

# Scoil Ursula

## Special Educational Needs Policy

### ■ Introductory Statement

Scoil Ursula is a Co-Educational Mainstream National School located in Sligo town. Under the new Model for Allocating Special Education Teachers to schools, Scoil Ursula has 5 full time teachers in house and part time teacher /shared with Gaelscoil Cnoc an Ré. The SET Team met via Zoom in May, 2020 to update this policy. It is reviewed annually within S.E.N. to update annual changes of resources and personnel. It was adapted to the current format in accordance with the publication *Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support* which was circulated to all schools in 2007. It was reviewed and redrafted in 2020. An online consultation was undertaken in June 2020 and the policy was ratified by the Board of Management board in October, 2020.

### ■ Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

It is our wish to provide a learning environment, which is most conducive to the academic, social, physical, psychological and moral development of the children under our care. To this end three general aims permeate our educational processes:

- (1) To enable the children to live full lives as children.
- (2) to equip them to avail themselves of further education.
- (3) to prepare them to live full and useful lives as adults.

In the light of these aims our Special Needs Policy emphasises the need to facilitate the full development of children with diverse talents and abilities. Our philosophy incorporates the tenet that the challenge in teaching is not so much to provide for the needs of children, who have the capacity to learn without our intervention. The challenge in teaching is to bring learning to those who cannot succeed without us.

Caring, sharing, and giving. We hope that all who pass through our gates will bring that spirit with them, that they will continue to identify with their school and keep intact that marvellous spirit of belonging. The central aim is the formation of the human person with respect to his/her spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually, aesthetically and socially.

### ■ Guiding Principles:

- All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community

- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support

### ■ Aims of SEN Support

1. To support the inclusion of SEN pupils in primary schools.
2. To ensure that the Staged Approach/NEPS Continuum of Support is implemented.
3. To “optimize the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school.” (Learning Support Guidelines: pg. 15). This support may be provided by the Class Teacher and / or the Support Team (Appendix 1: The Staged Approach, described in Circular 02/05).
4. To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English or /and Mathematics.
5. To enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum.
6. To encourage differentiation in the classroom.
7. To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
8. To support attainment and behavioural, social and emotional functioning.
9. To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
10. To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support pupils.
11. To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent /reduce difficulties in learning.
12. To guard the self-esteem and self-image of the learner.

## ■ Inclusion

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

## ■ Three principles for inclusion

### Setting Suitable Learning Challenges

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. In order to do this, Scoil Ursula will use the 'Continuum of Support Process' as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils. Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at a pupil's needs in context, and to use our resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports).

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

#### **Classroom Support**

The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.

A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.

This is informed by:

- Parental consultation
- Teacher observation records
- Teacher-designed tasks/assessments
- Standardised Test results
- Basic needs checklist
- Learning environment checklist
- Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist
- In class Literacy and numeracy tests

A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

<p><b>School Support</b></p>	<p>At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed tasks/assessments</li> <li>• Basic needs checklist</li> <li>• Parent consultation</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Formal observation of behaviour eg. ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition, in the classroom or withdrawal depending on the needs of the child</p> <p>A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
<p><b>School Support Plus</b></p>	<p>This level of the continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures</li> <li>• Parental consultation</li> <li>• Functional assessment</li> <li>• Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc</li> <li>• Basic Needs Checklist</li> <li>• Learning Environment Checklist</li> </ul> <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.</p>

## Meeting Children’s Diverse Learning Needs

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

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

<p>Action1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>Review existing information on pupils’ needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests).</p> <p>Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
<p>Action 2: Setting targets</p>	<p>Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.</p>
<p>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</p>	<p>Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.</p>
<p>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</p>	<p>Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>
<p>Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources</p>	<p>Cross-reference the needs of pupils at school support and school support plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place.</p>

	Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise.
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	<p>Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At whole-school and classroom support level by all teachers</li> <li>• At the school support and school support plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers.</li> </ul>

### **Overcoming Potential Barriers to Learning and Assessment for Individuals and Groups of Children**

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

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

### **■ Board of Management**

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

The Board of Management:

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

## ■ Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. He will work closely with the Deputy Principal and SET Team and will keep the Board of Management informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal and Deputy Principal in collaboration with the SET Team to:

- Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
- Liaises with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision
- Arranges for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeps a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Stores confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and shares same with class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.

## ■ The Role of the Class Teacher

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. Mainstream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their

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

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

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

- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs

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

## ■ The Role of the Special Education Teacher/ Team

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. Teaching approaches will include a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at



classroom level, or through mainstream classroom placement with additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models.

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

- Organises the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Advises parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs
- Supports the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Participates in and or oversees the drafting of and classroom support plans

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

- curriculum support
- life and/or social skills training
- physical training/gross motor development
- speech training/communication and/or language development
- behaviour modification programmes
- assistance with sensory modulation
- development of anger management strategies
- a combination of some/all of the above

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

## ■ Parental Involvement

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of

progress. The Continuum of Support process provides valuable opportunities for engagement with parents in the pursuit of identification of and responding to the Special Educational Needs presented by pupils.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving relevant information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of Scoil Ursula, Sligo can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

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

## ■ Admissions

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

Parents are encouraged to notify the school of their child's special needs in advance of their enrolment. The Board of Management will request a copy of any reports that could assist the school in providing an appropriate education for the child and in meeting his/her individual needs. No child will be refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

## ■ Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

### 1. Promotion of Literacy:

- Whole school promotion of Reading for Pleasure .... DEAR time, book reports,
- Comprehension Strategies : Building Bridges
- Writing genres
- Team Teaching & station teaching in classes
- Adapted Literacy Lift-off in Senior Infants & 1<sup>st</sup> class, guided reading from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class.
- Class novels from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class
- Print rich environment.
- Shared/paired reading.
- Story time, Library time, DEAR time, Book Week, Book Fair, Reading Buddies, Word games, Class library, visiting authors
- Access to Literacy apps on school iPads and at home
- Children in all classes writing for a variety of audiences e.g. other classes, pair/group work, Principal etc.
- Developing literacy through play based learning based on the principles of Aistear in the junior section
- Discrete Oral Language lessons in all classes
- Appreciation of poetry
- Drama

### ■ 2. Early Intervention

Infant classes are prioritised for in class support. We believe it is very important to identify and assess children with special needs as early as possible so that effective interventions can be put in place. The Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy and Numeracy will be administered at the end of Senior Infants

Teacher observation and checklists inform selection of pupils who require support in Infant classes.

### ■ 3. Developing Listening Skills:

Promoting a classroom environment where children listen to others, do not interrupt the speaker and wait their turn; Circle time, Listening games/activities; Listening Programmes; Listening to music.

#### ■ 4. Observation and/or assessment:

The support and class teacher will perform appropriate diagnostic tests as required. These tests will focus on areas such as Literacy: Reading and associated areas, the various aspects of Numeracy, social & behavioural

We continually review the assessment and screening tests that we use in order to balance the needs of our pupils and the need to provide information for appropriate support.

Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, record sheet for each child, listening to reading, General correction of homework.

Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, Teachers own observation.

Share concerns with: - Last year's/ next year's teacher, similar level teacher, parents, Support Teachers

#### ■ Stages of Assessment and Provision

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher identifies a child with Special Educational Needs the class teacher consults with the SET Team and provides interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher. However, as most of our support is in-class the stages are less defined than in situations where learning support is delivered by withdrawal.

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents and work collaboratively on a classroom plan which is agreed with parents.

The triggers for this intervention could be;

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

The class teacher completes a classroom support plan and monitors the differentiated support given for a specified period of time (6 – 8 weeks). If this strategy does not work, the teacher will continue to the next stage, School Support.

**Teachers inform Parents of the possibility that their child's needs would be better served in a small group with a support teacher. Parental consent is required.**

## ■ School Support Plan

In cases where, despite, differentiated support (Classroom Support Plan – S1) progress has not been made supported by the results of tests and teacher observation, intervention in the form of a support teacher will be accessed. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents.

- The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support teacher.
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated bi-annually.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in a SEN room with the support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

When it is apparent that a child, despite the various interventions conducted and after a suitable/significant period of time, is still struggling the class teacher with the support teacher may decide to seek extra intervention. The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme the child:

- Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
- Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age
- Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and School Support Plus plan
- Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service
- Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and act as a barrier to learning

The class teacher in consultation with SET Team and with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

1. A psychological assessment will be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
2. Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including school support plus targets and strategies.
3. Access to a special needs assistant may be applied for.

4. In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used to at least two members of staff.
5. The use of specialised yard equipment may also need to be demonstrated to these staff members. Courses will be provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
6. If an exemption from Irish is deemed appropriate, the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Education and Skills.

## ■ School Support Plus Plan

Children with the greatest needs will be provided with greatest access to the highest level of differentiated support. These needs will be monitored to ensure that as needs evolve and develop appropriate support will be provided.

The School Support Plus Plan employs a small steps approach. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that the child experiences success.

This plan may include:

- the nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills
- the degree of the child's special needs,
- the present level of performance,
- services to be provided,
- services for transition to 2<sup>nd</sup> level school where appropriate,
- the goals, which the child is to achieve over a specified period of time.

The strategies set out in the School Support Plus Plan will, as far as possible, be implemented in the normal classroom setting.

The management of the School Support Plus Plan strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher and SET Team in consultation with parents.

## ■ Review of School Support Plans

The SET Team will ensure that the review is conducted twice a year (February and June). The class teacher consults with the support teacher, the child (and SNA if appointed) where appropriate. They agree on the expected outcomes of the School Support Plus Plans. A draft copy is discussed with the child's parents and parents are invited to contribute suggestions or amendments. The final copy will be signed by Class Teacher and SET team member and parents where appropriate. Again, outside agencies may play a part in contributing to the final copy. The review will be recorded on the form.

Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently

achieving targets over the stated time, a decision will be made to revert to previous level of support.

The Support Plans for children moving to 2<sup>nd</sup> level will be referred to at the consultation meetings with the 2<sup>nd</sup> level representative on foot of parental permission.

## ■ Complaints

Should parents have concerns regarding the Special Education provision for their child, an appointment should be arranged with Class Teacher and/or SET team member in the first instance and subsequently with the principal should concerns still persist.

The complaint will be investigated and dealt with as early as possible. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction, then the matter proceeds to the Board of Management in keeping with the official protocol as detailed in Complaints Procedure.

## ■ Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This will lead to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe as outlined below.



Monitoring outcomes is part of a dynamic process of identification, target-setting, intervention and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File (Appendix 1) provides schools with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcomes with parents and pupils.

Such monitoring of progress, and subsequent adaptation of support plans, are key drivers of effective practice.

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

The Board of Management will ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of the school development plan and will evaluate the effectiveness and success of this policy by monitoring:

- The standards obtained by children with special needs
- The number of children at each of the three stages: Classroom support, School support and School support plus.
- The level and pattern of help (i.e. average time allocated and the balance of in-class and withdrawal support)
- Views of parents
- Visits from specialist teachers
- Staff views on in-service
- Children's views

## ■ Exceptional Ability & Gifted

### **Definition and Background:**

'An able child is one that achieves or has the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of their peer group. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range'. (Eyre, 1999)

- Children who are considered gifted may have been assessed by a psychologist and found to have a high level of intelligence (an IQ score of 130+, 98<sup>th</sup> Percentile)
- Giftedness is recognised as a 'disability' or special education condition in the Education Act (1998).

### **School Ethos:**

We, the teaching staff at Scoil Ursula have agreed to cater for those pupils who are exceptionally able in academic areas (i.e. the top 2% of the school population).

Those pupils who show exceptional talent in non-academic areas e.g. psychomotor ability, mechanical aptitude, visual and performing arts ability, will be given information regarding the relevant outside agencies.

## ■ Procedure for identification of pupils with Exceptional Ability

### **Criteria for Assessment:**

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



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

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

### ■ **Catering for Pupils with Exceptional Ability:**

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

### ■ **Responsibility and Management:**

1. The class teacher is responsible for differentiation within the classroom, including acquisition and distribution of teaching resources for differentiation.
2. The SET team will be responsible for the assessment stage of this process, organisation of extension classes including timetabling (where applicable), acquisition and distribution of information regarding referral and assessment by outside agencies.
3. The Principal will liaise with parents, SETs and class teachers throughout the process.

### ■ **Implementation and Review**

The implementation of this Policy will commence in September 2020. It will be subjected to a full and in depth review every three years as well as annual consideration by staff to ensure that this policy reflects current practices in Scoil Ursula, Sligo or as circumstances may warrant.

### ■ **Ratification and Communication**

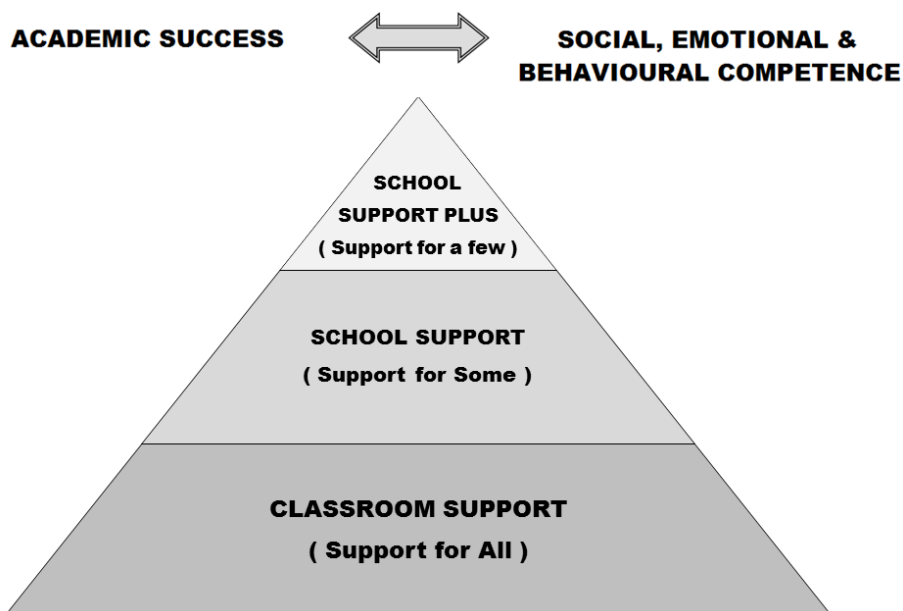
The Board of Management ratified this policy on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson, BOM)

**The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the school website. All Scoil Ursula policies are available for inspection in the school.**

<b>STUDENT SUPPORT FILE</b>	
<b>Name of Student</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>School</b>	
<b>Date File Opened</b>	
<b>Date File Closed</b>	

### A Continuum of Support



*Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student.*

*We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.*

**Student Support File- Log of Actions:**

Date	Actions

### Support Checklist

<b>Name:</b> {{ first_name }} {{ last_name }}	<b>Age:</b> {{ age }}	<b>Class:</b> {{ class }}
<b>General Information</b>	<b>Date Checked:</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/ Guardians Consulted</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information from previous school/preschool gathered</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical Needs</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Needs Checklist completed</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of learning-screening</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of learning style/approach to learning</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of behaviour</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with pupil</li> </ul>		

• Classroom work differentiated?		
• Learning environment adapted?		
• Yard/school environments adapted?		
• Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
• Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
• Other interventions put in place in school?		
<b>Action needed</b>		

**SUPPORT PLAN – Classroom Support**

***To be completed by the teacher(s).***

Student's name	{{ first_name }} {{ last_name }}	Age	{{age }}
Lead Teacher:		Class/Year:	{{ class }}
Start Date of Plan			
Review Date of Plan			
Student's strengths and interests			
Priority concerns			
Possible reasons for concerns			
Targets for the student			
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets			
Staff involved and resources needed			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this plan.

**SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD –**

*Classroom Support*

**To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.**

Student's name	{{ first_name }} {{ last_name }}	Class/Year	{{class}}
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Names of those present at review		Date of Review	
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?			
Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?			
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?			
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when?			
Any comments from the student?			
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) comment?			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			
<b>Outcome of review ( ✓ tick as appropriate)</b>			
tick	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support	tick	Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
tick	Continue at Current Level of Support	tick	Request consultation with other professionals

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

### SUPPORT PLAN - School Support

**To be completed by the teacher(s).**

*For help, see SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers: BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers pp.71-74; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.*

Student's name	{{ first_name }} {{ last_name }}	Age	{{age }}
Lead Teacher:		Class/Year:	{{ class }}
Start Date of Plan			
Review Date of Plan			
1. Student's strengths and interests:			
2. List of concerns: A. Literacy      B. Numeracy      C. Social      D. Motor			
3. Nature of SEN:			
4. Targets for the student: Term 1 Ongoing   Emerging   Achieved a. b. c.			
5. Strategies to help the student achieve the targets: a. class b. home c. SET d. Yard			
6. Staff involved CT: SET:			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			




\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this plan.

### **SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD - School Support**

**To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.**  
For help, see *SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers; BESD: A Continuum of Support –Guidelines for Teachers; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools.*

Student's name	{{ first_name }} {{ last_name }}	Class/Year	{{class}}
Names of those present at review		Date of Review	
What has been most successful and why?			
Any new information or newly identified needs?			
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when? See section 4 and 5 of Support plan for new targets.			
Any comments from the student?			
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) comment?			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			

**Outcome of review ( ✓ tick as appropriate)**

tick	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support	tick	Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
tick	Continue at Current Level of Support	tick	Request consultation with other professionals

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS (IEP)	
Name:	Persons involved in drafting this IEP: SEN Co-ordinator:
Class:	

Address:	Psychologist : Social Worker: Class Teacher: Support Teacher:
Date of Birth:	SNA : Parents: Other
Reports:	
Summary of Other Information:	
General arrangements in school to support :	
Activities at home to support :	
Learning strengths and attainments:	
Long term Learning Needs for :	
Priority Learning Targets for the period:	
Strategies to attain the target (s)	

**Target-setting as part of the problem-solving-framework**

**How do we evaluate targets?**  
Standardised tests  
Screening tests  
Observations  
Interviews  
Teacher measures  
Check lists  
Consultation  
Ratings

Evaluation of child's response to targets informs the next step of the problem-solving cycle



Targets are informed by information gathering and assessment

**What data can help us set targets?**  
Standardised tests  
Screening tests  
Observations  
Interviews  
Teacher measures  
Check lists  
Consultation  
Ratings

**Targets are written as desired skills which are:**  
Specific  
Measurable  
Achievable

