



# Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

## Special Educational Needs Policy

### General Information

<b>Name of School:</b>	Swords Educate Together National School
<b>Address:</b>	Applewood, Swords, Co. Dublin
<b>Telephone:</b>	01-8903899
<b>email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@swordseducatetogether.ie">info@swordseducatetogether.ie</a>
<b>Denominational Character:</b>	Multi-Denominational
<b>Patron:</b>	Educate Together

### Special Educational Needs

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act was passed into law in July 2004. Special educational needs are defined in this act 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.

### Rationale

The inclusive ethos and philosophy of Swords Educate Together National School is to cherish all children equally and to aid and support them in achieving their true potential. Therefore, the school recognises the pivotal role of Special Education Needs (SEN) in pursuing its educational goals.

### Aims

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice that makes it possible. Our policy aims to enable children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

The principle aim of this policy is to provide practical guidance for Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, and Parents/Guardians on the provision of effective Learning Support and Resource

Teaching (LSRT) to children diagnosed with Low Incidence Special Educational Needs (Circular 02/05) or who are experiencing low achievement as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Welfare Act 1998.

**To support children with Special Educational Needs our aims are:**

- To enable all children to participate fully in the curriculum for their class level. This is done through implementation of a differentiated curriculum for their specific class level.
- To develop self-esteem and positive attitudes towards school and learning.
- To enable children to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To involve Parents/Guardians and other outside agencies (e.g. Department of Education and Skills Personnel, HSE, School Aged Disability Team (SADT), Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists) in supporting children's learning.
- To recognise the key role of Class Teachers.
- To establish specific models of support (Appendix 1) that are specifically designed to enhance learning and to prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.
- To ensure that our duties, as set out in The Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000 and Education for Persons with Disabilities Act 2004, are fully met, to enable children with special educational needs to join in the normal activities of the school along with children who do not have special educational needs.
- To ensure that all children gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have an equal opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs and their abilities.
- To identify children with special needs as early as possible.
- To use our resources as efficiently and fairly as possible when assessing and meeting the special educational needs of our children.
- To provide a staged approach in order to match educational provision to children's needs.
- To develop a partnership with Parents/Guardians in order that their knowledge, views, and experience can assist us in assessing and supporting their children.

**Swords Educate Together National School is committed to providing the best possible educational service to children with Special Educational needs.**

To ensure this, we require:

- A close level of co-operation between Parents/Guardians, Class Teachers, SEN Teachers, SNAs and any other school personnel assigned to support the child/children.
- Copies of the most recent psychological and medical reports prior to enrolment. These will be treated with the utmost confidence at all times. Copies of all relevant assessments and reports should be supplied to the school as these become available, on an ongoing basis.
- An assurance from Parents/Guardians that they understand that our responsibility is primarily to **all** children in our care, and therefore, if it becomes apparent to Teachers and Parents/Guardians that the integration of an individual child with a disability and/or special educational needs is having an ongoing adverse effect on the education of the other children in the class or school, and not meeting the needs of the child with a disability or Special Educational Need the Board of Management reserves the right to review the enrolment of the individual child.

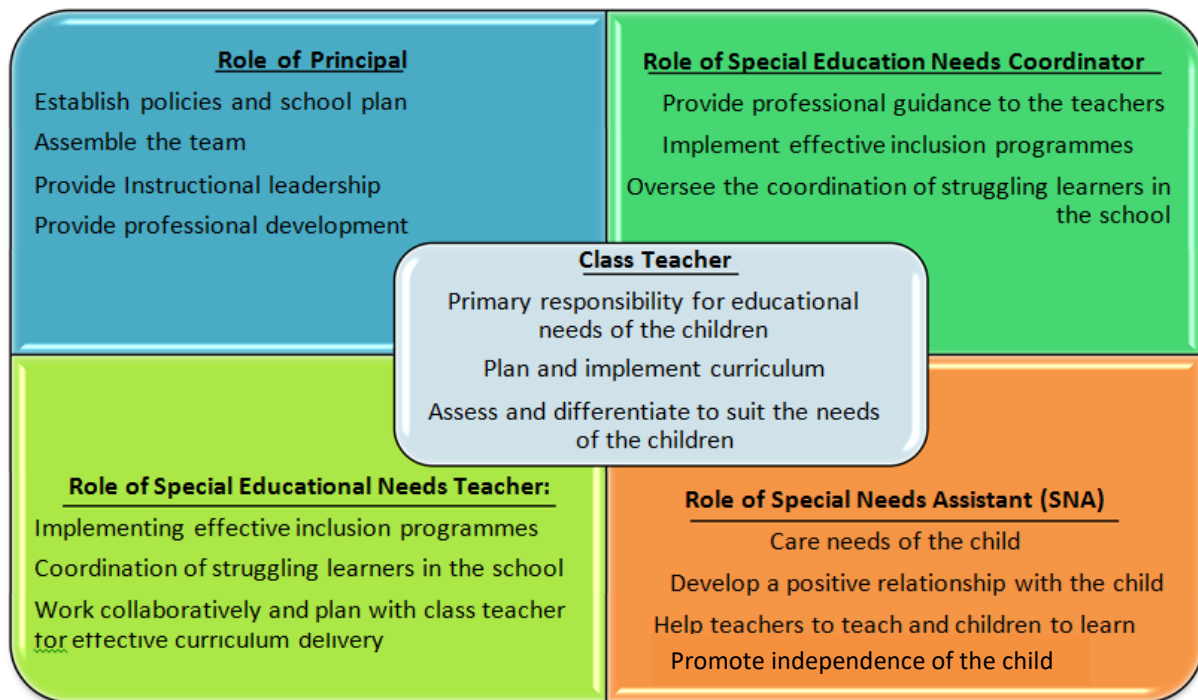
### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all: The Board of Management, Senior and Middle Management, SEN Coordinator, Teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) Parents/Guardians, and children. It is important that everyone contributes to the planning and implementation of our SEN Policy.

#### **SEN Teams**

In Ireland, Special Educational Needs (SEN) Teams were first advocated in Circular 24/03 as well as in Circular 02/05. The most recent NCSE document on the Inclusive Education Framework (2011) promotes the development of SEN Teams. Class Teachers, SEN Teachers, the SEN Co-ordinator, SNAs, and the Principal constitute the school SEN Team and each team member has a clear role in supporting children with special educational needs to access the curriculum.

In our school, we view the Class Teacher as central to the educational needs of each SEN child. All other staff members work with the Class Teacher to serve the needs of the child as stated in the Circular 02/05.



*Key roles of the school SEN Team members as summarised from the Inclusive Education Framework Document (2011).*

### **The Principal**

The Principal, in consultation with the Board of Management, has overall responsibility for the school's SEN programme and for the operation of services for children with Special Educational Needs. The Principal:

- Helps Teachers/SNAs to increase their knowledge and skills in the area of Special Educational Needs by encouraging them and providing opportunities for them to avail of relevant professional development.
- Meets regularly with the SEN Coordinator/SEN Team.
- Oversees SEN related policies and procedures.
- In conjunction with the SEN Coordinator, the Principal:
  - Liaises with outside agencies on SEN related matters.
  - Reviews, monitors, and applies for adequate resources for SEN children.
  - Reviews applications to outside Agencies for Special Educational Needs support.
  - Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify children with low achievement so that such children may be provided with the support that they need.
- Has responsibility for the allocation of SEN/SNA positions and class allocation within the SEN Team.

## **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has an important role in developing, supporting, and monitoring school policy on Special Educational Needs.

The Board of Management:

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of the SEN policy.
- Ensures that adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the SEN Team.
- Ensures a secure facility for storage of records relating to children.

## **SEN Co-ordinator**

In SETNS, the role of the SEN Coordinator has been assigned to the Deputy Principal.

The SEN Co-ordinator:

- Works on the development of the school plan for Special Educational Needs.
- Oversees the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening program to identify children with very low achievement and/or learning difficulties so that they can be provided with the support they need (See Assessment Policy).
- Collaborates with the Principal, SEN Team, Class Teachers, SNAs, External Agencies and Parents/Guardians of SEN children.
- Keeps SEN Teachers, Class Teachers, SNAs, and Parents/Guardians informed about relevant external assessment and Special Educational Needs services that are available.
- Maintains a list of children who are receiving SEN support.
- Helps to coordinate the caseloads / work schedules of the SEN Team.
- Liaises with external agencies such as Psychologists, Family Doctors, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists, NEPS, the School Aged Disability Team, and the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) to arrange assessments and special provisions for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Collaborates with SEN Team/Class Teachers in identification, screening, and referral procedures.
- Maintains records and disseminates information to relevant school personnel.
- Orders, purchases, distributes, and informs Staff on class screening materials and procedures.
- Ensures that all documentation relating to children who receive additional support is properly filed and secured.
- Facilitates regular meetings with SEN Team and SNA Team.

### **The Class Teacher**

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of **all** children in his/her class including those receiving Learning Support/Resource Teaching.

The Class Teacher:

- Liaises regularly with Parents/Guardians on their children's progress.
- Facilitates the implementation of various models of support provided by the SEN Team (See Appendix 1).
- Liaises initially with Parents/Guardians to make them aware of the difficulties their child may be experiencing.
- In conjunction with the SEN Team, uses class observations, standardised, screening, and diagnostic test results to highlight children's required levels of support.
- Collaborates with the SEN Team, SEN Teacher, and SNA on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for children with access to Low Incidence Teaching Hours (See Circular 02/05) and/or Individual Profile and Learning Programme (IPLP).
- Attends IEP Meetings with Parents/Guardians, SEN Teacher, and SNA.
- Meets with the SEN Team/Teacher on a regular basis to monitor progress and adapt the learning programme as necessary.
- Liaises with the SEN Team/SEN Teacher in the purchasing of relevant additional support materials.

### **SEN Teacher**

SEN Teacher refers to any teacher employed by the Board of Management in a Learning Support/Resource Teacher role. The SEN Teacher helps to provide an education which meets the needs and abilities of children assessed as having a specific disability (as outlined in Circular 02/05) and/or children who are experiencing low achievement as documented in standardised and/or diagnostic test results.

The SEN Teacher:

- Maintains relevant monthly reports (Cúntas Míosúil) on children/groups of children in receipt of Resource Teaching/Learning Support Teaching.
- In conjunction with the Class Teacher, implements various in-class models of support as referred to in Appendix 1.
- In collaboration with the Class Teacher, gathers information on children to create a profile of children experiencing difficulties (See NEPS *Continuum of Support*).

- In consultation with the Class Teacher, administers relevant screening and/or diagnostic tests to children who have been identified as experiencing difficulties.
- Liaises with outside agencies (e.g. Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists) on providing support and input on the teaching of children with Special Educational Needs.
- Develops an Individual Profile and Learning Programme (IPLP) to address the needs of children experiencing low achievement as reported in relevant standardised and/or diagnostic test results. The SEN Teacher agrees the specific targets with the Class Teacher and Parents/Guardians for children and/or groups of children
- **IEP**

#### *Formulation*

In close collaboration with Parents/Guardians and the Class Teacher, the child (where appropriate), and SNA if appointed, the SEN Teacher develops an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to address the needs of children with specific low incidence disabilities (Circular 02/05). This collaborative group agrees on the expected outcomes of the IEP. Parents/Guardians are invited to attend a meeting to discuss or make recommendations to the draft. Upon completion, Parents/Guardians are invited to the school to read and sign the IEP, and a copy of this is sent home.

#### *Review*

The SEN Coordinator will ensure that two reviews are conducted at the end of 20 weeks of instruction (February and June). The Class Teacher consults with the SEN Teacher, Parents/Guardians, the child (where appropriate), and SNA if appointed. When appropriate, outside agencies are invited for their input into IEP review. New targets are agreed by all members.

### **Special Needs Assistant**

The role of the Special Needs Assistant (SNA) is to provide schools with additional support in assisting children with Special Educational Needs who also have additional and significant care needs (Circular 07/02, Circular 0030/2014). Applications for SNA are based on recommendations from the professional who assessed the child and who diagnosed the child's special educational needs. The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) is responsible for SNA allocation.

The Special Needs Assistant:

- Attends and provides input into meetings regarding specific children whom they support.
- Liaises regularly with the Class Teachers of the specific children whom they support.

- Assists children to board and alight from school buses and, when necessary, travels as an escort on school buses of the child with Special Educational Needs.
- Provides special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties (e.g. helping physically disabled children with typing, writing, mobility, and orientation).
- Assists with clothing, feeding, toileting, and general hygiene.
- Assists child/ren with Special Educational Needs during out-of-school visits, walks, and similar activities.
- Assists teachers in the supervision of children with Special Educational Needs during assembly, recreational, and dispersal periods.
- Accompanies individuals or small groups who may need to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom.
- Provides general assistance to the Class Teacher, under the discretion of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. SNAs may not act as substitute or temporary teachers or be left in sole charge of the class.
- Prepares and tidies up classrooms in which the children with Special Educational Needs are taught.
- Where an SNA has been appointed to assist a school in catering for a specific child, duties should be modified to support the particular needs of the child concerned.

### **Parents/Guardians**

*“Parents, through their unique knowledge of knowing their own child, have much to contribute to their child’s learning programmes” (Learning Support Guidelines, p.52).*

The role of the Parents/Guardians of a child with Special Educational Needs is important to its success. Specifically, Parents/Guardians contribute through:

- Regular communication with the Class Teacher and SEN Teacher.
- Creating a home environment where Literacy and Numeracy can thrive.
- Fostering positive attitudes in the child about school and learning.
- Attending IEP meetings and providing input/feedback to Class Teacher/SEN Teacher/SNA.
- Collaborating in generating profiles through Diagnostic Windows and Questionnaires.
- Collaborating with SEN/Class Teacher and SNA in formulating and implementing an IEP for their child.
- Sharing insights and feedback on their child’s development and learning difficulties.



- Being fully involved at all times in their child's education. If Parents/Guardians have any concerns, they are encouraged to make an appointment to see the Class Teacher first, followed by, where appropriate, the SEN Teacher, Principal, or Deputy Principal.
- The views of Parents/Guardians will be sought at all stages of assessment and provision.

### **The Role of the Child**

In recognition of the child-centred nature of the school's ethos, we recognise the importance of the child's own role in the provision of Special Education Support.

A child-centred approach will enable the SEN team to work with the child to:

- Take ownership of his/her own learning.
- Recognise his/her own needs and strengths.
- Take on a responsibility for his/her achievements and work hard to succeed.
- Work together from a shared understanding of the difficulties the child is experiencing.
- Set clear realistic and achievable goals so that the child experiences a sense of achievement.
- Whenever and wherever possible the views of the child will be ascertained and the child will be directly involved in the process by completing the NEPS (2007) *My Thoughts about School* checklist.

### **The Staged Approach to Assessment, Identification and Provision of Learning Support and Resource Teaching**

The SEN Team, with the Principal, SEN Coordinator, and relevant Teachers adopt a staged approach to intervention (see model of Staged Approach below). If concern remains after intervention and additional support from the Class Teacher and SEN Team, the school may request a consultation and assessment of the child's need from a specialist outside the school. Where this is the case, the Parent's/Guardian's permission in writing will be sought. If Parents/Guardians refuse permission for a child to receive additional support, a written record of their decision, signed by Parents/Guardians will be kept in the child's file. In the event that Parents/Guardians refuse to consent to have their child assessed, the matter will be conveyed to the Board of Management.

The Staged Approach to Meeting the Needs of Children who Need Additional Support (Ref: SP ED 02/05)		
Observation	Process	Persons Involved
<p><b>Stage 1: Classroom Support</b></p> <p><b>Class Teacher/ Parent has concerns regarding the child's academic, physical, social, behavioural, or emotional development.</b></p>	<p>Class Teacher devises a simple differentiated plan which aims to meet the child's identified needs within the normal classroom setting.</p> <p>The success of this plan is regularly reviewed in consultation with Parent/Guardians and termly with the SEN Team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class Teacher</li> <li>- Parents / Guardians</li> </ul> <p><b>Advisory Supports Available</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEN Team</li> <li>- Principal</li> <li>- NEPS Psychologist</li> </ul>
<p>If concerns remain after a number of reviews, additional support may be required at Stage 2</p>		
<p><b>Stage 2: School Support</b></p> <p><b>The child is referred to the SEN Teacher, with parental permission for further diagnostic screening/assessment.</b></p>	<p>If diagnostic and/or standardised testing indicates that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this is arranged in consultation with Parents / Guardians.</p> <p>Parents / Guardians, Class Teacher and SEN Teacher collaborate in devising, implementing, and reviewing an Individual Child's Learning Plan (IPLP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class Teacher</li> <li>- Parents / Guardians</li> <li>- SEN Team</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Supports Available</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Board</li> <li>- NEPS Psychologist</li> </ul>
<p>If significant concern remains after a number of terms and reviews (usually by 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Terms), it may be necessary to move to <b>Stage 3</b></p>		
<p><b>Stage 3: School Support + Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the School formally request a consultation, and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from specialist(s) outside the school.</b></p>	<p>As appropriate, and in the event that Low-Incidence Teaching Hours (LITH) have been allocated, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is devised by personnel involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Class Teacher</li> <li>- Parents / Guardians</li> <li>- SEN Team</li> <li>- Relevant Specialist(s)</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Supports Available</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Board</li> <li>- NEPS Psychologist</li> <li>- Speech and Language Therapist</li> <li>- Occupational therapist</li> <li>- Psychiatrist</li> <li>- CAMHS</li> <li>- Assessment of Need</li> <li>- School Aged Disability Team</li> </ul>

### Stage 1: Classroom Support / In-Class Differentiation

A Class Teacher or Parent/Guardian may have concerns about the academic, physical, social, behavioural or emotional development of certain pupils. The Class Teacher should then administer screening measures, which may include screening checklists and profiles for pupils in senior infants and first class, standardised, norm-referenced tests for older pupils and behavioural checklists where appropriate.

The Class Teacher should then draw up a short, simple plan for extra support to be implemented within the normal classroom setting, in the relevant areas of learning and/or behavioural management. The success of the classroom support plan should be reviewed regularly, with appropriate parental involvement. If concern remains after a number of reviews and adaptations to the plan, the SEN Team may be consulted about the desirability of intervention at Stage 2.

### Stage 2: School Support / Class Level Differentiation and Learning Support

**If intervention is considered necessary at Stage 2, then the child should be referred to the learning support/resource teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing.** In the case of children with learning difficulties, if the classroom support plan does not achieve the desired outcome, the pupil should be referred to the SEN Teacher, with parents' permission, for further diagnostic testing. If this diagnostic assessment suggests that supplementary teaching would be beneficial, this should be arranged. The Parents/Guardians and the Class Teacher should be involved with the SEN Teacher in drawing up the learning programme, which would include appropriate interventions for implementation in the home, in the classroom, and during supplementary teaching.

The SEN Teacher and the Class Teacher should review regularly, in consultation with the Parents/Guardians, the rate of progress of each pupil receiving supplementary teaching. If significant concerns remain after a number of reviews and adaptations to the learning programme, then it may be necessary to provide interventions at Stage 3.

In the case of pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties, it is recognised that, with serious difficulties, further action may be required. In these cases the pupil's needs should, with parents' permission, be discussed with the relevant NEPS psychologist and/or the case

should be referred to the clinical services of the Health Services Executive. This may lead to a more detailed behavioural management programme to be implemented at home and in class, or to referral for further specialist assessment (Stage 3).

### **Action to be taken at Stage 2:**

- The Class Teacher and SEN Teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific area(s) of difficulty with achievable goals to be implemented by the Class Teacher and SEN Teacher
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, a group IPLP will be implemented
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated every term.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in a SEN Room with the SEN Teacher or Class Teacher. This withdrawal will be subject to written parental consent, time limited (by termly review), and for specific purposes only.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer experiencing difficulty, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children (Stage 1).

### **Stage 3: School Support Plus**

**Some children who continue to present with significant learning needs will require more intensive intervention at Stage 3.** The school may formally request a consultation and, where appropriate, an assessment of need from a specialist outside the school. This is in respect of pupils with learning difficulties or mild or moderate behavioural problems (or both) who have failed to make progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme and in respect of pupils with serious emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems. Such specialist advice may be sought from psychologists, paediatricians, speech and language therapists, audiologists, etc.<sup>1</sup>

The SEN Teacher and the Class Teacher, in consultation with the relevant specialist or specialists should then draw up a learning programme that includes identification of any additional available resources that are considered necessary in order to implement the programme. Parents/Guardians should be fully consulted throughout this process. This

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<sup>1</sup>Following the introduction of the general allocation model teaching resources are available to schools for pupils at Stage 3 without necessarily having recourse to an assessment by an external specialist outside the school (SP ED 02/05).

programme should be the subject of regular reviews, leading to revisions of the learning programme and referral for specialist review, as necessary.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling despite intervention at Stage 2, and as part of considering intervention at Stage 3, the Class Teacher, with the SEN Team, may seek advice from the NEPS Psychologist, in consultation with the Child's Parents/Guardians to determine whether:

1. A psychological assessment should be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004).
2. Other outside agencies should be contacted, who will advise on a range of provisions including targets and strategies.
3. The triggers for intervention remain and, despite intervention at Stage 2, the child:
  - Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
  - Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age.
  - Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties.
  - Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and/or IPLP.
  - Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service.
  - Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and acts as a barrier to learning.

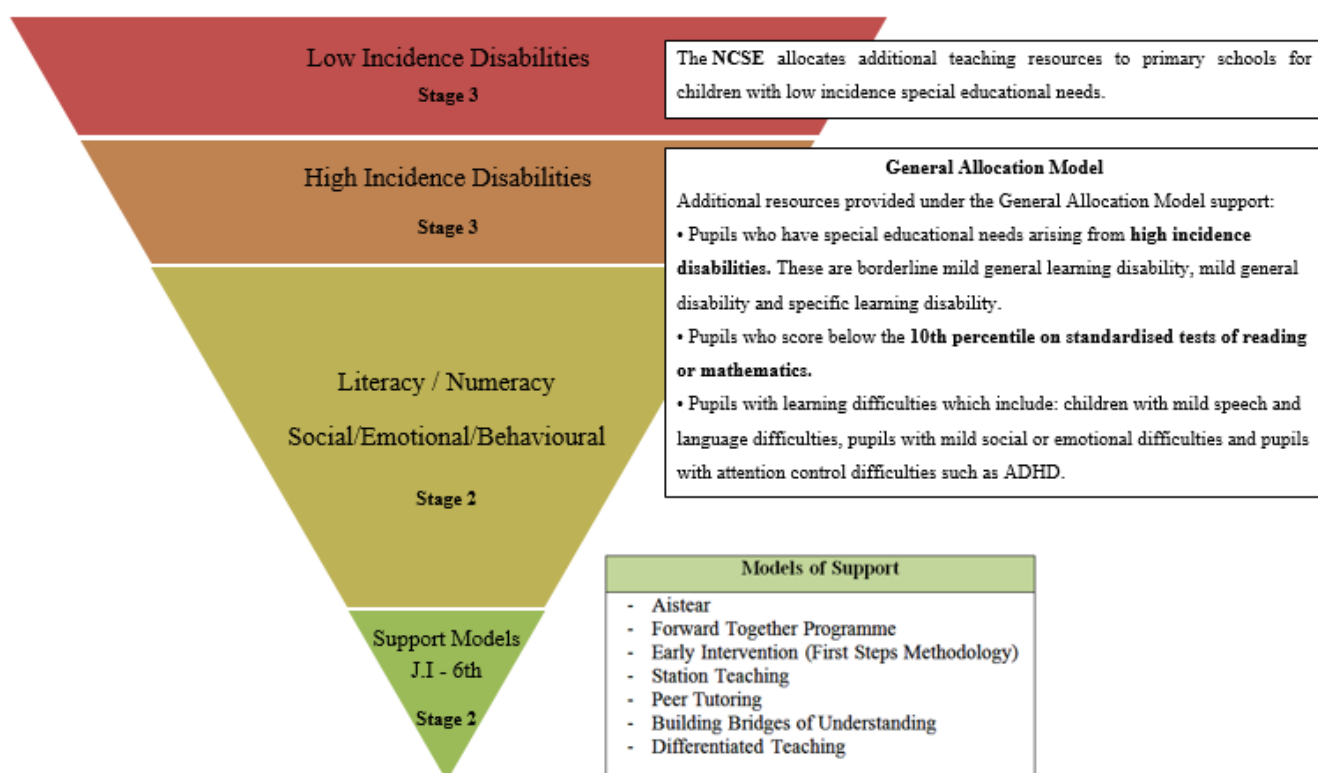
In the case of children identified at an early age as having very significant special educational needs, intervention at Stage 3 will be necessary on their entry to school. Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such pupils, and primary responsibility for the pupil will remain with the Class Teacher, in consultation with the Learning Support or Resource Teacher.

## Assessment and Selection of Children with Special Educational Needs

As outlined in the diagram below, and in accordance with NEPS *Continuum of Support Guidelines* (2007 and 2011) and DES *Circular SP ED 02/05*, children are eligible to receive additional support if:

1. They have been formally allocated Low Incidence Teaching Hours (LITH) and/or SNA provision for the current school year by the NCSE following a clinical or educational psychological assessment, i.e. pupils with Low Incidence Disabilities.
2. They are in any of the categories of Special Educational Needs eligible for Learning Support intervention as per DES Circular Sp Ed 02/05 (General Allocation Model):
  - Achievement at or below the 10th percentile on Standardised Tests in Literacy/Numeracy;
  - High Incidence Disabilities such as a specific learning difficulty;
  - Mild or transient learning difficulties arising from identified speech and language difficulties or social and emotional difficulties.
3. Depending on the time remaining, and in conjunction with the school's existing Support Models, the SEN Team may also decide to consider other pupils who score close to the cut-off points on standardised or other screening measures.

### Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support



### **Resource Hours/ Low Incidence Teaching Hours (LITH)**

- Children who have been assessed by external agencies (e.g. Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist etc.), and where LITH (Low Incidence Teaching Hours) have been presented and sanctioned by the SENO (Special Educational Needs Organiser) are eligible for access to Resource Teaching.
- Resource Teaching Hours may include in-class support, inclusion in small group withdrawal, and/or withdrawal on a one to one basis, depending on the recommendations contained within specific reports, consultation with Parents/Guardians, and the Class Teacher.
- All children will require written consent from Parents/Guardians to be withdrawn from class to avail of Resource Teaching.
- If a child has been confirmed as having Special Educational Needs by the relevant professional(s), an application for Low Incidence Teaching Hours / Resource Teaching Hours will be completed by the SEN Coordinator, in consultation with Parents/Guardians, and forwarded to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO). The SENO will assess whether the child falls into the category of having a Low Incidence or High Incidence Disability. Low Incidence Disabilities are awarded Resource Teaching Hours, while the school makes provision for High Incidence cases under the General Allocation Model (See DES Circular SP ED 02/05).
- If it is stated within professional reports that a child has care needs, the support of a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) may be applied for by completing a BCN1 Form.
- In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used to at least two SNAs and either the Class or SEN Teacher. The SEN Coordinator or the Principal will also be present. The use of specialised yard equipment may also need to be demonstrated to these staff members. Courses will be provided on an ongoing basis to train staff in the relevant areas.
- If an Exemption from Irish is recommended within a professional report, the Principal will evaluate this under guidance from the Department of Education & Skill (Circular Letter 12/96).

## Learning Support

- Where in-class support is available, all children will have access to learning support.
- The level of support given will be determined by the children's needs.
- Where a child is receiving additional support at Stage 2, the child may receive in-class support where appropriate or withdrawal as part of a smaller group, subject to the needs of the child and with permission from Parent/Guardian.
- If a child scores on or below the 10<sup>th</sup> Percentile on Standardised Tests in Literacy/Numeracy the SEN/Class Teacher will seek written parental consent for their child to receive additional support and, if necessary, for further school-based diagnostic assessment to take place.
- Parents/Guardians must communicate their wishes in writing should they not permit their child to avail of Learning Support.
- Following a review, and in consultation with relevant Class Teachers and Parents/Guardians, supplementary teaching may be discontinued and deployed elsewhere throughout the school. Children will continue to be monitored by the Class Teacher and SEN Teacher. This is detailed in the Staged Approach.

### Models of Support and Prevention Strategies

The school will implement various models of support, where applicable, in order to assist in the prevention of various learning difficulties. The table below outlines the models of support that are prioritised in our school (Appendix 1).

Class	Model of Support
Junior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aistear</li> </ul>
Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aistear</li> <li>• Forward Together Programme (2<sup>nd</sup> Term)</li> </ul>
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Intervention (First Steps Strategy/Methodology)</li> <li>• Station Teaching (Numeracy)</li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Intervention (First Steps Strategy/Methodology)</li> <li>• Station Teaching (Literacy/Numeracy)</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Tutoring</li> <li>• Station Teaching (Literacy/Numeracy)</li> </ul>
5 <sup>th</sup> Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Bridges of Understanding</li> <li>• Station Teaching (Literacy/Numeracy)</li> </ul>
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Bridges of Understanding</li> <li>• Differentiated Teaching (Numeracy)</li> </ul>



**Intervention programmes can be an effective response to meeting the needs of children with low achievement, particularly in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. These programmes:**

- Are set within a specific time frame.
- Occur within the classroom setting.
- Are based on a shared expectation of success with everyone involved.
- Focus on oral language, key skill development, laying the foundation for meaningful reading activities and further development of language and comprehension skills.
- Engage the children in frequent supervised activities at an appropriate level of difficulty and monitor their comprehension.
- Stress the interconnected nature of listening, speaking, reading and comprehension.
- Focus on language development in numeracy, and in the development of mathematical procedures and concepts.

**Our strategies for the prevention and early intervention of learning difficulties include:**

- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of children in the Infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- The development of agreed approaches to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
- Provision of additional support in language development and any relevant early literacy and mathematical skills to children who require it.
- The MIST (Middle Infants Screening Test) is administered to all Senior Infants during the second term (February) of the school year. Children who present with scores below a given point are selected to complete the home-school collaborative Forward Together Programme in the third term.

### **Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching**

An instructional term is generally 20 weeks of instruction. Supplementary teaching will normally be discontinued where the relevant targets have been met and the child is achieving at a level that can be sustained within the mainstream classroom setting. The school may decide to adjust supplementary teaching with some children in order for the SEN Team to provide additional support for Senior Infants after analysis of the MIST test results in February.

### Other Relevant Policies/Circulars

Relevant Policies	Relevant Circulars/Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance Policy</li> <li>- Enrolment and Admissions Policy</li> <li>- Communications Policy</li> <li>- Staff Development Policy</li> <li>- Special Needs Policy Statement and Special Needs Assistant Contract</li> <li>- English Language Policy</li> <li>- Data Protection Policy</li> <li>- Assessment Policy</li> <li>- Child Protection Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education and Welfare Act 1998</li> <li>- Special Education Circular 02/05</li> <li>- Circular 07/02</li> <li>- Circular 0030/2014</li> <li>- NEPS Continuum of Support 2007</li> <li>- Learning Support Guidelines</li> <li>- Assessment in the Primary School</li> <li>- The Disability Act 2005</li> <li>- The Data Protection Acts (1998, 2003)</li> <li>- Freedom of Information Act 1998</li> </ul>

### Implementation Date

This policy will come into effect from November 2016.

### Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary

### Ratification

The Board of Management of Swords Educate Together ratified this policy on

Signed:



Date: 01/02/16

Chairperson, Board of Management

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1:** Models of Support

**Appendix 2:** Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support

**Appendix 3:** Glossary of Terms

**Appendix 4:** Additional Information

## Appendix 1: Current Models of Support available in Swords Educate Together National School

### **Aistear**

The aim of Aistear is to help every child to **grow and develop** as a **competent and confident learner**. Ultimately, according to Aistear, early childhood care and education must support a child's sense of: Well Being, Identity and Belonging, Exploring and Thinking, and Communicating. These goals are achieved through the contexts of play and supported by caring, learning relationships with adults and peers. In this way Aistear makes very strong links between care and education in the early years and firmly establishes the child's right to a safe, stimulating, nurturing and play-based environment.

### **Early Intervention**

Early Intervention involves providing support in our school to children in the Junior Classes (Junior Infant-2<sup>nd</sup> Class). It is a model of support that encompasses various methodologies such as First Steps Strategies and Station Teaching Methodologies.

**First Steps:** is a research-based literacy resource that offers teachers an accurate means of assessing and monitoring children's competencies and progress in reading, writing, spelling and oral language. It then links this assessment to appropriate classroom-based activities and strategies.

**Station Teaching** is the process of teaching several lessons at one time. Children move from one station to the next, within a specific time frame, to engage in all activities! Teacher Assisted Station- teacher is available to work with students at this station.

### **Peer Tutoring**

Peer tutoring is a flexible, peer-mediated strategy that involves students serving as academic tutors and tutees. Typically, a higher performing student is paired with a lower performing student to engage with curricular areas such as Literacy and Numeracy.

Peer Tutoring helps us move away from an exclusive reliance on withdrawal teaching for pupils with learning difficulties and address specific needs on a whole class/in-class support level.

### **Building Bridges of Understanding**

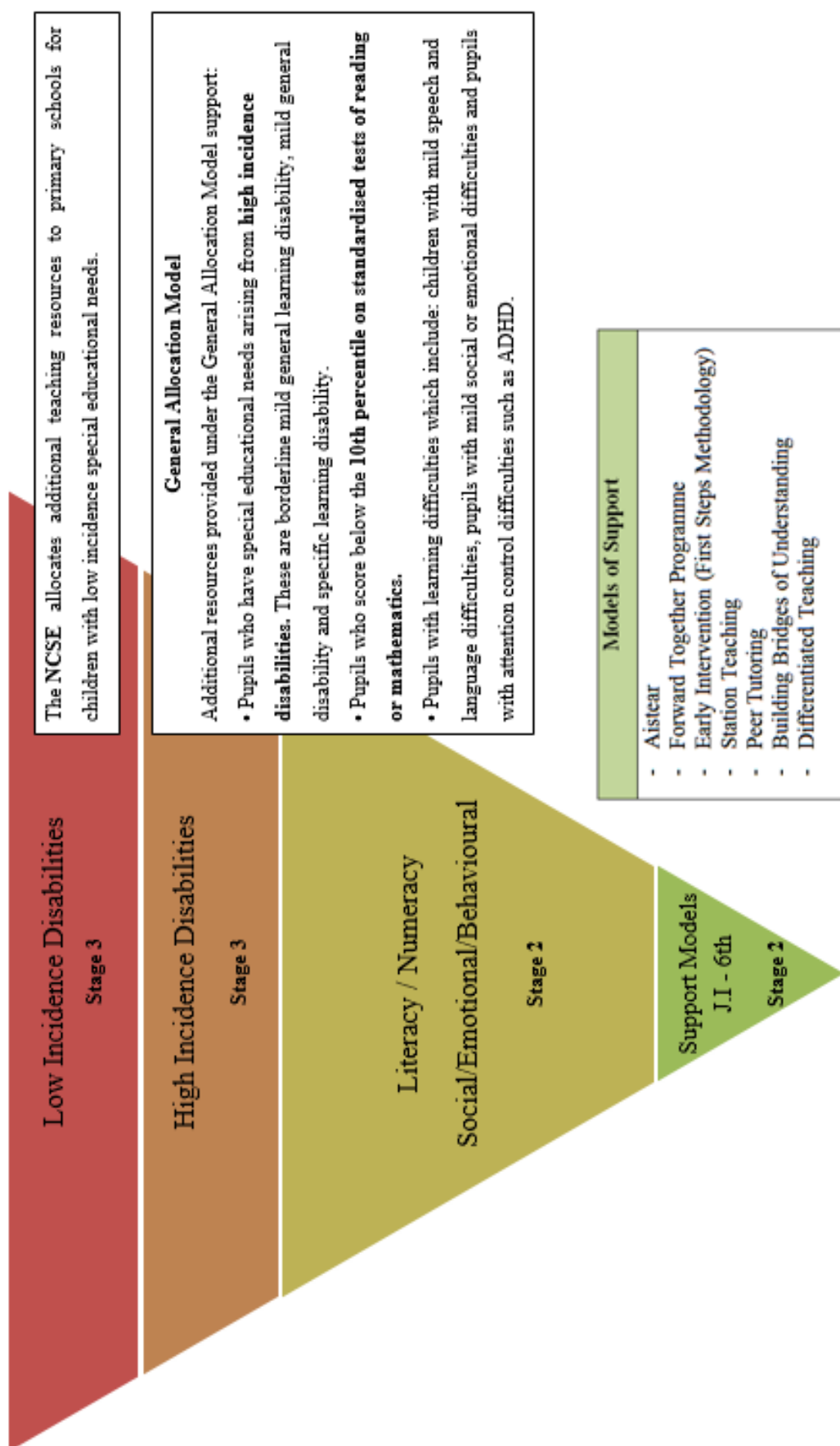
Building Bridges of Understanding is a whole school approach to the teaching of comprehension devised by Dr. Ann Courtney of the University of Hartford, Connecticut, Dr. Martin Gleeson, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick and nine schools in the Munster area. Drawing on research regarding effective comprehension instruction its primary focus is the teaching of comprehension, with the ultimate aim of enabling children to become self-regulated strategic readers.

### **Differentiated Teaching**

Differentiated Teaching is used in the Senior Classes and is a structured, modularised strategy in teaching Literacy and Numeracy. The SEN Team works with the Class Teacher in delivering the curriculum to all children in the class. The structure of the class is aimed at children who achieve similar results in standardised tests and where focused teaching is enabled through the reduced pupil teacher ratio, team teaching approaches and methodologies and through setting differentiated learning outcomes.

## Appendix 2: Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support

### Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support



### Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

- **ADHD** Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
- **AON** Assessment of need
- **ASD** Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- **DES** Department of Education and Skills
- **EPSEN** Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (Act)
- **GAM** General Allocation Model
- **GLD** General Learning Disability
- **HSE** Health Service Executive
- **IEP** Individual Education Plan
- **IPLP** Individual Profile and Learning Programme
- **LITH** Low Incidence Teaching Hours
- **LS/RT** Learning Support/Resource Teaching
- **MIST** Middle Infants Screening Test
- **NBSS** National Behaviour Support Service
- **NCCA** National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- **NCSE** National Council for Special Education
- **NEPS** National Educational Psychological Service
- **NEWB** National Educational Welfare Board
- **SENO** Special Educational Needs Organiser
- **SESS** Special Education Support Service
- **SNA** Special Needs Assistant

### Appendix 3: Additional Information

#### *Links*

- *Department of Education and Skills*  
<http://www.education.ie/en/>
- *Special Education Circular 02/05*  
[https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/sped02\\_05.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/sped02_05.pdf)
- *Special Education Support Service (SESS)*  
<http://www.sess.ie/>
- *National Council for Special Education*  
[www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)
- *National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)*  
<http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/NEPS-Home-Page.html>
- *Information Booklets and Pamphlets for Parents*  
<http://ncse.ie/information-booklets-pamphlets-2>
- *Irish Exemption*  
<http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/FAQs.html>
- *Dyslexia Association of Ireland*  
<http://www.dyslexia.ie/>
- *National Disability Authority*  
<http://nda.ie/>
- *National Behaviour Support Service*  
<http://www.nbss.ie/>