

# Special Educational Needs Policy

Boolavogue National School

2022



## Special Needs Policy

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## Introduction

### Introductory Statement

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy was coordinated by the Special Education Teacher (SET) support team in consultation with the principal. The policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary as part of our School Self Evaluation (SSE). The policy was circulated to the staff of Boolavogue N.S. in November 2022 and made available on the school website in \_\_\_\_\_.

### School Information

Boolavogue National School is a co-educational mainstream primary school in the parish of Boolavogue, under the patronage of the Bishop of Ferns. The school has a Catholic ethos and we commit ourselves to making our school a safe and enjoyable place of education through an inclusive and challenging curriculum. Each student will be respected and encouraged to develop to his/her full potential. The school currently has five classroom teachers and two SET posts, one of which is a job-sharing position. The purpose of this policy is to provide effective support and supplementary teaching to students who are experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties, as well as to fulfill our obligations under the Education Act 1998.

### Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about the school's SEN procedures and practices;
- outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school;
- comply with legislation (Education Act 1998 & Equal Status Act 2000);
- fulfill Department of Education & Skills (DES) circulars – 0013/17 *Circular to the Management Authorities of all Mainstream Primary Schools; Special Education Teaching Allocation, and 2017*

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*Guidelines to Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Education Needs in Mainstream Schools).*

### **Belief Statement**

Our school is dedicated to the implementation of an effective system for meeting the needs of all our students in accordance with our mission statement, the resources provided by the DES and the Board of Management (BOM).

We believe that all our students have the right to an education, which is appropriate to their individual needs. We strive to ensure that all our students feel that they are a valued part of our school community. We are fully committed to the principles of inclusion. This policy aims to enable children with special educational needs and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and the appropriate modification of the learning/teaching environment and activities or by providing additional support from the class teacher, SET or special needs assistant (SNA).

### **Aims of the Policy**

Our aim is to optimise the teaching and learning process for all our students including those with special educational needs as follows:

- to identify the additional needs that our students may have;
- to support the inclusion of students with special educational needs into our mainstream primary school and to encourage differentiation in the classroom;
- to ensure the *Staged Approach/NEPS Continuum of Support* is implemented;
- to “*optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable pupils with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school.*” (Learning support Guidelines p.15). This support may be provided by the class teacher and/or SET. (DES Circular 02/05 Appendix 1: The Staged Approach).

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- to allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of SEN students in the most effective way;
- to develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes to learning and school in general amongst all our students;
- to support academic attainment in addition to behavioural, social and emotional functioning;
- to promote collaboration between teachers, SNAs and parents in order to maximize the teaching/learning opportunities of each student;
- to establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to reduce learning difficulties and prevent failure;
- to enable students to monitor their own learning and to become independent learners.

## Principles

The school recognises that effective teaching and learning are based on the following principles:

- Quality of teaching  
*“Research has consistently shown that the quality of teaching is the most critical factor in enhancing pupils’ learning and educational experiences.” (Learning Support Guidelines 2017, p.27).*
- Effective whole-school policies.
- Direction of resources to those students in greatest need.  
*“The intensity of additional support that is provided for pupils with low achievement and pupils with special educational needs should be based on their needs and should be provided differentially through the continuum of support process.” (DES Circular 0013/2017 p.17)*
- Implementation and provision of a staged approach – Class Support, School Support and School Support Plus.
- Provision of the model of intervention most appropriate to the needs of the individual student or group of students.
  1. Withdrawal Support Model
    - One-to-one interventions (vital when dealing with students with complex needs)
    - Small group interventions  
*“There appears to be little evidence to date that in-class models of support are effective in the teaching of reading. Shinn et al., 1997 found that in-class support was not effective in raising the achievement of failing readers. Not surprisingly many of the highly effective intervention programmes reviewed*

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*by Brooks (2007) are delivered in one-to-one or small group settings.”*  
(NEPS, 2015)

### 2. In-Class Support Model

- Station teaching
- Team Teaching
- Peer Tutoring
- Provision of intensive early intervention.
- Collaboration between teachers, SNAs, the principal, students, parents and outside agencies e.g. NEPS and psychologists and therapists working for the HSE and in private practice.
- Comprehensive assessment procedures throughout the school.
- Manageable caseloads and timetables for the SET support team.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all members of staff.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by the whole school community – the BOM, the principal, class teachers, SETs, SNAs, parents, students and external agencies e.g. NEPS. It is important that all concerned parties are involved in the planning and implementation of the school plan relating to special educational needs.

### **Role of the Board of Management**

The BOM are responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and review of the school policy on SEN. They also ensure that adequate accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided.

### **Role of the Principal**

The role of the principal is to:

- assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies on special educational needs in conjunction with SET support team;
- work with teachers and parents in the development of the school plan on special educational needs;
- monitor the implementation of the school plan regarding SEN on an ongoing basis;

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- liaise with the principals of any schools with whom we have shared SEN hours;
- keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals;
- arrange for classroom accommodation and resources as appropriate;
- monitor screening processes and the selection of students for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the students with the greatest need.

### Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all students in his/her class including those selected for supplementary teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of the school plan on SEN teaching the class teacher should:

- implement the school policy on screening and select students for supplementary teaching in English and Mathematics;
- collaborate with the SET support team in the development of a *Student Support Plan (SSP)* or a *Group Student Support Plan (GSSP)* by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising the teaching and learning in his/her classroom to achieve these goals;
- differentiate the class curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of all students in the class. With regard to teaching students with low achievement, the following general methods are recommended:
  - *Group teaching*
  - *Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximize the involvement of all students in the class*
  - *Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum*
  - *Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and achievement*

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### Role of the Special Education Teacher

The role of the SET should include:

- assisting in the implementation of a broad range of whole-school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties;
- the development of an individual Student Support Plan (SSP) or Group Student Support Plan (GSSP) for each student or group of students who is/are in receipt of supplementary teaching in consultation with the class teacher and the parents;
- the production of fortnightly plans and progress records for each individual or group of students in receipt of supplementary teaching;
- the delivery of intensive early intervention programmes in the areas of literacy and/or numeracy to early years students i.e. junior infants to second class using a combination of both in class and withdrawal;
- providing supplementary teaching in English and/or Mathematics to students in the upper school (third to sixth class) who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties using a combination of both in class and withdrawal;
- coordinating the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of students for supplementary teaching, in line with the selection criteria specified in the *Continuum of Support* and in conjunction with the class teacher, the principal and the parents;
- contributing to the development of the school's SEN policy;
- contributing at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of resources, books and materials to be made available to students with SEN.

### Role of the Parent

The collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school is an essential element of our SEN policy. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own child/children have much to contribute to their child's/children's learning. Parents/Guardians should:



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- share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, etc. regarding their child's development and this should be made available at the time of enrolment;
- support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe regarding their child's learning;
- attend meetings arranged by their child's class teacher, principal or SET support team and participate in the setting of educational targets to be included in the SSP or GSSP;
- support the targets outlined in their child's SSP or GSSP and engage in all suggested home-based activities;
- inform the post primary school of their child's needs at the transition stage.

### Role of the Student

Students who are in receipt of supplementary teaching should as appropriate:

- be given the opportunity to contribute to the setting of the medium and short-term targets on the SSP/GSSP;
- become familiar with the targets that have been set for him/her;
- become more independent as learners;
- become aware of their own strengths, weaknesses and needs;
- evaluate their own progress;
- develop ownership of the skills and strategies taught during supplementary teaching and apply these strategies and skills to support their learning in other areas.

### **Identifying Students with Additional Needs – Continuum of Support**

The school uses the *Continuum of Support Framework* set out by the DES to identify and support children with additional needs. We recognise 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 special educational needs. The framework supports a staged approach which helps us to ensure that our supports and interventions are incremental, moving from class-based



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interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of each student's progress.

By using the *Continuum of Support Framework*, we can identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. This in turn allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

### STAGE 1 - CLASSROOM SUPPORT

*Classroom Support* is the most common and typically the first response to emerging needs. It is the response for students who have individual educational needs and who require approaches to learning and/or behaviour which are additional or different to those of the other students in the class. When a parent or teacher has concerns regarding an individual student the teacher and the parent discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which might be effective. *Classroom Support* incorporates the simple, informal problem-solving approaches commonly used by class teachers to support emerging needs.

### STAGE 2 - SCHOOL SUPPORT

In some cases interventions at classroom support level are not enough to fully meet the student's special education needs and therefore *School Support* may be required. The class teacher needs to involve the SET support team in the problem-solving process at this point and it involves a more systematic gathering of information and the development and monitoring of a *Student Support Plan*.

### STAGE 3 - SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

If a student's special educational needs are severe and/or persistent they are likely to need intensive support. *School Support Plus* will generally involve personnel from outside the school team in the problem solving, assessment and intervention process. However, the information from the class teacher and the SET and the School Support work will provide the starting point for problem-solving at this level.

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Classroom Support and School Support will continue to be an important element of the student's/students' SSP/GSSP respectively.

We gather information to identify needs and support children with additional needs by using the stages explained here. Whilst most students' initial needs should be met through classroom based interventions, a small number of students may arrive in school with difficulties that are more significant or which are immediately recognised as complex. In such cases, it may be more appropriate to begin the process at the School Support or School Support Plus stage of the continuum. Most of the students to whom this applies will be new to the school. However, it may also apply for some students following an event which impacts significantly on him/her in school.

### **Prevention Strategies and Parental Involvement**

Boolavogue N. S. recognises the importance of having appropriate prevention strategies and as a result of this has implemented a selection of the following:

- Comprehensive Early Screening in junior infants since (2008) using Boolavogue Infant Screening Assessment.
- Early intervention programme in Literacy since (2005).
- Early intervention programme in Numeracy '*Mata sa Rang*' since (2012)
- Identifying information from enrolment forms which may indicate difficulties at a later stage e.g. slow to reach recognised milestones / language acquisition and development / attending speech therapy prior to starting school / difficulties noted by pre-school teacher, etc.
- Noting observations and possible concerns of parents at parent teacher meetings.
- Implementing appropriate whole school programmes in English and Mathematics.
- Development of agreed approaches to language development and to teaching other aspects of English and Mathematics in order to ensure progression and continuity from class to class.
- Provision of additional support in language development and in early literacy and numeracy skills to students who need it.

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- Implementing a whole-school parent involvement programme through guided reading and the use of such schemes as 'Oxford Reading Tree', 'Jolly Phonics' which focus on developing children's oral language skills, sharing books with children and the acquisition phonics and skills relating to phonological and phonemic awareness.
- Ongoing observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of students in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Providing support for early years i.e. junior/senior infants in the form of group teaching provided by SET.
- Inclusion of Middle Infant Screening Test to highlight difficulties during the second term for senior infants and providing intensive intervention to those who require it. Working closely with parents on early intervention targets drawn up for students.
- Ongoing consultation between class teachers, SET and the principal regarding individual needs of students.
- Formal and informal parent/teacher meetings.

### **Early Intervention Programme**

Following implementation of prevention strategies, students will be selected by class teacher and SET to receive intensive one-to-one or small group teaching. Below is a summary of course content that may be included in an intervention programme.

<b>Prevention Programme for Junior and Senior Infants</b>
Phonological & phonemic awareness
Phonics – initial sounds, consonant & vowel digraphs, consonant clusters
Letter recognition i.e. phoneme and grapheme association
Sequencing of alphabet / days of the week
Dolch words/Tricky words
Sight vocabulary

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Supporting class reading

Handwriting skills

7 aspects of oral language development through use of Oxford Reading Tree

- listening
- naming
- categorising
- describing
- denoting position
- sequencing
- reasoning and planning
- retelling a story

Other areas as recommended by class teacher depending on individual/group needs.

See also details of Boolavogue Junior Infant Screening Test.

### **Criteria for selection of students to receive supplementary teaching**

In the allocation of places for supplementary teaching the following will be prioritised:

- Children who have been identified as having special educational needs. Any student who has been assessed by another agency e.g. educational psychologist, occupational therapist etc., and has had a recommendation of supplementary teaching will be given priority.
- Students who are performing at or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile in a standardised test in English (Micra T or Drumcondra).
- Early intervention in the junior classes
- Students who are performing at or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile in a standardised test in Mathematics (Sigma T or Drumcondra).
- Support for children presenting with difficulties in literacy and /or numeracy scoring above the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile. These may be students with specific areas of weakness such as spelling /oral language skills / handwriting / comprehension.

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- Students displaying dyslexic tendencies are monitored especially where there is a known family history of dyslexia.
- Currently only one or two students per school, per annum, are being assessed by NEPS and schools have been advised to refer priority cases.
- There will be flexibility to provide for children who are scoring above the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile but who we judge would benefit from supplementary teaching. However, this will be dependent on available time table slots and the overall caseload of the SET support team.

### **Procedure following screening**

1. Preliminary screening which involves the administration and interpretation of screening measures by the class teacher e.g. Micra T, Sigma T, Drumcondra Early Literacy Screening Test & Drumcondra Early Numeracy Screening Test.
2. Selection for diagnostic assessment, which involves consultation between the class teacher and parents and consultation between the class teacher and SET. Parents' consent is sought before the administration of diagnostic tests.
3. Diagnostic assessment, which involves the administration of diagnostic tests by the SET who interprets the outcomes in conjunction with the class teacher. In consultation with the parents the teachers then decide on the most appropriate form of intervention for the student.
4. Programme planning involving a preliminary meeting between the class teacher and the SET with a follow-up meeting to include the parents in finalising the student's/students' SSP/GSSP respectively.
5. Implementation of SSP/GSSP i.e. the class teacher makes appropriate modification of teaching approaches and the SET provides supplementary teaching initially for one academic year.
6. A review takes place at the end of the first instructional term i.e. in February. This involves an assessment of the student's progress and an evaluation of the SSP/GSSP in consultation with the class teacher, SET and parents and sometimes the SNA.

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7. Following the review at the end of the second instructional term a decision is made to either continue or discontinue supplementary teaching and also regarding the level of support required by the student.

During this process the SET may meet parents to:

- discuss the results of diagnostic assessment when applicable;
- discuss the targets for the student's SSP or GSSP;
- discuss the actions to be taken by the school to meet the agreed targets;
- suggest ways in which the parents can support their child/children;
- address any queries/concerns that the parents may have.

### Assessment and Reporting

#### Inventory of Test Materials

##### **Screening Tests**

Boolavogue |Junior Infant Screening Test  
Quest Screening Test  
Aston Index – incorporating Schonell Reading and Spelling  
Marino Word Recognition)  
MIST (Middle Infant Screening Test  
Spar Reading & Spelling Tests  
Dolch Sight Vocabulary 220 words  
100 most frequently used words in reading  
100 most frequently used words in spelling  
Bangor Dyslexia Screening Test  
Test 2r  
GL Dyslexia Screening Test (online)  
Nessy Quest Dyslexia Screener (online)

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Drumcondra Single Word Reading Test

Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test

PM Benchmark1

PM Benchmark 2

New NRIT 1-3 (Non-Reading Intelligence Tests 1-3)

YARC (York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension Primary School Assessment Kit)

WRAT5 (Wide Range Achievement Test)

Suffolk Reading Scale 2 - nferNelson

GRTII 6-14 ( Group Reading Test II) - Nfer Nelson

BIAP (Bellfield Infant Assessment Profile)

Get Reading Right

Literacy Probe 7-9

Senior Infant Mathematic Assessment

Rain Sentence Reading Test

Rapid Reasoning Tests – Non-verbal Reasoning 1 to 6

Rapid Reasoning Tests – Verbal Reasoning 1 to 6

Ballard/Westwood Timed Arithmetic Test

Schonell Single Word Reading Test

Schonell Spelling Test

Vernon Spelling Test

Primary Assessment Profile

### **Diagnostic Tests**

Neale Analysis of Reading Ability

Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy Diagnostic

Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy Diagnostic

Quest – Diagnostic Test of Early Literacy

Quest – Diagnostic Test of Early Numeracy

Maths Recovery - Diagnostic Tests



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### Assessments Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class

<b>Junior Infants</b>	Boolavogue Junior Infant Assessment
<b>Senior Infants</b>	M.I.S.T. (Middle Infant Screening Test) Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy
<b>1<sup>st</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test Bangor Dyslexia Screening Test New N.R.I.T. (Non-Reading Intelligence Test)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
<b>4<sup>th</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test New N.R.I.T. (Non-Reading Intelligence Test)
<b>5<sup>th</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test
<b>6<sup>th</sup> class</b>	Micra T/ Sigma T or equivalent Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test

### Diagnostic Assessment

The objectives of diagnostic assessment are as follows:

- to identify the student's learning needs and strengths;
- to generate information essential for the completion of the SSP or GSSP;

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- to identify, in consultation with student's class teacher, the appropriate level and duration of the supplementary teaching that will be provided and the form that this support will take e.g. withdrawal in a small group or one-to-one or in class support;
- to identify and record medium-term learning targets for the the two instructional terms.

### Content of Diagnostic Assessment for Emergent Literacy Stage

1. Print awareness
2. Print conventions.
3. Phonemic awareness and ability to rhyme words
4. Letter identification
5. Knowledge of letter sounds
6. Word recognition
7. Visual discrimination
8. Word identification skills
9. Spelling
10. Writing
11. Auditory Skills – sequencing and discrimination

### Content of Diagnostic Assessment for students who have moved beyond the Early Stages of Literacy

1. Reading fluency
2. Sentence and passage comprehension
3. Word recognition
4. Vocabulary
5. Word identification skills
6. Miscue analysis
7. Spelling
8. Oral language proficiency i.e. listening skills, comprehension, and expressive language

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9. Motivation to learn

10. Social adjustment

Diagnostic Assessment of Mathematics will include some or all of the following depending on the student's individual needs

1. Conservation of number
2. Understanding of math's concepts
3. Number sense
4. Understanding and ability to use the language of mathematics
5. Computation skills
6. Ability to use number in realistic situations
7. Problem solving strategies
8. Recall of number facts
9. Mathematical reasoning skills

### **Provision of Supplementary Teaching**

- The primary work of the SET is the provision of supplementary teaching to the students who have been identified through the screening procedures and diagnostic testing as appropriate.
- The school year will be divided into 2 instructional terms.
- Classes will be intensive in terms of frequency.
- A system of withdrawal and/or in-class support will operate in response to the needs of the students.
- The SET decides the size of groups, taking into account the individual needs of students and the overall SET caseload.
- One to one teaching may be provided where small group teaching has not been effective and the SET caseload permits.
- The class teacher and the SET meet to devise SSPs and GSSPs in consultation with the principal and parents, the students may also contribute to setting their own short-term targets.

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### Student Support Plan (SSP) and Group Student Support Plan (GSSP)

An SSP or GSSP is drawn up by the SET in conjunction with the class teacher, parents and principal to address the student's individual needs.

This will include short term and long term planning covering targets, progress and programme evaluation at the beginning and end of each instructional term.

The SSP or GSSP will be in accordance with the criteria as advised in the Continuum of Support. The plan will address the individual student's/group's full range of needs and will include:

- details from class teacher
- relevant information from the parents
- assessment results
- other relevant information, e.g. reports from other agencies
- learning strengths and attainments
- priority learning needs
- learning targets
- class-based learning activities
- supplementary support activities to include ICT
- home support activities
- resources matched to the student's/group's needs
- review and assessment dates

Each plan will be monitored through teacher observation, the keeping of planning and progress records and through the student's own feedback.

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A detailed review will take place at the end of each instructional term. The SET and/or class teacher may meet the parents to discuss the child's progress in the light of the review at the conclusion of the second instructional term.

### Monitoring Progress

In order to monitor the progress of supplementary teaching a meeting with principal and the SET will be held annually to discuss:

- the school's prevention and early intervention programmes;
- the school's screening programmes;
- the appropriate criteria for continuing/discontinuing supplementary teaching for students at the end of each instructional term;
- the SET caseload;
- the progress of students in receipt of supplementary teaching;
- the levels of parental involvement;
- the referral of students for additional assessment and support;
- the co-ordination of support services in school;
- the time table for supplementary teaching;
- a review of the resources available for supplementary teaching.

### Record Keeping

The SET team will be responsible in conjunction with the class teacher for maintaining the following documentation.

1. SSP or GSSP including review of progress
2. Short term plans
3. Long term plans
4. Assessment records
5. Samples of work

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6. Reading analysis records e.g. benchmarking, running records, Dolch word checklists, etc,
7. Reports from outside agencies e.g. educational psychologist, occupational therapist, etc.

### Provision of Resources

Boolavogue N.S. is fortunate in having a wide range of resources to support both teaching and learning for students with special educational needs in the areas of both literacy and numeracy.

Resources are sourced and purchased when necessary, keeping in mind budgetary constraints.

### Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

In general the aim is that a student should not stay for more than two years in supplementary teaching unless they remain at or below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile in a standardised test in either English or Maths. A review is completed at the end of each instructional term i.e. in February and June each year. Following the second review a decision is then made to continue/discontinue with the provision of supplementary teaching.

The criteria on which this decision is made include:

- Has the student achieved some/all of the learning targets set?
- Will the student be able to cope in the mainstream classroom without some form of support?

A decision to continue the provision of supplementary teaching will result in a revision of the student's SSP or GSSP.

The decision-making process will involve consultation between the class teacher, SET, the principal and the parents. Account will also be taken of the overall SEN demands within the school.

### Liaising with Parents/Guardians

Consultation with parents prior to diagnostic assessment is standard practice within the school. The results of the diagnostic assessment are shared with the class teacher and the parents. A SSP or GSSP is drafted following a decision to provide supplementary teaching.

Guidance can also be given to parents/guardians prior to testing by the SET. This may include information or discussion relating to the following:

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1. The purpose and procedures of the school's SEN policy
2. Developing children's oral language and reading
3. Motivating children to read more
4. Creating a home environment in which literacy can thrive
5. Helping children with homework
6. Selecting books that interest children
7. Paired reading
8. Developing children's reasoning and problem solving abilities
9. Developing children's mathematical knowledge

Parents are encouraged to:

- contact the SET if any difficulties arise during an instructional term
- attend any meetings requested by the SET including the review at the end of each instructional term in order to discuss their child's/children's progress in achieving the learning targets.

If it is decided that supplementary teaching is to continue parents are invited to discuss revised learning targets and activities.

### Communication Strategies

The operation of an effective communication system between all parties involved in meeting the learning needs of the child is considered essential. In order to facilitate this at the beginning of each instructional term planning meetings will take place and the regular SET timetable will be suspended during these weeks. The SET timetable will also be suspended for periods in the year in order to facilitate assessments:

- Junior Infant Screening Assessment (October/November)
- SSP & GSSP reviews (February & June)
- Class benchmarking in preparation for guided reading (arranged in consultation with class teachers)



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- Standardised testing in English & Maths (May/June)

The various strands of this system include:

- Meeting parents of Junior Infant children to explain school policies and how parents and teachers can work together for the benefit of students.
- Informing parents of concerns regarding their child's progress in school.
- Outlining the school's practice with regard to diagnostic testing and follow up procedures.
- Consultation between the class teacher and SET following a low score on a screening test.
- Consultation between principal, SET, class teacher and parents following a low score on a screening test, including the seeking of approval for diagnostic assessment and provision of supplementary teaching.
- Ongoing communication between the SET and the class teacher
- Regular communication between the SET and parents in the form of notes /comments written into a student's copy or homework diary or by email or Aladdin direct to the parents.
- Copies of checklists sent home – such as sight vocabulary lists indicating words recognised and words requiring more practise.

### Links with Outside Agencies

The school will liaise with any outside agencies that will support and assist the learning of the student. The school will gain written consent from the parents/guardians before contacting these agencies. These include:

- NEPS for psychological assessment
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Social Workers
- A representative from Post Primary Schools to discuss transfer of all 6<sup>th</sup> class students. These meetings take place usually in the summer term.

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### **Referral to Out-of-school Agencies**

- The SET in consultation with the class teacher, principal and parents co-ordinates the referral of students to outside agencies, e.g. educational psychologist.
- The principal, SET and class teacher meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.
- The SET in conjunction with the class teacher completes the necessary referral form in consultation with the Principal and the parents.
- The external professional visits the school to meet with the student, parents, principal, class teacher and the SET as appropriate and the assessment is conducted.
- This is followed by a return visit at which findings are discussed, recommendations are considered and an appropriate response is agreed.
- Where concern arises regarding the manner or speed of the follow-through post assessment, such concern is pursued by the principal with the out-of-school agency.

### **Health and Safety Issues**

Every staff member and student is entitled to a safe and secure environment and to be treated with due respect. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of each student with SEN. When a place is offered to a child with SEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the child is entitled are in place as soon as possible. All members of staff will be informed of any potential risks and where necessary, individual plans will be drawn up and implemented.

### **Supervision/Child Protection**

The following will apply:

- For students who receive support on a one-to-one basis the SET is responsible for ensuring that both him/herself and the student are visible through the glass panel in the door.
- If students are withdrawn for support it is the responsibility of the SET to collect and return them

## Special Needs Policy

SCOIL NÁISIÚNTA



to their classroom.

- If a student has access to an SNA, the SNA may withdraw the child from the classroom provided a plan is in place with the class teacher.

### **Implementation and Review**

This policy will be implemented from \_\_\_\_\_.

It will be reviewed in \_\_\_\_\_ by the SET support team and all staff at Boolavogue N.S.

### **Ratification**

**Ratified by Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_**

**This policy will be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_**