

# Teaching and Learning Policy

*This policy offers a comprehensive overview of the approach to teaching and learning at Douglas Rochestown Educate Together National School (ETNS). It is compiled in line with the Learning Support Guidelines (DES 2000) and Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools as well as Circulars SP ED 24/03, SP ED 09/04, SP ED 13/04, SP ED 01/05, 13/17 and NCSE 01/05.*

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## School Details:

Name: Douglas Rochestown Educate Together National School

Address: Carr's Hill, Douglas, Cork

Telephone: 021 489 0122 / 085 2428753

Email: info@dretns.ie

Roll Number: 20413N

Principal: Dr. Alan Sheehan

The school premises consist of the area within the school boundaries/fence at Carr's Hill. School start/end times are as follows:

Start Time:	End Time:
8.30 am	1.10 pm/2.10 pm

The school doors open at 8.20am. The school provides supervision of pupils within the school grounds only from 8.20am – 1.20pm for Junior and Senior Infants and from 8.20am – 2.20 pm for all other Classes. Please note that no responsibility is accepted for anyone in the areas outside the school fencing. Please also note that no responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before 8.20am or for supervising pupils after 1.20pm/2.20pm.

## General Information:

Douglas Rochestown ETNS is under the patronage of Educate Together. It is based on four key principles: Child-centered, Co-educational, Democratic and Equality-based.

Douglas Rochestown ETNS follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills, which may be amended from time to time, in accordance with Sections 9 and 30 of the Education Act (1998).

## Rationale

The purpose of this Teaching and Learning policy is:

- Is to provide an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all and good collaboration and engagement between schools, parents/guardians and pupils (Guidelines for Primary Schools, p.3)
- To identify and cater for the learning needs of all children in our school

- To cater for the enrolment of pupils with identified special educational needs in our school.
- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school.
- To comply with legislation and department circulars.
- To outline to the partners in education their respective roles in relation to SEN provision with a view to assisting them in the provision of optimum learning opportunities for pupils with SEN.
- To outline best practice regarding the provision of teaching and learning in the school.

The following extracts were considered when drafting the policy for Douglas Rochestown ETNS:

Pupils with the greatest levels of need should have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils should be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support. (New guidelines)

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004 (EPSEN), Section 1, defines a special educational need as “a restriction in capacity to participate in and benefit from education due to an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition and cognate words shall be construed accordingly”

Learning Support Guidelines, 2000, p. 1 refers to pupils whose achievement is at a very low level and who are at risk of not reaching adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school.

## Aims

By introducing this policy, the school hopes:

- To enable pupils of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education (including exceptionally able pupils – **see Appendix 1**).
- To enable pupils with special educational needs to share with their peers as complete an education experience as possible.
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching and learning.
- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in the school.
- To outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to supporting the learning of pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs.
- To provide practical guidance for teachers and other interested parties on the provision of effective learning support to pupils
- To establish communication structures for the involvement of all the partners in the education of pupils requiring support. (*Learning Support Guidelines*)

## Roles and Responsibilities

The role of supportive learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all – (i) the Board of Management, (ii) Principal Teacher, (iii) Class Teachers, (iv) Support Teacher, (v) Parents, (vi) Pupils, and (vii) Special Needs Assistants (SNA). It is important that everyone contributes in the planning and implementation of our school plan on support provision.

### (i) *Board of Management*

The board of management shall:

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of the teaching and learning policy.
- Communicate with DES to ensure that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the SUPPORT TEACHERs within the school's resources.
- Provide adequate funds for the purchase of support materials.
- Budget for ongoing support for Professional Development in support teaching for staff

### (ii) *Principal Teacher*

The *Learning Support Guidelines* (2000, p.39) outlined the principal teacher's overall responsibility for the education of children with special educational needs. Under the new allocation model the principal's leadership role is central and includes the following:

- Developing inclusive whole-school policies and monitoring their implementation
- Assigning staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinating 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
- Ensuring 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 (*Guidelines for Primary Schools*, p.23)

### (iii) *Class Teachers*

The role of the class teacher includes:

- an increased emphasis on consultation with the Support Teachers and with parents (new SEN model).
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in her/his class, including those selected for support teaching.
- Providing a fortnightly plan of work in English and Maths to the Support Teacher in advance.
- "A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to create a classroom environment in which learning difficulties can be prevented or at least alleviated", (*Learning Support Guidelines*, p.42)
- This can be achieved by:
  - A positive ethos and learning environment whereby all pupils, including those

with special educational needs, feel welcome and experience a sense of community and belonging

- An emphasis on promoting pupils' participation and active engagement in their learning and in the life of the school
  - A commitment to developing pupils' academic, social, emotional and independent living skills
  - A focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for all pupils  
(Guidelines for Primary Schools, p.21)
- With regard to teaching pupils with low achievement, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:
    - Such children should be prioritised when accessing information from previous class teacher
    - Effective use of appropriate assessment tools to identify learning strengths and needs
    - Priority when establishing parental contact
    - Use of effective team teaching strategies (station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, teaming, one teaching, one assisting)
    - Group teaching
    - Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
    - Placing an emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
    - Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
    - Setting learning targets at an appropriate level
    - Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
    - Carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty, for particular attention in subsequent lessons.
    - Setting up "buddy systems" in class (peer tutoring)
    - Collaboration with the Support Teacher in devising and implementing a suitable programme for each pupil based on assessments and pupils' own strengths and weaknesses, and to communicate with Support Teacher on an ongoing basis.
  - With regard to teaching pupils with high achievement, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:
    - Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with high achievement in class activities
    - Setting learning targets at an appropriate level
    - Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging

(iv) *Support Teacher*

The activities of the Support Teacher should include both teaching and non-teaching duties. According to the Learning Support Guidelines (2000) *"The particular balance that the learning support/resource teacher achieves between supplementary teaching and consultative activities will depend on the*

*specific circumstances of the school*" (p.32). The Support Teacher's activities should include, where possible:

- Assisting in the implementation of a broad-range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance learning and to prevent learning difficulties.
- Provide support teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs for both high and low achieving pupils.
- Research the pupil's specific learning difficulty, to become *au fait* with this impediment to learning.
- Implement recommendations from outside agencies, wherever possible, and liaise with outside agencies pertinent to the children in their care.
- Development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each pupil with low incidence disability, in consultation with class teachers and parents.
- Development of a Support Plan for pupils (both high and low achieving) on the learning support caseload.
- Maintaining a fortnightly planning and progress record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of support teaching.
- Delivering intensive early intervention programmes and providing support teaching in English and Mathematics to pupils in the junior section of the school (Junior Infants to second class).
- Providing teaching in English and/or Mathematics to pupils in the senior section of the school who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties.
- Providing teaching to supplement the learning of high achieving pupils.
- Providing appropriate support for children with social, emotional and behavioural needs
- Providing support for children with motor difficulties (fine & gross)
- Co-ordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, giving due consideration to:
  - The selection criteria specified in this policy
  - Teachers' professional observations
- Contributing to the development of the teaching and learning policy at a whole school level.
- Providing advice to the class teacher about pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties in such areas as:
  - Individual pupil assessment
  - Programme planning
  - Curriculum differentiation
  - Approaches to language development
  - Approaches to reading
  - Approaches to spelling
  - Approaches to writing
  - Approaches to Mathematics
  - Behavioural and emotional needs
  - Fine and gross motor skills
  - High achieving pupils
- Meet with parents at annual parent teacher meeting to discuss the progress of the child.

- Engage periodically with parents of pupils with an IEP or Support Plan. This will consist of at least one review meeting every term.
- To consult with the Principal regarding the purchase of resources.
- To advise the Principal on issues that may arise in the day to day implementation of the learning assistance programme in the school.
- Liaise with external agencies such as psychologists to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with special needs.
- Track the progress of pupils who have discontinued learning support.
- Examine the Standardised Test results of any new entrants transferring from other schools.
- Record the results of Standardised/Screening Tests.

#### Organisational Strategies

- Grouping
- Peer Tutoring
- Team teaching
- In class support through group teaching
- Working with class teacher in class
- Working with parents in implementing IEPs & advising homework strategies
- Withdrawal from classroom on a one to one or group basis
- Time blocks for specific Learning programmes
- Tuition on a one to one basis is to be delivered in accordance with our Child Protection Policy

#### (v) *Parents*

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils, especially those with special educational needs. This is recognised by schools and is seen in the many good practices and initiatives they use to promote parental involvement.

The following are recommended for good practice for parents:

- Providing a home environment in which there are opportunities for adults and children to participate together in language, literacy and mathematical activities in the early years before formal schooling begins.
- Supporting the work of the school by participating with their child in such activities as:
  - Using Information and Communications Technology (ICT), where available to support learning in English and/ or Mathematics.
  - Book sharing/ reading stories
  - Storytelling
  - Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
  - Discussions about school and other activities to build vocabulary and thinking skills
  - Writing lists and short accounts about children's experiences
  - Counting and measuring and other activities involving number

- Visits to the Zoo, museum, library etc.... to broaden the range of their child's experiences
- Talking positively about school and school work
- Availing of real-life situations to discuss the importance of language, literacy and mathematics.
- Modelling involvement in language, literacy and mathematical activities at home by engaging in and talking about these activities.
- Parents should keep the class teacher informed of the progress that they observe in their child's learning. Every pupil will benefit from the 'Support for All' model. Consent for pupils to work in small groups with the Support Teacher is included on the Pupil Information Form, which is completed on enrolment (**Appendix 2**).
- Parents should also let the school know of any learning difficulties that they observe in their child at home.
- Where the child is in receipt of on-going support teaching from the Support Teacher, the parents should:
  - Engage with the Continuum of Support process and use the Student Support File to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with learning needs (new guidelines)
  - Discuss, periodically, their child's progress with the Support Teacher and, in cases where support teaching is to be continued, discuss the revised learning targets and activities in their child's IEP /Support Plan.
- At the discontinuation of support teaching, parents should continue to monitor their child's progress at home.
- Participate in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Parents are to be advised by the class teacher if a child is to be included in the learning support programme. Parents who are unwilling to avail of this service must inform the school in writing (see **Appendix 3**)

(vi) *Pupil*

*"The involvement of pupils in the development, implementation and review of their own learning programmes is an important principle underlining effective supplementary teaching"* (Learning-Support Guidelines, p.54). All pupils benefit from having ownership of their learning. Our school facilitates this by ensuring pupils:

- Become familiar with the medium and short-term learning targets that have been set for them and they should be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of such targets e.g. WALT and WILF.
- Participate in project work on topics of interest.
- Learn self-assessment strategies and learning strategies in various curricular areas.
- Participate in a formal Pupil-Teacher conference from Second to Sixth Class.

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

- Contribute to the selection of texts and other learning materials that are relevant to the attainment of their learning targets.



- 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.

(vii) *Special Needs Assistant (SNA)*

The duties of an SNA are of a non-teaching nature such as:

- Preparation and tidying up of the classrooms in which the pupils with special needs are being taught.
- Assisting the children to walk up and down stairs, board and alight from buses on trips, etc.
- Special assistance as is necessary for pupils with particular difficulties e.g. helping physically disabled pupils with typing or writing
- Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene
- Assisting on out of school visits, walks and similar activities
- Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils with Special Needs during activities such as assembly, recreational and dispersal periods
- Accompanying these children when they have to be withdrawn temporarily from class
- General assistance to the class teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature

## Early Intervention

Prevention and Early intervention is a cornerstone of the Support Teacher’s role. Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

- Teachers will communicate effectively to ensure progression and continuity from class to class. This will include transfer of information relating to standardised testing and other relevant assessment data as per our Assessment and Recording Policy.
- Provision for additional support in language development and relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to pupils who need it
- Implementation of a whole school parental involvement programmes that focus on developing children’s oral language skills, shared books with children and developing their early mathematical skills.
- Implementation of paired reading programmes e.g. CAPER
- 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 infant teacher and the Support Teacher.

Early intervention programmes may be provided by the class teacher and/ or by the Support Teacher, in accordance with the staged approach, outlined in Circular 02/05 (p.21-22, see below):

- Close collaboration and consultation between the class teacher and the Support Teacher, will identify pupils who may be in need of early intervention. Teacher observation and professional opinion will be given due consideration in the selection of pupils for early intervention programmes.
- Intensive early intervention programmes in the early primary classes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement. These programmes will:
  - Be set within a specific time frame (13-20 weeks).
  - Be based on a shared expectation of success by everyone involved.
  - Involve small group teaching or one-to-one teaching where small group teaching has

not been effective.

- Include a strong focus on oral language, laying the foundation for meaningful activities and further development of language and comprehension skills.
- Emphasise the development of phonemic awareness and a range of other word identification skills.
- Engage the pupils in frequent supervised oral and silent reading of texts at appropriate levels of difficulty and monitor their comprehension.
- Stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Focus on language development in mathematics, and in the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

## **The Staged Approach**

***(Refer to Circular 02/05; Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers, NEPS, 2007; Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools)***

### **Stage 1 – ‘SUPPORT FOR ALL’: Procedures for the early identification, screening and addressing of the SEN of certain children.**

The Class teacher will utilise strategies to support all pupils as follows:

- Implement a range of team teaching approaches and short-term interventions with the Support Teacher.
- The pupils have the opportunity to self-assess and request support in specific areas being taught (e.g. genre writing, multiplication, etc.).
- Regular opportunities to participate in small learning groups (literacy, numeracy, motor skills, social skills). Consent for all pupils to participate is sought in a generic form at the start of the school year.

The class teacher will also:

- Identify concerns regarding the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of a child using teacher observation, screening checklists (e.g. Dyslexia, ADHD, ADD, Dyspraxia, ASD, Behavioural), infant profiling (e.g. Belfield Infant Assessment Profile, Middle Infant Screening Test), results of standardised tests (e.g. MICRA-T/SIGMA-T) etc.
- Draw up a short simple plan for extra help, using the Stage 1 template (**see appendix 4**) provided in their Student Support File within the normal classroom setting in the relevant areas of learning and/or behaviour management with appropriate parental involvement.
- Review the plan and liaise with parents on a regular basis and consult the Support Team if concerns remains after approximately one school term.

The Support Teacher will:

- Support the class teacher at Stage 1 through informal meetings.
- Document each pupil receiving specific support according to their stage on a grid (**see appendix 5**).

### **Stage 2 – ‘SUPPORT FOR SOME’: Referral to Support Teacher**

***(refer to DES Learning Support Guidelines p. 57 and Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers, NEPS, 2007)***

If the class teacher’s plan fails to achieve to desired outcome, then the class teacher will:

- Contact the parents of the child to explain how Support For Some can address their child’s needs. This may be done by phone, at a meeting, or by letter.

- In consultation with the parents, refer the child to the Support Teacher, for further diagnostic testing (for list of diagnostic assessments (**see appendix 6**). If this diagnostic testing indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, then this will be arranged in accordance with the selection criteria for Learning Support.
- Request written parental consent for the child to receive Support using the school's standard consent form (**see appendix 3**).
- Collaborate with the Support Teacher and Parents in drawing up a Support Plan. This will be contained in the child's Student Support File.
- Implement the Support Plan with supplementary activities in the class and at home.
- Review the success of the Support Plan with the Support Teacher and parents.
- Implement Stage 3 if the significant concerns remain after a period of at least one school term.

If the class teacher's plan fails to achieve the desired outcome, then the Support Teacher will:

- Collaborate with the class teacher in drawing up a simple plan for extra help using the Stage 2 template (**see appendix 7**).
- Carry out diagnostic testing on the child to indicate whether supplementary teaching would be beneficial.
- Collaborate with the class teacher and parents in drawing up the Support Plan (**see appendix 8**).
- Implement the Support Plan through supplementary teaching.
- Review the success of the Support Plan with the class teacher and parents on a regular basis. If it is deemed that supplementary teaching is to be reduced or discontinued, it is necessary to record this in the child's profile.
- In conjunction with the class teacher and parents implement Stage 3 if the significant concerns remain after a period of at least one school term.

In the event of a parent's reluctance or refusal to consent to further testing, the school makes every effort to inform the parents of the concerns of the school, as well as the benefits of supplementary teaching to the child. However, the school recognises that it is a parent's inalienable right to refuse the offer of this extra support.

The instructional term for Support Teaching begins on week 5 of the school year and continues until the final week of the school year (**see appendix 9**).

### **Stage 3 – 'SUPPORT FOR FEW': Consultation or referral for assessment to outside specialist**

*(Refer to Special Educational Needs A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers, NEPS, hbj2007)*

Stage 3 is implemented in respect of the pupils with learning difficulties and mild/moderate behavioural problems that have failed to make progress after receiving support at stages 1 and 2.

- In collaboration with parents and following their support, the school will formally request, in writing, a consultation and where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school e.g. psychologist, occupational therapist, psychiatrist etc.
- Assessments are facilitated in the school if necessary. The most appropriate setting is determined following discussion with the parents, staff and specialists.
- If parents have assessments carried out privately, their recommendations are given equal priority in relation to assessments commissioned by the school.
- The Class Teacher, Support Teacher, Principal, parents, and relevant professionals will collaborate and draw up an IEP, or a Group Education Plan (GEP), as appropriate
- The Support Teacher will conduct an annual audit of pupils with learning needs at the end of May. This will be monitored and reviewed regularly.

#### **Procedures for liaison with Outside Agencies:**

- The School Principal and teacher responsible for Special Education Needs (Special Duties Post) will liaise with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Tusla, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), and the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO)
- The Support Teacher will liaise with other agencies e.g. Speech & Language Therapist (SLT), Autistic Spectrum Disorder Regional Service.
- Class Teachers will inform the Principal and Support Teacher of any correspondence or information received from outside agencies, parents etc.
- All documentation is to be collected and stored in the child's file. Copies of these documents are held by the Principal and the Support Teacher in the child's file and stored securely in the administration office. These records are kept as per our Data Protection Policy and our Assessment and Recording Policy.

### **Deploying Resources**

- **Step 1 Circular 02/05, p.7** A list of every pupil in the school, who has been highlighted as being in need of support (**AT STAGE 2 OF THE STAGED APPROACH**), will be compiled by the principal
- **Step 2 Circular 02/05, p.7** This list will be examined in consultation with circular 02/05, and each child will be allocated support, as appropriate, under the terms of the **Staged Approach**
- **Step 3 Circular 02/05, p.7** A list of members of the teaching staff will be compiled by the principal
- **Step 4 Circular 02/05, p.8** A member of staff will be allocated to support the learning of each pupil identified, taking into account: the staged approach; the needs of the pupils; the expertise and experience of the teacher; and practical considerations
- **Step 5 Circular 02/05, p. 8** Pupils with similar needs may be grouped for support
- Staff members will be allocated to Support Teacher posts as per annual staffing schedule
- Pupils will be allocated to individual Support Teachers as deemed appropriate.

### **Drafting and implementing an Individual Education Plan (for pupils at Stage 3) *see Chapters 2 and 3, Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, NCSE***

- The purpose of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is to address the pupils' full range of needs within a specific time frame. The following information will be included in an IEP: *Refer to 29 of Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, NCSE*
  - Details from the class teacher
  - Assessment results
  - Other relevant information, e.g. reports from other agencies

- Learning strengths: based on teacher observation, parent observations, SNA observation etc.
- Priority learning needs: based on psychological report, teacher input, parental input, pupil input etc.
- Learning targets - *See page 34 Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, NCSE*
- Class based learning activities
- Supplementary support activities to include ICT
- Home support activities
- Timetable
- An agreed format is in use throughout the school (*See Special Educational Needs A Continuum of Support – Resource Pack for Teachers, NEPS, 2007 and **Appendix 10** below*)
- A detailed review will take place at the end of each term as set out in the child's IEP. The Support Teacher and/or the Class Teacher will meet the parents to discuss the child's progress in light of the review.
- IEP Meetings
  - The Support Teacher and the class teacher have responsibility for co-ordination of the IEP
  - It is the responsibility of the Support Teacher to compile all relevant data and produce the IEP.
  - The Support Teacher, class teacher and parents participate in the preparation of the education plan
  - Participation is facilitated through formal face-to-face meetings in the school *See pages 24 – 25 of Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, NCSE*
  - The pupil may be included in the process through their own feedback
  - A copy of the plan will be kept in individualised files. The class teacher will receive a copy of the plan and keep it in their SEN folder. The pupil's parents will be provided with a copy of the plan.
- If the education plan identifies resources over and above those normally available in a mainstream school setting, the Principal will bring this to the attention of the SENO and/or the NCSE
- The Principal and Support Teacher are responsible for ongoing consultations with psychologists, SENO, and other interested parties.
- Co-ordination of education plans from class to class, sharing relevant information between staff, school and parents is discussed and where possible carried out at the final staff meeting of the year.

## **Continuing and discontinuing supplementary teaching**

- Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the targets have been met and the pupil (on assessment) is performing above the percentile laid down in the criteria for receiving learning support. However, provision of support will be allocated on a case by case basis having considered all relevant data, the needs of the pupil and caseload of the Support Teacher.
- The school may decide to discontinue supplementary teaching with pupils who have made satisfactory progress. This may enable the Support Teacher to provide early intervention/

prevention for Senior Infants. After the analysis of the MIST screening test results in February/March a phonics programme will be implemented for pupils who have presented with difficulties.

- Due consideration will be given to the overall needs of the school and all of its pupils, and to the cluster, as appropriate.
- Children, who have in the past received supplementary teaching, but are no longer doing so, will be closely monitored. This will take the form of discussion with the class teacher and, if required, supplementary resources and materials will be supplied for these teachers.
- Other children about whom the class teacher expresses concern will also be monitored and their progress reviewed.

## **Timetabling**

Pupils in need of learning support to be sourced and followed by pupil time-allocation. Support Teachers, in conjunction with Principal and class teachers, are to set out pupil timetable to coincide with Support timetable. Each Support Teacher's timetable includes time for class-based interventions, team teaching and whole class in-class support.

## **Liaising with outside agencies**

Delivery of this programme recognises the importance of collaboration with professionals from external agencies e.g. psychologist, speech & language therapists, occupational therapists. Meetings will be arranged as required at the school or externally.

### Meeting procedure (including IEP meetings):

At least one week's notice should be given in advance of any meeting unless it is an emergency situation. The purpose of the meeting should be clearly stated. Personnel required to attend the meeting should be identified. The estimated duration of the meeting should be stated in order to facilitate redeployment of personnel within the school. Staff meetings may facilitate input from professionals from external agencies as deemed appropriate. A record should be kept of who attended these meetings **(Appendix 11)**.

## **Record Keeping**

- The Support Teacher will maintain the following documentation in individualised files:
  1. Support Plan/IEP
  2. Short term planning and programme record
  3. Other records e.g. tape recording of oral work
  4. Samples of written work
  5. Reading analysis record
- The Support Teacher, the Principal and class teachers have access to these records. Note: Bearing in mind the child's entitlement to confidentiality, access might be on a need to know basis.
- The records are stored in the Support Teacher's room in a filing cabinet which is locked. The Support Teacher and the Principal have copies of the keys for this filing cabinet.

- These records are retained indefinitely as per our Data Protection Policy.
- The records are updated on a regular basis e.g. when an IEP has been reviewed, when the school receives correspondence from outside parties etc. The Support Teacher, Class teacher and Principal has responsibility for contributing to a child's file.
- Records are made available to other agencies, including other schools when the pupil transfers on a need-to-know basis (*Under Section 28 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, it is a requirement of the Board of Management that information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress be communicated between schools*). This is in compliance with our Data Protection Policy.

## **Ratification and Review**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and replaces our school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

The policy was reviewed by a staff committee in the 2017-18 school year.

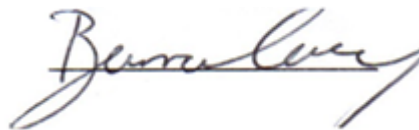
The policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 21st November 2018.

## **Communication:**

The policy has been made available to school personnel via the school website ([www.rochestownetns.ie](http://www.rochestownetns.ie)). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the patron (Educate Together) if requested.

Signed:



Barra Casey  
Chairperson of the Board of Management

## **Appendix 1      Identifying Exceptionally Able Students (from NCCA *Exceptionally Able Students: Draft Guidelines for Teachers*)**

Exceptionally able students may:

- possess extensive general knowledge, often know more than the teacher and find the usual reference books superficial
- show good insight into cause-effect relationships
- easily grasp underlying principles and need the minimum of explanation
- quickly make generalisations and extract the relevant points from complex material
- have mental speeds faster than physical capabilities and so are often reluctant to write at length
- prefer to talk rather than write and often talk at speed with fluency and expression
- be reluctant to practise skills already mastered, finding such practice futile
- have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why
- be inventive and original when interested
- ask searching questions which tend to be unlike other students' questions
- often see the unusual rather than the conventional relationships
- be able to pose problems and solve ingeniously
- display intellectual playfulness, fantasise and imagine and be quick to see connections and to manipulate ideas
- read rapidly, retain what is read, and recall detail
- listen only to part of the explanation and appear to lack concentration or even interest but always know what is going on
- jump stages in learning and often be frustrated by having to fill in the stages missed
- leap from concrete examples to abstract rules and general principles
- have quick absorption and recall of information, seem to need no revision and be impatient with repetition
- be keen and alert observers, note detail and be quick to see similarities and differences
- see greater significance in a story or film and continue the story
- see problems quickly and take the initiative
- have advanced understanding and use of language but sometimes be hesitant as they search for and use the correct word
- become absorbed for long periods when interested and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change
- persist in completing activities when motivated
- often set very high personal standards – be perfectionists
- be more than usually interested in 'adult' problems such as important issues in current affairs (local and world), evolution, justice, the universe etc
- want to adapt and improve institutions, objects, systems, e.g. can be particularly critical of school
- be philosophical about everyday problems and common sense issues
- be perceptive in discussion about people's motives, needs and frailties
- daydream and seem lost in another world
- show sensitivity and react strongly to things causing distress or injustice
- often take a leadership role
- empathise with others and be very understanding and sympathetic
- be confident and competent
- express their own feelings attribute ideas to others
- be self-effacing reflect on their own performance
- give inventive responses to open-ended questions



- have a keen sense of humour in the unusual and be quick to appreciate nuances and hidden meanings
- appreciate verbal puns, cartoons, jokes and often enjoy bizarre humour, satire and irony
- criticise constructively, even if sometimes argumentatively
- be unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination and want to debate and find reasons to justify the why and the wherefore

## **Appendix 2          Consent for ‘Support for All’ on Pupil Information Form**

I give permission for my child to participate from time to time in group based learning with a support teacher, which can assist academic and social development	
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## Appendix 3 Letter seeking parental permission for Learning Support

For the attention of the parents / guardians of: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents / Guardians,

Following in-class assessment and/or screening tests and diagnostic assessments conducted here in school, we believe that your child would benefit from a period of supplementary teaching in the area of literacy and/or maths provided by our Support Teacher, \_\_\_\_\_.

We are pleased to inform you that we can offer your child a place on the Support Teacher's caseload, and would like your permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to attend learning-support. If you require any further clarification on this matter, you are more than welcome to call to the school at any time. It would be best to make an appointment with the principal teacher in advance, in person or by telephone, so that we can offer you uninterrupted time.

Please complete the form below and return it to the school as soon as possible.

Thanking you for your co-operation,  
Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal Teacher).

Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

---

We **give** permission for our child, \_\_\_\_\_, to attend the Support Teacher.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

**OR**

We **do not give** permission for our child, \_\_\_\_\_, to attend the Support Teacher.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Appendix 4      Staged Approach to Special Educational Needs – Stage 1**

Name of pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of concern (e.g. academic; behaviour)

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Checklists/Tests administered:

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Consultation with parents:

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**Outline of Plan** (Priority Need, Target, Other Supports, Materials...etc)

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Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Outcome:**

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## Appendix 5      SUPPORT TEACHER Grid

	Pupils with learning needs at stage II (literacy and numeracy needs)	Pupils with learning needs at stage II (other special educational needs)	Pupils with learning needs at stage III (pupils with high incidence disabilities)	Pupils with learning needs at stage III (pupils with low incidence disabilities)
Junior Infants				
Senior Infants				
First Class				
Second Class				
Third Class				
Fourth Class				
Fifth Class				
Sixth Class				

## **Appendix 6      Diagnostic Assessments**

- Harcourt Assessment Test
- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
- Dyslexia Early Screening Test
- Quest Starter Pack
- Aston Index
- Jackson Phonics Skills Test
- Test 2r

## Appendix 7      Stage 2

Support Checklist		
Name:	Age:	Class:
General Information	Date Checked	Comments
1. Parents/ Guardians Consulted		
2. Information from previous school/preschool gathered		
3. Hearing		
4. Vision		
5. Medical Needs		
6. Basic Needs Checklist completed		
7. Assessment of learning- screening		
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning		
9. Observation of behaviour		
10. Interview with pupil		
11. Classroom work differentiated?		
12. Learning environment adapted?		
13. Yard/school environments adapted?		
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
16. Other interventions put in place in school?		
<b>Action needed</b>		
<i>Helpful references: SEN: A Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 13-16, 18 to 20; BESD: A Continuum of Support, p 7; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp32-36; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools, pp20</i>		

## Appendix 8      Support Plan

Student's name		Age	
Lead teacher		Class/year	
Start date of plan			
Review date of plan			
Student's strengths and interests			
Priority concerns			
Possible reasons for concerns			
Targets for the student			
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets			
Staff involved and resources needed			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			

### Support Plan Prompts



<b>Social Skills</b> Self-esteem (identity, belonging etc.)  Interaction with peers (body language, play, structured activities)  Interaction with staff (body language, asking questions, dependence level)  Behaviour (response to rewards, adapting to different settings/ groupings)	<b>Language skills</b> Oral language (verbal, non-verbal, social functions, description..)  Comprehension recall, assimilate, retell, deduce, infer..  Phonological awareness (rhythm, phoneme, morpheme, onset, rime..  Reading fluency Penmanship Writing (functional, creative)
<b>Mathematical skills</b> Number: operations, estimation, problem-solving  Measures: estimation, instruments of...	<b>ICT skills</b> (mouse control, keyboard, word processing, software use)

## Appendix 9      Sample Special Education Teaching Calendar

## **September - October**

### **Week 1 Diagnostic Testing**

. Liaise with Principal Teacher - Team

. Liaise with Class Teachers – Team

### **Week 2 Diagnostic Testing / IEP**

. Draw up draft IEP with Class Teacher

. Liaise with Parents / Pupils

### **Week 3 Write up IEP**

. Liaise with Class Teachers

. Liaise with Parents

. Teach Pupils with Low & High Incidence Disability

### **Week 4 Timetable**

. Arrange Groups / Individuals

. Arrange type of most appropriate support

. Arrange / Review Resources

. Teach Pupils with Low & High Incidence Disability

### **Week 5 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Order new resources

### **Week 6 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Initiate Early Intervention/Prevention Programme Jun / Sen Infants

### **Week 7 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 8 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Liaise with Principal Teacher/Team

*Mid Term*

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## **November – End of Term**

### **Week 1 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 2 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 3 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 4 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Review Early Intervention Programme with Principal / Class Teachers

### **Week 5 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 6 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

### **Week 7 (and a half) Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Liaise with 1st / 2nd Class Teachers about Early Intervention Programme next term

. Review Materials / Resources

## ***End of term***

---

## **January – Spring**

Week 1 *Holidays*

### **Week 2 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Initiate Early Intervention Programme for 1st and 2nd Classes

### **Week 3 Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

Week 4 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Make Arrangements for Review

Week 5 **Review IEP**

. Liaise with Class Teacher

. Liaise with Parents

. Liaise with Team / Principal

. Week 6 and 7 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Review Early Intervention Programmes with 1st and 2nd Class Teachers

Review IEP (where necessary)

*Many schools may be closed for one week in February so weeks 6 and 7 have been combined*

Week 8 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

Week 9 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

Administer M.I.S.T to Senior Infants with class teacher

Week 10 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

Consult with class teacher about M.I.S.T. results

Week 11 **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

. Liaise with Team / Principal

. Liaise with Class Teachers

**Spring Holidays**

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**Spring – Summer**

Week 1: **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

Week 2: **Teach Groups/Individuals**

. Withdrawal/In-Class Support

**Week 3: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support

**Week 4: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support

**Week 5: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support

**Week 6: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support
- . Liaise with Team /Principal
- . Presentation to Staff on Screening Tests

**Week 7: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support
- . Liaise with Class Teachers on Screening Tests

**Week 8: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support

**Week 9: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support
- . Model Screening Test Procedures {where needed} for Class Teachers
- . Review IEP with Class Teachers

**Week 10 and 11: Teach Groups/Individuals**

- . Withdrawal/In-Class Support
- . Liaise with Parents / Pupils
- . Review Psychological Assessments

***Summer Holidays***

## Appendix 10 Individual Education Plan (IEP)

### Individual Education Plan

Name:	Class:
Address:	Class Teacher:
D.O.B:	Learning Support / English as an Additional Language Teacher:
Commencement date of supplementary teaching:	Review date:

Assessment	Date	Result

<b>Assessment before Resource Teaching</b>

<b>Learning Strengths</b>

<b>Priority Learning Needs</b>

<b>Learning Targets:</b>	<b>Date achieved/progress</b>

<b>Learning Support Activities – Classroom Teacher</b>

<b>Resources</b>

## Appendix 11      Record of Meeting

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance:

Name	Role	Signature