

# SEN Policy



## Shronell NS

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## **Introductory Statement**

This SEN policy was updated by the staff of Shronell NS including Ms. Hickey, Ms. Kelly, Ms White and Ms Quinlan in May 2021 in response to the new SEN model that was rolled out in 2017. In addition, it was distributed to the parent's association and board of management of Shronell NS for review.

## **School Information**

Shronell NS endeavor to create a positive and inclusive atmosphere that respects all children, regardless of their religious, social, cultural background or special educational needs.

As a school, we aim to

- cultivate and cherish the individuality and uniqueness of each child;
- seek out and nurture their strengths thus developing a healthy self- esteem and thereby enabling them to experience a full and happy childhood.
- achieve the highest possible standard in each curricular area thus laying a solid foundation on which to build in the future.
- develop in pupils an appreciation of the arts and an awareness of the beauty of the world around them and of their responsibility in its preservation and conservation.
- awaken the pupils a sense of belonging to, respect for, responsibility towards and pride in the members of their family, their school and their community.

## **Rationale**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- cater for the enrolment of pupils with special education needs in a mainstream setting
- to have a common approach to the education and inclusion of children with special needs
- to streamline the provision of special needs support in the school
- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our SEN procedures and practices.
- outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school.
- comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act, 2000)
- fulfil DES circular 0013/17 -Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and new 2017 Guidelines for

Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools).

## **Aims of the Policy**

This policy aims to outline our procedures and practices of how we:

- identify additional needs that our pupils may have
- allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of children with additional needs
- divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to pupils with additional needs
- track, monitor, review and report on the progress of children with additional needs
- communicate information between the SET team, principal, staff and parents/guardians
- will endeavour to provide pupils of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education
- enrol children with special needs in our school
- carry out our approach to teaching/ learning in relation to pupils with special educational needs
- to assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school

## **Enrolment of children with identified special education needs (Refer to enrolment policy)**

The Board of Management will consider the following factors in enrolling of a special needs pupil and in assessing how best the school can address the needs of that pupil and his/her learning

1. 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.
2. Prior to the child's enrolment, the school will acquaint themselves with a child's special needs and whether these are categorised as "Critical Needs" (School support for a few) or if the child meets the criteria for Classroom support, School support or School Support Plus.
  - Meeting between parents/ principal/ class teacher/special needs staff and SENO as appropriate
  - Obtaining copies of reports, assessments etc from SENO, parents ....

- Contact with SENO, NEPS psychologist or other psychologist/ speech therapist/ occupational therapist/ referral from other Agency e.g. Brothers of Charity etc.
3. A decision will be reached whether the pupil will receive support at the level of Classroom Support, School Support or School Support Plus by teacher observation, parental input, reports furnished by professionals and other outside agencies.
  4. The following steps will ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school:
    - Parental visits to school
    - Pupil visits to school
    - Staff liaise with special schools/special units
    - Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act)
    - Liaison with SENO to arrange additional personnel, resources, training
    - Establish a “Buddy” system to support all pupils with special needs.
    - The school will conduct research on the Special Needs of the children and facilitate access to support programme such as The July Programme where applicable.
  5. 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 these e.g. access, toilets, supervision, administration of medicine, intimate care, course for SNA e.g. lifting techniques.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Board of Management:***

The BOM oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on SEN. They also ensure that adequate classroom accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided.

### ***Principal:***

The *Learning Support Guidelines (2000, P.39)* outline that the principal has overall responsibility for SEN procedures and practices in the school. The new allocation model states the principal’s leadership role is central and includes the following;

The school principal should

- Implement and monitor the school's Additional Needs policy on an on-going basis.
- 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
- assign responsibility for coordinating additional support to an identified teacher (i.e. SET)
- communicate with the SENO (Special Education Needs Organiser)
- oversee a whole school assessment and screening programme
- allocate time within the school timetable for the SET to plan and consult with teachers and parents
- inform staff about external agencies and provide information on continuing professional development in the area of SET
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress

***SEN Co-ordinator: ( In Shronell NS, the SENCO and SET is a combined role)***

SEN co-ordinator (SEN) should:

- communicate with the principal in relation to SEN matters on an on-going basis
- liaise with external agencies about the provision for pupils with additional needs
- liaise with the NEPS psychologist and class teachers to prioritise children for psychological assessments (NEPS)
- liaise with class teachers to identify, support and monitor children with additional needs
- co-ordinate regular SEN planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for children with additional needs
- collaborate with the teaching staff in creating timetables for additional support
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate the whole-school standardised testing at each class level
- co-ordinate the screening of pupils for additional support, using the results of standardised tests

- select children for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted
- oversee the tracking system of test results on password-protected Aladdin software to monitor the progress of pupils
- maintain lists of pupils who are receiving additional support

### ***Class Teacher:***

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** pupils in his/her class, including those selected for additional support. They should

- implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and, to the greatest extent possible, prevent the emergence of learning difficulties
- create a positive learning environment within the classroom
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SEN Class Co-ordinators to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- open a Pupil Support File once additional needs have been identified and require classroom support
- develop classroom support plans for children in receipt of Classroom Support
- collaborate with staff to develop student and school support files
  - meet with Special Education Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- collaborate with Special Education Teacher and relevant staff to develop an Student Support File (SSF) for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- regularly meet with Special Education Teacher, relevant staff to review SSFs
- meet regularly with Special Education Teacher, relevant staff and parents to review SSF
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- adjust the class timetable to ensure that children in receipt of supplementary teaching will not be absent for the same subject/activity during each session
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned

### ***Special Education Teacher (SET)***

The SET teacher should:

- familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of need
- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- collaboratively develop Student Support File (SSF) for each pupil selected for school support teaching with class teachers and other staff
- meet with class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- collaborate with class teachers and relevant staff to develop a Student Support File for each pupil in receipt of School Support Plus
- regularly meet with class teachers, relevant staff to review
- meet twice a year (Halloween and Easter) with class teachers, relevant staff and parents to review SSF
- update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- provide supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in-class support basis
- support whole-school procedures for screening
- administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- co-ordinate class groups and offer advice and support to class teachers regarding pupils on their caseload
- discuss the needs and progress of children on their caseload at planning meetings
- provide necessary information to a SEN pupil's receiving school once a transfer letter has been received

### ***Special Needs Assistants:***

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills and under the direction of the principal/class teachers, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN pupils to which they have been assigned. (Circular 10/76).

The SNA should

- support the needs of pupils in effectively accessing the curriculum
- contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the pupils
- support learning and teaching in the classroom
- attend, where possible, training courses/workshops provided by the BOM

- attend SSF meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary
- ensure the safety of the SEN pupils in the schoolyard, and be present for the duration of the yard breaks along with the teachers on duty
- maintain a record of support provided to their SEN pupil
- accompany SEN pupil to supplementary lessons when appropriate

### ***Parents/Guardians:***

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own children have much to contribute to their child's learning.

Parent/Guardian should:

- share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage
- support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning
- attend meetings arranged by the class teacher or SET team
- support the targets outlined in their child's support plans and engage in all suggested home-based activities
- inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage

### ***Pupils:***

Pupils who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should, as appropriate:

- be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term learning targets
- become familiar with the targets that have been set for them
- develop 'ownership' of the skills and strategies that are taught during supplementary teaching and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning
- contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment

## **Identifying Pupils with Additional Needs**

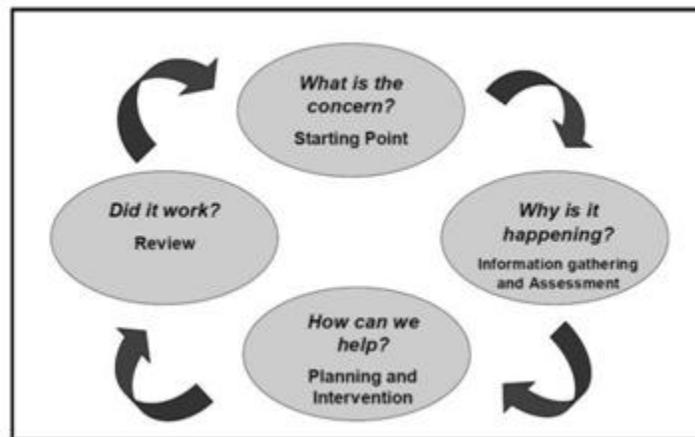
### **Continuum of Support**

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support children with additional needs. Like this framework, we recognise that

special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and that pupils require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs. By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

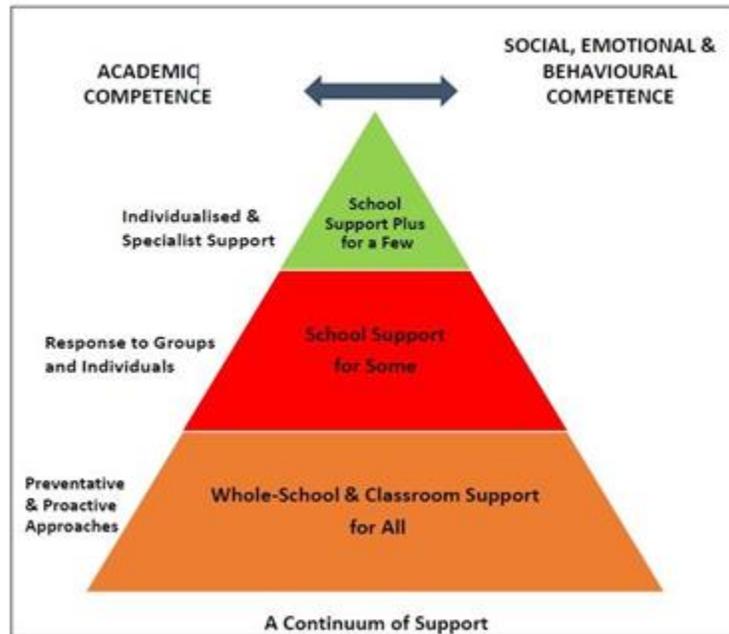
The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables us to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual pupils.

This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

**The Continuum of Support suggests the following levels of support:**



***As per circular 13/2017, the following guidelines are taken into account when identifying pupils with additional needs:***

- Standardised tests can be used to screen and identify pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. Those pupils performing below the 10th percentile should be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Pupils who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment, and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. Schools should also take into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.
- Pupils with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Pupils who have specific learning disabilities.
- Pupils with significant Special Educational Needs. For example, pupils with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These pupils need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.

- Schools should also carefully consider the needs of other pupils who may present with a range of learning whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the pupils' learning and ability to access the curriculum.
- Pupils who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those pupils who need additional English Additional language Support.

### ***STAGE 1 CLASSROOM SUPPORT***

Classroom Support is the most common, and typically the first response to emerging needs. It is a response for pupils who have distinct or individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are **additional to or different** from those required by other pupils in their class. Problem-solving at this level typically begins when a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil. The teacher and parents discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. Classroom Support incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs.

### ***STAGE 2 SCHOOL SUPPORT***

In some cases, interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the pupil's special educational needs. School Support may, therefore, be required. The class teacher needs to involve the Special Education Teacher in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a School Support Plan.

Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of the SEN of certain children

A teacher can 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 (reference: Identifying Children with Special Needs by Glynis Hannell)
- Infant profiling, Reasoning test
- The agreed screen measures that are used in the school are Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST), MICRA-T, SIGMA-T, Drumcondra Spelling Test, Dyslexia Portfolio
- Parents are kept informed of progress and of concerns. If a test is to be administered, parents will be informed.

- The SET will choose a test and will discuss and interpret results with the class teacher with a view to devising appropriate intervention.
- If concern remains after a number of reviews, the Special Education Teacher in the School may be consulted about the desirability of a move to Stage 3.
- If diagnostic testing indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this is arranged. Class teacher and SET collaborate in devising, implementing and reviewing the pupil's learning plan. Parents will be kept informed and their opinions sought.
- The school, through the SET/Class teacher/Principal will seek parental consent in writing, for further diagnostic testing by SET.
- Sensitivities of parents can be addressed in various ways - *e.g. Early contact with parent to explain how learning support can address their child's learning needs, a meeting or a standard letter*

There is a standard consent form, which is sent to parents to seek consent for their child to receive additional support, in use in the school. There is a section to indicate refusal of service. Refusals are recorded and kept on file.

The screening tests in use in the school are:

- Dyslexic Screening Test, Dyslexia Profile, Checklists, Quest Screening & Diagnostic Tests

SET administers and interprets results in consultation with the class teacher and Principal. In planning to meet the special educational needs of pupils, the school will plan, in a manner consistent with the size of the school, the learning profile of the pupils with special educational needs, and the expertise of the school staff.

As stated in Circular 13/17, the over-riding principle is that "schools will have greater certainty as to the resources that will be available to them to provide additional teaching support, to support the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs on an on-going basis..... The new model will provide greater level of autonomy for schools in how to manage and deploy additional teaching support within their school, based on the individual learning needs of pupils, opposed to being primarily based on a diagnosis of disability.

In order to support schools in how they should identify and provide for the learning needs of pupils, this Circular is being accompanied by Guidelines for Schools on the organisation, deployment and use of special education teachers to address the need of pupils with special educational needs." (SEE ATTACHED)

The following factors will be considered in order to achieve optimum use of allocated SEN hour Interventions with pupils will be delivered in a manner that best meets the needs identified, which may be through group or individual teaching.

- Intervention with pupils at School Support for a few may include a classroom support plan to ensure that the pupils' needs are met for the whole of the school
- The development of literacy and numeracy skills will be a major component of many interventions at stages II and III. However, special educational needs in areas such as oral language, social interaction, behaviour and application to learning tasks may also need to be addressed

### **STAGE 3 SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS**

If a pupil's special educational needs are **severe and/or persistent**, they are likely to need intensive support. School Support Plus will generally involve personnel outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from Classroom and School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level. Classroom support and school support will continue to be an important element of his/her individual education plan.

The flow diagrams below outline how we gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs. A more comprehensive explanation of each stage can be in the Continuum of Support – Guidelines for teachers

If an assessment by an outside specialist is sought, parents will be consulted and their written permission is sought. A parent is free to seek private assessment but is responsible for its costs.

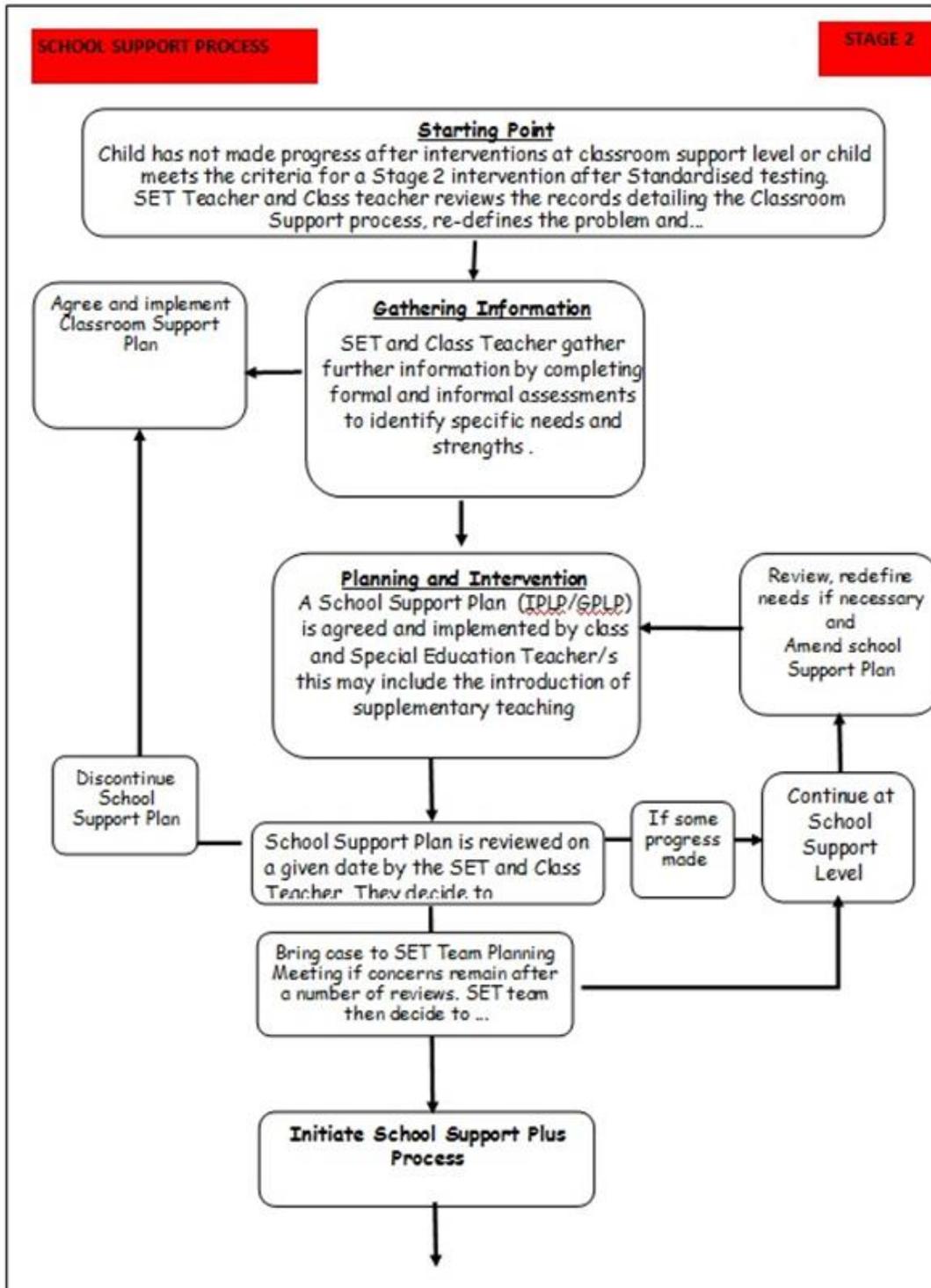
It is the responsibility of the Principal teacher in consultation with the class teacher and the SET to make the referral and to liaise with the specialist

Assessment will take place in the SET room and/or classroom

[https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps\\_special\\_needs\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf)

\* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 12 - 15 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

\* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 22 - 25 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

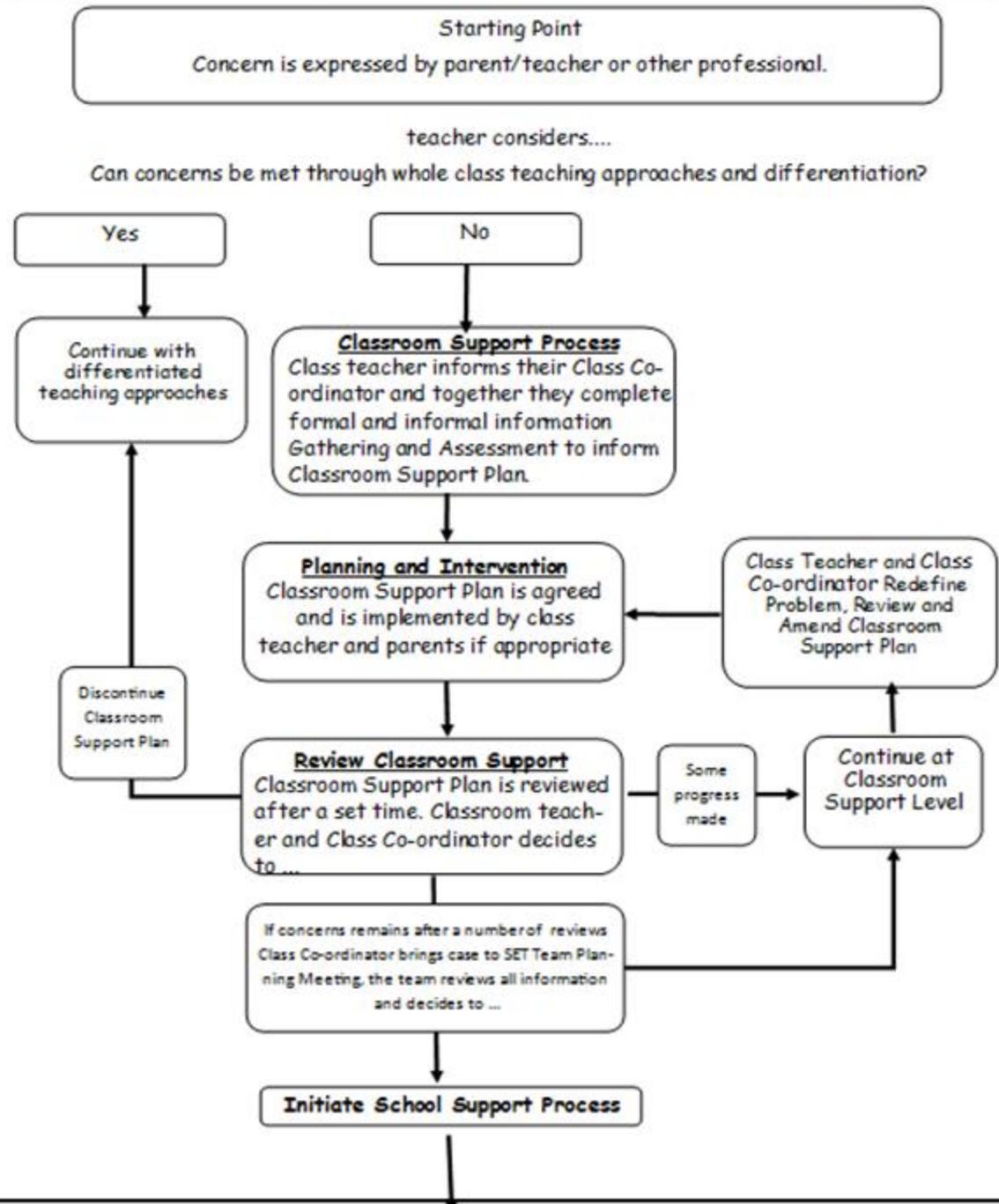


\* adapted from NEPS Continuum of Support. For more detailed steps see page 32 - 35 of the continuum of support - Guidelines for teachers

\*\*\*While most pupils' initial needs should be met through classroom based interventions, a small number of pupils may arrive at school with difficulties that are more significant or which are immediately recognised. In such cases, it may be more appropriate to begin with a School Support or School Support Plus Plan. Most of the pupils to whom this applies will be new to the school. However it may also apply for some pupils following an event which impacts significantly on them in school.\*\*\*

**CLASSROOM SUPPORT PROCESS**

**STAGE 1**



**Drafting and implementing School Support Files (for pupils at School Support Plus on Continuum) see Chapters 2 and 3, Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, NCSE.**

An SF will include the following:

- Learning strengths: based on teacher observation, parent observations, SNA observation and a self profile
- Learning needs: based on psychological report, teacher input, parental input, pupil input
- Learning targets (there is an agreed format in use throughout the school)
- The IEP covers a period of 5 – 6 months and is reviewed twice a year .

Student Support Meetings:

- The SET and class teacher have responsibility for co-ordinating the SSF.
- Parents, teachers, SNAs, outside specialists etc are involved in the preparation of the SSF
- The principal attends the initial SSF review in the first term
- The pupil may be involved in the preparation of the SSF depending on his/her ability for example discussion with child, checklists, “My Thoughts on School”
- A copy of the plan is available to the SET, class teacher, principal and parents/guardians. A copy of the updated SSF will be provided to parents.
- Progress is reviewed informally on an ongoing basis and formally bi-annually.

The SET in conjunction with the class teacher and principal is responsible for ongoing consultation with psychologists, SENO and other professionals.

The education plans move with the children from class to class and relevant information is shared between staff, school and parents.

## **Inclusion**

- The practical steps that are in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included as fully as possible in the life of the school and the classroom include: group work, mixed ability groups, interest groups, alternating seating arrangements, paired reading, Team-building exercises, sensory equipment, art display, whole school project work, buddy system, SPHE classes, drama activities, peer tutoring, social integration tasks, classroom management skills.
- The ethos of the school supports inclusiveness in many ways, and a cross-curricular approach is vital to inclusiveness.

### Collaboration and Communication

The arrangements that are in place to facilitate collaboration between those involved in the child's education are as follows:

- Meetings of school personnel with regard to special needs take place inside and outside of school hours.
- Homework for special needs pupils is only assigned in collaboration with the class teacher and SET. To avoid homework overload, the pupil's diary is brought to the learning support room each day where homework is entered and checked by the class teacher before class homework is given. No written homework is given by the SET.
- Specific arrangements for formal consultations with outside agencies are as follows:
  - Meetings are arranged around principal release days and accommodate an agreed time for meeting with parents.
  - There are arrangements for supervision put in place if a class teacher is involved.

### Resources

- The resources available in the school include sensory equipment, sand timers, adapted PE equipment, reference books, educational software, board games, social games, special furniture, laptop for child's own use, ear muffs.
- The Board of Management and staff are responsible for sourcing and acquiring additional resources.
- All staff are aware of where these resources are stored and maintained. There is shared responsibility among the staff.

### Transfer to post-primary

- The procedures that assist a smooth transition for pupils with special needs to post primary education include Moving on Up! Board game, supplementary visit to the school with parent and resource teacher, S. P.H.E Lessons, addressing concerns as they arise, visits from past pupils.
- Specific education targets are included in the SSF to cover the transition period. Where deemed necessary, a formal assessment by the NEPS psychologist is carried out prior to the transition.
- The principal/SET meets with the principal/resource teacher of the secondary school.
- Information transferred includes an oral report on progress both socially and academically and an end of year written report to the secondary school principal and SET by way of the NCCA Education Passport.

## Other related policies

Some aspects of this policy may impact upon other policies in the school. For example,

1. The Code of Behaviour/Anti Bullying Policy of Shronell National School recognises and takes into account the special needs in the area of behavioural and emotional difficulties.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement of Shronell National School recognises the possible need for intimate care and toileting of children with special needs and has a policy in place.
3. The school's curricular and organisational policies and plans take into account the needs of pupils with SEN. *e.g. differentiation of content and methodologies in curriculum areas*

## Information Gathering and Assessment

Assessment is part of what a class teacher does on a daily basis for all children. Some methods include self-assessment, questioning, teacher observation, portfolios of work and teacher-designed tasks and tests. The information gathered enables the teacher to plan learning experiences based on the appropriate objectives from the curriculum.

In order to identify pupils who may require supplementary teaching, screening; including standardised testing, is carried out in all classes annually and further diagnostic testing may need to take place. The information gathered from these formal assessments is then used to inform decisions for support and pupil's support plans.

### **Assessment and Screening Tests:**

In our school we carry out the following assessment procedures:

- Junior Infants: ·

Senior Infants: Observation, Checklists, MIST, Reasoning Test

- 1st class: Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, Drumcondra Spelling Test
- 2nd class: Observation, Checklists Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT, Drumcondra Spelling Test
- 3rd class: Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT, Drumcondra Spelling Test
- 4th class Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT, Drumcondra Spelling Test
- 5th class: Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT, Drumcondra Spelling Test
- 6th class: Observation, Checklists, Micra T, Sigma T, NNRIT, Drumcondra Spelling Test

As a school, we also carry out the NNRIT across classes 2nd- 6th every second year in the second term.

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. Therefore we may deviate from the above list prior to the review date.

## **Inventory of Test Materials**

### **Screening Tests**

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)
- Micra-T
- Drumcondra Spelling Test
- Sigma-T
- New Non- Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT)
- Dyslexia Screening Test (DST – J)

In our school the following tests are available for administration:

- Jackson Phonics Test
- Bangor Dyslexia Test
- Schonell Reading Test
- Two Peas Phonological Awareness Assessment
- Non-Word Reading Test
- Single Word Spelling Test
- NEPS Word Test
- Early Literacy Test
- Jolly Phonics Assessment

## **Prevention and Early Intervention Strategies**

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
- Provision of additional support in language development and any relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to pupils who need it.
- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of pupils in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Close collaboration and consultation between the class teacher and the SET.

- Promotion of literacy e.g. Print-rich environment, Guided Reading Literacy Programme, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), USSR(Uninterrupted, Sustained Silent Reading)
- Promotion of Numeracy e.g. [www.mathsisfun.com](http://www.mathsisfun.com), [www.topmarks.co.uk](http://www.topmarks.co.uk), [www.sumdog.com](http://www.sumdog.com), mangahigh.com, bebras.co.uk, teachingtime.co.uk, scoil.net, teachingtables.co.uk, Active Brains, Maths Week, Maths Games (in groups)
- Parental involvement in promoting literacy and numeracy e.g. Homework Policy Guidelines for Parents and websites previously mentioned
- Differentiation - adapting the learning environment.
- In-class support from the SET team.
- Team Teaching/Aistear.
- Withdrawing individuals/groups.
- Guided reading
- 1-2-1 CT- student support

## **Meeting the Needs and Allocating Resources**

### **Deployment of Staff**

The school 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 by a combination of withdrawal and in-class support, by group work, by working individually with the SNA, by staff being aware of the specific needs of the child and enabling the child to cope with school life and achieving an increased level of independence.

Once pupils' needs have been identified, Special Education Teachers (SETs) are deployed to address these needs as required. We deploy the SET in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet pupils' needs. We aim to strike a balance between in-class support, group and individual support while ensuring that the needs of children with additional needs are met inclusively.

Importantly, the level and type of support reflect the specific targets of individual pupils as set out in their support plans and are informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. In this way, following a period of intervention, some pupils may no longer require additional teaching supports; some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive supports.

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. Importantly, those with **the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support**. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development, motor skills and application to learning.

The SET regularly meets class teachers and parents if possible to review children's needs, the resources in place and progress made using the continuum of support problem solving model of assessment and stage approach flow charts. As a team, we review all support and allocate resources for the subsequent term. When relevant, we 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.

### **Student Support File**

We use a Student Support File to plan interventions and to track a pupil's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates us in documenting progress and needs over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to pupils, in line with their level of need. Our Student Support File is based on the NEPS template and is stored on the school server, Aladdin.

All support files should include:

- Cover sheet with pupil's details
- A timeline of actions
- Record of support received
- Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores
- Support plans (See below)
- Checklists

### ***See selection process tables***

A class teacher or class coordinator should open a Student Support File once a child is placed on Stage 1 –Classroom Support on the continuum. This is stored digitally on the server in Pupil Records and a paper copy is stored in the class teacher's assessment folder and SEN filing cabinet stored in SENCO's room. At the end of the year, a copy of the information gathered is moved to the Child's SEN file in the SENCO's filing cabinet.

If, after a number of reviews, the child's case is moved to School Support, this information is then transferred to an orange folder and into the child's SEN file in the SENCO's room. It is the responsibility of the class teacher and the allocated SET to access and update the information in the Student Support File. The same system is in place for children on School Support Plus.

## **Support Plans**

We use three different support plans for the three stages of support on the Continuum of Support.

### ***Stage 1 – Classroom Support***

A Support Plan at stage 1 is a **Classroom Support Plan**. (CSP) This is a simple plan which is drawn up by the Class Teacher in collaboration with the SET which outlines the pupil's additional educational needs and the actions, including individualised teaching and management approaches, which will be taken to meet the pupil's needs. The plan may also include home-based actions to be taken by the pupil's parents to support their child's development. The Classroom Support Plan should include a review date. This could be at the end of a school term.

### ***Stage 2 – School Support***

A Support Plan at stage 2 is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed SET teacher. It will set out the nature of the pupil's learning difficulties, define specific teaching, learning and behavioural targets and set a timescale for review. The plan should, for the most part, be implemented within the normal classroom setting and complimented by focused school based intervention programmes. Depending on the nature of the needs and on the school context, additional teaching might be within a small group or individual or a combination of both either in class or on a withdrawal basis. Home-based actions may also be included. After the plan has been drawn up, it should become a working document through the careful monitoring of the pupil's response to the actions taken.

### ***Stage 3 – School Support Plus***

A Support Plan at stage 3 is drawn up by the class teacher and appointed Special Education Teachers, in consultation with the child's parents/guardians, professionals external to the school and (if appropriate) the child based on the information gathered. It will set out;

- The nature and degree of the pupil's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the pupil's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the pupil
- The special educational needs of the pupil
- The special education and related support services to be provided to the pupil to enable the pupil to benefit from including:
  - Strategies for supporting the pupil's progress and inclusion in the classroom setting

- Individual and/or small group/special class interventions/programmes
- Specific methodologies/programmes to be implemented
- Specific equipment/materials and/or IT supports, if required to support learning and access to the curriculum
- Support required from a Special Needs Assistant (SNA), if appropriate
- The goals which the pupil is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months
- The pupil's priority learning needs, long and short term targets to be achieved, the monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place

SSF meetings are coordinated by the SET. Parents will be invited to at least two out of three meetings depending on the needs of the child. Any additional meeting required either by the SET or the parent can be facilitated also.

## **SEN Records**

### Record Keeping

- The school support files, psychological reports, standardised and diagnostic test results, correspondence from SENO and other outside agencies are all stored in a locked filing cabinet. Written parental and child involvement in the SSF process are also kept in their file. A log book of incidents relating to care needs and health and safety is kept by the SNA/class teacher.
- The class teacher, resource teacher, SENO, psychologist, inspector, parents, SNA, have access to these records on a need to know basis.
- The hard copies of the information are kept in a locked cabinet in the school while the electronic copies are password protected.
- The records are retained for nine years after the end of sixth class. This is covered in the school's policy on record keeping.
- The class teacher, SNA, SET and principal have responsibility for contributing to a child's file.

### ***Individual SEN Files***

All pupils' SEN files are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office. It is the responsibility of the SET to update and manage the files of the children on school support and school support plus that they support. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to update and manage the SEN files of children on classroom support. The following should be stored

- Student Support File
- Psychological Report
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies

- Copy of reports from outside agencies
- Record of SEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter- school meetings
- Record of SEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff

### **Whole Class SEN Files**

Whole class SEN records are stored in a folder in a locked filing cabinet in the office room. It is the responsibility of the SEN Class Coordinators to manage and update these. The following should be stored in these black, whole class SEN folders:

- End of Term Needs Analysis record sheets
- Whole class test results (SIGMA – T, MICRA – T, NNRIT)
- SEN children in receipt of interventions record sheets

### ***Communication between SET Team/Principal/Class Teachers***

Staff are afforded the opportunity to attend pupils support planning meetings, care team meetings, Team Teaching Planning Meetings, SEN Class Coordinator meetings and SEN consultation/planning/review meetings, when necessary by teachers being flexible in supervising classes to allow such meetings to take place. Due to the fact that we are a small school, many of these meetings take place outside of school time.

### **Health and Safety Issues**

Every staff member and pupil is entitled to a safe, secure environment and to be treated with due respect. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of each pupil with SEN. When a place is offered to a child with SEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the child is entitled are in place as soon as possible. Staff members will be informed of any potential risks and, where necessary, individual plans will be drawn up and implemented.

### **Supervision/Child Protection (see Child Safeguarding Statement )**

- Where pupils receive support on a one-to-one basis, the SET teacher is responsible for ensuring that both themselves and the pupil are visible through the glass panel in the door.
- Where there is no glass panel, the door of the room should remain open.
- Where pupils are withdrawn for support, the SET teacher should collect and return children to their classrooms.

- Where a child has access to an SNA, they may withdraw the child from the class if a plan is in place with the class teacher.

### **Ratification and Communication**

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management in Shronell NS on the date below.

### **Implementation and Review**

This policy will be implemented from March 2019. It was reviewed in May 2021 by the Special Education Teacher and all staff at Shronell NS.

Signed: *Liam Vaughan*

Date: 26<sup>th</sup>- 05 - 21

(Chairperson)