special Needs Co-Ordinator to be inserted in the Continuum of Support File
- Once the subject teacher has identified the challenges they will be aware of the specific needs of the student and know that they, the subject teacher, must implement a **classroom support plan (Appendix 2)**. A Classroom Support Plan is devised and the class teacher and the Parents/Guardians sign this plan. The Plan is implemented for a pre-set period of time.
- There are four guiding principles that need to be addressed when setting out students' targets. Targets need to be:
 - Linked to assessment
 - Strengths based
 - Linked to interventions
 - Developed collaboratively
- A copy of the Classroom Support Plan, signed by the class teacher and Parents/Guardians, has to be sent to the Principal/Deputy Principal and it is the responsibility of the Special Needs Co-Ordinator/Principal/Deputy Principal to save the documents in the Student Support file and this will then help the school track the student's needs and progress over a period of time
- All concerns are documented and the student's strengths and interests are also noted. At this stage of the process information collected by the teacher when completing the Classroom Support Checklist can be availed of
- Recommendations and ideas in relation to strategies/interventions are discussed to target the student's needs in a classroom context
- The plan is reviewed on a continuous basis. A review date is to be inserted in the template - in this case, the subject teacher is the expert when it involves the subject and the Parent/Guardian is in the best position to know the student and their needs. Therefore, the Parent/Guardian and the subject teacher will decide and agree on the review date.

The Student's Continuum of Support File: School Support

In a lot of cases classroom support is not enough to fully meet the needs of a small number of school students.

In those instances, where classroom support is not sufficient, a **School Support Checklist (Appendix 3)** has to be completed. It is the class teacher and the parents/guardians that decide to initiate a School Support Plan when, following a review, there is evidence of no progress.

The class teacher and the parents/guardians discuss concerns, these are recorded and they also note the student's strengths and interests using the **School Support Plan (Appendix 4)**.

A copy of the school support plan has to go to the school Principal/Deputy Principal so it can be inserted into the Continuum of Support File.

At this point the subject/resource teacher needs to be involved in the problem solving process.

The aim of the School Support Plan is to systematically collect information about the student. This information includes diagnostic assessment and learning observation as well as observing behavioural/emotional issues and/or social skills. At this stage of the process information collected when completing the School Support Checklist can be availed of.

The School Support Plan is drafted by the class teacher and the Parents/Guardians and signed by them. It is implemented for a pre-set period of time. The plan is **reviewed** regularly. **Appendix 5** needs to be completed when reviewing the School Support Plan.

The Student's Continuum of Support File: School Support Plus

School Support Plus is initiated if there is agreement, when reviewing the School Support Plan, that the student is not making enough progress.

The School Support Plus Plan/Individual Education Plan gives a detailed account of the needs of the student and of the interventions needed at this support level and progress monitoring takes place through the Plan. The information in the Student's Continuum of Support File is important in relation to the reviews of achievements to date and this information should be included in the School Support Plus Plan/IEP.

The School Support Plus Plan, as well as the reports from different professionals, consultation records and other relevant documents, will add to the information already contained in the Student's Continuum of Support File and this allows the school to track the student's needs and progress over a period of time.

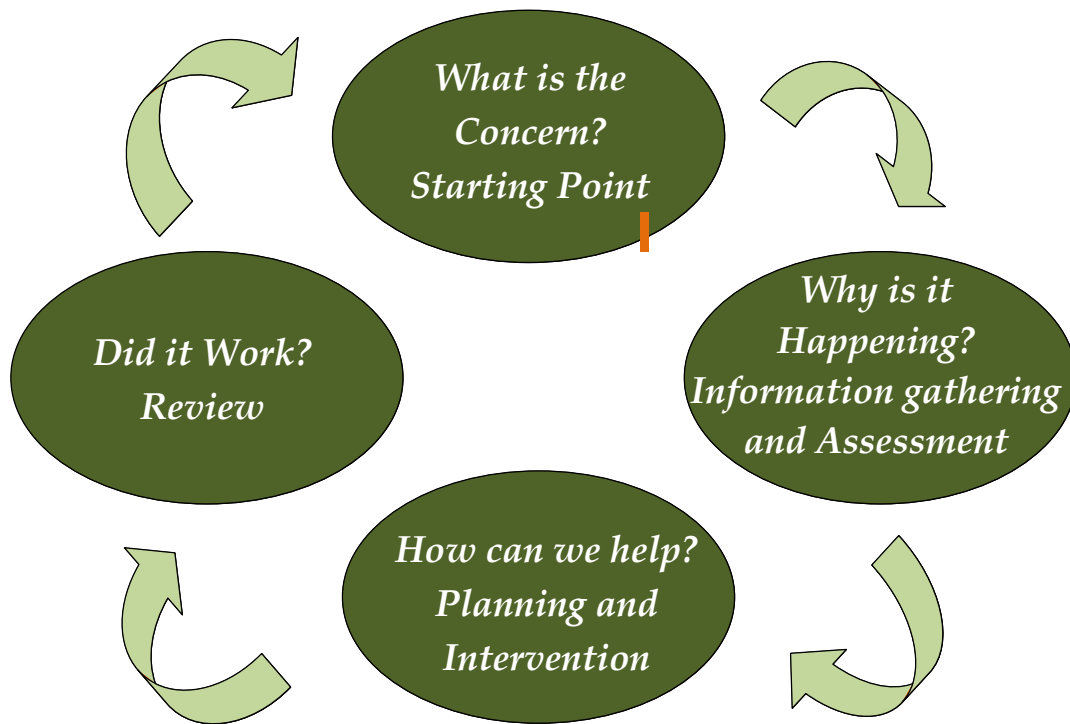
At this point, professionals and external support services usually participate in the process and it involves a detailed focus on solving problems so as to help the student. Provision at the School Support Plus level can be expected to focus on those students who have the greatest needs.

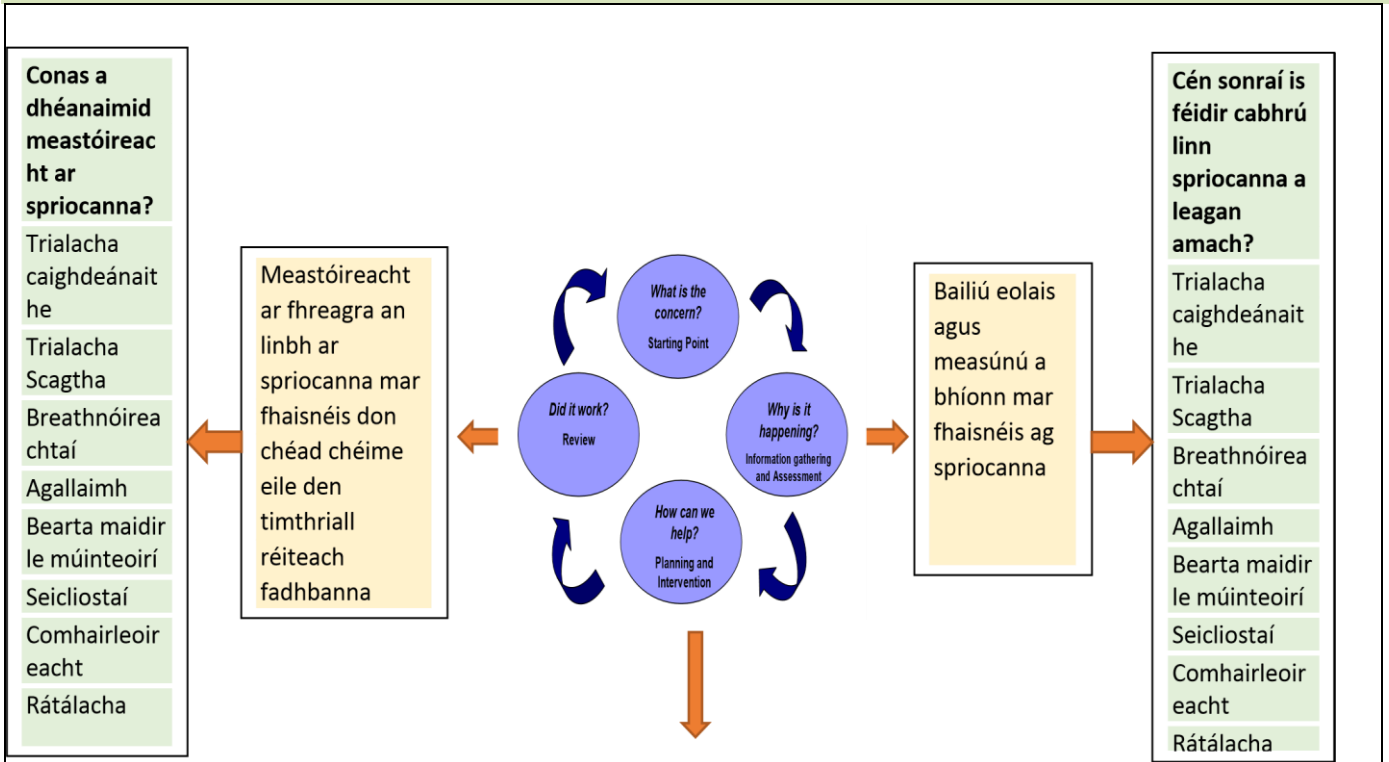
Steps:

1. The subject teacher and the Parent/Guardian will have to complete a Planning Page for the Individual Education Plan (**Appendix 6**) and forward it to school management
2. School management will have to complete an Individual Education Plan (**Appendix 7**)
3. School management will have to complete a Review of the Individual Education Plan (**Appendix 8**).

The Continuum of Support - Process

The method of contemplation and working method applied at each level of the Continuum of Support is based on a problem solving process and that process is demonstrated as follows:





Targets are written as desired skills which are:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time Limited

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

John will recognise the first 50 Dolch words accurately with 80% accuracy
Seán will say a full sentence that consists of a subject, verb and objectives
Anne will use her PECS to request a break from activities

Classroom Support Checklist (Appendix 1)

Class	Age:	Class	Today's date:
General information	Checked Yes/No	Comments	
1. Parents Consulted			
2. Information collected previously from school/play school			
3. Hearing			
4. Vision			
5. Medical Needs			
6. Basic Needs Checklist completed			
7. Assessment/screening test done			
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning			
9. Observation of Behaviour			
10. Conversation/discussion with student			
11. Differentiation Teaching applied in class?			
12. Learning Environment Adapted?			
13. Yard/school environments adapted?			
14. Informal consultation with external professionals			
Action Needed?			
Agreement with parents and relevant staff members in relation to an action plan			
Signed by: Parents: _____ Teacher(s): _____			

Appendix 2

Classroom Support Plan/Review of the Plan (Appendix 2)							
Name	Age:	Year:	Today's date:				
Student Strengths/Areas where progress can be seen							
The existing Concerns/that are still there							
Possible reasons for concerns (We think it's happening because...):							
The goals we would like to achieve:							
<u>The strategies to be used:</u> <u>In the Resource classes (Present Plan)</u>							
Signed by: Parents: _____ Teacher(s): _____							
Review date and outcomes (goals achieved/not achieved)							
Outcome of the Review:							
New Classroom Support Plan to be agreed/	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom Support Plan no longer required	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Classroom Support Plan to be set up	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek consultation with another professional for example NEPS psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>

School Support Checklist (Appendix 3)

Name	Age:	Class	Date:
General information	Checked Yes/No	Comments	
1. Parents consulted			
2. Information collected previously from school/play school			
5. Hearing			
6. Vision			
7. Medical Needs			
8. Basic Needs Checklist completed			
9. Assessment/screening tests done			
10. Observation of learning style/approach to learning			
11. Observation of Behaviour			
12. Conversations/discussions with the student			
13. Differentiation Teaching applied in class?			
14. Learning Environment adapted?			
15. Yard/school environments adapted?			
16. Informal(or formal) consultation/advice with external professionals			
17. Advice from learning support teacher or other members of school staff ?			
18. Other interventions applied in the school?			
Action Needed?			

School Support Plan (Appendix 4)

Student's Name	Age:	Start Date:
Co-Ordinating Teacher:	Class	Review date:
Student's Strengths & Interests		
Main Concerns:		
Possible reasons for concerns: <i>(Important References: 'Special Educational Needs – Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers Pages 18-21), Behaviour, Emotional and Social Problems: Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers Pages 80-108)</i>		
The goals we would like to achieve:		
The strategies to be used: <i>(Special Educational Needs – Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers, Pages 23, Behaviour, Emotional and Social Problems – Continuum of Support, Pages 111-139)</i>		
Who will be involved and resources needed		
Signed by: Parents: _____		
Teacher(s): _____		

Review of School Support Plan (Appendix 5)

Student's Name	Age:	Class					
Those present at the Review:		Review Date:					
Goals achieved and reason they were successful:							
Goals not achieved and the reason they were not successful:							
What are the student's current needs?							
Recommended Actions – <i>what</i> they are, <i>who</i> will execute them, <i>how</i> and <i>when</i> :							
Student's Statements/Opinions:							
Parents/Guardians Opinions:							
Signed by: Parent(s): _____							
Teacher(s): _____							
Outcome of the Review:							
New Classroom Support Plan to be agreed/	<input type="checkbox"/>	Return to the Classroom Support Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Classroom Support Plus Process to be set up	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek consultation with another professional for example NEPS psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>

School Support Plus (*Appendix 6*) Planning Sheet for the Individual Education Plan

Name	Age:	Class	Date:
Progress to Date/Strengths: The student's ability, skills and talents and how strong they are			
Areas for improvement/presenting difficulties: The special needs that exist and the way these needs affect the student's progress			
The student's present level of educational performance			
Summary of the Student's Special Educational Needs			
Provision of Special Education: The special education services and the support services to be provided for the student			
Further Information			
Signed by: Parent(s): _____			
Teacher(s): _____			
Outcome of the Review:			

School Support Plus – Individual Education Plan (IEP) *(Appendix 7)*

Student's Name	Age:	Start Date:
The Co-Ordinating Teacher:	Class	Review date:
Priorities/Long Term Goals:		
Short-term Goals and Strategies:		
Goal 1:	Strategies:	
Goal 2:	Strategies:	
Goal 3:	Strategies:	
Goal 4:	Strategies:	
Signed by: Parent(s): _____		
Teacher(s): _____		

School Support Plus – Review of Individual Education Plan (IEP) (Appendix 8)

Student's Name	Age:	Class
Present for the Review:		Review date:
Progress/Strengths The student's ability, skills and talents and how strong they are		
Areas for improvement/presenting difficulties: The special needs that exist and the way these needs affect the student's progress		
The student's present level of educational performance		
Summary of the Student's Special Educational Needs		
Provision of Special Education: The special education services and support services to be provided for the student		
More Information		
Signed by: Parent(s): _____		
Teacher(s): _____		
Outcome of the Review:		

Classroom Support Plan/Review of the Plan (Appendix 9)

Name	Age:	Class:	Today's date:				
The Student's Strengths/Areas where progress can be seen							
The Concerns that Exist/that are still there?							
Possible reasons (We think it's happening because...): <i>(Important References: 'Special Educational Needs – Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers (Pages 2 - 16), Behavioural, Emotional and Social Problems: Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 64-69))</i>							
The targets we would like to achieve:							
<u>The strategies to be used:</u> (Special Educational Needs – Continuum of Support, Guidelines for Teachers page 14, Behavioural, Emotional and Social Problems – Continuum of Support, pages 110-122)							
Signed by: Parents: _____ Teacher(s): _____							
Review date and outcomes (targets achieved/not achieved)							
Outcome of the Review:							
New Classroom Support Plan to be agreed/jointly agreed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom Support Plan no longer required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Classroom Support Plan to be set up	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek consultation from a professional, for example, a NEPS psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<p>Whole school and Classroom (Support for All)</p>	<p>In the Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools you will find a range of ideas and resources that will help to identify interventions and monitor results. The subject teacher examines how to differentiate the learning programme effectively so as to provide for the needs of each student in the class.</p> <p>Students requiring additional support can be identified through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intake Screening • Information collected from primary schools, including the Student’s Passport • Teacher Observation • Teacher Assessment • Learning Environment Checklist • Student Support Team Involvement • Standardized tests of Literacy/Numeracy • Student Consultation • Parental Consultation <p>When students have continuous significant problems, despite whole school interventions, (such as differentiation teaching, mentoring programme or a social skills group) School Support will be initiated (for some students).</p>
<p>School Support (for some students)</p>	<p>At this level a Support Plan is formulated based on the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation records • Measures/Assessments designed by the teacher • Parent/Student interview • Learning Environment Checklist • Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy • Formal observation of behaviour including Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence (ABC) charts – frequency measures • Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>Support at this level can take various forms, for example: staff teaching, small group teaching or individual teaching, peer mentoring, membership in social skills group, behaviour rewards and consequence systems. A Support Plan is implemented for an agreed period of time and is reviewed.</p>
<p>School Support Plus (for a few students)</p>	<p>At this level, the subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with external agencies as required, adopt a more detailed and systematic approach for collecting and assessing information. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools which involve the teacher’s observation, interview with the student, cognitive ability and assessment of social, emotional and behavioural performance as needed.</p> <p>Details generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and to provide a baseline with which to measure progress.</p> <p>Usually a Support Plan at this level is more detailed and more tailored and involves longer term planning and consultation.</p>

The Student's Continuum of Support File: Guidelines

Why should the Student's Continuum of Support File be used?

- The Student's Continuum of Support File allows the school, through the Continuum of Support, to **track the student's pathway** – from the beginning of the Classroom Support process and onwards if necessary, as far as School Support and School Support Plus levels
- The Student's Continuum of Support File allows the school to keep a **record of the student's progress and their needs over a period of time**
- The Student's Continuum of Support File ensures **continuous support** for the student
- The Student's Continuum of Support File could **encourage the parent's collaboration and participation in the student's learning**
- The Student's File helps schools to **provide appropriate support for students** at a level consistent with their needs.

The Student's Continuum of Support File: Classroom Support

Classroom Support is the most common response to emerging needs and usually the first step undertaken. When the teacher and the parents/guardians communicate a student's learning or social development concerns to one another this is the **starting point** of the Classroom Support process.

By this time some classroom interventions have probably already been tried – such as differentiation teaching, modifications in the learning environment or teaching style. Concerns still exist though in relation to:

the student's skills and/or behaviour as it's clear these are below the usual range expected for their age and the student's learning or socialising is affected as a result

how the student is progressing as a result of the simple interventions already tried in class

As these concerns exist it's understood that the student has specific needs that require a Classroom Support Plan.

All concerns are documented and the student's strengths and interests are noted. At this stage of the process the information collected by the teacher when completing the Classroom Support Checklist can be availed of.

Recommendations and opinions in relation to **strategies/interventions** are discussed to target the student's needs in a classroom context.

A Classroom Support Plan is devised and the class teacher and the Parents/Guardians sign this plan. The Plan is implemented over a pre-set period of time.

The plan is reviewed on a continuous basis.

The Classroom Support Plan is kept in the **Student's Continuum of Support File** – a specific file for that particular student – as well as the reviews, checklists and other relevant documents (such as a record or report of joint consultation with a NEPS psychologist). Through this process the school can track the student's needs and progress over a period of time.

Master copies of some of these documents can be downloaded from <http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html>, from the file '**Classroom Support Documents**'.

For the most part, student's primary needs can be catered for through interventions at classroom level. However, a small minority of students have more significant problems, which are identified once they start school. In those cases, a School Support Plan or a School Support Plan Plus would be more appropriate as a first step. This would mostly apply to newcomer students but it could also apply to a student who experienced an event which impacts significantly on them in school.

The following NEPS publications offer further guidance in relation to completing the Classroom Support Plan, hard copies are available in the school or can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Skills website: (<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html>).

- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 11-19)
- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers (Pages 2-17)
- Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties: Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers, Pages 38-42; 65-70)

The Student's Continuum of Support File: School Support

Even though interventions at Classroom Support level are sufficient as a first step to cater for the needs of the majority of the school's students it is not sufficient to meet the special educational needs of some students. In those cases a **School Support Plan** is required. Usually the class teacher and the parents (or guardians), in collaboration with the school's learning support teacher(s), make the decision to initiate a School Support Plan.

The class teacher and the parents and support teacher **discuss** concerns, **record** them and also note the student's strengths and interests.

At this point both the class teacher and the learning/resource support teacher need to be involved in the problem solving process.

The aim of the School Support Plan is to systematically collect information about the student. This information includes diagnostic assessment and learning observation as well as observation of behavioural/emotional issues and/or social skills. At this stage of the process the information collected when completing the School Support Checklist can be availed of. The class teacher, support teacher(s) and the parents or guardians draft the School Support Plan/ Individual Pupil Learning Profile and sign it. It is implemented for a pre-set period of time. The plan is reviewed regularly.

The School Support Plan is kept in the **Student's Continuum of Support File** – a specific file for that particular student – as well as the reviews, checklists and other relevant documents (such as a record or report of consultation with a NEPS psychologist). This additional information adds to the information

already in the File which allows the school to track the student's needs and progress over a period of time. Master copies of some of these documents can be downloaded from:

<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html> in the file called '**School Support Documents**'.

The following NEPS publications offer further guidance in relation to completing the School Support Plan, hard copies are available in the school or can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Skills website:

(<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html>).

- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 21-30)
- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers (Pages 18-23)
- Behavioural, Emotional and Social Problems: Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 43-49; 71-74)

The Student's Continuum of Support: School Support Plus

School Support Plus is introduced if it is agreed, when reviewing the School Support Plan, that the student is not making enough progress. At this point professionals and external support services usually participate in the process and it involves a detailed focus on solving the problem involved, so as to help the student. The provision at the School Support Plus level would be expected to focus on those students with the greatest needs.

The School Support Plus Plan/Individual Education Plan gives a detailed account of the needs of the student and of the interventions needed at this support level and progress monitoring is done through the Plan. The information in the Student's Continuum of Support File is important in relation to the reviews of achievements to date and this information should be included in the School Support Plan Plus/IEP.

The School Support Plus Plan, as well as the reports from different professionals, the consultation records and other relevant documents builds on the information already available in the **Student's Continuum of Support File**, and this allows the school to track the student's needs and progress over a period of time.

Master copies of the relevant documents can be downloaded from:

<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html> in the file 'School Support Plus Documents'.

The following NEPS publications offer further guidance in relation to completing the School Support Plus Plan, hard copies are available in the school or can be downloaded from the Department of Education and Skills website:

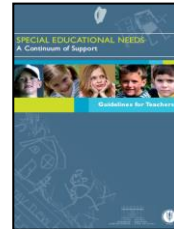
(<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Educational-Psychologist-NEPS-/NEPS-Model-of-Service.html>).

- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 32-46)
- Special Educational Needs: Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers (Pages 24-25)
- Behavioural, Emotional and Social Problems: Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers (Pages 50-62 and pages 80-139)

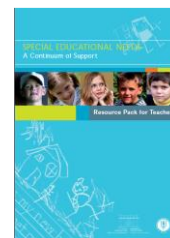
In the Guidelines for Individual Education Plans issued by NCSE (www.ncse.ie) best practice examples are given in relation to the planning and review approach at School Support Plus level.

D'fhéadfaí leas a bhaint as na foilsiúcháin seo a leanas nuair a théann an scoil i mbun Chomhad an Scoláire um Leanúntas Tacaíochta a ullmhú i dtaca le haon scoláire:

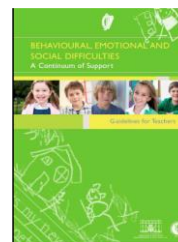
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:
Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
Continuum of Support: Resource Package for Teachers



Behavioural, Emotional and Social Problems
Continuum of Support: Guidelines for Teachers



Guidelines for the Individual Education Plan Process
(www.ncse.ie).

