



St. Multose National School Support Teaching Policy

Date ratified by the Board of Management: October 2008

Date of review: 04/06/2010

Date of review: 22/10/2014

Date of review: 13/09/2017

Introductory Statement

This policy was originally formulated by the staff of St. Multose National School in October 2008, in consultation with parents and sanctioned by the Board of Management. The purpose of the policy is to outline ways in which we at St. Multose School endeavour to support children's learning within the school according to his/her needs.

Rationale

- St. Multose N.S. aims to help children to think clearly, creatively and critically and to act independently. Positive strategies are in place to identify and address learning difficulties.
- Inclusion, early assessment, a team approach with specialist teachers and a multidisciplinary approach are recognised as essential. Pupils will be provided for with equality of access and at a level appropriate to their needs.
- St. Multose School recognises its duty in identifying pupils who require support teaching and making provision for them as early in their school life as possible. Pupils with the highest level of need will have the highest level of support in literacy and numeracy.
- The school has become adept at early identification of children who need extra support and liaises regularly with support services and parents to ensure the best care and learning for the children in the school.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the school

Our school cherishes all pupils equally and endeavours to aid them to reach their full potential. A sense of personal achievement, rather than failure, is the ultimate goal for all children, irrespective of difficulties and limitations. All children have strengths and these should be focused on and used to boost children's self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities.

Aims

- To ensure that all children reach their full potential, insofar as possible.
- To ensure that suitable teaching and equipment is in place to accommodate those who struggle academically.
- To put in place procedures for assessment of children with educational difficulties.
- To assist the formulation of individual programmes of work, if deemed necessary.
- To provide CPD (continuous professional development) for staff to ensure knowledge and skills are in-line with current policy and procedures.

Guidelines

Role of Assessment

- Assessment is used to monitor learning and to ascertain achievement in each area of the curriculum
- Assessment is also used to identify children with specific learning difficulties/providing information so as effective intervention can be put in place
- Assessment assists communication between teacher and child, teacher and parent and between teacher and teacher
- Assessment/testing affirms the good work being done in school
- Assessment/testing allows progress to be monitored

Approaches to Assessment:

At all times the concerns of a class teacher re: pupils in his/her care is of prime importance.

- Teacher observation
 - Forms a continuous part of the teaching process
 - Short term basis – notes the teacher makes from time to time
 - Physical dexterity/co-ordination during P.E. lessons
 - Construction and drawing competence during Visual Arts lessons

- Fluency and articulation during drama, free speech, discussion, circle time, debate etc.
 - Speed, presentation, handwriting etc.
 - Numeracy skills: mental computation, problems solving etc.
 - Social engagement and interactions
 - Behaviours exhibited
 - Unexplained absences – school reticence
- Teacher - designed tasks/tests
 - Spelling and tables tests
 - Mental maths challenges
 - Revision tests
 - Reading and comprehension exercises
 - Formal class assessments
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
 - Particular relevance to English/Maths
 - Portfolios – samples of children’s writing/mathematical concept
 - Reading records – i.e. PM+ Reading Assessment
 - Different projects completed
 - Art portfolios
 - Folders of worksheets etc.
 - Blue permanent school record folders (stored in the office): containing samples of work and test scores throughout schooling and kept until the child reaches the age of 21.
- Standardised tests
 - Annually in May: norm/performance – related to other pupils at the same age or class level
 - As per DES regulations, Drumcondra Reading and Maths test will be administered to all pupils from 1st – 6th
 - Results will be conveyed to parents of pupils in 2nd, 4th and 6th class in their end of year reports and they will be given the opportunity to discuss the results with the class teacher in June or during parent teacher meeting in October.
 - From October 2014, all pupils in First Class will complete the NNRIT (New Non-Reading Intelligence Test). New pupils to the school over 6 years of age will also be tested. Should it be required, children may be retested in subsequent years.
 - The MIST (Middle Infant Screening Test) test will be administered to all pupils in Senior Infants in April each year.
 - The Drumcondra Spelling Test will be administered annually in February.
 - Diagnostic testing (administered by support teachers)
 - Used to point towards particular strengths and weaknesses in literacy and numeracy: GL assessment, Neale Analyse of Reading Ability (NARA) etc.

Communication to Parents/Retention of Records

- Following administration of standardised testing, parent-teacher meetings will be held to explain the results to parents. In addition, standardised scores will be included in end of year school reports for 2nd, 4th and 6th classes.
- The Support Teachers will also meet with parents following diagnostic testing and, for children in receipt of supplementary tuition, regularly throughout the year
- All results will be stored securely in locked files – only parents and staff will have access to test results. Children may only be told their test results from standardised tests, should parents wish it.
- Test documents will be stored in each individual child’s folder and kept until child is 21 years of age.
- 6th class pupils’ school reports (Education Passport) will be sent to their relevant secondary schools in June.

Procedure should child show signs of learning problems: *Continuum of Support approach*

- Pupils, who exhibit needs within the class environment, will follow the Continuum of Support. See attached appendix for an outline of the Continuum of Support.

A continuum of support student file shall include:

- The nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the child's special educational needs
- The present level of educational performance
- Test results or other assessment results
- Special education and related support services to be provided and the goals the child is to achieve for the term/period.

In the event that a child, already enrolled in the school, should show signs of having special educational needs, then the following measures will be used:

- When the principal, having been advised by parents/guardians/teachers or otherwise, forms an opinion that a child has special educational needs, the principal shall take such measures as necessary to meet the educational needs of the student.
- The Continuum of Support will be used, in conjunction with any other support available within the school.
- If the principal is of the opinion that the student concerned is still not benefiting from the education programme provided the principal shall arrange for an assessment of the student to be carried out.
- The assessment is to be carried out by people such as a psychologist, a medical practitioner/psychiatrist, Occupational or Speech Therapist, the principal of the school, a teacher of the school, a qualified social worker, a play therapist and/or other suitably qualified therapists.
- The assessment is to be carried out with the consent of the parents/guardians.
- The principal shall ensure the parents of the child, the S.E.N.O. and such other persons as are appropriate are consulted and that the involvement of the parents/guardians is facilitated.
- When an Individual Education Plan (IEP) has been prepared by the Support Teacher/s, the principal shall ensure that it is furnished to the parents/guardians and they have an opportunity to discuss it.
- The principal of the school shall ensure the educational plan is implemented and ensure that the school will apply to the Department of Education and Skills for the necessary monies and support services.
- Biannually, the support teacher/s shall review each I.E.P. for those children attending the school who have been assessed and granted resource hours.
- They will meet with parents/guardians and the class teacher to discuss the I.E.P. Outside agencies may attend I.E.P. meetings as necessary.
- Parents, support teachers and the principal will sign the I.E.P.

Success Criteria

This policy endeavours to best assist children with learning (and emotional and/or behavioural) difficulties and to support their parents. It is hoped that all children would make pleasing progress and engage with numeracy and literacy in a practical way. Improved test scores and overall performance will provide an indication of success.. Improvements in social skills, confidence/self-esteem, coping and life skills will show success in less academic areas.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Class teachers and the Principal, in conjunction with the support teachers, parents and a psychologist from NEPS (or another approved Educational Psychologist) are responsible for assessing pupils and providing them with the best help available.
- The Department of Education & Skills is responsible for providing necessary equipment to make it possible to provide the best care available.

- The principal will liaise between NEPS psychologist and parents, and between the S.E.N.O., parents and all teachers.
- Parents are responsible for co-operating with IEP planning and implementation of suggested follow-up activities in the home.

Timeframe for Implementation

September 2017

Timeframe for Review

The policy was reviewed in May 2010 - no amendments to procedures were made at that point. The policy was ratified on 4th June 2010. The policy was reviewed again on 22nd October 2014 and again on 28th September 2016. Amendments were made. Pupils who require support teaching will be discussed at staff meetings regularly and following standardised or other testing. The list of children benefitting from individualised teaching will be fluid.

The current version of the policy was prepared on 13th September 2017 to reflect the revised arrangements for support teaching from the Department of Education and Skills. The next review will take place in two year's time when the revised allocations are made and formal reviews are made by the wider educational community.

Responsibility for Review

The support teachers, principal and class teachers will carry out the review. Feedback from parents, during parent-teacher meetings and information from SNAs will be noted and discussed at the review.

Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management ratified the revised policy and the policy was circulated to staff and uploaded to the school website.

Signed: _____