

# **Middleton College**



## **Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy**

### **SEN Department Handbook**

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## **1. Introduction**

Special Educational Needs (SEN) are defined in the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 as “a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of 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”.

As per our school admission policy, Middleton College welcomes students with Special Educational Needs and endeavours to “provide that the education of people with such needs shall wherever possible take place in an inclusive environment” (Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004). The application process for a student with Special Educational Needs will be the same as that of any other applicant.

Our vision is of a welcoming, inclusive, vibrant community where every member feels a real sense of belonging in a school characterised by the following features:

- Inclusion
- Strong ethos based on mutually respectful relationships which ensures students feel happy and safe
- Positive Learning environment
- Whole School Community Engagement
- Student centred
- Holistic education
- Ethical Curriculum
- Pastoral supports
- Broad and balanced curriculum
- Culture of achievement and success
- Excellence and innovation as a e-mature school utilising ICT as an educational tool
- Deployment of Active Teaching Methodologies
- Extensive and engaging extra-curricular activities
- Modern sporting facilities

### ***(i) Mission***

**Our mission is to provide the best possible education for the students in our care. We want all in our school community to develop and achieve their potential in a positive atmosphere of respect, effort and fairness.**

**Our mission as a department and as a whole school is to ensure that:**

- Our students with the greatest levels of need have access to the greatest level of support and whenever possible, these students are supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.
- The special education teaching supports provided are used solely for the support of students with identified special educational needs, including those students for whom English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- These special education teaching supports are not used to reduce the student-teacher ratio for general subject teaching or to provide additional subject options for students who do not have special education needs.
- The resources provided to support students with special educational needs are being used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school.
- Supports provided to students with special educational needs are based on identified needs and are informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and students) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.

- Our subject teachers have primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in the classroom, including students with special educational needs.
- A core team of teachers and special need assistants has been established and maintained to meet the needs of our students with special educational needs.
- Our staff members have the necessary experience and access to continuing professional development to support the diverse needs of our students with special educational needs.

**(ii) Aims and Objectives**

- To facilitate the social, emotional, educational (including literacy and numeracy) and physical wellbeing of students with Special Educational Needs.
- To ensure that Middleton College is an inclusive learning environment that enables students with Special Educational Needs to live a full life and to realise their full potential as unique individuals through access to an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum.
- To enable students with Special Educational Needs to function as independently as possible in society through the provision of such educational supports as are necessary to realise that potential.
- To help students with Special Educational Needs develop the skills they need to continue learning in adult life.
- To ensure that parents/guardians are involved in decisions about their children's education.

*This policy may be used as a reference document and a source of guidance for all staff, parents/guardians and students.*

**(iii) Inclusion**

Under the revised model, the Department provides special education teaching supports directly to schools based on their educational profiles (including a baseline component). This gives stability to schools' staffing arrangements over a number of years. It offers schools greater autonomy to allocate teaching resources flexibly, based on students' needs, without the requirement for a diagnosis of disability.

**A key principle underpinning this revised model is that all students, irrespective of special educational needs, are welcomed and enabled to enrol in their local schools.**

In addition, a fundamental objective is that special education teaching resources are utilised in an optimum manner to improve learning experiences and educational outcomes for students with special educational needs.

***Special Education Circular 0014/2017***

**(iv) Categories of SEN**

The various categories of Special Educational Needs, the definitions of these categories, and the criteria for the allocation of additional resources and the procedures for application are set by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and are as follows:

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance and/or behaviour problems
- Severe emotional disturbance and/or behaviour problems
- Mild general learning disability
- Borderline general learning disability

- Specific learning disability
- Moderate general learning disability
- Severe or profound general learning disability
- Autism/autistic spectrum disorder
- Pupils with special educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome
- Specific speech and language disorder
- Multiple disabilities

We would also include:

- Gifted and Talented students

### ***(v) The Continuum of Support***

The Department has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to students' needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe and from transient to long term and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress.



## ***(vi) SEN Team: Roles and Responsibilities***

The overall responsibility for the provision of education to all students, including students with Special Educational Needs, lies with the Board of Management. Under current legislation, the Principal of the school has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met.

In order to facilitate the organisation and provision of education for students with Special Educational Needs in Midleton College, we have identified both the internal and external SEN team members below.

### ***Midleton College's Internal SEN Team***

- Midleton College Board of Management
- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
- Special Education Teachers
- Mainstream Teachers
- Guidance Counsellor
- Chaplain
- Special Needs Assistants (SNA)
- Students

### ***Midleton College's External SEN Team***

- Parents
- External Agencies
- NEPS Psychologist
- External Support Services
- Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO)

Our Special Educational Needs support team provides an organisational structure to enable teachers in specialist roles related to inclusion and SEN to collaborate with one another and with mainstream teachers in an efficient and effective manner for the benefit of the students in their target groups.

### **The Board of Management**

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated.
- Approve the policy.
- Consider reports from the principal for the implementation of the policy.

### **The Principal and Deputy Principal**

The Principal and Deputy Principal have overall responsibility for ensuring that the special education needs of students are met. In this regard, they will work in close co-operation with the SEN Team. They must ensure that all teachers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to students with Special Educational Needs and must also arrange for the continuous professional development of staff in this regard.

In practice, much of this work in Midleton College is delegated to the SENCO and SEN Team with the ongoing support and involvement of the Principal and the entire teaching staff.

### **The SEN Coordinator**

The Special Needs Coordinator is responsible for co-ordinating the Special Needs Team in Midleton College and for ensuring the provision of special needs support for all students identified as having special needs.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator in conjunction with the Principal:

- Oversees the day-to-day operation of our school's SEN policy, including formulation, implementation and review.



- Supports our school's management team in terms of management and responsibility for the provision of SEN within the school.
- Formulates, assesses and reviews the Yearly SEN Department Plan (see Appendix A) and the School provision Plan (see Appendix D).
- Liaises with management in allocating additional teaching hours to pupils, as appropriate i.e. team-teaching, small groups and/or one to one withdrawal.
- Advises management of pupils who have Irish exemptions as directed by a psychological assessment.
- Organises the continued testing of pupils on an annual and individual basis, where deemed necessary.
- Sources resources for use with SEN students.
- Seeks to identify students with specific learning difficulties.
- Keeps all records regarding student progress in the area of special needs education.
- Arranges educational assessments.
- Makes applications to SENO (SNA support, assistive technology, transport etc.).
- Is responsible for the School Provision Plan to be completed, monitored and reviewed.
- Coordinates management and timetabling of the SEN team (team teachers/learning support teachers/SNAs).
- Coordinates and allocates duties for SNAs.
- Liaises with and advise colleagues in relation to SEN.
- Liaises with the Guidance Counsellor and the Chaplain.
- Coordinates the formulation, implementation and review of Student Support Files (see Appendix G).
- Monitors and tracks students with SEN.
- Coordinates provision for students with SEN e.g. withdrawal of students for individual/group instruction, in class support etc.
- Oversees the records/reports/register on students with SEN.
- Liaises with parents/guardians of students with SEN.
- Contributes to the in-service/upskilling of staff as appropriate.
- Facilitates the identification of Irish and third language exemptions.
- Assesses and tests students for eligibility for RACE.
- Coordinates and organises the application for Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations (RACE).
- Liaises with feeder schools, teachers and parents of incoming students.
- Implements the Transition from Primary to Secondary School Programme: **Belonging +** (see Appendix C).
- Liaises with external agencies and support services as appropriate including:

Inclusion Support Service

Special Education Needs Support Service (SESS)

National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS)

Visiting Teachers Service

National Education Psychological Service (NEPS)

National Council for Special Education (NCSE)

State Examinations Commission (SEC)

Psychologists

Speech and language Therapists

Occupational Therapists

Dyslexia, Dyspraxia Associations

Autism/Asperger Support Ireland

National Council for the Blind of Ireland

National Council for the Deaf

### **The Special Education Teachers**

The role of the Special Education Teacher is:

- to be responsible for diagnostic assessment, programme planning, consultation with parents, teachers and pupils, communication with the whole staff and for teaching, monitoring and evaluating students' progress. (*Learning Support Guidelines 2000*)

- to provide additional teaching support to students with low achievement in literacy or numeracy and to those with mild or transient difficulties in such areas as language, motor co-ordination, organisation, behaviour, socialisation and attention. Priority and high level of support will be given to students with the highest level of need.
- to familiarise themselves with the Continuum of Support and put in place the required provision to the students (*Support for some* or *Support for few*)
- to liaise with the Subject Teacher in order to implement a plan that will benefit the student (modified exam papers, differentiated work and provide support in specific areas.
- to familiarise themselves with this Department Handbook and use it as a reference to SEN guidelines.
- to be aware of their students' profiles, learning styles and needs and teach and support them accordingly.
- to take an active role in the classroom during Team Teaching or In Class Inclusion. For each classroom intervention, a written comment should be added to the Student LS record file.
- to get involved in the writing process of the Student Support File, familiarise themselves with the targets and review the plan termly with the SEN coordinator.
- to plan lessons, programmes, interventions and record them on the Student LS Record File. Short-term planning should reflect the Support Plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each pupil's specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for students should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.
- to complete the Student Review Report for each student in May.
- to record any incident, concern or discussion that may occur with a student or a parent during class/meeting and send it by email to SEN co-ordinator.
- to source resources for use with SEN students.
- to identify students with specific learning difficulties.

Depending on the learning needs identified, a student with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level or through mainstream classroom placement with additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models. Members of the SEN team should have the necessary experience and ongoing access to professional development to support the diverse needs of students. A special education needs team helps ensure that those students with the greatest level of need have access to support from teachers with the necessary experience and expertise. The role of the special education needs team could include developing, implementing and monitoring a whole-school approach to the education of students with special educational needs.

### **The Chaplain**

The Chaplain provides students with Special Educational Needs with pastoral and spiritual support.

The Chaplain role within the SEN team consists largely of the following functions:

- Counselling in personal, pastoral and spiritual development
- Personal and social development
- Consultation with parents and staff
- Consultation with community organisations

### **The Guidance Counsellor**

The Guidance Counsellor assists students with Special Educational Needs in making career decisions and by coordinating the DARE applications.

The Guidance Counsellor role within the SEN team consists largely of the following functions:

- Counselling in personal, educational and career development
- Personal and social development
- Psychological testing
- Career information management
- Consultation with parents and staff
- Consultation with community organisations

- Vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience
- Referrals to other professionals and agencies
- Evaluation of the guidance and counselling needs and services

## **The Subject Teachers**

**Mainstream teachers are obliged to make themselves aware of the special needs of students in their classes.**

Subject teachers have access to information that is relevant to the teaching or supervising of such students, via files that are shared on VShare and with the permission of the SENCO, psychological reports which are kept in the SEN office. A list of all students with Special Educational Needs is given to subject teachers at the beginning of the school year and regular updates and information are communicated via weekly meetings, emails, internal Google Drive or notice board in the staffroom.

Subject teachers' role is also to:

- Differentiate their teaching practice to cater for students with learning difficulties
- Be alert to the possibility of general and specific learning difficulties and bring concerns to the attention of the SEN department.

## **Parents**

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure that Midleton College is provided with timely access to professional reports that are critical to collaborative planning for students with Special Educational Needs. These should be supplied to the College in advance of enrolment or supplied when a new report becomes available.

Parents should ensure that they are active participants in the formulation and review of Student Support Files and should attend all parent-teacher and general information meetings arranged by the school.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Support the school policy.
- Provide support for homework and learning.

## **SEN students**

Students with Special Educational Needs are involved in the development, implementation and review of their Student Support File.

The role of the student is to:

- Support school policy.
- Participate in their learning in a group, individual or class setting in a positive manner.

## **Special Needs Assistants**

The school has an allocation of special needs assistants (SNA) whose brief is to provide **care assistance** to named students following the approval of the local SENO and whose specific duties are set out by the Principal.

Special Needs Assistants are recruited specifically to assist pupils with disabilities in an educational context and are appointed to the school. SNAs may be involved in supporting the student both within the classroom and in the wider sphere of their personal and social education outside of the classroom.

Their duties are assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal and their work is supervised either by the Principal/Deputy Principal or another teacher as determined by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

## **Bodies outside the school**

- The Department of Education and Skills (DES)
- The National Council for Special Education
- The National Educational Psychological Service
- The Special Education Support Service (SESS)
- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
- TUSLA
- The Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Pieta House
- Jigsaw

**These duties are reviewed regularly and may change to ensure the priority needs of the department are met.**

## 2. SEN in Midleton College

### *(i) Identification of those with SEN*

#### (a) Enrolling 1st Year Students

The process of application to, and enrolment, in Midleton College is set out in The Enrolment Policy. In the context of the Enrolment Policy, Midleton College does not undertake any form of entrance examination and makes no prior categorisation of the applicant based on previous educational attainment.

As per our school admission policy, Midleton College welcomes students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and endeavours to “provide that the education of people with such needs shall wherever possible take place in an inclusive environment” (*Education for Persons with Special Needs Act 2004*). The application process for a student with Special Educational Needs will be the same as that of any other applicant.

Following the conclusion of the enrolment process, it is necessary to determine which students have specific learning needs and plan for the learning of these students and the transition to secondary school of all students.

In the December prior to entry, all parents/guardians are asked to complete a SEN School Transfer form (Appendix E) which asks for information regarding each child’s learning needs, previous assessments and interventions if present. Permission is also sought to allow Midleton College access to all relevant records from the Primary School. The Student Passport, supplied by the Primary School will also be available to the SENCO.

Collaboration between primary and post-primary schools is also important in helping to identify those who might be at risk during transition, so that monitoring can be put in place for students who may have emerging needs.

Sometimes a student, who had been receiving School support or learning support at primary school, may revert to Support for ALL in post-primary school. Equally, a student who had School Support or learning support in primary school, may need School Support Plus in post-primary school, perhaps due to the more complex structure of post primary education.”

Other methods for the identification and assessment of enrolling Form I students include:

- All Form I students undertake a numeracy and literacy test in March of the year of entry – this may indicate that the student has learning needs.
- School reports and any submitted assessments are analysed.
- Student School File, if received from Primary School, is reviewed.
- The SEN coordinator may contact the student’s primary school.
- Following commencement, teachers may refer a student to the SEN department for assessment.
- All Form I students to complete the *Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT 4)*, which is a series of short tests to assess a student’s reasoning abilities in key areas that support educational development and academic attainment.
- A copy of the *Individual report for teachers* is sent to the teaching staff and a copy of the *Individual report for parents* is sent to the parents.
- Through other diagnostic tests carried out by the SEN department.

#### (b) Enrolling Students into other Years

Prior to entry, each student’s parent will be required to complete an SEN school transfer form.

Following commencement, teachers may refer a student to the SEN department for assessment. The SEN Department reserve the right to complete assessments as required to identify students that may need support.

### (c) Enrolled Students

Midleton College follows the Guidelines for Teachers in A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools.

“For most students with significant special educational needs in post primary schools, their difficulties have been identified during primary schooling and are well documented. For a smaller group of students, needs may emerge in post primary, perhaps arising out of an acquired injury, the more complex school environment, changes in home circumstances or perhaps needs may emerge as new students from abroad join the school community.

Mainstream teachers raise concerns to the SEN coordinator about a student who experiences literacy, numeracy or emotional difficulties. The SEN coordinator then assesses the student, liaises with the parents/guardians and the principal for actions to be taken if support is needed.

Information may also be gleaned from an analysis of a student’s assessments, parent referral, student request and through diagnostic test undertaken by the SEN department.

*As per Circular 0014/2017*, the Identification of Students for Support takes into account the following:

- Standardised tests can be used to screen and identify students’ performance in reading and mathematics. Those students performing below the 10th percentile should be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.
- Students who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Students who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. Schools should also take into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.
- Students with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Students who have specific learning disabilities.
- Students with significant Special Educational Needs. For example, students with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These students need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Schools should also carefully consider the needs of other students who may present with a range of learning whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the students’ learning and ability to access the curriculum.
- Students who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those students who need additional English Additional Language Support.
- In Irish language schools the support provided for pupils by schools to assist with pupils literacy development may be conducted in Irish or English, or a combination of both, as considered necessary by the school. The intensity of additional support that is provided for students with low achievement and students with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of the support process.

*(ii) Assessment of Needs*

Table 1 below outlines how a school can collect evidence about students' educational needs at each level of the Continuum of Support. This evidence can then be used to adapt teaching, to plan the next steps in students' learning and to gauge their responses to intervention. When data and information are carefully collected, shared and compared, schools can identify and respond to those students who have special educational needs.

<b>Whole-School and Classroom (Support for All)</b>	<p>The Post-Primary Continuum of Support contains a range of ideas and resources to assist in identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes. The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class.</p> <p>Identification of those needing additional support can be informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intake screening</li><li>• Collection of information from primary schools, including Student Passport</li><li>• Teacher observation</li><li>• Teacher assessment</li><li>• Learning Environment Checklist</li><li>• Student Support Team involvement</li><li>• Standardised tests of literacy/numeracy</li><li>• Student consultation</li><li>• Parental consultation</li></ul> <p>Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole-school interventions (such as differentiated teaching, a mentoring programme or social skills group), School Support (for Some) is initiated.</p>
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<b>School Support (for Some)</b>	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>• Parent/student interview</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>Support at this level can take many forms, for example: team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, peer mentoring, inclusion in social skills groups, behaviour reward and consequence systems.</p> <p>A Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
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<b>School Support Plus (for a Few)</b>	<p>At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate.</p> <p>Data generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A Support Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.</p>
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(a) Student Support File

The assessment of the student's needs should be contained within a Student Support File. These have been developed to enable schools to plan interventions and to track a student's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates teachers in documenting progress over time and assists them in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need. Following a period of intervention and review of progress, a decision is made as to the appropriate level of support required by the student. This may result in a decision to discontinue the support, to continue the same level of support or move to a higher or lower level of support.

The Student Support File is a key resource to help plan interventions and document progress overtime.

Developing a student support file is the outcome of a problem solving process using the Continuum of Support and the six action process. The SSF is collaborative, involving teachers, parents/guardians and the students.

All teachers have access to relevant information from students' support plans so they can:

- Differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of students and set specific targets related to their subject area.
- Assess students' progress.
- Be informed hence planning becomes a collective responsibility.

#### (b) Personal Pupil Plan

As and from October 2015, schools are required to submit a Personal Pupil Plan with all applications for SNA support.

*Section 15 of the Circular* sets out the requirement for the plan:

“Schools applying for SNA support from the 15/16 school year will be required to submit a Personal Pupil Plan for each pupil outlining the pupil's special care needs and showing how the SNA will be deployed to assist the pupil.

The plan should demonstrate how the school intends to actively reduce, and where appropriate, eliminate dependency on SNA support within a reasonable timeframe.

The plan should include time-bound targets for the development of independence skills.

Only a very small number of pupils with severe special educational needs and very significant care needs will continue to access to SNA support throughout their education.” *Circular 0030/2014*

It is envisaged that the Personal Pupil Plan will be developed in conjunction with the Student Support File which has been developed by NEPS and schools are encouraged to use the NEPS Continuum of Support framework when planning for care needs of students with special educational needs.

During the year it will be necessary to develop such a plan for all pupils with SNA support as they are now required for all care needs reviews in schools.

“All SNA allocations are subject to annual review by the NCSE. All allocations will be time bound, made initially for a period of three years, and subject to annual review, and subject to full re-assessment at the end of the three-year period”. *Circular 0030/2014*

#### ***(iii) Provision of Resources***

Following the assessment of needs, the appropriate interventions are determined. Resources are allocated on a needs basis - students with the greatest levels of needs should have access to the greatest levels of support. The Principal has the final determination as to the provision of school resources.

#### (a) Transition Management

The transition from primary to post-primary can be a stressful event for all students and their parents, and this can be compounded when the child has special educational needs. The need for flexibility in accommodating this transition, especially when the student has a special need, is noted in the Introduction to the Primary School Curriculum.

In 2013 the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) published a research report on the experiences of young students with special educational needs (SEN), and their parents, of the move from primary to post primary school – ‘*A Study of Transition from Primary to Post-Primary School for Pupils with Special Educational Needs.*’

**DES Circular 0056/2011 - Initial steps in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy** - refers to the transferring of assessment information between schools, for example, when pupils move to another primary school or transfer to a post-primary school.

### **Midleton College SEN department follows the Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities regarding Transition (NCCA – 2007 pp.5-6)**

The focus of planning for transition is on preparing for change before it happens. Three phases are identified in this process of planning for the transition of students with general learning disabilities from primary to post-primary education: **Communication, Consultation, and Consolidation.**

- **Communication**

Ongoing contact between schools is vital. The SENCO, in communication with the principal, parents, SEN coordinator and with support from the NEPS, will plan how best to support the transition and help the school to prepare to meet the learning needs of students prior the arrival to school.

- **Consultation**

Once Midleton College becomes aware that a student with SEN will be transferring from a primary school, a process of consultation takes place to gather information about the learning and other needs of the student. This information may be sourced from Student support files (SSF), NEPS assessment reports, from parents/guardians, from social services where relevant and from the school from which the student is transferring.

- **Consolidation**

This third phase involved the bringing together and co-ordination of the relevant aspects of the school plan and ensuring that the desired outcomes are achieved prior to the arrival of the student in the school.

The transition plan is drawn by the SEN coordinator (transition co-ordinator) and reflects and accommodates the child’s specific needs.

### **In Midleton College we follow the 5 Bridges of Transition Model from the NCSE (see Appendix B).**

- 1- The Administrative Bridge**
- 2- The Social and Emotional Bridge:**
- 3- The Curriculum Bridge**
- 4- The Pedagogic Bridge**
- 5- The Management of Learning Bridge**

### **Transition for ALL**

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post primary schools.

These include:

- Post Primary Transfer Review (see Appendix E)

- 6th Class Report Card
- My Profile sheet for children
- My Child's Profile sheet for parent(s)
- A Special Educational Needs Summary Form is included to support the sharing of information for children with identified learning needs.

Since the 2014/15 school year, schools are required to use the Education Passport materials detailed above and to forward them to the relevant post-primary school, following confirmation of enrolment, ideally by the end of June (*Circular 45/2014*).

The SEN team provides students, parents and primary school teachers with essential and timely information in relation to orientation activities, school organisation, school curriculum (NCSE Programme **Belonging +**).

In 1<sup>st</sup> Year, our students attend the Wellbeing module (part of SPHE) where through the *My Friends Youth Programme and the Why Try? Programme* they are taught social and emotional skills required for success in school and life during and outside school. The programmes also provide the students with strategies and tools to help change patterns of failure and indifference.

Important life skills taught through the programmes include the following:

- Basic problem solving
- Anger management
- Dealing with peer pressure
- Living by a safe society's laws
- Building a support system
- Visualising future goals
- Building resilience
- Reducing anxiety
- Making Friends

Our First Year students are also involved in our school Transition from Primary to Post Primary Programme where they become Middleton College ambassadors by creating a booklet and making a series of videos and presentations in order to help the Incoming Students transitioning smoother into First Year. The NCSE Programme **Belonging +** is being used to facilitate a smooth Transition from Primary to Secondary School

### **Transition for SOME**

Prior to the assessment test, a meeting can be arranged between the parents and the SEN coordinator to discuss the needs of the student.

The procedures for pre-entry assessments are discussed that day to alleviate anxieties.

Lockers, dining hall and general organisation issues (folders for each subject) are highlighted and explained explicitly that day.

### **Transition for a FEW**

Prior to the assessment test, a meeting can be arranged between the parents and the SEN coordinator to discuss the needs of the student.

During the meeting, the student meets up with key personnel (SNA/SENCO/Principal) and gets a tour of the school where some role plays/activities related to orientation are put in place.

The procedures for pre-entry assessments are discussed that day with the student and the teacher/parent to alleviate their anxieties.

Lockers, dining hall and general organisation issues (folders for each subject) are highlighted and explained explicitly that day. A sample timetable and a map of the school are also provided to the transitioning student.

#### (b) Types of Intervention

The School Provision Plan (see Appendix D for template) shows provision for all students identified on Continuum of Support. It identifies the students with the greatest needs, shows the deployment of SETs and reflects the school's allocation as outlines on NCSE website

The special education teaching supports cannot be used to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio in mainstream classes. Neither can they be used to allow any special education teacher sole responsibility for the delivery of any curriculum subject to any particular class.

**Students with the greatest levels of needs should have access to the greatest levels of support.**

The range of interventions and resources used in Midleton College are outlined in the table overleaf, this includes: Social and Emotional Learning, Self-management, Study Skills, Behaviour, Literacy, Numeracy and Medical.

## Provision Map for Middleton College

	<b>Social and Emotional Learning</b>	<b>Self-management and/or organisational skills</b>	<b>Study Skills</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Support for ALL</b></p> <p><i>Preventative and Proactive Approaches</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pastoral Care Team</li> <li>● Guidance Referral System</li> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Diagnostic Informal Assessment</li> <li>● Social Skills Training: Why Try? My Friends for Life</li> <li>● Mindfulness</li> <li>● Belonging + Programme for 1<sup>st</sup> years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Colour coded timetables, books, folders, checklists and study plans</li> <li>● Movement breaks</li> <li>● Self-monitoring checklists</li> <li>● Transition programme for Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Years: visit of the school, map of the school, familiarisation with homework journal, late card</li> <li>● Team Teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Study Skills focus prior to school exams</li> <li>● Colour coded study plans</li> <li>● Subject revision checklist development</li> <li>● Visual representing</li> <li>● Sequencing Training</li> <li>● Summarising techniques</li> <li>● Checklist creations</li> <li>● Skim and scan</li> <li>● Comprehension strategies</li> <li>● Explicit teaching of time management and scheduling strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report Sheets</li> <li>● Class behaviour plans</li> <li>● Merit system/ reward slip</li> <li>● Staff monitoring lunch/ break times</li> <li>● Use of journal and incident sheets</li> <li>● Parent/guardian communication</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Support for SOME</b></p> <p><i>Interventions delivered at School Support / to support students with SEN who are in receipt of additional interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pastoral Care Team</li> <li>● Guidance Referral System</li> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Lunch club with board games</li> <li>● Friday Chips and Chat</li> <li>● Lunch club</li> <li>● Smart Board used in SEN classroom for social games</li> <li>● Specific focus on oral communication with JC students in SEN classes</li> <li>● Diagnostic Informal Assessment</li> <li>● SSFs</li> <li>● Social Skills Training: Why Try? Friends for Life Talkabout Programme</li> <li>● Social Skills Groups</li> <li>● Small Group Withdrawal</li> <li>● Mindfulness</li> <li>● Social Stories</li> <li>● Teachers and SNA observations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Highlighted group of 1<sup>st</sup> years who need extra organisational support</li> <li>● Colour coded timetables, books, folders, checklists and study plans</li> <li>● Movement breaks</li> <li>● Self-monitoring checklists</li> <li>● SNA locker support</li> <li>● Quiet Zone in the Learning Support Department</li> <li>● SSFs</li> <li>● Transition programme for Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Years: visit of the school, map of the school, familiarisation with homework journal, late card</li> <li>● Team-Teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Study Skills focus in SEN classes prior to school exams</li> <li>● Colour coded study plans</li> <li>● Subject revision checklist development</li> <li>● Differentiated handouts</li> <li>● Visual representing</li> <li>● Sequencing Training</li> <li>● Summarising techniques</li> <li>● Checklist creations</li> <li>● Skim and scan</li> <li>● Comprehension strategies</li> <li>● Explicit teaching of time management and scheduling strategies</li> <li>● SSF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report Sheets</li> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Class behaviour plans</li> <li>● Check In Check Out Strategy (CICO)</li> <li>● Merit system/ reward slip</li> <li>● Staff monitoring lunch/ break times</li> <li>● Use of journal and incident sheets</li> <li>● Parent/guardian communication</li> <li>● Team teaching or In Class Support</li> </ul>

**School  
Support  
for a  
FEW**

- Individualised school support plans
- NEPS/NCSE/CAMHS
- Reduced timetable
- Individual in-school counselling
- Individual counselling
- SSFs
- Reduced subject load

- Self-monitoring checklists
- OT programme
- SNA supports to encourage independence
- SSFs

- Individual Study Skills Development
- SSF

- Individualised school support plans
- Collaboration with Outside agencies
- Timetable modification
- Regular CICO throughout the day

	<b>Literacy and Language</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>Physical and /or sensory</b>	<b>Medical</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Support for ALL</b></p> <p><i>Preventative and Proactive Approaches</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow up CAT4 Test</li> <li>● School newsletter</li> <li>● Library access to books for students reading ages, dictionaries</li> <li>● ICT</li> <li>● In-class teacher support /Team teaching</li> <li>● Classroom content notes provided</li> <li>● Primary school resources</li> <li>● EAL liaison teacher</li> <li>● Mind maps, graphic organisers</li> <li>● Oral descriptive and expressive skills development</li> <li>● Sigh Word building</li> <li>● EAL support</li> <li>● Vocabulary Enrichment Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow up CAT4 Test</li> <li>● ICT</li> <li>● Small group class</li> <li>● In-class teacher support/co teaching</li> <li>● Classroom content notes provided</li> <li>● Primary school resources</li> <li>● Differentiated exams /tests</li> <li>● Functional Maths</li> <li>● Key work banking</li> <li>● Concrete maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primary school liaison prior to enrolment</li> <li>● Computer typing skills program used for those with laptops</li> <li>● Movement breaks</li> <li>● Sensory breaks</li> <li>● Stress balls</li> <li>● Lift access</li> <li>● Additional toilet and changing facilities with space for wheelchairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mindfulness</li> <li>● Transition Support Plans</li> <li>● Self-care skills</li> <li>● Nurse Support</li> <li>● Student medical Record</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>School Support for SOME</b></p> <p><i>Interventions delivered at School Support / to support students with SEN who are in receipt of additional interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Follow up CAT4 Test</li> <li>● Literacy plan</li> <li>● Vocabulary Enrichment Programme</li> <li>● Keywords Journal Banks</li> <li>● School newsletter</li> <li>● Library access to books for students reading ages, dictionaries</li> <li>● ICT</li> <li>● Small group withdrawal</li> <li>● Individual classes timetabled</li> <li>● In-class teacher support/co teaching</li> <li>● RACE accommodations for state exams</li> <li>● Classroom content notes provided</li> <li>● Primary school Resources</li> <li>● Differentiated exams /tests</li> <li>● SSFs</li> <li>● Functional Maths</li> <li>● Key work banking</li> <li>● Concrete maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SEN department Referral</li> <li>● Follow up CAT4 Test</li> <li>● ICT</li> <li>● Small group withdrawal</li> <li>● Individual classes timetabled</li> <li>● In-class teacher support /co teaching</li> <li>● RACE accommodations for state exams</li> <li>● Classroom content notes provided</li> <li>● Primary school Resources</li> <li>● Differentiated exams /tests</li> <li>● SSFs</li> <li>● Functional Maths</li> <li>● Key work banking</li> <li>● Concrete maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Primary school liaison prior to enrolment</li> <li>● Computer typing skills program used for those with laptops</li> <li>● Movement breaks</li> <li>● Sensory breaks</li> <li>● Stress balls</li> <li>● Lift access</li> <li>● SSFs</li> <li>● Additional toilet and changing facilities with space for wheelchairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mindfulness</li> <li>● Transition Support Plans</li> <li>● Self-care skills</li> <li>● SSFs</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre for Paired Learning at the University of Dundee</li> <li>• SEN department Referral</li> <li>• EAL liaison teacher</li> <li>• Withdrawal from third language/ Irish (if exempt) class for extra support with English</li> <li>• Key words journal</li> <li>• Mind maps, graphic organisers</li> <li>• Oral descriptive and expressive skills development</li> <li>• Sigh Word building</li> <li>• EAL support</li> <li>• Vocabulary Enrichment Programme</li> <li>• SSFs</li> </ul>			
<p><b>School Support for a FEW</b> <i>Interventions delivered at School Support Plus / Support for Few levels to support students with SEN who are in receipt of additional interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework and external professionals</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSFs</li> <li>• Individual classes timetabled</li> <li>• SNA's allocated to assist in class</li> <li>• RACE accommodations for state exams</li> <li>• Toe by Toes program</li> <li>• SNIP Programme</li> <li>• NEPS struggling readers Strategy Supports</li> <li>• SEN language development linked to Speech and language therapist or identified needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSFs</li> <li>• Individual classes timetabled</li> <li>• SNA's allocated to assist in class</li> <li>• Tailored Maths initiative</li> <li>• Sequential development</li> <li>• Scaffolding</li> <li>• Pre teaching class topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSFs</li> <li>• SNA allocated to students with mobility needs</li> <li>• Collaboration with outside agencies</li> <li>• Collaboration with visiting teachers for the deaf and the blind students</li> <li>• Teachers using an auditory system for students with hearing impairment (BAHA, microphone)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP/HSE monitoring</li> <li>• SNA support CAMS/NEPS support/intervention</li> <li>• Transition Support Plans</li> </ul>

(c) Special Needs Assistants

***As per Circular 0030/2014:***

- All schools have a responsibility to provide for the care and wellbeing of all the pupils who attend their schools including children with special educational needs.
- It should not be assumed that all children who have special educational needs or who have been diagnosed as having a disability, require access to SNA support.
- It should also not be assumed that the allocation of additional adult SNA support is a prerequisite for a student with special educational needs to attend school.
- The purpose of the SNA scheme is to provide for the *significant additional care needs* which some pupils with special educational needs may have.

- It is therefore important to set out what constitutes significant care needs under the terms of this scheme, and which will normally qualify for SNA support under the scheme.
- For a child to require or qualify for access to SNA support, a child must have an assessed disability. The care needs outlined must be of such significance that they are beyond that which would normally be expected to be provided to a child by the child's class teacher, support teacher, or other school teachers, or beyond the level of assistance which could be offered to the student by his/ or her fellow pupils in school.
- The care needs must also be those beyond which could normally be provided for by alternative supportive approaches or modifications of the classroom environment, teaching approaches and/or assistive technology or specialist equipment.
- The type of significant care needs that pupils may have can be varied, depending on the nature or level of the disability or sensory impairment that a child may have. Given the variety of medical conditions that children may suffer from, it is not possible to list all of the care needs that may arise here.

However, examples of the primary care needs which would be considered significant – and which might require SNA support are:

*Assistance with feeding:* where a child with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time

*Administration of medicine:* where a child requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time.

*Assistance with toileting and general hygiene:* (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so.

*Assistance with mobility and orientation:* on an ongoing basis including assisting a child or children to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a child to access school transport), or helping a child to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.)

*Assistance with supervision in the class, playground and school grounds:* at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that 6 existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision.

*Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions:* such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.

*Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential:* This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a child may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.

*Assistance with moving and lifting of children:* operation of hoists and equipment.

*Assistance with severe communication difficulties:* including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs (See also section 9) and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.

The tasks noted above are the primary care support tasks for which access to SNA support will normally be provided. The following tasks are the type of secondary care associated tasks which SNAs will often perform, but only once they have been allocated on the basis of the primary care support tasks listed above. The indicative list of secondary associated tasks listed below is not definitive and is reflective of the tasks detailed in ***Circulars 08/02 and 71/2011.***

The associated support tasks which may be carried out, but which would not in themselves normally constitute a reason for the allocation of SNA support include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a child who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for children with special educational needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.
- Assist teachers and/or Principal in maintaining a journal or care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by students with special needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with class teachers and other teachers such as the resource teacher and school principal, attending meetings with parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of class teacher/principal.

(d) Timetabling

- Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including class teachers or support teachers.

Our Form I students receive 40 minutes of a Wellbeing class and In-Form II 40 minutes of a Guidance class per week. The Wellbeing Curriculum follows My-Friends Youth Resilience Programme by Dr Paula Barrett and My Wellbeing Journey Textbook by Edel O’Brien and Catherine Deegan; this forms part of the SPHE program.

During SPHE in Form IV, the students will attend the UCC Bystander Intervention Programme workshops during the transition year, with each workshop focusing on a specific topic. The overall aim of the Programme is the development of a progressive and effective culture around the issues of sexual misconduct and sexual violence at school and beyond. The Programme has been piloted with 4th Year students across a number of Secondary Schools in a traditional classroom-based delivery and has now been transitioned to a blended-learning design.

**For SOME**

At the beginning of each year a timetable is established to meet the needs of pupils with SEN. The allocated resources are made available with maximum efficiency to meet the objectives of the school and SEN policies. The deployment of staff involved in working with pupils with SEN is organised to ensure the most efficient use of teaching and other expertise.

Our staff are deployed to classrooms for In-Class Support or Team-Teaching practice. Small SEN classes may also run in parallel with main stream classes or staff can be timetabled for group support of students who do not study Irish. This also allows us to support a wider range of SEN students who benefit from specific support but who do not have access to LS group support as they are not exempt from Irish.

**For a FEW**

Our SEN team teaches students on a 1 to 1 support class based on the assessment of needs. Lunch club and Homework club are also available for students who need further social or academic support.

The timetable is revised at the end of each term and modified according to the needs of the students.

(e) Examinations

At Junior Cycle, the granting of reasonable accommodations for house exams does not ensure eligibility for the same in state exams. This is decided according to test scores (Hedderly, WRAT 4, WIAT II/III) or medical/psychological reports as dictated by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

At Senior cycle, the accommodation follows what has been granted to the student by the SEC for their Junior certificate.

During the House Exams, our students are assigned to centres according to their diagnosis, needs and available resources:

- Each centre has a designated staff member responsible for the wellbeing of the students.
- An envelope system is put in place to facilitate the collection of exam papers.
  - Each SEN student has their own envelope with their name on it in the meeting room.
  - This envelope consists of 2 A4 envelopes stapled together. The envelope is placed in a box with the Form Number on it.
  - Each subject teacher puts the blank exam paper for their SEN student(s) in the front envelope the day before the exam.
  - The staff member responsible for the centre collects the exam paper in the morning and puts at the end of the exam the exam paper back in the back envelope.
  - The subject teacher collects the exam paper at the back of the envelope.
- Supplementary centres can be shared or individual centres.
- Some SEN students in shared centres avail of the use of Reading assistance or Word Processor. Others receive accommodation under medical grounds.
- Individual centres are provided to students who need a scribe or a reader.
- Information is sent to parents a month prior to the exams with details of the centre, supervising staff and student requirements.

(f) Communication with Teachers

Communication with mainstream teachers is mainly via email. Information about our SEN students can be found on VShare under our SEN section or in the filing cabinet in the Learning Support Centre.

Teachers are introduced to all enrolling students with SEN at the start of the academic year. They are also regularly given documentation and presentations on teaching students with SEN e.g. stepping stones guides.

(g) Communication with Parents

Parents are welcome to phone or meet with the SEN coordinator at any time during the school year. Parents also receive a Learning Support report at the end of each term.

(h) Monitoring and Review

The following are the different steps to monitor and review Pupils with SEN receiving intervention through the Continuum of Support Framework.

**1- School Provision Plan (See Appendix D)**

- This plan shows provision for all students identified on the Continuum of Support
- It identifies students with the greatest needs. Do they receive the highest level of support?
- It shows the deployment of SETs
- It reflects the school's allocation as outlined on the NCSE website

**2- The evaluation of provision for students with SEN on Post Primary schools (see Appendix D)**

The purpose is to evaluate a school's provision for:

- Students on stage one of the Continuum of support who receive support within mainstream classes.

- Students on stage two or stage three of the Continuum of Support who receive support within the mainstream classes and/or in support settings.
- Students in special classes.
- The SEN-PP model addresses the following questions relating to the quality of a school's provision for students with additional and special educational needs:
  - How good are the learning outcomes for students identified with special educational needs?
  - How good are the learning experiences of students identified with special educational needs?
  - How well is the school using the resources it receives for students with SEN to improve learning experiences and learning outcomes?
  - How effective are the structures and systems that the school has in place in fostering the inclusion, equality of opportunity and holistic development of students with SEN?
- A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

(i) Guidelines for Team Teaching and In Class Support (See Appendix I)

The learning support guidelines advocate placing a high priority on enhancing classroom-based learning through alternate groupings and providing shared teaching approaches in the pupil's classroom.

The main role of the learning support / resource teacher is to provide supplementary teaching either in the pupils' own classrooms or in a learning support room.

For both Team Teaching and In Class Support settings, the Special Education Teacher is responsible for determining targets drawn in the Student Support Plan, implementing them and reviewing them.

Records need to be kept and shared with the SEN team to reevaluate termly the efficiency of the set up.

### **Team Teaching**

Team teaching is '...a group of two or more teachers working together to plan, conduct and evaluate the learning activities for the same group of learners.' Goetz, 2000

*Collaborative-teaching* (co-teaching) is an instructional arrangement where two or more certified professionals share the responsibility of lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and progress monitoring (through a balanced assessment system) for all students.

- Co-Teachers collectively create goals for their work in bringing students to mastery of the standards.
- Co-Teachers plan for and simultaneously execute the delivery of instruction, using an agreed upon instructional approach and one of the four highly effective co-teach models.
- Co-Teachers assess student progress and adjust their teaching practices and instruction based on the student's needs in the classroom.
- Co-Teachers are responsible for providing differentiated instruction, interventions and enrichment within the classrooms for all students.
- Co-Teachers are consistently taking data regarding student academic and behavioural needs and using that data to improve their practices with meeting the individual needs of the students in the classroom.

**Students to Consider:** The use of the Co-Teach arrangement in the mainstream is considered a high level of support for students accessing the general curriculum. Co-Teach should be considered for those students who: require daily on-going support, for the entire duration of a class period, based on their qualifying areas of need, goals/objectives and modified assessments and have demonstrated a need for having two certified professionals in the classroom 100% of the duration of the class.

**Planning:** Once Co-Teachers have worked with their level or content teams to plan for instruction, the co-teachers will decide which co-teach model will be used to facilitate the learning. Using the co-teach model planning guide, co-teachers will specify responsibilities, divide activities, address student learning styles, differentiate and incorporate choice into the lesson prior to the day of instruction.

**Preparation:** The co-taught class is supported by two qualified teachers; therefore, **both** shall participate in bringing the necessary materials/equipment to support **all** learners in the classroom toward mastering the objectives/standards.

**Presentation:** As both certified teachers have planned for the delivery of the instruction, both are fully involved in the execution of the plan. Using one of the four highly effective co-teach models, co-teachers operate together to provide rigorous, relevant instruction that allows for all students to master their academic goals.

**Collaboration:** Co-Teachers will collaborate often to discuss data and next steps regarding the daily classroom instruction.

## **In Class Support**

In Class Support (ICS) is the support provided inside the general education classroom by a Special Education Teacher. ICS allows for specific, targeted interventions relating to the course content to take place during a specified duration of time.

Special Education teachers who provide supports in the mainstream classroom focus on the specific needs of the individuals that they are assigned to work with while understanding that other students may find the resources useful or helpful and therefore do not limit their services to one or two students, but extend their services to assist all students who may benefit from what is being brought into the classroom.

**Planning:** The Special Education teacher providing ICS will have access to all content lesson plans at least one week prior to the lessons taking place in the classroom to prepare supports for individuals with special needs. The teachers providing ICS may or may not be a part of the planning of the lesson as the number of students being supported may have the Special Education staff member in multiple classrooms over the duration of a school day and class week.

**Preparation:** The teacher providing ICS is responsible for preparing and bringing into the classroom supportive materials, manipulatives, and activities to further student learning and appreciation for the standards that are being taught. This teacher will communicate with the general education teacher the plan for supporting specific students to ensure high levels of learning for all students. The general education teacher and special education

**Presentation:** Both the general education teacher and staff member providing the ICS will collaborate to determine when/if each teacher will be delivering the instruction to ensure minimal distractions and appropriate flow of the instruction. They will also decide the best time (within the class) to present activities, materials, and alternative teaching/learning strategies that the ICS teacher has designed/prepared. Presentations can take place through various methods (i.e. station teaching, small groups, individual sessions).

**Collaboration:** To ensure data driven decisions are being made to drive instruction, the general education teacher and special education teacher should meet and analyse student academic gains and instructional practices. This analysis is to ensure appropriate academic growth for individuals receiving special education.

### **3. Other Areas**

#### ***(i) Irish Exemptions***

Currently, the granting of exemptions from the study of Irish is guided by Department *Circular 0052/2019*. It clearly states that exemptions from the study of Irish are to be granted in exceptional circumstances only.

**The exemption from the study of Irish does not automatically give the student access to Learning Support Hours. These are provided at the discretion of the school.**

#### **1- Application**

A parent/guardian must make an application in writing to the principal of the school for a Certificate of Exemption from the study of Irish.

#### **2- Circumstances and criteria for granting exemptions from the study Irish**

*Circulars 0052/2019* states that the granting of an exemption from the study of Irish should only arise in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances apply to the following categories of pupils/students:

- Pupils whose primary education up to the age of 12 years was received in other countries.
- Pupils who were enrolled in a recognised primary or post-primary school and who are now re-enrolling having been abroad for at least three consecutive years. The pupil must also be at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment.
- Children of diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland.
- Pupils assessed as having presented with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in both Irish and English over time, and at the time of the application for exemption present with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

#### **3- Procedures for granting an exemption from the study of Irish**

The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her access to the curriculum and his/her future learning. The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal teacher, but it must be made following detailed discussion with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), the class teacher, special education teachers, and the pupil.

The Principal will inform the parents/guardians of the decision on the application within 21 school days.

#### **4- Appeals procedure following refusal to grant an exemption from the study of Irish**

Where the application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, a parent/guardian can appeal the school's decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee (IEAC). The deliberations of the IEAC will focus solely on the process the school engaged in reaching its decision. The IEAC will consider how the school followed the process as prescribed in this Circular and the accompanying Guidelines for Primary Schools.

An appeal must be lodged within 30 calendar days from the date the decision of the school not to grant an exemption.



## ***(ii) RACE Applications***

In the annual booklet provided to the school, the State Examinations Commission states:

The scheme of Reasonable Accommodations at the Certificate Examinations (RACE) facilitates access to the certificate examinations by candidates who would have difficulty in accessing the examination or communicating what they know to an examiner because of a physical, visual, hearing and/or learning difficulty.

The scheme assists candidates who have special educational needs to demonstrate what they know and can do in certificate examinations, without compromising the integrity of the assessment.

The focus of the scheme is on removing barriers to access, while retaining the need to assess the same underlying skills and competencies as are assessed for all other candidates, and to apply the same standards of achievement as apply to all other candidates. The scheme provides accommodations for students with a variety of complex special educational needs including learning difficulties as well as permanent or temporary physical, visual, hearing, medical, sensory, emotional, behavioural or other conditions.

### **Key Features of the RACE Scheme**

**(a)** Accommodations that were provided at Junior Cycle will be reactivated at Leaving Certificate subject to confirmation by the school authority of an identified and continuing need. Schools retain devolved authority for recommending the supports to be put in place at Junior Cycle and now also have devolved authority to recommend the supports to be put in place at Leaving Certificate. It is expected that, in most cases, the school's recommendation in the case of Leaving Certificate will be to reactivate the same supports as were provided to the candidate at Junior Cycle. In the case of reactivating arrangements that had been in place for Junior Cycle, the SEC will accept the recommendation of the school based on the school's judgement that the need for supports persists and in general there will be no need for schools to undertake further testing. Unless some exceptional circumstance arises, the SEC will accept all such reactivation recommendations. This new model of decision making will give certainty from an earlier stage of students' post-primary education as to the supports that they will have in the state examinations should they continue to be needed. There is one exception to this, detailed at d) below.

**(b)** The category of 'Specific Learning Difficulty' has been broadened to a new category known as 'Learning Difficulty'. This brings RACE into line with the overall needs-based approach to the provision of support to students with special educational needs, advocated by the National Council for Special Education in 2014. There is no longer a need for the school or candidate to provide cognitive ability scores or to otherwise confirm that a candidate has a specific learning difficulty in order to be eligible for RACE. Eligibility should be assessed based on the level of need, without a requirement for a diagnosis of a specific condition. The change to a needs based approach enables greater access to the scheme by candidates with general learning disabilities and brings RACE into line with the overall needs based approach for the provision of support to students with special educational needs. Where testing is required as evidence of eligibility, at Junior Cycle or in the case of an application for new accommodations at Leaving Certificate, the testing arrangements are the same as before. So the need for a reader, for example, will continue to be evidenced by reference to the candidate's attainment in a standardised reading test and error rates in reading examination papers.

Other key features of the RACE scheme, which are set out in greater detail in the remainder of the document, can be summarised as follows:

**(c)** The role of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has changed. NEPS are no longer involved in centrally considering applications. Instead, the role of NEPS is to: provide training to schools on

the RACE scheme; provide advice, information and support to schools that are considering whether to make RACE applications, particularly in relation to complex applications; engage with the SEC on governance of the RACE scheme including quality assurance of RACE applications at both individual and school level engage with the SEC in considering Complex Case referrals.

- (d) A candidate who had an individual special centre at Junior Cycle and who continues to require a special centre will be approved for a special centre at Leaving Certificate. However, depending on the nature of their need, this approval may be for a shared, rather than an individual, special centre. Candidates may previously have been placed in an individual special centre when a shared special centre might have been sufficient. In allowing Junior Cycle accommodations to be reactivated at Leaving Certificate, the SEC will work with schools to rationalise the numbers of individual examination centres. Section 5.5 deals with this in detail.
- (e) In order to ensure that the scheme is underpinned by good practice, schools must, as part of the application process for Junior Cycle, indicate that learning support and interventions have and will continue to be made by the school to support learning for the individual applicant. In order to have the same supports progressed to Leaving Certificate, schools are required to confirm that the need that led to the granting of supports persists, and that the supports provided to enable access at Junior Cycle are required to enable access to Leaving Certificate.
- (f) Applications will be subject to central quality assurance checks during and following the application process, and schools have access to an SEC referral and advisory service to assist them in difficult decisions.
- (g) A separate application process applies to Leaving Certificate candidates who did not have any accommodations at Junior Cycle or who are applying for a change to the accommodations provided at Junior Cycle.
- (h) An Independent Appeals process continues to be offered. Those unhappy with the processing of the appeal will have recourse to the offices of the Ombudsman or Ombudsman for Children.

### **Writing Accommodations**

Further clarity is provided this year regarding the distinctions between the three accommodations available to eligible students who have writing difficulties; i.e., use of a word processor; use of a recording device; access to a scribe.

A student unable to make use of a word-processor in their examinations will be provided with the use of a recording device as an alternative.

A higher barrier of access applies for access to a scribe. Access to a scribe will only be sanctioned if there is a valid reason why the use of a recording device is not an appropriate accommodation (e.g. in the case of a candidate with a severe speech impediment).

### **Guidelines for Writing Accommodations in cases of Physical Disabilities**

In response to requests from schools, the SEC has provided further instructions on assessing students for writing difficulties on grounds of a physical disability including clarification in relation to writing speed. These guidelines apply to students being assessed for reasonable accommodations for the first time, i.e. at Junior Cycle or in the case of new Leaving Certificate applications. There is no need for schools to undertake any additional assessment of students who had writing accommodations to enable them to access their Junior Cycle provided that the school authority is satisfied that the need for the accommodation persists. The guidelines are based on

international best practice and have been the subject of consultation with experts on dysgraphia; dyspraxia and Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD).

### **Individual Reader versus Reading Assistant**

The distinction between an Individual Reader and a Reading Assistant is as follows:

- An Individual Reader is to read the examination papers, without elaboration or explanation.
- A Reading Assistant is to read occasional words or phrases of examination papers without elaboration or explanation.

### **Assistive Technology**

The SEC recognises the role of Assistive Technology in enabling independent access to the examinations by students who qualify for a writing accommodation. The SEC will continue to encourage broader use of available Assistive Technology as well as being open to considering applications to use alternative types of Assistive Technology. The enhancements to the Assistive Technology provision are:

- Providing access to an exam reading pen\* as an alternative accommodation to a Reader/Reading Assistant for candidates eligible for these.
- Providing Digital Coursework Booklets, for completion by students eligible to use a word processor, in a limited range of subjects. For the 2019 examinations, Digital Coursework Booklets will be available in Leaving Certificate History, Geography and Politics and Society as well as Junior Cycle CSPE and English Assessment Task.

### **Range of Accommodations**

Applications for reasonable accommodations are considered in line with the published Framework of Principles and can only be approved in accordance with the principles and requirements of the scheme.

The means by which a candidate normally studies or communicates, the supports provided by the school and his or her eligibility in line with the published criteria, and/or other conditions of eligibility, and the range of supports available under the scheme will largely determine the access arrangements which can be provided. In this context, a candidate must have a need to work in a particular way based on their special educational needs rather than any personal choice that they might make.

Applications for the RACE scheme will continue to be made on one of four grounds as follows:

- Learning Difficulty
- Hearing Difficulty
- Visual Difficulty
- Physical Difficulty\*\*

\* \* this category is taken to include medical, sensory, mental health and behavioural difficulties as well as physical difficulties.

The SEC appreciates that schools may make applications for candidates with complex needs whose difficulties span a number of the grounds for making a RACE application. The range of accommodations available to candidates for the 2019 examinations under each of these categories is set out in the following section. Each accommodation is explained in more detail below including eligibility criteria as appropriate.

### **(1) Learning Difficulty**

- An Individual Reader to read the examination papers, without elaboration or explanation.
- A Reading Assistant to read occasional words or phrases of examination papers without elaboration or explanation.
- An Exam Reading Pen to scan text and convert it to speech which can be listened to using ear-phones.
- A word processor or recording device to record the candidate's responses or, in very exceptional circumstances, access to a scribe.
- A waiver from the assessment of spelling, grammar and punctuation in language subjects.

### **(2) Hearing Difficulty**

- Use of a personal CD player with a personal induction loop in the main examination centre for the aural examination.
- A special examination centre for the aural examination.
- A Modified aural examination in a language subject.
- Exemption from the aural examination, if modified aural is not appropriate for the candidate.
- An exemption from the aural component of the Music examination.
- A Sign language interpreter, to sign an examination paper, without elaboration or explanation.
- Being examined by an oral examiner who has been briefed in dealing with candidates with a hearing/speech impairment
- Exemption from the oral tests, if support arrangements are unsuitable.
- Seating the candidate close to the superintendent and/or the CD player in the main examination centre can be arranged by the school.

### **(3) Visual Difficulty**

- Standard examination paper enlarged to A3 size.
- Modified examination paper (visual elements removed or simplified), enlarged to A3 size.
- Braille version of the modified paper.
- An Individual Reader to read the examination papers, without elaboration or explanation.
- A Reading Assistant to read occasional words or phrases of the examination papers without elaboration or explanation.
- An Exam Reading Pen to scan text and convert it to speech which can be listened to using ear-phones.
- A word processor or recording device to record the candidate's responses or, in very exceptional circumstances, access to a scribe.
- Use of drawing aids such as parallel motion drawing boards and smaller drawing sheets in the subjects Technical Graphics, DCG, Construction Studies, Materials Technology (Wood) or Technology.
- Colour identifier in Geography.
- Low vision aids, magnifiers and reading lamps normally used in the classroom can be arranged by the school.

### **(4) Physical Difficulty (including medical, sensory, behavioural and mental health difficulties)**

- A word-processor, standard or voice-activated or a recording device to record the candidate's responses or, in very exceptional circumstances, access to a scribe.
- Use of drawing aids such as parallel motion drawing boards and smaller drawing sheets in the subjects Technical Graphics, DCG, Construction Studies, Materials Technology (Wood) or Technology.
- Junior Cycle Home Economics only – exemption from the practical and/or project.

## **Additional Time**

Additional time in which to complete the written examinations (not to be confused with rest breaks) is not an accommodation that can be sanctioned in its own right under the RACE scheme.

The following section describes the limited circumstances attached to the award of additional time in the examinations:

Other than in Leaving Certificate Irish, English, History and Geography, additional time, at a rate of 10 extra minutes per scheduled hour, or part thereof, of each examination paper, may be provided to candidates in the following circumstances:

1. Candidates for whom the use of a scribe has been sanctioned - as there is a time overhead in dictation and otherwise in dealing with a scribe.
2. Candidates who are eligible for RACE support arising from a visual impairment – such candidates should be under the care of the Visiting Teacher Service.
3. Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria for the use of a mechanical aid but who are unable to make adequate use of these aids under examination conditions.

Regardless of the circumstances or combination of circumstances, additional time is limited to a maximum of 10 minutes per scheduled hour, or part thereof, of examination to a maximum of 30 minutes per examination. For example, a candidate with a visual impairment, sitting a 2.5 hour examination, will be entitled to additional time of 30 minutes. A candidate with a visual impairment, sitting a 2.5 hour examination, and using a scribe, will still only be entitled to additional time of 30 minutes in that examination.

Under no circumstances will a candidate granted the use of a word processor (or another device) be allowed extra time to type their responses on grounds of slow typing speed.

## **Adjustments to the Published Leaving Certificate Examination Timetable**

Additional time of 20 minutes per examination paper was introduced in 2000 for all candidates in the Leaving Certificate subjects, Irish, English, History and Geography. This was introduced to meet the needs of candidates with special educational needs by making the time element of these examinations less critical. It remains the case that the examinations in these subjects are 20 minutes longer than the time they were designed to require. Therefore, any further additional time allowed in the examinations in these subjects is limited to 10 minutes over and above that shown on the published timetable.

## **Rest Breaks**

Schools have discretion, to grant rest breaks or rest periods, not exceeding 20 minutes per examination, to candidates with physical and/or medical conditions. Rest breaks do not represent additional time in which to complete the examination. You do not need to and should not apply to the SEC to allow individual candidates to take rest 15 breaks. However, the SEC will intervene with any school if it believes that the discretion to grant rest breaks is being abused.

Breaks should be granted based on your knowledge of what is in the best interests of the candidate.

The following rules apply to rest breaks:

- Candidates are not permitted to read, write or complete any other examination related activity during the rest break. Based on their needs, candidates may take one or more rest breaks during each examination. The total of the rest break(s) granted by the school must not exceed 20 minutes per examination.
- During a rest break, the clock is effectively stopped for the candidate involved and the time taken during the rest break(s) is added at the end of the examination.
- The candidate should be accommodated in the main examination centre and must only be in a special examination centre if that accommodation has been approved for another reason.
- Rest breaks must be supervised by the superintendent or a member of the school authority.
- A note, signed by the principal, must be provided to the Superintendent by the school authority authorising standard rest breaks.

### ***(iii) Parental engagement***

Parent participation in the special education decision-making process is strongly encouraged. The most important thing parents can do is ensure they are involved with and take an active role as a member of the Student Support File (SSF) team. Parents should strive to attend meetings to ensure participation in decision making and to provide input on all aspects of their children's programs.

Parents should be prepared to offer insight into whether current strategies and instruction are helping the child learn and provide information on the child's strengths and weaknesses at home, background information on the child's history and development, and information on

Parents have the opportunity to sit side-by-side with their child, working through homework and other learning activities for extended periods. Parents may be the only adults who closely observe students' work and get feedback from their children. Consequently, no one else has the perspective of a parent in a meeting.

Transition meetings are held to discuss moves from one school to another and the parents' input at each transition can ensure that appropriate services and supports are in place and increase the chances of the child's success in the new school/program.

### ***(iv) Gifted and Talented Students***

The term 'gifted' tends to be reserved for those with an IQ (Intelligence Quotient) greater than 130 on standardised IQ tests, i.e. the top 2% of the population. It is important to remember that, although the number of such students decreases as IQ scores of 170 and above are reached, their needs become increasingly acute. Adopting a precise cut-off point can have little practical application.

Exceptionally able students are likely to show some of the following characteristics:

- have acute powers of observation
- learn to read early (often prior to attending school)
- read rapidly and widely
- have a well-developed vocabulary
- possess intellectual curiosity
- absorb information rapidly (often described as sponge-like)
- have a very good memory
- display an ability to concentrate deeply for long periods
- have very good powers of reasoning and problem solving
- have intense interests
- possess exceptional imaginative powers.

Students may have a great interest in 'big questions', such as the nature of the universe and environmental issues. Students may be very sensitive, easily upset and demonstrate a strong sense of fairness.

It should be noted that good practice for exceptionally able students is also good practice for all students and can improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

As regular schoolwork may not be sufficiently challenging, students may describe experiencing boredom and frustration in school. Prolonged boredom in school may lead to underachievement as the student finds new ways to absorb themselves (e.g. by daydreaming, scribbling, etc.). If this goes unchallenged for long periods, the habit of concentrating on schoolwork may be diminished and can require an effort to 'relearn'.

#### **(v) EAL**

According to the *Circular 0015/2009*:

It is a matter for the school authority to deploy this teacher allocation having regard to the proficiency levels of individual pupils involved and in line with their evolving needs. The allocation of EAL support teachers is based on allowing schools flexibility in the deployment of support. It is recommended that pupils receive additional EAL support teaching in the classroom or in timetabled EAL lessons for small groups in addition to the support they receive from the class teachers.

Clear and effective arrangements for the identification of pupils requiring support, the assessment of pupils' levels of language proficiency, programme planning, and the recording and monitoring of pupils' progress and communication with parents are key features of effective EAL support provision.

For each EAL student, a Student Support File is being completed and reviewed. Ongoing communication with the parents/guardians is priorities.

For our House exams, EAL students get reasonable accommodation such as a reader, spelling and grammar waiver, use of bilingual dictionaries. We apply for the same accommodation for the State Exams.

#### **(vi) Trips and Tours**

Our SNAs assist and accompany SEN students with access to an SNA on trips and tours. Our students are included in every aspect of school life and are given the same opportunities as non-SEN students.

#### **(vii) Assistive Technology**

The application form sent to the NCSE has to be completed by the parents, the SEN coordinator and signed by the parents and the Principal. The SEN coordinator will send the application form to the SENO.

On receipt of an application from a school, the SENO will examine the application in the light of the needs of the pupil, the school facilities and the criteria set out in this circular.

Following this process, the SENO will decide whether to recommend that grant aid to be made available to the school by the Department of Education and Skills.

On receipt of an application and recommendation from the SENO, the Department of Education and Skills will advise schools on the level of grant approved. Schools must await the approval of the Department before purchasing equipment.

All equipment must, in general, be purchased with a 3-month period of receipt of the approval letter from this Department. After purchase, receipted invoices must be submitted with claims for payment and copies retained in the school account.



Assistive Technology can be accessed by a student as per *Circular No 0010/2013*:

The purpose of this scheme is to provide grant-aid to schools to allow them to purchase the type of specialist equipment which has been recommended by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) as being essential for pupils who have been diagnosed as having a serious physical disability and/or sensory or communicative disability to the extent that their ability to communicate through the medium of speech or writing is materially curtailed. Where it is clear that existing equipment in the school is insufficient to meet the child's needs without unduly depriving other children of access to the equipment and where without such equipment it will not be possible for such children to access the school curriculum.

The recommendation of the NCSE will be based upon accompanying professional reports, as necessary and from relevant professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists etc.

Professional reports should also clearly identify how, when, and in what way the recommended equipment will be used.

**Provision under this scheme is made for those pupils whose degree of physical and/or communicative disability is such that without technological support it will not be possible for them to access the school curriculum.**

(A) The primary categories of disability or need for which assistive technology support will be provided, subject to application by the school and a medical recommendation, are:

- Hearing impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Physical Disability Severe/Profound
- General Learning Disability

(B) In some circumstances, where accompanying medical reports and/or other professional reports have outlined that the degree of communicative disability is such that it is recommended that without the support of specialist equipment the child cannot access the school curriculum, equipment may be provided for pupils with the following disabilities:

- Moderate General Learning Disability
- Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Specific Learning Disability
- Specific Speech and Language Disorder
- Multiple Disabilities

It should not be assumed that all children with a communicative disability or specific learning disability either require, or will qualify for a personal computer under the terms of this scheme. Such equipment will only be provided where medical and/or other professional reports outline that the degree of communicative disability is such that this equipment is essential to allow the pupil to access education and set out how the equipment will provide for this.

### ***(viii) Visually Impaired Students***

#### **Visiting Teacher Service**

Visiting teachers support children who are blind/visually impaired and their families from the time the sight loss is identified. They liaise with teachers in schools and provide specialist teaching advice for the child with visual impairment. They provide guidance on assistive technology.

They teach children to use Braille and support mainstream teachers to use Braille machines. Visiting teachers can refer children for assessment of low-vision aids and then train the children in their use.

Visiting teachers aim to be a support to the parents/ guardian, the child and the school.

#### **At school**

Our visually impaired students are supported in school in the following ways:

- The subject teacher supports our students with special educational needs and may adapt lessons or tasks to suit the individual, as necessary.
- Each subject teachers uses a USB key to transfer the notes and handouts given in class onto it. The USB key can be read on the Sense Machine or on a braille computer. Its content can be printed in Braille in the school.
- Learning support teachers are available to provide additional teaching, if it is required.
- Access to support from special needs assistants (SNAs) is provided for pupils who have significant care needs arising from their sight loss. SNAs are employed to look after the care needs of children while the teacher is responsible for teaching the child. The circumstances in which SNAs are allocated to pupils who are blind/visually impaired are detailed in *Circular 0030/2014*
- Assistive Technology (in accordance with the criteria set out in DES *Circular 0010/2013*), for example, Braille Equipment/Braille Keyboards, CCTV equipment with distance camera, computer equipment for enhanced text reading and online library and audio equipment for audio books.
- Large print books (produced by the National Braille Production Centre) or digital books, depending on the child's needs.
- Special school transport arrangements may be available for eligible children.
- Candidates with permanent or long-term conditions, including visual and hearing difficulties, which they believe will significantly impair their performance in the examinations, may apply to the State Examinations Commission for a reasonable accommodation(s) (RACE).

### **Policy**

The Department's policy is focused on ensuring that all children, including those who are blind/visually impaired, can have access to an education appropriate to meeting their needs and abilities. The policy is to provide for children with special educational needs to be included in mainstream schools unless such a placement would not be in their best interests or the interests of the children with whom they are to be educated.

### **Support organisations**

- ChildVision – National Education Centre for Blind Children: [www.childvision.ie](http://www.childvision.ie).
- Deafblind Ireland: [www.deafblindireland.ie](http://www.deafblindireland.ie).
- Féach: [www.feach.ie](http://www.feach.ie) (Féach is a support group for parents of children who are blind/visually impaired).
- Fight for Sight: [www.fightforsight.ie](http://www.fightforsight.ie).
- Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind: [www.guidedogs.ie](http://www.guidedogs.ie).
- National Braille Production Centre: [www.braille.ie](http://www.braille.ie).
- National Centre for Technology in Education: NCTE : [www.ncte.ie](http://www.ncte.ie).
- National Council for the Blind of Ireland: [www.ncbi.ie](http://www.ncbi.ie).

### ***(ix) Hearing Impaired Students***

*The Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Ireland* states that in line with Section 2 of the EPSEN Act 2004, Deaf and hard of hearing children should be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless this is inconsistent with the best interests of the child as determined by an assessment carried out under the Act or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated (Government of Ireland, 2004). 2. Deaf and hard of hearing children should have the same access to education as their peers but it should be recognised that they have distinctive needs in relation to language acquisition and communication.

### **Visiting Teacher Service**

Visiting teachers support children who are hearing impaired and their families and they liaise with teachers in schools and provide specialist teaching advice for the child with hearing impairment. They provide guidance on assistive technology.

They teach children to use hearing devices, BAHA, microphone. Visiting teachers can refer children for assessment of low-vision aids and then train the children in their use.

Visiting teachers aim to be a support to the parents/ guardian, the child and the school.

### **Policy**

Section 2 of the EPSEN Act, 2004 explicitly states that: ... “a child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with: a. the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or b. the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated” (Government of Ireland, 2004).

### **At school**

Our aurally impaired students are supported in school in the following ways:

- The subject teacher supports our students with special educational needs and may adapt lessons or tasks to suit the individual, as necessary.
- Each subject teachers wears a microphone around the neck which id connected to the hearing device or BAHA worn by the student.
- Learning support teachers are available to provide additional teaching, if it is required.
- Access to support from special needs assistants (SNAs) is provided for pupils who have significant care needs arising from their hearing loss. SNAs are employed to look after the care needs of children while the teacher is responsible for teaching the child.
- Assistive Technology (in accordance with the criteria set out in *DES Circular 0010/2013*), for example audiology equipment, laptop
- Candidates with permanent or long-term conditions, including visual and hearing difficulties, which they believe will significantly impair their performance in the examinations, may apply to the State Examinations Commission for a reasonable accommodation(s) (RACE).

### ***(x) Students with Physical Disabilities***

Students may have physical disabilities arising from conditions such as congenital deformities, spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, brittle bones, haemophilia, cystic fibrosis or severe accidental injury. It is important to state that there is no necessary direct correlation between the degree of physical disability and the inability to cope with the school curriculum, apart from the elements involving physical activity. Students with severe physical disability may have minimal special educational needs, while those with minimal physical disability may have serious learning needs.

Physical access can be a major concern for students who have physical disabilities as those who use wheelchairs, braces, crutches, rotators, canes or prostheses, or those who fatigue easily may have difficulty moving around a school campus.

### **At school**

Our students with physical disabilities are supported in school in the following ways:

- The subject teacher supports our students with special educational needs and may adapt lessons or tasks to suit the individual, as necessary.
- Each subject teacher wears a microphone around the neck which is connected to the student hearing aid.
- Learning support teachers are available to provide additional teaching, if it is required. (touch type skills)
- Access to support from special needs assistants (SNAs) is provided for pupils who have significant care needs arising from their physical disability. SNAs are employed to look after the care needs of children while the teacher is responsible for teaching the child.
- Assistive Technology (in accordance with the criteria set out in *DES Circular 0010/2013*, e.g. laptop use)
- Candidates with permanent or long-term conditions which they believe will significantly impair their performance in the examinations may apply to the State Examinations Commission for a reasonable accommodation(s) (RACE).

### ***(xi) Education and Disabilities***

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) provides for the education of children with special education needs through a number of support mechanisms depending on the child's assessed disability.

Section 2 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004 requires that:

“A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with:

- The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act.
- The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.”

In general, educational provision for children with special needs is made:

- In special schools;
- In special classes attached to ordinary schools;
- In integrated settings in mainstream classes.

The nature and level of the educational response is based on the child's professionally-assessed disability.

The Department's policy is to achieve as much integration as possible, as envisaged in Section 2 of the EPSEN Act. Where placement in an integrated setting is considered to be the appropriate response, the provision will normally take the form of resource teaching or special needs assistant support, or both, depending on the pupil's assessed level of need.

While the DES' policy is to ensure the maximum possible integration of children with special needs into ordinary mainstream schools, students who have been assessed as having special educational needs have access to a range of special support services. The services range from special schools dedicated to particular disability groups, through special classes/units attached to ordinary schools, to placement on an integrated basis in ordinary schools with supports.

Children with more severe levels of disability may require placement in a special school or special class attached to a mainstream primary school. Each such facility is dedicated to a particular disability group and each operates at a specially reduced pupil teacher ratio. Pupils attending these facilities attract special rates of capitation funding and are entitled to avail of the special school transport service and the school bus escort service.

### ***(xii) CPD***

The professional development of education practitioners is fundamental to the effective operation of the SEN system. The school management and the SEN coordinator is responsible for ensuring systems and processes are in place to identify the professional learning needs of its workforce and should provide appropriate support to meet those needs.

Teaching practitioners have responsibility for their own professional learning and development. All should undertake appropriate professional learning in relation to SEN to ensure they remain equipped to meet the needs of all learners. The NCSE and SESS aim to support the professional development needs of teachers and schools in relation to the teaching of children with special needs. Online Courses - [ICEP Europe](#) are also accessible to our staff. The Board of Management will seek to support SEN teachers and SNA's in the attendance of relevant CPD.

(This policy was drawn up in collaboration with the Board of Management, staff, PTA, Student Council.)

## Appendix A - Yearly SEN Department Plan

### August

- Meet with SNAs.
  - Meet with all staff re incoming first years to share relevant information.
  - Department meeting – review results from students in the previous academic year.
  - Identification of SEN students for this year.
  - Transition plans for incoming first year students with SEN.
  - Meeting with new LS teachers (training, expectations, targets, planning, log of actions, SEN policy, timetable, responsibilities within the team).
  - Review and update the yearly SEN Department Plan.
  - Identification of students who would benefit from the L2 Learning Programme.
  - Review SEN students partaking in next month's Spanish trip and liaise with parents/outside agencies re: care needs.
- 

### September

- Update and finalise the School Provision Plan.
- Start Lunch Club to meet the needs of those socially isolated students. Organise board games.
- Timetabling break and lunch cover for SEN students either through use of SNAs or SETs.
- Timetabling staff to suit the needs of students ensuring a correct mix of numeracy and literacy.
- Organise SEN Rooms/Units/Resources/Office.
- Coordinate SEN hours for EAL students.
- Meeting with visiting teachers for the Blind and the Deaf.
- Staff collaboration with the Learning Support department.
- Staff training: targets for Student Support Files.
- Plan for Open Day.
- Send NSCE Form 6 to SENO.
- Identify students in need of referral to NEPS, CAMHS, COPE etc... and make referrals.
- Review JC results for LS students when published.
- Liaison with Guidance Counsellor to monitor students with a pastoral need.

- Schedule parent/teacher consultations for new SEN students and meet with other parents as required.
- Testing of “at risk” students at teachers’ request.
- In class monitoring of students with SEN who are not in the main LS programme.
- Present to staff re continuum especially, support for all triangle base and that SEN is everyone’s responsibility and decide as a staff whole school approaches/targets (whole school approaches to literacy, numeracy, teaching best practice).
- Write PPP for each student with access to an SNA, get it signed by Dr. Gash, the SNA, and the parents. Send PPPs + relevant information to SENO.
- Critical Incident Procedure to be reviewed with Guidance Counsellor and Principal.
- SEN Policy to be reviewed and updated if necessary.
- Transition from Primary to Secondary School Programme Belonging +.

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### October

- Submit Assistive Technology applications to SENO.
- Dyslexia Awareness Week - information sent to all the staff members.
- Start Student Support Plans in collaboration with SETs.
- SEN staff meeting - review support to SEN students.
- Carrying out individual student assessments for RACE applications for the Leaving Certificate. Complete RACE applications for LC students and submit to SEC.
- Input to First Year Welcome Ceremony for SEN students.
- NEPS – review of existing students and concerns regarding this academic year with our educational psychologist.
- Enable Ireland – review of students in school with psychologist, OT etc.
- COPE/CAMHS – review of students if required.
- Meeting with Visiting teacher for the Blind.  
Meeting with Visiting teacher for the Deaf.
- Identify students requiring supplementary centres for Christmas House Exams and issue requirements and staffing requests to Exams Officer.
- Review upcoming Junior Certificate students who may be eligible for RACE, with WRAT 4 or WIATT II/WIATT III testing where appropriate.
- Subject department meeting to review current timetable and ‘student fit’ approaching half term.

- Staff training: Framework for JC – incorporating skills into L/S programme.
- Student Support Files to be completed, then posted on Google Drive for all students with SEN. All reports to be uploaded on VSware for teacher’s consultation.
- Parent/teacher consultations as required.
- In class monitoring of students with SEN.
- Regular liaison with Guidance Counsellor regarding students identified as having a pastoral need.
- Supporting School Leavers who may require additional ongoing support when they leave school.
- Liaise with HSE Occupational Guidance Officer.
- Draw up list of resources required and place orders.
- Meeting with the nurse to review any students with new medical issues who might require special accommodation for house exams or RACE.
- SENCO Cluster Meeting – Church of Ireland secondary schools.

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**November**

- Submit RACE applications to SEC for Junior Cert students.
- Notify parents in writing if students are receiving RACE for Christmas house exams.
- Review SNA provision and amend time tabling where necessary to ensure best practice.
- Review Irish exemptions and ensure all valid documentation is in place.
- Circulate list of supplementary centres and accommodations to all staff for upcoming house exams and post it in staff room.
- Ensure learning support staff available to cover 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year parent/teacher consultations.
- Send letters to Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Years parents requesting any reports, assessments or LS information to facilitate a smooth transition into secondary school.
- Staff training: Supplementary centres for exams.
- Test students on request of concern from teachers/parents.
- In class monitoring of students with SEN.
- Liaison with Guidance Counsellor regarding LC students eligible for DARE programme.
- Pastoral care meetings.

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**December**



- Timetable staff to run supplementary centres during house exams and suspend learning support classes for exam duration.
  - Ensure class cover for those staff in supplementary centres who still maintain teaching commitments i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years.
  - Written reports to be completed on Google Drive for all SEN students by each member of staff teaching them for learning support.
  - Department meeting to review the progress of individual students in learning support programme.
  - Amendment of timetable and PPS's as required, post review.
  - Staff training: Testing using WRAT 4.
  - Parent/teacher consultations as required, including meetings with parents of prospective students.
  - Application to NCSE for Assistive Technology where required.
- 

### January

- Compile list of students requiring supplementary centres and RACE for mock exams in February and send to Exam officer together with staffing requirements before the end of term. Send letters to parents with details of accommodation, centre and supervisor.
  - Implement/monitor timetable changes made at the end of the last term.
  - Evaluate first term's Student Support Files and set new targets where appropriate.
  - Begin examining files for incoming first years to identify students with SEN, seek further information from feeder schools and parents where necessary.
  - Arrange learning support representation for 6<sup>th</sup> year parent/teacher consultations.
  - Continue WRAT 4 and WIAT III testing for students identified as being of concern post-Christmas exams.
  - Pastoral care meetings and liaison with Guidance Counsellor as required.
  - Liaise with NEPS, COPE, CAMHS, ENABLE IRELAND for review of individual students.
  - Ensure accurate completion of NCSE Leavers Return by mid-January.
  - Hold subject department meetings.
  - Staff training: Using Toe by Toe.
  - RACE letters to be sent to parents of candidates for JC and LC mock exams.
  - Follow up with SEC re any outstanding RACE applications for JC and LC.
  - Remind/Talk to staff re support for all targets (whole school approaches to literacy, numeracy, teaching best practice).
- 

### February

- Meet with incoming pupils and their parents for escorted visit around school campus and get any reports. Observe in their primary schools, talk to their teachers.
- Finalise list of centres/staff/students for mock exams. Collate with decisions from SEC for RACE. Circulate list of centres and RACE to all staff and post in staff room.
- Compile list of students requiring supplementary centres and RACE for mock exams in February and send to Exam officer together with staffing requirements before end of term. Send letters to parents with details of accommodation, centre and supervisor.
- Collate timetables for exams and issue requests for class cover for those in special centres. Arrange cover for break/lunchtime supervision of SEN students due to suspension of Lunch Club for the duration of exams.
- SNA Review – carry out a review of existing SNA's and students requiring assistance. Submit application to DES for any alterations to SNA provision after consultation with SENO.
- Collate learning support reports ensuring each student has a comment from all teachers.
- Subject Department Meeting.
- Staff training: Social Skills for Autism.
- Pastoral care meetings and liaison with Guidance Counsellor.
- Submission of School Leavers Form to NCSE.
- Organise reasonable accommodations if required for any incoming pupil.

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### **March**

- Diagnostic assessment tests for incoming first years. Arrange letters to parents of prospective students. Liaise with PTA re parent's reception.
- Score and complete stats for incoming students. Identify any of concern and follow with feeder schools and parents for more information.
- Review of mock exams re. Supplementary centres and performance of SEN students.
- Arrange representation for learning support for 1<sup>st</sup> year parent/teacher meeting.
- Review of record keeping: SSF's, Lunch Club, Assisted Prep, Gifted Programme.
- Peer observation within learning support classes.
- Review of timetable and SNA provision for the upcoming term.
- Pastoral care meetings and liaison with Guidance Counsellor.
- Subject Department meeting.
- Staff Training: assisting LC students with study skills.

- Testing for in-house Accommodation for summer exams.
  - Visit Primary schools of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> years if required.
- 

### **April**

- Compile a list of proposed supplementary centres for house summer exams for forms 1, 2, 4 and 5 and pass to Exams Officer with staffing and room requirements.
  - RACE: Check all applications for JC and LC are resolved.
  - Compile a list of centres and staff for state exams. Hold meeting with superintendents of proposed special centres to ensure full knowledge of procedure and RACE and student's needs.
  - Subject Dept. meeting.
  - Staff training: Group testing of prospective students.
- 

### **May**

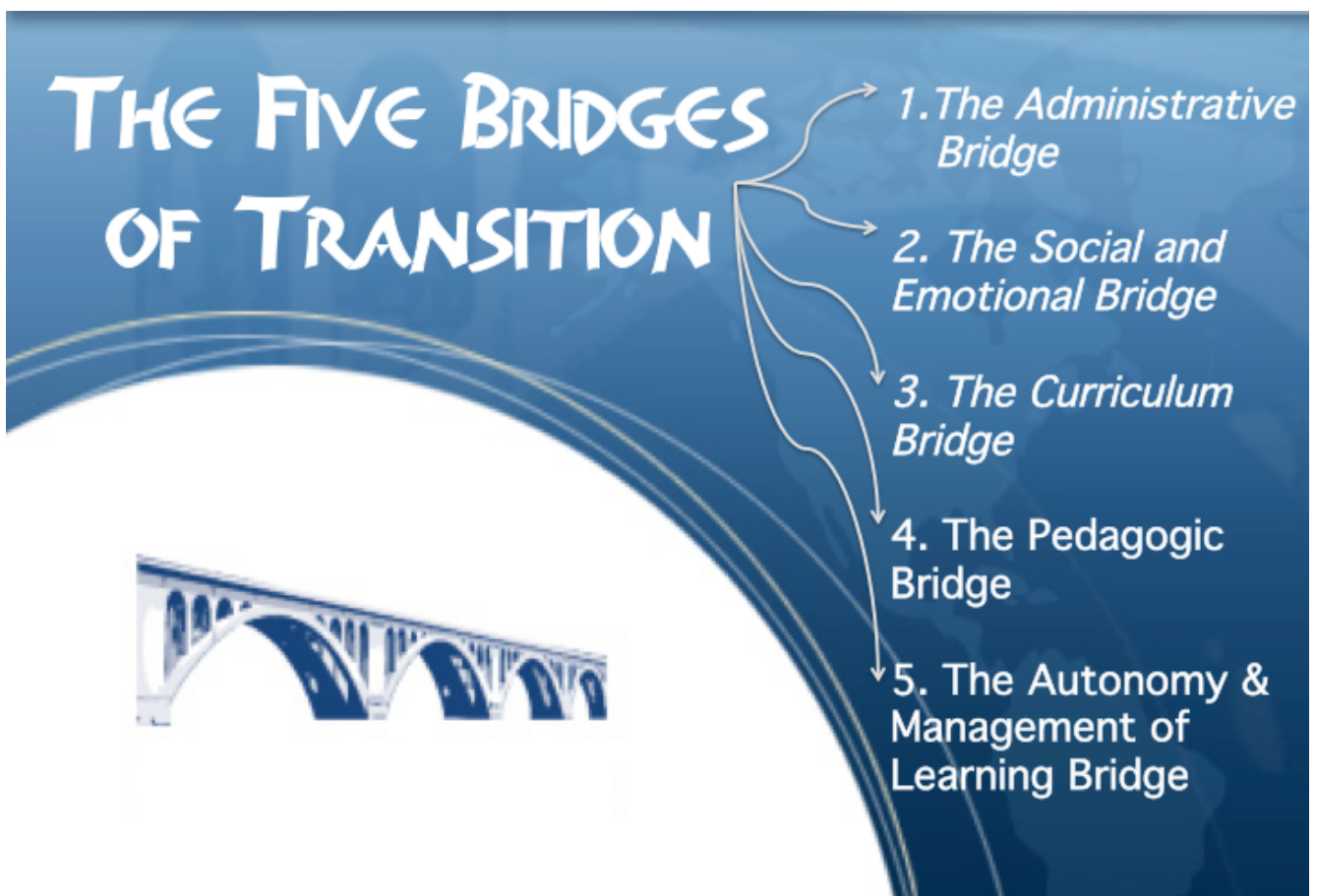
- Publish and circulate a list of supplementary centres for house exams together with RACE allowed. Make late applications to SENO if necessary for any new cases.
  - Arrange cover SNA assisted students during the house exam period.
  - Subject Department Annual Review meeting.
  - Staff training: Testing with WIAT IV.
  - SSF's – ensure all reviews in place.
  - Ensure end of term reports completed in respect of all learning support students.
  - RACE – SEC applications for current 5<sup>th</sup> years. Begin testing and scoring sample papers. Identify eligible students for applications for Sept 2018.
  - Identify students for timetabling next term.
  - Identify students suitable for Friends First (Junior Cycle) and Life (Senior Cycle) for the next academic year.
  - Attend review meeting with Principal to discuss learning support programme this past year and initiatives/ changes for the coming year.
  - Facilitate visit of any incoming First Years requiring a high level of support.
  - Identification of Fifth Year pupils who will require RACE in Sixth Year.
- 

### **Throughout the Year**

- Liaise with N.E.P.S

- Liaise with Tulsa.
- Liaise with N.C.S.E
- Formal and Informal communication with parents.
- Attend meetings as a member of various review and sub-groups.
- Ongoing CPD.
- Weekly Pastoral Care Meetings.
- Weekly meetings with Guidance Counsellor Ms Gillespie.
- Weekly meeting with Principal Dr. Gash.

## Appendix B - 5 Bridges – Transition Form Primary to Post Primary Program



### 1- The Administrative Bridge:

Communication of pupil records both personal and academic and administrative meetings between school staff: Micra and Stigma T scores, work samples, reports, parent's meetings, etc.

Once all the assessments reports are received and discussed with parents and primary school, applications are made to the SENO for Special Needs Assistant Support.

The SEN co-ordinator liaises with the primary school, visits the resource teachers and gets information to facilitate application for resources. The *End of Year* report and *My profile* sheet for children is completed and shared with the secondary school as well as the *My Child's profile* Sheet.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post primary schools.

These include

- Post Primary Transfer Review (see Appendix E)
- 6th Class Report Card
- My Profile sheet for children
- My Child's Profile sheet for parent(s)
- A Special Educational Needs Summary Form is included to support the sharing of information for children with identified learning needs.

Since the 2014/15 school year, schools are required to use the Education Passport materials detailed above and to forward them to the relevant post-primary school, following confirmation of enrolment, ideally by the end of June (*Circular 45/2014*).

## **2- The Social and Emotional Bridge:**

To ensure that primary pupils become familiar with their secondary school prior to transition and feel comfortable and confident with the changes of teachers, key school routines, new peer group and physical surroundings: transfer of passport, identifying and responding to student anxieties, recognising and dealing with relationships and friendship issues, tackling bullying the fear of bullying, creating a culture where achievement is valued. The NCSE Programme **Belonging +** is being used to facilitate a smooth Transition from Primary to Secondary School.

## **3- The Curriculum Bridge:**

To ensure Curriculum continuity between phases so that post primary teachers can develop existing levels of achievement and attainment rather than seeing the secondary curriculum as a blank slate.

The SEN co-ordinator is responsible for the Assistive Technology transfer to be agreed by the primary school. The SEN co-ordinator also makes contact with the SENO or the visiting teacher to put in place a specific transition plan in the case of a student with a physical disability. As part of the plan, the timetable will be adjusted, and extra textbooks/eBooks will be provided.

The entrance assessment will also be differentiated according to the student's needs.

## **3- The Pedagogic Bridge:**

To develop cross phase links between teachers of 6<sup>th</sup> class and 1<sup>st</sup> years, to ensure consistency in pedagogic approaches in the classroom: teaching styles and skills, learning preferences, learners' profiles or passports.

## **4- The Management of Learning Bridge:**

To ensure that students are aware of the challenges of transition and are given the opportunity to make their own decisions: helping students to know more about themselves as learners and reflect on what and how they are learning, helping students understand how learning in the early years of second level an impact on future learning.

Primary level staff and SEN pupils are invited to visit the school to familiarise themselves with the building layout. During the meeting, the student meets up with key personnel (SNA/ SEN co-ordinator) and gets a tour of the school where some role plays/activities related to orientation are put in place.

The assessment procedures for entrance exams are discussed that day with the student and the teacher/parent to alleviate their anxieties.

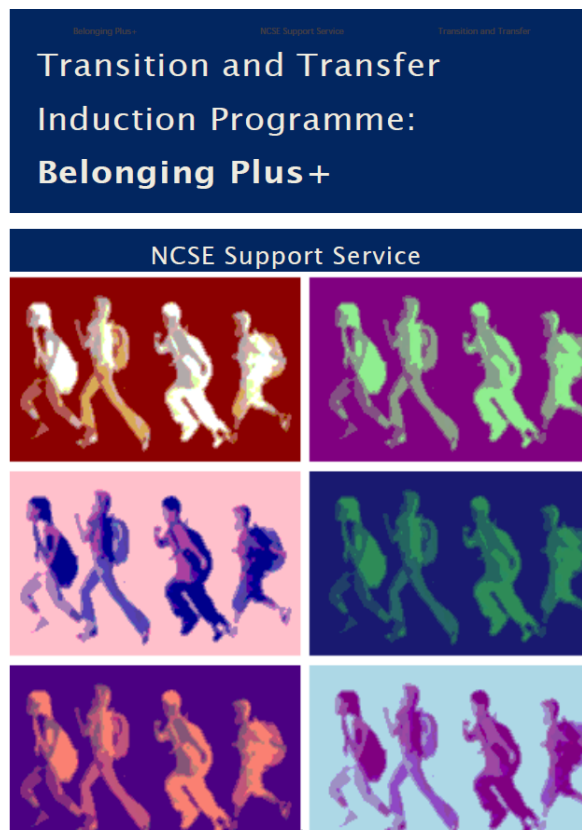
Lockers, dining hall and general organisation issues (folders for each subject) are highlighted and explained explicitly that day.

A sample timetable and a map of the school are also provided to the transitioning student.

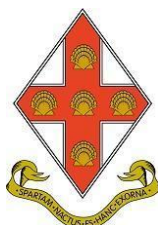
The SEN co-ordinator provides students, parents and primary school teachers with essential and timely information in relation to orientation activities, school organisation, school curriculum (NCSE Programme **Belonging +**).

## Appendix C – Belonging +





## Appendix D – School Provision Plan Template



Midleton College - SEN Department

### School provision plan for pupils with special educational needs

School: Roll No: **62370J**

School Year: **2019/2020** Reviewed: **May 2020**

Special Educational Needs Teaching: **149.58** hours

Teacher Name	Periods	Brief Description of Role and Duties
Paul Cashman	2	Geography support for senior cycle students.
Jennifer Cahill	15	Literacy + Social Skills support junior cycle students / Geography support for senior cycle students + In Class Support Teacher
Loraine Copithorne	6	Literacy + Social Skills support for junior and senior cycle students + In Class Support Teacher
Louise Curtin	2	Numeracy support (maths + science) for junior cycle students.
Ann Dawson	1	Spanish support for 3rd year student.
Rebecca Farr	22	Literacy, Numeracy and Social Skills to Junior and Senior Cycle students + In Class Support Teacher

Leonie Farragher	4	In Class Support Teacher
Brian Gill	2	Business, Economics support for senior cycle students.
Meadhbh Lynch	10	Music, Literacy support + In Class Support Teacher.
Kelly Masters	14	Literacy, Social Skills, Typing Skills support Junior and Senior Cycle students + CBAs support + In Class Support Teacher + Admin Role.
Jennifer McGrath	17	Literacy + Social Skills support junior cycle students / Business support for senior cycle students + In Class Support Teacher
Daire McLoughlin	5	DCG + Maths support to Junior and Senior students.
Delphine O'Brien	19	Literacy, Social Skills, Typing Skills support Junior and Senior Cycle students + CBAs support + In Class Support Teacher + SENCO
Laura O'Donovan	9	Science, Numeracy and Typing skills support to Junior and Senior Cycle students.
Daniel O'Gorman	5	Numeracy support to Junior and Senior Cycle students.
Niamh O'Mahony	14	Science, Numeracy and Typing skills support to Junior and Senior Cycle students + CBAs support.
Jane O'Sullivan	2	Language support for 3rd year students.
Laurie Power	2	Music to 6th year student and Literacy support to Junior Cycle Student.
Niamh Rossiter	4	Home Economics support to 6th year students.
Nora Ward	4	Literacy support to Junior Cycle Students.
Noelle White	4	Language support for 3rd year students.
Eoin Whyte	1	English support to 3rd year students.

***Pupils with Special Educational Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework***

<b>Classroom Support</b>				
<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Supports</b> Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	<b>Focus of Support</b>
<b>School Support</b>				
<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Support</b>	<b>Focus of Support</b>
<b>School Support Plus</b>				
<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Description of SEN</b>	<b>Nature of Support</b>	<b>Focus of Support</b>



## Appendix E – Student Transfer Review Letter sent to 1<sup>st</sup> Form Entry Student’s Parents

In order to facilitate a smooth transition into secondary school, we would appreciate if you could fill in the following information if it is relevant to your child.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present School: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Language: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Assessment**

Has your daughter/son undergone assessment/s? (Please circle) Yes No

If so, please send all the relevant reports to Midleton College.

Date(s) of Assessment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Has your daughter/son been involved with any agency providing Psychological/Psychiatric Services,

Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy etc.? (Please circle) Yes No

If so, please send all the relevant reports to Midleton College.

Does your daughter/ son have an Exemption from Irish? (Please circle) Yes No

If so, please send the Irish Exemption Certificate to Midleton College.

Does your daughter/ son have access to Assistive Technology? (Please circle) Yes No

If so, please give details: \_\_\_\_\_

Specify what (if any) equipment will transfer with your child: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your daughter/ son have access to a Special Needs Assistant? (Please circle) Yes No

If so, please give details: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your son/daughter have received any support in primary school, academically or socially?

If so, please give details: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please circle) Yes No

Please tick the box if you agree for your child's current primary school to forward all the relevant information and documents relating to the above.

Please provide any other relevant information: \_\_\_\_\_

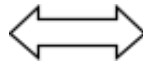
## Appendix F – Student Support File Template



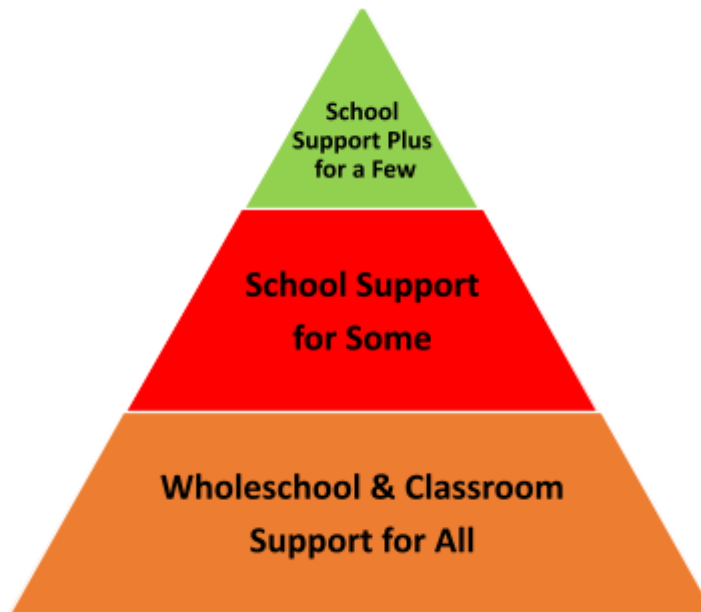
STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	

## A Continuum of Support

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS**



**SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL and  
BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE**



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem-solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

## Student Support File, Log of Actions

Date                      Actions

<b>Support Checklist</b>		
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Age:</b>	<b>Class:</b>
<b>General Information</b>	<b>Date Checked</b>	<b>Comments</b>
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>		



**To be completed by the teacher(s).**

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			

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this plan.

# SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD\*

Classroom Support

School Support (Support for SOME)

School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

**To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.**

For help, see SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers; BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools.

Student's name	Class/ Year
Names of those present at review	Date of Review
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?	
Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?	
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?	
Recommended future actions – <i>what, how, who, when?</i>	
Any comments from the student?	
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) comment?	
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)	
Signature of teacher(s)	

Outcome of review (tick as appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue at Current Level of Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Request consultation with other professionals

\*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.

## Appendix G – Roles and Responsibilities

### A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools Guidelines for Teachers

	Subject Teachers	Specialist teachers (learning support/ resource/ language (EAL*)/ guidance counsellors/ HSCL*/ tutors/ heads of year)	School Management
<b>Support for All</b>	Differentiate teaching and learning activities Create positive classroom environment, including use of positive and constructive feedback Assess & monitor progress Create opportunities for success Communicate concerns to colleagues Collaborate with specialist teachers	Collection and analysis of school-wide screening data, including in-take screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records Collaboration with subject teachers	Leadership in developing relevant whole school policies: enrolment/ assessment/ inclusion Strategic management of implementation of policies and practices Strategic support for evidence based interventions
<b>School Support (for Some)</b>	As above, plus Contribute to group or individual planning and review Implement agreed strategies Communicate progress and concerns to co-ordinating teacher	As above plus Diagnostic testing Liaising with parents Gathering information from subject teachers/ other staff Plan, implement and review individual and/or group intervention Seek external professional	As above plus Assign roles and responsibilities Keep records of those receiving this level of support

<b>School Support Plus (for a Few)</b>	As above plus Prepare information for IEP planning meetings Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies Direct the work of SNAs* in the classroom	As above plus Plan, implement, monitor and review specialist and individualised responses Direct the work of SNAs in the school	As above plus Compliance with statutory requirements when EPSEN* is implemented.
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\*EAL- English as an Additional Language

\*SNA - Special Needs Assistant

\*HSCL - Home School Community Liaison

\*EPSEN - Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004

### Role of NEPS Psychologist

At Support for ALL schools may consult with NEPS psychologists about appropriate methods of identifying those at risk, or ask for support in further developing whole school policies, such as positive behaviour approaches, or give input to the whole staff about effective differentiation in class.

At School Support (support for **some** students) the psychologist may be involved in consulting with staff about individual students or groups of students, and may be involved in some direct work with the student, his/ her teachers and/or parents.

At School Support Plus (support for a **few** students) consultation might involve input into specialist interventions, and the psychologist may also be involved in individual assessment and intervention with the student.

## Appendix H – Range of Support

- Guidelines for schools: Supporting students with SEN in Mainstream Schools
- Inclusion of Students with special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines 2007
- NEPS
- NEPS Continuum of Support Documents
- NCSE and the support services SESS, NBSS
- NCCA website
- JCT L1 and L2LPs
- NEWB
- VTS for VI and HI
- Middletown Centre for Autism