

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY GLASHEEN BOYS' SCHOOL

(January 2017)

Introduction

Our initial Special Educational Needs Policy was formulated by our teaching staff in 2002. All staff members, resource, learning support, class teachers and principal were involved. The Policy was discussed & further developed by the staff following the General Allocation of supports by Dept. of Education & Skills (DES), during the school year 2006/2007.

This policy was further updated by the Special Education Team in February 2010 and added to by the principal and staff. That Draft Policy was then discussed, accepted and ratified by the Board of Management in October 2010. This policy was further revised & reviewed in 2013 and on an ongoing basis, since then, with the latest review in January 2017.

Rationale

The Special Needs Policy was formulated

- To cater adequately and effectively for the enrolment of pupils with special educational needs, in a mainstream setting
- To ensure continuous liaison & consultation of the SEN (Special Ed Needs) & EAL (Language Support) teachers with class teachers & Principal
- To ensure the effective use of school resources for the benefit of children
- To facilitate home-school links with the parents of special needs children
- To fulfill our duties to each child; **those with particular strengths and those with particular challenges**, while complying with legislation & DES circulars.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

This policy reflects the characteristic spirit of Glasheen Boys' School, which aims to provide an appropriate education for each pupil and to enable them to develop educationally, emotionally and socially, in an inclusive, caring atmosphere and to reach their potential, regardless of their ability levels.

Aims

By introducing this Policy, Glasheen Boys' School aims

- To optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy, while in primary school. This will be provided in a positive school environment where the learning strengths of the individual pupils are recognised and will be achieved through a collaborative team approach involving the pupils themselves, the principal, class teachers, learning-support teachers, resource teachers, language support teachers and parents.
- To enable the children to participate, in as far as they are able, in the full curriculum for their class level
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- To set out procedures for the enrolment of SEN pupils in the school

- To involve parents in supporting their children through effective parent support programmes
- To foster collaboration and teamwork among all teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for pupils
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning
- To develop positive self-esteem & positive attitudes about school & learning
- To enable pupils to monitor their learning & become independent learners
- To establish a team approach including relevant outside support personnel – psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists etc.
- To cater for pupils who are exceptionally able or have particular strengths.

Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

Please refer to the School's Enrolment Policy.

Procedures for Identifying/Screening/Referral of Special Needs Children from within the School

Children with emerging SEN (Staged Approach to Special Educational Needs.....Circular 02/05)

Stage 1 A class teacher / parent may have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a pupil. The teacher will administer screening measures, which may include checklists & profiles for children in senior infants & 1st class, **standardised & norm referenced tests** for older children & **behavioural checklists** where appropriate.

The class teacher should then draw up a short simple plan for extra help within the normal classroom setting in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management. The success of the plan should be reviewed on a regular basis, with appropriate parental involvement. If certain concerns remain after approximately two terms, the special education support team in the school may be consulted about the desirability of a move to Stage 2.

Supports available for Stage 1: Home/School/Community Liaison

teachers, if it is deemed necessary, may be involved at this stage and in subsequent stages in supporting and advising the parents of children with difficulties in the school. Teachers may consult the **NEPS psychologist** (when possible), about their proposed learning or behavioural management plan.

Stage 2: In the case of children with learning difficulties, if the Stage 1 plan does not achieve the desired outcome, then the child should, with parental permission, be referred to the learning support team, for further diagnostic testing to determine the specific area of concern.

- If this diagnostic assessment indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, then this is arranged with the learning support team. Children with similar needs are grouped together and an individual profile and learning programme (I.P.L.P) is prepared for the group. The parents and the class teacher are involved with the learning support teachers in drawing up this learning plan. The class teacher and the learning support teacher will review

on a regular basis, in consultation with the parents, the rate of progress of each child receiving supplementary teaching. When the targets have been met, supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued.

- If significant concerns remain after a period of at least one school term, then it may be necessary to implement Stage 3. **In the case of children with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, with serious difficulties, more urgent action may be needed.** In these cases, the child's needs may be discussed with the NEPS psychologist, or referred for either public or private assessment, whichever is agreed as appropriate, following consultation between home & school. This may lead to a more detailed plan of behavioural management at home and in class and may lead to referral for further specialist assessment (Stage 3).

Supports available for Stage 2: The learning support service has been established in order to meet the needs of the children with learning difficulties in the area of English and Maths. In general, the service is provided for children from senior infants up, who score at or below the 12th percentile on standardized, norm referenced tests. Children who score at or below the 2nd percentile should be accorded a high priority for learning support and review.

- Other staff and services available to the school may assist with programme planning at this stage. Schools may also consult with the NEPS psychologist about diagnostic test results and about their proposed learning or behavioural management plans.

Stage 3: Pupils who continue to present with significant learning needs may require **more intensive intervention** at stage 3.

- The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist from outside the school in respect of children with learning difficulties and/or mild moderate behavioural problems who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or behavioural programme and of children with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from Psychologists, Speech & Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists etc.

- In consultation with these specialists, the resource teachers and class teachers then develop an **Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)** incorporating the identification of any additional resources considered necessary to implement the plan. Parents should be fully consulted throughout this process. This plan should be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning plan and referral for specialist review as necessary

- In the case of pupils identified at an early age, as having **very significant special educational needs, intervention at Stage 3 will be necessary, on their entry to school.** Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such pupils. Primary responsibility for the pupil will remain with the class teacher.

Supports available for Stage 3: A consultation may be requested from the NEPS psychologist or a private assessment may be commissioned.

Timetabling - The school operates a combination of a **withdrawal** system of support & a certain amount of **in-class support / station teaching**.

Timetabling is organized, with great care, to ensure that each child does not miss the same subject everyday and that he does not miss out on favourite subjects such as Visual Arts, P.E. etc. Consideration is also given during timetable planning to ensure that, in as far as is possible, classes with multiple withdrawals will be timetabled for the same period daily. It is also important that pupils with SEN are included, as fully as possible, in the life of the classroom and of the whole school.

Initiatives – We run several supportive initiatives and groups including Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Social Skills, Typing Skills, Station Teaching, Aistear, Maths for Fun, Ready Set Go Maths, Literacy Lift Off, Reading Recovery, Language Support, Guided Reading, Be Active ASAP. The school is also involved in several projects with UCC & Lifetime Lab, for example, Robotics, Visual Thinking Strategies, Science & Maths, as well as The Irish Centre for Talented Youth & Quizzes to All-Ireland Level.

Transfer to Post Primary School - When transferring to post primary school, following **consultation with parents**, the new school is made aware, if a pupil has SEN. The pupil can be helped in the following ways:

The class teacher or resource teacher could meet the SEN coordinator in the secondary school

The child could visit the secondary school and familiarise himself to some extent with the lay out of the building

New skills such as following a timetable, organising books for various subjects etc. could be built into his I.E.P. for the month of June.

Record Keeping - Records maintained on SEN pupils:

- Psychological assessments
- I.E.P. for children attending resource teachers
- I.P.L.P. for children attending learning support teachers
- Results of tests, standardised and diagnostic
- Parental permission forms

These records are updated on a regular basis and are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the learning support and resource teachers' rooms and in the Principal's office. Records are retained until the child is twenty one years old.

Roles and Responsibilities: Role of Board of Management

*Oversee development, implementation & review of school's SEN Policy

*To provide adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources for the support teachers

*To provide a secure facility for storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of support services.

Role of Principal.

The principal has overall responsibility for the school's SEN Policy. The principal should endeavour to:

- Work with the teacher assigned the duty to devise and update the SEN Policy (Ms. Sheila Clark, Deputy Principal)
- Monitor the implementation of the school's SEN Policy on an ongoing basis
- Liaise regularly with the learning support teachers and resource teachers
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme at the agreed time
- Monitor the selection of pupils for support.

Role of Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all the pupils in his/her class including those selected for Special Educational Support teaching. Therefore, in order to ensure the success of the Special Educational Needs Policy, in addition to creating a classroom environment in which learning difficulties can be alleviated, the class teacher must be involved with the support teachers in developing the childrens' learning targets and implementation of activities designed to attain those targets. In addition each class teacher should endeavour to:

- Liaise closely with parents of children with SEN, making them aware of the need for support intervention
- Consult on the development and implementation of all learning plans - I.P.L.P.s and I.E.P.s by identifying appropriate learning targets and by discussing classroom activities to achieve those targets
- Review the outcome of the screening and diagnostic tests and discuss with the learning support and resource teachers the collaborative intervention programme that best meets the need of the pupil
- Maintain regular contact with all support teachers throughout each term both formally and informally
- Implement teaching programmes, which optimise the learning experience of all pupils
- Implement the school policy on the screening and selection of pupils for support teaching in English and Maths by administering and scoring the appropriate standardised screening tests
- Discuss the results of these tests with the learning support teachers, advise on the selection of pupils for withdrawal, inform parents of their need for inclusion and seek their permission for support
- Be aware of any children presenting with learning problems – general or specific, behavioural or speech difficulties and bring their concerns to the attentions of the support teachers and the principal, with a view to acquiring an educational/psychological assessment. Administer checklists as appropriate.
- Differentiate the class curriculum appropriately to maximize inclusion and to meet the needs of all pupils
- Aid in the identification of pupils with fine and gross motor skills deficits and administer the specially designed checklists to verify same. Having

discussed their needs with the SEN Team, to then inform parents of the difficulties identified & seek their permission for inclusion in initiatives.

Role of Learning Support and Resource Teachers

- To develop, in consultation with class teachers and parents, an Individual Profile & Learning Programme (I.P.L.P.) for each child selected for learning support teaching and an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) for each child eligible for resource teaching
- To provide supplementary teaching commensurate with each child's individual needs
- To liaise with external agencies such as educational psychologists, occupational therapists etc. to discuss special provision for SEN pupils
- To collaborate with the principal teacher and discuss issues relating to the implementation of the school plan on SEN.
- To communicate on an ongoing basis with the parents of each pupil in order to discuss pupil's targets and ways in which attainment of these targets may be supported at home. Effective communication with all parents is critically important
- To provide advice and resources to class teachers for pupils experiencing learning difficulties in such areas as individual pupil assessment, programme planning, differentiation of the curriculum and to maintain regular contact
- To co-ordinate the implementation of a whole-school assessment & screening programme in early May and to liaise closely with class teachers in interpreting the outcome of same
- To determine with class teachers the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching in line with the selection criteria specified by the D.E.S.
- To collaborate with the class teacher in devising and implementing suitable programmes for each pupil selected, based on test results and the pupils learning strengths
- To work intensively with all pupils towards the attainment of these learning programmes
- To carry out a diagnostic assessment of each pupil who has been identified as experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties
- To devise and implement early intervention programmes designed to enhance early learning
- To monitor the ongoing progress of each pupil in receipt of learning support and resource teaching in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and the short term objectives that arise from them
- To review each pupil's progress, in consultation with the class teacher, at the end of both instructional terms – mid-February and mid-June
- To devise and maintain an effective record keeping system for all pupils in receipt of supplementary teaching
- To support the children experiencing learning difficulties for whom supplementary teaching cannot be provided, when requested
- To help identify pupils with a general or specific learning difficulty
- To maintain a record of attendance

- To test any new child enrolled in the school mid-year as determined by the class teacher's concerns
- To contribute to the development of policy on the educational support of children with special educational needs at whole-school level
- To advise the principal on issues that arise in the day-to-day implementation of special needs education in the school.

Timetable for Review

This Special Needs Educational Policy has been continually reviewed to meet with the school's changing needs in the area of SEN and particularly in the light of the General Allocation Model. It has most recently been reviewed in January 2017 and it will be reviewed again when the new SEN Model is implemented by the Department of Education & Skills (D.E.S.) in Autumn 2017.

SCREENING & ASSESSMENT POLICY

Junior Infants: The class teacher monitors all students in Junior Infants closely and teacher observation is applied to identify children with special needs. The Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (B.I.A.P) provides an early screening test (age 4-7yrs) and it is administered to identify children with potential learning difficulties as early as possible in their school careers, ideally before they have experienced educational failure. The Lucid CoPS computerised psychometric assessment system, which is also designed to identify children's cognitive strengths & weaknesses, is administered in Term 3 to children presenting with obvious learning difficulties.

The **Belfield Infant Assessment Profile** provides a screening procedure for the five major developmental areas & assists teachers in identifying the particular strengths & needs of infant children. It's the first stage in a process of continuing profiling throughout our school. The areas it examines are: Early Learning Styles, Language & Communication, Perceptual Processes, Motor Development, Social & Emotional Development.

Cognitive Profiling System (CoPS) provides direct assessment for use with children (4 years to 8 years 11 months) & was created after a 5-year research project. The eight areas of cognitive abilities tested – four visual and four auditory, are significantly related to the development of reading, writing, spelling and numeracy skills.

Senior Infants: The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis. In-class support is provided in September in accordance with early intervention strategies. As the term passes, the class teacher & support teacher decide on the childrens' needs. If a group is chosen for literacy support teaching, the class teacher then approaches parents & a consent form is signed. The support teacher meets with each parent with a view to making a short simple plan for the pupil's identified needs (IPLP) and to discuss the literacy programme planned

The support teacher administers appropriate **Individual Diagnostic Literacy Tests** throughout the year. If concern remains after a number of consultations and adaptations of the plan intervention at stage 2 may be considered.

CoPS is administered to children presenting with obvious learning difficulties & supplements test findings regarding visual / auditory strengths & weaknesses

Reading Recovery is ongoing throughout the year

Literacy Lift Off is brought into the classroom in a co-operative teaching framework

M.I.S.T. is administered in January/February during the children's fifth term of schooling, as is recommended. The information this test yields is carefully analysed. This is in accordance with the D.E.S. learning support intervention programmes

An added part of our early intervention programme involves the introduction of shared reading in the Senior Infant classes

The **Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)** provides us with an overall picture of pupil's performance in the following areas:

- The ability to listen and respond.
- A knowledge of letter sounds.
- The ability to write letters and words from memory.
- The ability to segment letter sounds.
- The ability to use these skills in writing sentences.

First Class: Literacy Testing The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis.

- Checklists have been devised by the Special Education Department and are administered by class teachers to aid in the information gathering process
- Quest English Standardised Screening Test is administered by the class teacher in October
- Quest Diagnostic English Test is subsequently administered by the learning-support teacher to those receiving literacy support
- The class teacher administers Drumcondra (English & Maths) in May.
- Individual Diagnostic Literacy Testing takes place, as appropriate, throughout the year
- CoPS is administered to all First Class children presenting with obvious learning difficulties and supplements test findings regarding visual and auditory strengths and weaknesses
- Reading Recovery is ongoing throughout the year
- Literacy Lift Off is a co-operative teaching model used.
- Shared Reading is actively promoted

Numeracy Testing Quest Maths Screening Test is administered by the class teacher in October.

Quest Diagnostic Maths Test is subsequently administered by the support teacher to those receiving numeracy support

Diagnostic Tests used by the support teacher, as necessary with First Class:-

Quest Diagnostic Tests (English and Maths), Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, CoPS, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, Sight Vocabulary Tests – Dolch, Murray McNally etc., Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication.

The **Rain Sentence Reading Test** is an individually administered test of reading achievement

The **Marino Graded Word Reading Scale** is an objective measuring instrument for assessing the level of attainment in basic reading skills

Jackson Phonics assesses knowledge of Individual letters, Two and three letter words, Final consonant blends, Initial consonant blends, Vowel digraphs Consonant digraphs etc.

The **Group Reading Test** measures the reading of sentences

The **Schonell Spelling Test** yields a child's spelling age.

Second Class: Testing

The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis Drumcondra (English & Maths) are administered by class teacher in May.

- Individual Diagnostic Literacy Testing takes place as appropriate, throughout the year
- CoPS is administered to all Second Class children presenting with obvious learning difficulties and supplements test findings regarding visual and auditory strengths and weaknesses. Shared Reading is also actively promoted

Diagnostic Tests The following is a list of the diagnostic tests used by the support teacher, as deemed necessary, with Second Class:-

Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, CoPS, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, Sight Vocabulary Tests, Neale Analysis Of Reading Ability 2, Non-Reading Intelligence Tests, Aston Index, Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication.

Third Class: Testing

The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis.

Drumcondra (English & Maths) administered by the class teacher in May.

Individual Diagnostic Literacy Testing takes place, as appropriate, throughout the year.

Diagnostic Tests The following is a list of the diagnostic tests, used by the support teacher, as deemed necessary, with Third Class:-

Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, LASS, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, Sight Vocabulary Tests, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 2, Non-Reading Intelligence Test, Aston Index, Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication.

Fourth Class: Testing

The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis.

Drumcondra (English & Maths) are administered by the class teacher in May. **Individual Diagnostic Literacy Testing** takes place as appropriate, throughout the year

The following is a list of the **diagnostic tests** used by the support teacher, as deemed necessary, with Fourth Class:-

Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, LASS, Sight Vocabulary Tests, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 2, Non-Reading Intelligence Test, Aston Index, Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication.

Fifth Class: Testing

The class teacher informally assesses all children on a regular basis. Drumcondra (English & Maths) are administered by the class teacher in May. Individual Diagnostic Literacy Testing takes place as appropriate, throughout the year

The following is a list of the **diagnostic tests** used by the support teacher, as deemed necessary, with Fifth Class:-

Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, LASS, Sight Vocabulary Tests, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 2, Non-Reading Intelligence Test, Aston Index, Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication.

Sixth Class:

It is the policy of the school to continue, if possible, ongoing support to those boys in sixth class who have been supported previously. In line with revised requirements Drumcondra Tests are administered in sixth class.

The following is a list of the **diagnostic tests** used by the support teacher, as deemed necessary, with Sixth Class:-

Rain Sentence Test, Marino Reading Test, Jackson Phonics, Group Reading Test, Schonell Spelling, Free Writing, LASS, Sight Vocabulary Tests, Neale Analysis of Reading Ability 2, Non-Reading Intelligence Test, Aston Index, Checklists as follows: Aspergers, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Sensory and Language & Communication

Communication of Results to Parents: In the context of the revised Primary School Curriculum and our obligations under Article 22 of the Education Act to “*regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and the parents*” the following policy regarding the Communication of English and Maths Results has been adopted by the Principal and staff of Glasheen Boys’ School:

- Class teachers will administer standardized English and Maths Tests annually in May from classes 1st to 6th inclusive

- Class teachers will correct the tests to the 'raw score' stage
- 'Raw score' will be converted to yield a 'standard score' which will then be converted to a 'percentile score' and 'sten score'
- A computerised score sheet for each entire class will then be generated
- Class teachers will communicate, in written form, both sten scores achieved, to the parents of all children as part of their end of year school report. In order to comply with the above regulation (Article 22) that results must also be communicated verbally to parents of children in 1st, 3rd and 4th classes. In our school, class teachers of 2nd, 5th and 6th classes will also refer to these results during their parent/teacher meetings, no later than November (Test results are valid only for six months).

Policy on Retention of Standardised Tests:

It is the policy of Glasheen Boys' School that completed test booklets travel with the students to their new classroom where they will be retained for the duration of one year. At the end of that year, the SNA will shred the booklet but will detach the completed result page from the front of each booklet, and these are further retained until the child leaves the school.

Thereafter, it is deemed sufficient that results only, are retained in the Designated secure cabinet near the Principal's office until pupil reaches 21 years of age. All school reports will continue to be stored until 21 years is reached.

Signed: *Máire Calnan* (Chairperson Board of Management)

Signed: *Michael Daly* (Principal)

Signed: *Sheila Clark* (S.E.N. Co-ordinator) Date: 31/01/2017