



LUCAN EDUCATE TOGETHER

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SUPPORT POLICY

Ethos:

Our school embraces an inclusive ethos which promotes and fosters the acceptance of all differences and encourages each child to reach their full potential. In line with this ethos our learning support policy has been developed to ensure that the children of Lucan Educate Together who are in need of additional support in relation to their learning needs receive an equal opportunity to access the curriculum as fully as possible and thereby develop to their full potential as members of the school community.

Principles:

We believe that effective learning support programmes are based on the following principles:

- Collaboration of the whole school community to ensure a continuum of support
- Promotion of a positive learning environment.
- Provision of early intervention strategies.
- Provision of additional resources to pupils in line with their needs.
- Regular monitoring and review of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) programmes.

Aims of Learning Support:

- To identify children with additional learning needs.
- To provide the necessary support to these children.
- To enable pupils with additional learning needs to access the curriculum as fully as possible.
- To provide a structure which promotes a collaborative approach to meeting these needs.
- To develop and promote positive self-esteem and a positive attitude towards learning in these students.

Aims of the Policy:

- To outline the roles and responsibilities of those involved in this process of providing supplementary support to children with additional learning needs.
- To inform the staff and wider school community of procedures to follow if they have a concern about any child's progress in learning.
- To inform the school community of organization and structure of SEN in our school.
- To outline approaches and interventions to be used in supporting each child with an additional need in order to establish an agreed and coordinated whole school approach.

These aims will be realised through the provision of a "Continuum of Support." (see NEPs document 'Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support'. This has been designed in order to identify and provide appropriate and focused support at three different levels: (1) Classroom (2) School and (3) School Plus. The Continuum is designed to be progressed along according to each child's level of need. This process will begin with the identifying of a concern and proceed to the gathering of information and assessment of this concern. A plan of intervention and support will be put in place and reviewed regularly in order to assess its effectiveness.

The Continuum of Support:

Level 1/ Classroom Support:

Assessment:

Assessment is an integral and regular component of all classrooms in our school. Assessment methods used to identify strengths and needs include consultation with parents, early years screening tests, formative curriculum based assessment, checklists and ongoing observation. Classroom assessment tools which may be used include:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios of work
- Project work
- Class homework
- Standardised tests
- Discrepancies between class work and the standardized test results.

Some of these assessment tools will be used to supplement information from the standardised tests used in the course of the school year e.g. Middle Infant Screen Test (MIST), Sigma T, Drumcondra Reading Test.

Planning:

Where specific learning needs are identified a classroom support plan will be drawn up by the class teacher. As far as possible, this will include taking the pupil's views into account. This plan will be simple, achievable, and workable. Its details will be discussed with the pupil's parents. It will be reviewed on a termly basis. This review will focus on progress, the effectiveness of the strategies agreed, identifying current

needs and setting new targets and strategies, if considered necessary. The classroom teacher will keep a record containing results of assessment, classroom support plans and reviews.

Methodologies / Teaching Arrangements:

In each classroom, access to the curriculum is provided for as fully as possible. Appropriate differentiation is made in terms of delivery and response depending on the range of needs in the class.

Careful consideration is given to the teaching, learning and social environment of the classroom including the rules, routines, rewards and consequences employed in this setting. (Assessing how these may reduce or create barriers to learning for individual pupils).

Flexible grouping arrangements within the classroom are employed to facilitate differentiated approaches, to encourage skill development and to provide peer support where appropriate. Consideration is given to the use of specialised software and programmes for groups and individuals where appropriate.

Numeracy and Literacy carousels will take place within all mainstream classrooms with support from members of the SET. This support could be on a weekly or fortnightly basis and will be reviewed each term based on the needs of each specific class.

Roles and Responsibilities:

At the [classroom support level](#) of the continuum, the **class teacher** has primary responsibility for the progress of all the pupils in his/her class. This responsibility involves:

- Identifying and designing any classroom based accommodations/modifications to reduce barriers to learning for a pupil.
- Providing pupils who are experiencing difficulties with strategies for literacy (e.g. reading, spelling), numeracy (e.g. problem solving in maths) and other specific areas (e.g. social and behavioural needs).
- Delivering and reviewing differentiated individualised or group programmes /interventions within the classroom.
- Consulting with parents, and where appropriate, the pupil and other school personnel in relation to this process.
- Drawing up a [classroom support plan](#) in collaboration with the parents and, where possible, taking into account the pupils views. This plan can take the form of individual or group differentiation.
- Retaining a file containing results of assessments, classroom support plans and reviews.

The Review Process:

An ongoing review of classroom support actions will involve the class teacher, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil. This will take place via parent/teacher meetings and end of year reports. This will focus on and may also include:

- The pupil's response to learning/behavior interventions
- Progress made by the pupil
- The effectiveness of the actions taken
- Suggested next steps

The Outcome of the Review Process may be:

(A) THE PUPIL CONTINUES TO HAVE A [CLASSROOM SUPPORT PLAN](#).

If the parents and teacher consider that the pupil is making progress towards the targets set but has not fully achieved them, it may be decided to continue with the same plan. Further review will then take place to ensure progress is maintained and achieved.

If however the parents and teacher consider that the pupil's progress towards the targets set is less than expected, the reasons for this will be considered. If necessary a revised Classroom Support Plan will be drawn up. A date for a further review will then be agreed.

If progress remains satisfactory after a number of reviews by the teacher and parents, no further Classroom Support Plans may be necessary. Strategies which have been helpful may now be a routine part of the approach used with the child.

(B) [SCHOOL LEVEL OF SUPPORT](#) IS INITIATED

If after reviews and adjustments to the Classroom Support Plan, it is agreed that the pupil is still not making adequate progress (or, in relation to standardised test results, the child falls below the 10th percentile) it may be necessary to move on to the next level of support i.e. initiating a [school support plan](#).

The Continuum of Support:

Level 2/ School support:

Assessment / Planning:

At this level of support, assessment and planning will take into account, and build on the outcomes of Classroom Support Plans.

- The children who fall below the 10th percentile in standardised tests or whom particular concerns have been expressed about will attend LRST for additional testing which may include some of the following Diagnostic tests:
 - Belfield Infant Assessment Programme (BIAP) - (Junior Infants)
 - Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA) (1st to 6th)
 - NRIT (Non –Reading Intelligence Test. 1st to 6th class)
 - Early Literacy Test (Senior infants-Third or for children who cannot do the NARA)
 - The Aston Index (including Schonell Graded reading and spelling test)
 - PHAB (Phonological Awareness Battery)
 - Jackson Phonics Skills Test
 - Teacher designed assessments for example of Miscue Analysis, Writing and Reading Comprehension, spelling assessments etc.
- Based on the results of these Tests, a more detailed analysis of the strengths and needs of an individual child can be made. At the beginning of the academic year an appropriate learning programme or School Support Plan, will be drafted collaboratively in order to have provisional programmes of learning and specific learning targets in place for each child, in order that they access the curriculum as fully and appropriately as possible.

Methodologies and Teaching Arrangements:

- At the school level of support, adaptations to the physical, learning and social and emotional environment of the classroom are made in accordance with the needs of the pupil and strategies identified in the School Support Plan. These could include consideration of seating arrangements, organisation of materials, visual supports, provision of work stations, access to concrete materials, peer support etc.
- Grouping arrangements will be used flexibly within the class/across a number of classes. This will often involve in-class support, and team teaching in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- The pupil may receive additional support outside of the class where flexible individual and small group approaches are used to promote skill development and independent learning. This maybe one to one support depending on the needs of the child.
- Specialist software, targeted time-limited interventions/programmes, special equipment and different materials may be used.
- Pupil and parent involvement in the plan will be clearly outlined and agreed.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The class teacher will continue to take responsibility for:

- Working with the pupil on a daily basis and using differentiation and accommodations within class.
- Meet with the pupil's parents and the Special Education Team (SET), if deemed necessary, to discuss how best to support the child's needs.
- Meet with the SET to discuss how the pupil's class programme and School Support programme can be linked in order to achieve the agreed learning targets in the pupil's School Support Plan.
- Implementing any classroom based accommodations and delivering differentiated individualised or group programmes/interventions identified in the School Support planning process.
- Contributing to the review process of the support plan.

At this level, the SET will take responsibility for:

- Making parents aware of the concerns of the school about their child's progress.
- Seek consent from the pupil's parents to proceed with a School Support Plus or School Support programme for the pupil.
- Outline the support that is being offered to the child e.g. they will be withdrawn for supplementary teaching in Literacy twice a week in a group.
- Developing a Support Plan for each pupil who receives supplementary teaching support. This will be done in consultation with the class teacher, (and special needs assistant (SNA) where appropriate).
- Consulting with class teachers in order to agree and draw up a timetable of when the child will receive learning support (and in what form/setting this will take place).
- Maintaining a regular planning and progress record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support with the Support Plans.
- Providing additional advice to the class teacher about pupils who have specific learning or behavioural needs.
- Being available to meet with the parents of each pupil who is in receipt of learning support to discuss targets and ways in which attainment of the targets can be supported at home.
- Reviewing the pupil's attainment of agreed targets with class teacher.
- Planning each instructional term in consultation with class teacher.
- Revising the pupil's support plan with the class teacher.
- Consulting with class teachers on the identification of pupils who may need further diagnostic assessment.
- Carrying out, if necessary, further diagnostic assessments and entering results on the Support Plan.
- Researching the pupil's specific learning difficulty and, based on this, developing a suitable programme of work for the child.
- Contributing to the development of policy on support at the whole school level.

- Contributing at the school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resources, books and materials to be made available to pupils with specific learning needs in their classrooms and in the SET rooms.

More generally, the SET will take the responsibility for:

- Co-ordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching.
- Liaising with the school staff regarding any concerns that they may have about a particular child in their class.
- Collaborating with the principal teacher and meet with him / her at least once each school term to discuss issues relating to the development and implementation of the school support plans.
- Researching and ordering appropriate diagnostic tests for the school, and collate results for records.
- Seeking advice from relevant professionals on the most appropriate diagnostic assessments for pupils who have been identified as having a specific learning need.

Review Process:

- A key element of providing successful support at the school level is a very high degree of consultation and co-operation between the class (teacher and SNA) and the SET. Central to this collaboration is the development, implementation and review of the School Support Plan. Appropriate consultation will be achieved through regular meetings and termly meetings of the SET and through informal consultation as the need arises.
- Close monitoring of the ongoing progress of each pupil in relation to agreed learning targets and the short-term objectives that arise from them, will also be important. From this, observations and progress will be recorded on a weekly basis.
- Finally, the progress of each pupil will be recorded at the end of each term and recorded in the pupil's support plan.

The outcome of the review process may be:

(A) THE PUPIL CONTINUES TO HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL PUPIL SUPPORT PLAN.

If the staff (and parents) consider that the pupil is making progress towards the targets set but has not fully achieved them, it may be decided to continue with the same plan. Further review will then take place to ensure progress is maintained and achieved.

If however they consider that the pupil's progress towards the targets set is less than expected, the reasons for this will be considered. If necessary a revised School

Support Plan will be drawn up. A date for a further review will then be agreed. If progress remains satisfactory after a number of reviews by the teacher and parents, no further School Support Plan may be necessary. Strategies which have been helpful may now be a routine part of the approach used with the child and can be incorporated into a more general classroom support plan.

(B) SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS LEVEL IS INITIATED

If after reviews and adjustments to the School Support Plan, the pupil is still not making sufficient progress it may be necessary to move on to the next level of support i.e. initiating a School Support Plus Plan.

The Continuum of Support:

Level 3/ School Support Plus:

Assessment:

If, having followed procedures as outlined at class and school support level, it is found that the child is not reaching expected targets/levels of progress or is not coping with the mainstream classroom setting, the school will, with parental consent, request the involvement of relevant external professionals in the assessment process. e.g. General Practitioner, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist (SLT), Occupational Therapist.

Planning:

Having received any additional assessment reports/ formal professional diagnosis of an SEN, then staff, parents and, where appropriate, relevant professionals, will meet to draw up a School Support Plus Plan. The pupil may be involved in this process as deemed appropriate. The School Support Plus Plan will be drawn up as per the guidelines of best practice provided by the Department of Education. The School Support Plus Plan, where appropriate, may incorporate social, emotional, behavioural and physical goals as well as academic ones and will provide an additional level of planning support for a child not an alternative to what has already been put in place at class and school levels. This will be done as soon as possible after assessments have been received and discussed.

Methodologies / Teaching Arrangements:

When the School Support Plus Plan has been drawn up and agreed upon, recommendations contained in the assessment report will be implemented as fully as possible. In some instances, a child with an School Support Plus Plan may be supported by an SNA or receive one to one allocated hours with the SET. If a staff member is working one-to-one with a child they will be mindful of the Child-Safeguarding statement and when possible will work in an open area e.g. the library. All classrooms have windows and all activities that take place are clearly visible from

outside the room. Where recommended, some additional modifications of the classroom/school environment may be needed to support the outcomes specified in the School Support Plus Plan. e.g. access to the O.T. and sensory rooms, access to I.C.T. and specialist software and equipment, chairs, writing boards etc. With reference to our ethos of inclusion, resource delivery will take place in a variety of settings such as in class, in a SET classroom in small groups or on a one to one basis depending on what is most appropriate.

The suitability/appropriateness and method of resource delivery will depend on the individual needs of the child, the subject areas, the time of day etc. This will be a collaborative decision made between relevant staff members while also taking parental consent into account.

Roles and Responsibilities:

As previously noted the class teacher will remain responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis, implementing classroom based accommodations and delivering some of the individualized interventions identified.

In consultation with the class teacher members of the SET will be responsible for the delivery and development of individualized or small group programmes in support of targets identified in School Support Plus Plan.

Where sanctioned a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will support the pupil as outlined in the school's SNA policy.

Outside agencies/professionals will contribute to meeting the needs of each child as and when appropriate to do so.

Review Process:

Ideally each School Support Plus Plan will be drawn up towards the beginning of every school year and reviewed on a termly basis as necessary. The school Principal is responsible for overseeing the review process in conjunction with the class teacher, SET, SNA, parents and, where appropriate, the child. Other outside agencies may provide support in individual cases e.g. Enable Ireland, Down Syndrome Ireland.

Consent to attend learning Support:

The delivery of Special Educational Support will be outlined in the school newsletter each September. Individual consent of parents will be sought for any children who are withdrawn for support. Parents will be made aware that additional support may be offered to their child for a short period of time if he / she is experiencing particular difficulty in a specific area of Numeracy and Literacy. No specific consent will be sought in this case.

Activity:	Date:
Reviewed:	
Ratified by Board of Management:	
Effective from:	
Next Review Date: *	

*** Unless reviewed at an earlier date if deemed necessary by a change in law, Department policy, or to reflect changing school circumstances.**

Signed: _____

Chairperson:

Signed: _____

Principal: