

Scoil Ursula

■ Title

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

■ Introductory Statement

Scoil Ursula is a Mixed Mainstream National School located in Sligo town. Under the new guidelines for Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision, the school was accorded a rating of 2.29 under general allocation, which entitles it to 2 teachers and 7.5hrs. We also have 22 Low Incidence Resource hours. In total, we have three Full-Time SEN Teachers and one Part-Time Teacher (4.5hrs) which we share with Gaelscoil Cnoc na Rí. The SEN Team met in September, 2006 to formulate this policy. It was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the School Development and Planning Support Service and is in line with the requirements of the revised legislation and guidelines. It was reviewed in November 2010 and was disseminated to the wider school community through the Board of Management and ratified by the board on the 7th of March, 2011

■ Rationale

We decided to formulate this policy in response to current enrolment of children with SEN in the school and to merge existing separate policies (Learning Support, Resource, Traveller Support and EAL Support) into one policy. We were also conscious of current legislative developments in the area of SEN and the need to bring our policy into line with these.

■ 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.

■ Aims

- To give clear outline to procedure and practice to be followed in relation to pupils with SEN.
- To ensure a whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to pupils with SEN.
- To guarantee inclusion of pupils with SEN with their peers in a mainstream school setting.
- To enable the children to participate in the full curriculum at their class level.
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitude to school and learning.
- To integrate newcomer children to classes and provide support for their language needs.
- To establish communication structures for all significant adults involved (parents and multidisciplinary team).
- To allow pupils to take part in the full curriculum for their class level.
- To develop positive self-esteem and attitudes towards school and learning in these pupils.
- To enable these pupils to become independent learners.
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support and resources for these pupils in literacy or Maths.
- To involve parents and secure their approval as partners throughout the process.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies on SEN.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce learning difficulties.

■ Content of the Plan

Enrolment of children with identified special educational needs

- The following factors will be considered by the Board of Management (BOM) in coming to a decision re enrolment of a special needs pupil?
 - (1) EPSEN Act 2004, Section 2 “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”
 - (2) Education Act 1998: 15.-(2) d. A board shall.... publish... the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to.... the participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs, 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

- Prior to the child's enrolment, the school will acquaint themselves with a child's special needs and whether these are categorised as High Incidence or Low Incidence by.
 - Meeting between parents/principal/class teacher/special needs staff and SENO, as appropriate
 - Obtaining copies/details of reports, assessments etc. from SENO, parents, ...
- Contact with Special Educational Needs Organiser, NEPS Psychologist or other psychologist/speech therapist/ occupational therapist, referral from other Agency.
- The SEN Team will decide in consultation with the Principal whether the pupil should receive support at the level of Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the Staged Approach. (Circular 02/05)
- To ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school, the following procedure will be utilised:
 - Parental visits to school
 - Pupil visits to school
 - Staff visits to home/special schools/special units
 - Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act)
 - Liaison with SENO to arrange for additional personnel, resources, training
 - Establish a "Buddy" system to support pupils with special needs
- If there are health and safety issues arising from the child's mobility and care needs, these will be identified and strategies developed to address them. *e.g. access, toilets, supervision, administration of medicine, intimate care, course for SNA e.g. lifting techniques*

Procedure for early identification/screening/referral of pupils with SEN within the school.

- Class Teacher – informal and formal assessment e.g. checklists
- Class tests
- Informal feedback from pupils
- Co-ordinated input from parents
- Junior Infants are assessed using the Belfield Infant Assessment Profiles (BIAP) in Term 3.
- Senior Infants are screened by Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) during January. The Forward Together Programme will be implemented with pupils who show up as having needs on the MIST Screening Test.
- For other pupils, preliminary screening through the administration of Sigma-T in October and Micra-T in May. 1st Classes are screened in October for the purposes of early intervention.
- Pupils in 1st and 4th classes are tested on the Non-Reading Intelligence Tests (NRIT) to acquire an IQ score, which can be compared to Standard scores on screening tests. This will indicate if a child's performance is in keeping with his/her ability. 1st class is tested in Term 1 and 4th class in Term 3.
- A School Needs Analysis is undertaken by the SEN Team Leader at the beginning of each school year. From this, caseloads are organised and assigned to SEN Teachers.
- Priority will be given to pupils as follows:
 1. Children at or below the 12th percentile literacy
 2. Children whose Average Age-Based Standard Score in Literacy is 15 points or more below their IQ.
 3. Early intervention as flagged by BIAP and/or MIST.
 4. Children with a Specific Mathematical Disability (Dyscalculia).
 5. Children from 2nd Class up who are at or below the 12th percentile numeracy.
 6. Children at or below the 20th percentile literacy.

Others that are in need of support (as much as timetable allows) are given support. Except in very exceptional circumstances, no child in 6th Class will receive General Allocation support.

- The Special Education Teacher (SET) administers appropriate diagnostic tests, the results of which will determine the type of intervention required.
- Diagnostic tests will be selected from the following:

Quest

Neale Analysis

Schonell Word Reading Test

Aston Index

Jackson Test

Dyslexia Screening Test – Junior (Pearson)

Rain Sentence Reading Tests

Speaking Listening Reading Writing testing for newcomer children. P.S.A.K. materials.

Intervention Programmes.

- Support teaching – provided by class teacher, SEN Teacher, resource teachers, visiting teacher as appropriate. Types of support teaching – one to one, small group teaching, classroom intervention.
- The class teacher will differentiate the curriculum in a meaningful manner matching learning to need and consulting with the SEN Team for advice.
- Account will also be taken of class teachers recommendations.
- Results will be discussed with class teacher on class needs to receive supplementary teaching.
- Supplementary teaching can be carried out on a withdrawal basis or team teaching/ in class /withdrawal model or a combination of these supports where appropriate.
- Children who present with significant delays in reading, spelling and maths will undergo the Three-Staged Process as described below. This will be done in consultation with the class teacher, special needs teacher, parents and Principal.
- Children sanctioned with resource hours will receive these hours on an individual basis or shared basis depending on practical circumstances.
- A Student Profile for each child in receipt of supplementary teaching, whether Learning Support or Resource is drawn up (see Appendix 1).
- From this profile, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each child for whom Resource hours have been sanctioned.
- A Learning Plan will be set up for children receiving L.S. This is also developed from the Student Profile, to which targets and progress are appended on an ongoing basis and where pupils with similar needs are grouped.
- Class teacher and parent will have input into intervention programmes as also any relevant outside agency.

Children with emerging special educational needs: The Staged Approach

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

A Class Teacher may identify concerns re the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child through Teacher observation, parental observations, use of simple teacher designed checklists, Infant profiling or screening measures such as the BIAP (see

Screening Tests below).

- Concerns are documented using the Scoil Ursula Staged Approach Report form (see Appendix 2)
- Scoil Ursula has adopted the following agreed screening measures in the school:
 - *Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)*
 - *Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)*
 - *Micra-T & Sigma-T standardised tests.*
- General information regarding the school's concerns is sought from and communicated to parents at this stage.
- The SEN Team support class teachers at Stage 1 by advising them on in-class strategies to be adopted such as curricular differentiation. They may set up general preventative systems in the classrooms such as the PAT Programme in Senior Infants or Reading Buddies in 3rd which the Class Teachers can continue on.
- If these strategies are found not to be efficacious and concerns remain and/or increase, the child is moved onto Stage 2 of the process. Parents, principal, SEN teacher(s) as well as the class teacher are involved in this decision.
- If the concerns are of sufficient severity the above partners may decide to move the pupil to Stage Three of the process at this point.

Stage 2. Referral to Special Educational Support Teacher

The following factors are considered in determining a child's need for supplementary teaching:

- *Assessment results*
- *Teacher recommendation*
- *Parents' concerns*
- *Availability of resources*
- Written parental consent for inclusion on the Learning Support Programme and further diagnostic testing by the SEN Team is sought by the Class Teacher on a Standard Consent Form (see Appendix 3). On this form, parents are made aware that support is delivered in a variety of ways including individual and/or group Withdrawal, or individual and/or group In-Class Support.
- Where parents are found to have sensitivities around their child receiving support, these will be addressed in by early contact with parent to explain how learning support can address their child's learning need. This may be done by letter or by phone or in extreme cases at a meeting with the Principal and/or the Class Teacher and/or a member of the SEN Team.
- In the event of a refusal of a parent to consent to support for their child and/or further testing, the child will continue to be supported at Stage 1. The Consent Form is in a Yes or No format and this record of refusal will be kept on the child's file.
- The diagnostic tests in use in the school are:
 - **Quest**
 - **Neale Analysis**
 - **Schonell Word Reading Test**
 - **Aston Index**
 - **Jackson Test**
 - **Dyslexia Screening Test – Junior (Pearson)**
 - **Rain Sentence Reading Tests**
 - **Speaking Listening Reading Writing Testing for newcomer children. P.S.A.K. materials.**

They are administered and interpreted by the SEN Team.

- Supplementary teaching is arranged by the SEN Team in consultation with the Class Teachers. A School Needs Analysis is carried out by the SEN Team Leader at the beginning of each school year. The principal calls a meeting of the Special Needs Team during the first week of the school year and the strategy for the year is discussed. Caseloads are organised for each SEN Teacher according to the needs of the pupils receiving support and timetables are drawn up. Scoil Ursula employs a mixed model of intervention incorporating elements of both Withdrawal and In-Class Support depending on need. Children with similar needs may be grouped where appropriate.
- Preparation of an Individual Profile & Learning Plan (*IPLP*).
 - The SEN Teacher in consultation with the Class Teacher has responsibility for preparation/co-ordination of a child's IPLP. The Principal, SEN Teacher, Classroom teacher, Parents and Pupils are responsible for the implementation of the plan.
 - There is close collaboration between all the above parties and discussions around implementation are facilitated as often as deemed necessary. This may be done informally through teacher/parent/pupil contact e.g. at the end of a school day and/or more formally through case conferencing involving all the concerned parties.
 - Learning plans may be prepared for groups where appropriate.
- There are five instructional terms for the SEN Team during the school year as follows:
 1. September/October (Up to Midterm)
 2. November/December (Midterm to Christmas)
 3. January/February (up to Midterm)
 4. March April (Midterm to Easter)
 5. May/June (Easter to Summer)
- Pupil progress is reviewed at the end of each period by the SEN Teacher in consultation with the Class Teacher on the basis of progress and results of tests.
- Continuing and Discontinuing support is undertaken according to the following procedure:
 - As children reach certain targets or levels of ability / independence their needs will be reassessed.
 - Spelling ages, reading ages, percentile scores and scores on Mathematical tests will be considered.
 - Parents and class teachers will be consulted with regard to continuation or discontinuation of supplementary teaching.
 - Supplementary teaching will continue for resource children and traveller children according to Departmental Guidelines.
 - Newcomer children in receipt of language classes will receive two years of supplementary teaching and this may be extended depending on the level of need.
 - However individual newcomer pupils will require additional support which will be provided at the discretion of the SEN team
- If there is still a difficulty, the child, in consultation with parents will be recommended for Psychological Assessment from NEPS or privately. This may lead to application to the NCSE for Resources i.e. Resource Hours, Services of a SNA, Equipment, Transport, Services of Visiting Teachers for Visual/Hearing Impairment etc. Referral to other services such as speech and language therapist, social worker or other relevant professionals may also be considered. This involves principal and teaching staff in the referral process. Pupils are prioritised for referral at a meeting of the SEN Team and Scoil Ursula is normally entitled to 4 NEPS assessment per annum.

Stage 3. Consultation or referral for assessment to outside specialist

- When the school feels that an assessment by an outside specialist would be in the best interests of the child, a Referral Form (Appendix 4) is prepared and the parents are asked to sign this along with a Consent Form (Appendix 5). They may also be asked to sign a form (Appendix 6) consenting to relevant information being passed to and received from other agencies involved with the child.

- The school makes contact with the NEPS Psychologist and dates are arranged for assessment in order of priority. In cases where pupils are not shortlisted for assessment and/or an educational assessment is not appropriate, parents are made aware of the option to seek a private assessment or a medical assessment through the HSE where appropriate as in cases of ASD or ADHD. (Referral to other agencies such as paediatrician, speech and language therapist, audiologist, etc. Is also undertaken if deemed appropriate.
- The responsibility for making the referral and liaison with the specialist lies with the Principal, SEN Leader and the Class Teacher.
- All the documentation is collected and submitted to the appropriate agencies while copies are kept in the Assessments File by the SEN Leader who co-ordinates this process.
- Assessments take place for senior pupils in a small comfortable Resource Room in the main building or for Junior pupils in a similar room in the Junior Block. The most appropriate setting for the assessment is determined by the psychologist having regard to the comfort of the child, an appropriate environment and parental sensitivities.
- In the event of limited availability of assessments through NEPS (normally 4 per year) decisions regarding priority are reached according to the following criteria:
 1. Early Intervention
 2. Degree of Need
 3. Likelihood of acquiring extra resources for pupils.
- If parents have had assessments carried out privately, the recommendations contained therein have the same weighting in relation to assessments commissioned by the school. The school will retain the right to satisfy itself as to the qualifications and suitability of outside practitioners and will deploy its resources accordingly.

Drafting & Implementing Individual Education Plans:

- The purpose of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is to set down a set of learning goals appropriate to the individual needs of the pupil.
- IEPs are drawn up by the SEN Teacher in collaboration with class teacher, parents, child, principal, support teachers and other relevant professionals, and are subject to review on a termly basis.
- The following information is included in an IEP:
 - Learning strengths: *based on teacher observation, parent observations, SNA observation, etc.*
 - Learning needs: *based on psychological report, teacher input, parental input, pupil input, etc.*

- Learning targets: *appropriate to individual need, SMART where possible (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed) and constantly evolving to adapt to the pupil's progress and needs.*
- There an agreed format in use throughout the school consisting of a Pupil Profile outlining general background information, results of assessments, observations on learning styles and needs. The termly targeted plans are added to this and the file is built up in this way accordingly.
- IEP Meetings
 - The SEN Leader has responsibility for co-ordination of the IEP.
 - All interested parties participate in the preparation of IEPs where feasible.
 - Participation is facilitated through meetings and/or ascertaining relevant opinions by word-of-mouth or in written form(ie Homework Journal)
 - The pupil is included in the process by ascertaining his/her interests and likes and attempting to individualise the learning process accordingly in so far as is practicable.
 - A copy of the plan is available to all concerned parties working with the child.
- Progress Review
 - Ongoing monitoring is carried out by following the same process as listed in Procedures for Identification of Pupils with SEN. Individual records are kept of progress on a monthly basis and kept with the school's monthly reports.
 - Reviews take place at the end of Term.
 - The SEN Teacher, Class Teacher is involved in the review in collaboration with the principal, parents and other relevant parties.
- Time – Tabling is done by the SEN Teacher in collaboration with class teacher and principal. Planning/consultation time is taken within school hours as need arises. Class teacher is released for consultation with the SEN Teacher.
- If the education plan identifies resources over and above those normally available in a mainstream school setting, the Principal will bring this to the attention of the SENO and/or the NCSE.
- The Principal is also responsible for ongoing consultations with psychologists, SENO, others.
- The SEN Leader is responsible for co-ordination of education plans from class to class, sharing relevant information between staff, school and parents. All pupil files are distributed to the relevant SEN Teacher at the beginning of the School Year and returned to the SEN Leader at the end of the year to be handed on the following year.

Inclusion

It is a fundamental policy within the school to include all pupils in the learning process with regard to their holistic development, academically and socially.

- All children are educated within the mainstream class setting. They take part in all subject areas of the curriculum.

- The school endeavours to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom through such initiatives as its buddy system, SPHE classes, etc.

- There are also strategies in place in the SPHE curriculum to raise awareness in the general pupil population of the needs of persons with disabilities. The school has close ties with the Special Olympics movement and has hosted the Special Olympic Torch Run as recently as 2010.

- Children diagnosed with SEN will continue to avail of Irish language teaching in class with peers. Homework assignments may be differentiated. Should parents request an exemption from Gaeilge, the school will facilitate the exemption (See Exemption from Irish Policy).

- All children are included in all activities within the school and teachers employ appropriate models of differentiation as the need arises. Class teachers are responsible for devising strategies to include pupils with SEN.

Exceptionally Able Students

The Definition in Scoil Ursula of a gifted pupil is “one who demonstrates a significantly higher level of ability than most pupils of the same age in one or more curriculum area or in any of the following:

- Physical talent
- Artistic talent.
- Mechanical ingenuity.
- Leadership.
- High intelligence.
- Creativity.

Identification:

A gifted pupil will be identified through teacher assessment and judgement.

This assessment is carried out through

- Discussion of pupils with colleagues.
- Discussion with the child.
- Consultation with parents /guardians.
- On-going assessment using differentiated tasks.
- Careful record keeping
- Collation of evidence/pupils work.

School aim:

- Create an ethos where it is ok to be bright.
- Encourage all pupils to become independent learners.
- Enrichment experiences – getting involved in cross curricular projects.
- Local and residential trips.
- Making child/children aware of outside school activities at local/national level.

Class aims.

- Varied and flexible pupil groupings, sometimes allowing able pupils to work together.
- Carrying out unaided tasks which stretch their capabilities.
- Enabling them to make choices about their work.

- Develop their ability to evaluate their work and so become self critical.
- Abilities will be recognised and valued.
- Differentiated teaching will be used to take account of the needs of the exceptionally able student.

Deployment of Staff

- The Principal, in consultation with the Staff, ensures the most effective deployment of staff in meeting the overall SEN requirements of the school taking into account the experience/expertise of teachers, part-time teachers, newly qualified teachers, SNAs etc.
- It is Scoil Ursula's policy to integrate all SEN pupils into the mainstream class setting. Where it is felt that a lower pupil-teacher better facilitates this policy than Withdrawal or In-Class Support, the principal may deploy General Allocation SEN Teachers to mainstream duties. Where this is the case, the SEN Team will not be able to provide as wide a service as would be the norm and there will naturally be a heavier onus on the Class Teacher to cater for less severe SEN needs within the Classroom setting.
- The remaining SEN Teachers are deployed according to need and on the basis on the School Needs Analysis carried out at the beginning of the year.
- SNAs are deployed according to the needs of the SEN pupils and are normally placed with pupils for whom hours have been allocated by the NCSE. They play a vital role in supporting pupils with special needs in the school.

Collaboration and Communication

- There are various arrangements in place to facilitate collaboration between those involved in the child's education.
 - Informal contact between Class Teacher and Parent (e.g. at the end of the school day) is allowed within reason.
 - A note will be sent to parents annually to inform them of continuation or discontinuation of supplementary teaching / to request the commencement of supplementary teaching.
 - To meet with parents of each pupil who has been selected for psychological assessment.
 - Meet with parents after assessment.
 - Discuss outcomes and learning targets for the term.
 - Demonstrate strategies to parents that will enable them to help their child.
 - Provide link by home work copy or notebook.
 - Parents of children receiving resource hours to be met regularly
 - Written communication between teacher and parent is a useful form of contact and a good way of keeping school and home informed and up to date on progress.
 - Formal Parent-Teacher Meetings take place each Spring.
 - Parents can make appointments to have more in-depth meetings with principal, teachers etc.
 - Occasionally a case conference is arranged at the behest of the school or another agency involved with the child where all the concerned parties come together to review the current provision and plan for future provision. If the school calls such a conference it will host the meeting and all the teachers involved along with the Principal will attend. If the meeting is called elsewhere the school will endeavour to send one or more

representatives to attend.

➤ Where a teacher has to absent him/herself from class for the purposes of a meeting, the SEN Team, Principal or colleague will provide cover.

Resources

▪ The following resources are available in the school:

- Reading schemes
- Phonics materials
- Language programmes
- Numeracy programmes
- I.C.T. software

A more detailed list is included as Appendix 7

- The SEN Team is responsible for sourcing and acquiring additional resources.
- The SEN Leader has responsibility for tracking, storing and maintaining these resources.
- Some of these resources are specifically for the use of the SEN Team but they may also provide additional resources for use by the Class Teacher as a follow-up activity in the classroom for a pupil with SEN.
- SEN Teachers, who are shared with other schools are free to use Scoil Ursula owned resources except in situations where they are needed at those times for use with our own pupils.
- Resources and Materials are updated as needs arise and as funding allows and with the approval of the Principal.

Transfer to post-primary

- To assist a smooth transition for pupils with special needs to post primary education, a representative from each Post Primary School in our area meets with the Principal and 6th Class Teachers to share information regarding SEN pupils.
- Where parental consent has been given, Scoil Ursula passes on all relevant information to the Post Primary schools. In the absence of parental consent, Scoil Ursula will pass on the documentation to the parents. The Post Primary schools can then ask for it from them.

Professional Development:

- Staff, both SEN & Mainstream are encouraged to avail of Professional Development when it is available. Many courses are available on an ongoing basis in the local education Centre. When the Principal in consultation with the Staff regards a course to be of potential benefit to the school arrangements are made for one or more teachers and/or SNAs to attend. The choice of attendee(s) will be made having regard to role, suitability, availability, equality of opportunity and having the least impact on the running of the school for the day(s) of the course. The attendees on their return will be given an opportunity to share their new found expertise with the rest of the staff e.g. Staff Meeting, Planning Days etc.

Special Need Assistants:

- There are currently two full-time Special Needs Assistants (one Full Day & one Infant Day) and one Part-Time (2.5 hrs per day) working in the school. These are assigned to specific children with Special Needs and they carry out their duties in accordance with

the terms of SNA 15/05.

- The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) is responsible for deciding and reviewing the allocation of SNAs for the school.
- If, at Stage 3 of the Staged Approach, a child is found to have needs that the school feels require the services of an SNA, the school will apply to the SENO including all relevant documented evidence.

Passing on of relevant information subject to parental permission.

Information relating to students' ability and progress e.g. test results, psychological reports etc. is passed on to relevant people or bodies subject to parental permission where it is in the interest of the student to do so.

Record Keeping

Files are kept containing relevant information on pupils who have SEN. These are stored in a filing cabinet in the SEN Team Leaders Room.

Access and contribution to files is under the remit of the class teacher, resource teachers, resource teacher for travellers, SET, psychologist, SENOs, other relevant professionals, inspector, parents, SNAS etc as appropriate.

Files are stored for duration of child's primary and secondary education.

■ Success Criteria

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our objectives. We will use the following indicators as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy:

- Inclusion of pupils with special needs into our school
- Progress of pupils with special needs in our school (assessments)
- Parental Feedback

■ Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all members of staff in the school to identify and provide for all children with special needs.

Role of the Board of Management

- The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting and monitoring school policy on special needs.
- To ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided.
- To provide a secure facility for storage of records.

The Role of the Principal

- To co-ordinate learning support and special needs services.
- To take responsibility for the development and implementation of school policy on learning support.
- To work with teachers and parents.
- To monitor the implementation of the special needs policy.

- To monitor the selection of pupils focusing on pupils with low educational achievement.
- To oversee the implementation of the whole school assessment and screening programme.
- To make available to teachers information on relevant in-career development.
- To call termly meetings of the SEN Team to discuss all of the above issues.

The role of the Class Teacher

- The overall responsibility for the educational needs of the pupil rest with the class teacher.
- To employ learning strategies that help prevent learning difficulties.
- To implement Micra-T and Sigma T tests for screening.
- To collaborate with learning support teachers in setting targets for I.P. / L.P.
- To differentiate the class curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special needs.
- To collaborate regularly on an ongoing basis with special needs teacher.
- To discuss screening and diagnostic results.
- To maintain suitable records of progress.
- To make parents aware of the concerns of the school about their child's progress.
- To outline school services available.

The Role of the Learning Support Teachers.

During the year 2010-2011 a model of integrated teaching whereby S.E.T. team use a whole school approach to the teaching of language/resource/learning support was adopted.

- To collaborate with the Principal, the class teacher, parents on a regular basis.
- To provide supplementary teaching to pupils in their own class or in a designated learning area.
- To meet with parents once a year.
- To deliver intensive early intervention in Senior Infants in relation to literacy: Forward Together.
- To advise principal teacher on issues that arise on a day to day basis.
- To consult with school staff as a group on a regular basis.
- Implementation of programmes for supplementary teaching.
- Analysis of outcomes of screening and diagnostic assessments in the form of an annual school needs analysis.
- Planning learning targets; develop an I.P.L.P.
- Monitoring and recording progress.
- Make referrals for educational psychological assessments.
- Make referrals for speech and language therapy.

The Role of the S.E.N. Team.

- To assess and record child's needs and progress
- To set specific time related targets for each child and agree these with teacher and principal
- To collaborate with the Principal, the class teacher, parents on a regular basis.
- To provide supplementary teaching to pupils in their own class or in a designated learning area.
- To meet with parents once a year.
- To advise principal teacher on issues that arise on a day to day basis.
- To consult with school staff as a group on a regular basis.
- Implementation of programmes for supplementary teaching.
- Analysis of outcomes of screening and diagnostic assessments in the form of an annual school needs analysis.

- Planning learning targets; develop an I.E.P.
- Monitoring and recording progress.
- Short meetings when necessary with other professionals involved.
- Make referrals for educational psychological assessments.
- Make referrals for speech and language therapy.
- To carry out Belfield test on Junior Infants in June.
- To carry out M.I.S.T. testing on Sen. Infants in January.
- To carry out N.R.I.T. tests on 1st and 4th classes each school year by S.E.N. team.
- To provide a model of support most appropriate to maximize learning or provide a combination of individual/in-class/group/withdrawal.

The Role of the Language Teacher

- To assess and record child's needs and progress.
- To use P.S.A.K for monitoring progress as laid down by the D.E.S.
- To cater for the language needs of foreign newcomer pupils attending the school.
- To meet with parents once a year.
- Implementation of programmes for supplementary teaching.
- To use Up and Away Programme as recommended by the D.E.S.
- To continue support after 2yrs in line with P.S.A.K. results
- Planning learning targets; Monitoring and recording progress.

The Role of the S.N.A.

- Preparing and tidying classroom.
- Assisting school children to board and alight from school buses. When necessary travel as escort during school hours on school buses may be required.
- Special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties e.g. helping special needs pupils with typing, writing, computers or other use of equipment.
- Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the pupil.
- Assisting on out-of-school visits, walks, examinations and similar activities.
- Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and dispersal from the classroom for one reason or another.
- Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another.
- General assistance to the class teacher to the teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special Needs Assistants may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class or group of children).
- Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process.
- Engagement with parents of special needs pupils both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management.
- Other duties appropriate to the grade as may be determined by needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Special Needs Assistants may be reassigned to other work appropriate to the grade when special needs pupils are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise.

■ **Timeframe for Implementation**

The policy is implemented from September 2011

■ **Timeframe for Review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2013.

■ **Responsibility for Review**

The SEN Team and the school principal will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the _____ of _____.

Signed: _____, (Chairperson, BOM)

Scoil Ursula does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All Scoil Ursula policies are available for inspection in the school and on the Scoil Ursula Website www.scoilursula.com

Appendix 1

Student Profile

Biographical Details

Name:	Date of Birth:
Address:	Class:

Teacher:	Parents:
Outside Agencies/Professionals:	

Nature and Degree of SEN and how this affects Educational Development.
Assessed by:
Support Services:
Accommodations:

Present Level of Educational Performance

Formal Assessment			
Date	Test	Administered by	Outcome

Summary of Information from parents, student, class teacher, resource teacher etc.

Self-management skills:
Concentration:
Motivation:
Social and Interpersonal skills:
Self-esteem:
Language and Communication
<u>Oral Language</u>
<i>Receptive:</i>
<i>Expressive:</i>
<i>Pragmatic:</i>
<i>Listening Skills:</i>
Literacy Skills
<u>Reading</u>
<i>Visual Perception:</i>
<i>Auditory Perception:</i>
<i>Phonological Awareness:</i>

<i>Phonic Skills:</i>
<i>Sight Vocabulary:</i>
<i>Fluency:</i>
<i>Word Attack/Decoding Strategies:</i>
<u><i>Comprehension</i></u>
<i>Oral:</i>
<i>Written:</i>
<u><i>Spelling</i></u>
<u><i>Writing</i></u>
<i>Surface:</i>
<i>Content:</i>
<i>Process:</i>
<u><i>ICT Skills</i></u>
Mathematical Skills
<u><i>Computation:</i></u>
<u><i>Concepts:</i></u>

<u><i>Problem-solving:</i></u>
<u><i>Social:</i></u>
Motor Skills
<u><i>Gross:</i></u>
<u><i>Fine:</i></u>
<u>Access to Curriculum:</u>
<u>ICT:</u>
<u>Learning Style:</u>
<u>Attendance:</u>
<u>Hobbies and Interests:</u>

Abilities, Skills and Talents	Learning Needs
<u>Priority Learning Needs</u>	

Appendix 2
Scoil Ursula Staged Approach Report

Child's Name		
Date of Birth		
Class		
Background Information		
STAGE 1 (In-Class Support)	<u>CONCERNS</u>	<u>INTERVENTIONS</u>

	<u>CONCERNS</u>	<u>INTERVENTIONS</u>
STAGE 2 (School Support)		

	<u>CONCERNS</u>	<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>
<p>STAGE 3 (School Support Plus)</p>		

Additional Information	
-----------------------------------	--

Signed: _____

(Class Teacher)

(Support Teacher)

(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix 3

Dear _____,

As a result of our observations and the results of tests, we have formed the opinion that your child _____ would benefit from a programme of learning support. This may involve further Diagnostic Testing to ascertain the precise nature of your child's learning needs. The Learning Support is delivered in a variety of ways including individual and/or group Withdrawal, or individual and/or group In-Class Support.

If you wish your child to avail of this service please sign the consent form below and return it to the school at your earliest convenience.

Yours Sincerely,

Tony Gallagher, (Principal).

Please Detach

We/I give our/my consent to have our/my child _____ included in the Scoil Ursula Learning Support Programme. Please tick:

Yes

No

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4

SCHEME FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

Referral Form

Confidential and without Prejudice

*Please ensure that all the relevant parts of this form are completed.
A signed Consent Form MUST accompany this form, otherwise the referral cannot be accepted*

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Address:.....

Telephone Number - Home: **Work:**

Parents/Guardians:
.....

School Address:

School Tel No: **Roll No:**

Class Teacher: **Class:**

ATTENDANCE: *Number of days absent in previous and current school years* /

Comments:

.....

.....

MAIN REASON FOR REFERRAL: Learning Behavioural Emotional Other

Comments:.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name of Teacher completing this page:..... **Date:**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please complete the following in consultation with the child's parents/guardians:

Mother: *Father:*

Legal Guardian (1): *Legal Guardian (2):*

Family Size: *Boys:* *Girls:*

Position of child in family:

Have you ever had any concerns regarding your child's early development?

.....
.....

What concerns have you regarding your child at present?

.....
.....

Has your child ever been referred to a psychologist, psychiatrist, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, eye/ear specialist or other specialist? Yes No

If yes, please state the name(s) of the service(s) and date(s) of attendance:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Is there any other significant information which you as parents/guardians feel should be included, e.g. problems at home, behaviour, emotional trauma (such as bereavements), etc?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What are your child's special talents, hobbies, interests and achievements?

.....
.....
.....

Name of Teacher completing this page: *Date:*

EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

Name of Child:

Pre-school attended with dates:

Previous schools attended with dates:

Classes repeated:.....Size of present class:

Has this child received Classroom Support? Yes No If yes, please give details:

.....

Has this child been receiving School Support? Yes No If yes, please give details:

.....

How many times per week and for how long has the child been receiving School Support?

.....

How many children are in his/her School Support group?

Is there an Individual Profile and Learning Programme/School Support Plan or Behaviour Management Plan in place for this child? Yes No If yes, please attach to this form.

Name of learning support teacher:

If not included in an intervention plan, please give details of recent standardised test results administered in school:

Date of Test	Name of Test	Result

Please comment on the above:

.....

.....

Name of Teacher completing this page:

..... Date:

Please comment on the various aspects of the child's achievements, development and relationships as listed below:

	<i>Comments/observations/examples</i>
<i>Listening Skills</i>	
<i>Memory</i>	
<i>Concentration</i>	
<i>Oral Language</i>	
<i>Reading</i>	
<i>Handwriting</i>	
<i>Spelling</i>	
<i>Number</i>	
<i>Motor Development</i>	
<i>Relationship with Adults</i>	
<i>Relationship with Peers</i>	
<i>Behaviour in Class</i>	
<i>Behaviour in Playground</i>	
<i>Self-esteem</i>	

Name of Teacher completing this page:

..... **Date:**

Please add observations with regard to the child's difficulties and strengths whether learning, behavioural or emotional:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....

Please describe any additional interventions relating to the child's strengths and difficulties:

.....

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.....

Name of Teacher completing this page: Date:

**I have discussed the referral with 's
parents/guardians and have received permission and written consent for this
referral to be made.**

SIGNATURE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

.....

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL: *DATE:*

Appendix 5

SCHEME FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCPA)

Consent Form

1. Having discussed the matter with the school principal, I/we consent to the assessment of my/our daughter/son by a psychologist commissioned by the school and on the SCPA panel. I/we understand that the assessment may include an individual interview with my/our daughter/son and/or the administration of psychological tests by the psychologist.
2. I/we understand that the outcome of this assessment will be made known to me/us and to the principal and, where the principal considers it appropriate, to other relevant members of the school staff.
3. I/we consent to having a copy of my/our child's psychological report sent to the DES/NEPS. In consenting to this, the following applies -

The Minister for Education and Science, and his or her servants or agents, may hold and process information which has been gathered arising from the psychologist's work with your child. This may include, but not necessarily be limited to, referral information, results of any assessments, records of the work carried out by the psychologist and findings recorded by the psychologist. A summary of this information will be held in an electronic format. A person has a right under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 to apply for access to records containing this information. The information will be treated as confidential information or personal information, or both, for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Acts.

For the purposes of the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, the information will form part of the personal data of the Minister for Education and Science. The purpose of holding this information is to assist with the performance of assessment, which may include consultation with other relevant third parties, making of recommendations, case management and preparation of statistical information. The Minister for Education and Science may also supply all or part of the information to third parties as appropriate for these purposes. A person has a right to request a copy of the personal data relating to him or her which the Minister for Education and Science holds.

Psychological reports and information provided to the DES/NEPS under the scheme may be used by the DES/NEPS to monitor the quality of the service, to ensure the provisions of the scheme are being complied with, to enable it to consider the adequacy of educational provision in particular cases and/or to assess, plan and coordinate educational strategy and delivery in respect of children with special educational needs generally.

By signing this form, THE UNDERSIGNED consent to the collection and use of the information as described.

Name of Child: **Date of Birth:**

School: **Class/Year:**

Home Address:

Tel. No.:

IMPORTANT: The legal guardian(s) of the child should sign below

Mother or Legal Guardian (1)	Father or Legal Guardian (2)
Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:
Date:	Date:

Appendix 6

Scoil Ursula

Sligo

*Liaison with Other Agencies
Parental Consent Form*

Name of Student: *Date of Birth:*

Home Address:

.....

.....

Tel No:.....

School: *Year:*

I/we give my/our consent to the Principal of the above named school to receive from or pass on to, relevant reports and/or information on the above student to the following persons/agencies:

Health Service Executive and agents/professionals thereof.

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

Father:

Mother:

Legal Guardian:

Date:

Appendix 7

SEN Resources available for use in the school:

Reading Schemes:	Fuzzbuzz Wellington Square
Phonics Materials:	Phonological Awareness Training (PAT) Sounds Linkage SpellWrite
Language Programmes:	English Language Learners Kit Toe by Toe
Numeracy Programmes:	To be decided
I.C.T. Software:	Clicker 4 & 5 Accelread Accelwrite