

Introduction

Kilcleagh National School is a co-educational primary school under the patronage of the Ardagh & Clonmacnoise Dioceses. It is an ordinary mainstream primary school catering for a full cross section of children. Kilcleagh N.S is a single storey building with ramps where appropriate.

The purpose of this SEN Policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other interested parties on the provision of effective learning support to pupils experiencing low achievement and /or learning difficulties, as well as to fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998

There are four full-time class teachers including a Teaching Principal, a full time Special Education teacher and a part time Special Education teacher.

Resources

Kilcleagh N.S. is a well -resourced school, which constantly monitors and updates its resources. I.T. provision is good and is updated regularly.

Communication

This policy will be available on our school website. Copies of all our school policies are also available in hard copy from the school if requested.

Guiding Principles:

- All our children have a right to an education, which is appropriate to them as individuals. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community.
- The resources provided to support pupils with special educational needs, will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school.
- Supports provided to pupils with special educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils with the greatest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.

As far as possible, therefore, it is our aim to minimize the difficulties that children may experience. We aim to achieve this by adopting three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum.

Inclusion:

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice, which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with 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 providing support that will enable the child participate in them.

Three principles for Inclusion:

1. Setting suitable learning challenges

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. In order to do this Killeagh N.S. will use the Continuum of Support Process as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs.

Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils. Using the Continuum of Support framework our school will identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at a pupils' needs in context and use our resources to support this.

Identification of Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

Classroom Support	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parental consultation• Teacher observation records• Teacher-designed measures /assessments• Basic needs checklist *• Learning environment checklist*• Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist• Literacy and numeracy tests• Screening tests of language skills <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
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School Support	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation records • Teacher-designed measures / assessments • Parent and pupil interviews • Learning environment checklist • Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy • Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures • Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition. A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
School Support Plus	<p>This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures • Parent and pupil interviews • Functional assessment • Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc. <p>Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation</p>

2. Meeting children’ diverse learning needs.

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching.

3. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of children.

We recognize that a minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning if we do not address them through special arrangements. Our SEN policy envisages a whole school approach that takes into account the roles of the Board of Management, the principal, class teacher, special education teacher and the parents.

In attempting the above objectives the B.O.M., Principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy.

Board of Management

The BOM will fulfil its statutory duties towards the pupils with special needs. It will ensure that the provision required is an integral part of the school development plan. Members will be knowledgeable about the school's S.E.N.'s provision – funding, equipment and personnel.

The BOM

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of the school policy on Support for Children with Extra Needs.
- Provide adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provide a secure facility for storage of records relating to pupils in receipt of special education
- Budget for ongoing support in Professional Development for SEN Teachers.

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. She will work closely with SEN teacher and will keep BOM informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal, in collaboration with SEN teacher to:

- Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/ agencies as is necessary
- Ensure effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (Class teachers, SET, SNAs) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class teacher and SET.
- With the SET liaises with external agencies such as NEPs to arrange assessments of children with SEN.
- With the SET liaises with the SENO regarding all aspects of Special Education provision.

The Role of the Class Teacher:

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. Main-stream class teachers have first-line responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes. Accordingly, classroom teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom. This will include adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern. This may require targeted interventions to develop relevant adaptive skills related to these needs. All mainstream class teachers will implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.

These include:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms.
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Differentiation
- Heterogeneous group work
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Embedding ICT in teaching, learning and assessment

Every pupil needs to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to their developmental level. Pupils' level of interest, attention, concentration and persistence should be gradually developed, extended and rewarded, using appropriate teaching strategies. To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, mainstream class teachers will regularly need to differentiate their lessons. This can be achieved by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons to take pupils' interests into consideration
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilizing resources, including the use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly

Teachers can make lessons accessible to a broad range of pupils through the use of a variety of appropriate teaching methodologies, including active learning, small group tuition, individual teaching, and scaffolded instruction. This may also require environmental adaptations to promote curricular access.

The Role of the Special Education Teacher

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. Teaching approaches in Killeagh N.S. will include a combination of team teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support. Depending on the learning needs identified, a pupil with special educational needs may be supported at classroom level, or through mainstream classroom placement with additional teaching delivered through in-class or withdrawal support models.

Some pupils with more complex and enduring needs may require specific methodologies, teaching approaches and/or learning activities. Such interventions will be based on careful identification of strengths and needs, including multi-disciplinary assessment when necessary.

The type of support offered may take the form of:

- Curriculum support
- Life and/or social skills training
- Physical training/gross motor development

- Speech training/ communication and/or language development
- Behaviour modification programmes
- Assistance with sensory modulation
- Development of anger management strategies
- A combination of some/all of the above

Special education teachers, in consultation with class teachers should plan their interventions carefully to address pupils' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant Continuum of Support plan. Short term planning should reflect the Support Plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each pupil's specific needs on a weekly basis. Outcomes for pupils should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.

In addition to consultation around the individual needs of their child, parents also value receiving good information on the nature and type of the special educational needs provision available in the school. Our school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing policies relating to the education of children with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that parents understand the school's approaches and better enables them to support their children in transitioning through the school.

The SET will also be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the SEN policy.
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs.
- Organising the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers where necessary.
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs.
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeping a list of all pupils receiving supplementary teaching.
- Facilitating planning with class teacher.
- Supports the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support.
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals.
- Advises parents on the procedures for availing of special needs services.
- Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class teacher and principal.
- With the principal liaises with external agencies such as NEPs to arrange assessments of children with SEN.
- With the principal liaises with the SENO regarding all aspects of Special Education provision.

Parental Involvement

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress. The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support Profile provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There may also be opportunities for parents to work collaboratively with the school through initiatives such as paired reading.

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The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of Kilcleagh N.S. can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

- Supervising, assisting with, showing interest in and signing homework.
- Reading and telling stories to their child/children.
- Listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading, tables and spellings.
- Where their child is in receipt of supplementary teaching, implementing suggested home-based activities and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Signing and returning consent forms to the school regarding withdrawal for support teaching.
- Talking positively about school and school work.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors which may be affecting their child's progress.
- Participate in activities that are organized by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Helping children to develop their organizational skills.
- Helping children to look after school books and other resources which are loaned to the children for home use.
- Supporting programmes and initiatives implemented by the school.
- Encouraging their child to visit the library.

Whole School Strategies to minimize learning difficulties.

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties in Killeagh National School will include:

1. Promotion of Literacy:

- Print rich environment
- Shared/Paired Reading
- Team Teaching
- Genre Writing
- Library time/ Book Fair/ Word games/Book Week
- Implement a strong oral language development programme
- Adhere to the whole school policy on special education
- Encourage and promote shared reading at home

2. Promotion of Numeracy:

- Print rich environment
- Maths games
- Paired Maths
- Encouraging and promoting mastery of tables
- Rote learning of tables
- Maths Stations

3. Early Intervention:

We believe it is very important to identify and assess children with special needs as early as possible so that effective interventions can be put in place.

Stages of Assessment and Provision 1.

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a teacher identifies a child in their class with SEN they consult with the SET and they together provide interventions that are **additional to** or **different from** those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils lies with the class teacher. However as most of our support is now in-class the stages are less defined than in situations where learning support is delivered by withdrawal.

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents.

The triggers for this intervention could be:

- The child makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness.
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment.
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school.
- Has sensory or physical difficulties.
- Has communication and / or relationship difficulties.

The class teacher monitors the Record of Differentiated Support. If this strategy does not work then the teacher will continue to the next stage.

Teachers inform parents that their child's needs would be better served in a small group with a support teacher. Parents will need to sign their consent.

2.

In cases where the Record of Differentiated Support indicates that progress has not been made, or if the results of tests (NRIT, BIAP, MIST, NARA, MALT, Drumcondra Reading, Maths & Spelling) and teacher observation indicate this to be the case, intervention in the form of a support teacher will be accessed.

Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by both class and support teacher.
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, then a group educational plan will be devised and implemented.
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated each term or as is deemed necessary.
- While every effort will be made to allow the SEN pupil/group to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in SEN room with either support teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only.
- Where progress is such that the child's progress is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

4.

The support or class teacher will perform diagnostic tests on these children (at School Action) usually at the beginning and end of each year. These tests will include: Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT), Neale Analysis Reading Test, DJST, etc.

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling and performing below the 12th Percentile despite School Action the class teacher with the support teacher and principal, in consultation with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

- A psychological Assessment to be arranged.
- Outside agencies may need to be contacted who will advise on a range of provision including IEP targets and strategies.
- If it is felt by the psychologist that a child has care needs, an SNA may be applied for.
- In circumstances where a child uses specialised equipment, consultants will be required to demonstrate how the equipment is to be used.
- If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish the Principal will see to this under the guidance from the Department of Ed. And Skills.
- The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme 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 regularly interfere with the child's learning or that of other children despite an appropriate behavior management programme and IEP
- Has sensory and/or physical needs
- Has ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and act as a barrier to learning

Individual Educational Plan

Based on psychologist's report, all test results and School Action Plan , an IEP is formulated, involving class teacher, support teacher, parents, and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary), SNA(if assigned).

These IEP's, which employ a small steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in this school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that each child experiences success.

This plan includes:

- The nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills
- The present level of performance
- Services to be provided
- Services for transition to 2nd level school where appropriate
- The goals which a child is to achieve over a period of time

The strategies set out in the IEP will, as far as possible, be implemented in the classroom setting. The management strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher and the support teacher.

Review of IEP's

The support teacher and the class teacher will review the IEP at the end of October and Easter. They agree on the expected outcomes of the IEP. A draft copy is formulated. The parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss or make recommendations to the draft review if they so wish. Sometimes outside agencies may play a part in formulating the final copy. The review will be recorded. The end of year review will help formulate an IEP for the following year. IEP's for children moving to 2nd level will be referred to at the consultation meetings with the 2nd level representative and included in pupil's Educational Passport

Complaints

If parents have a complaint about the Special Ed. Provision made, they should first make an appointment to see the Special Ed teacher and then the principal. The complaint will be investigated and dealt with as early as possible. If the matter is not resolved to the parents' satisfaction, the matter proceeds to the BOM.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (teacher designed tests, checklists, observation, work samples) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This will lead to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe. Monitoring outcomes is part of a process of identification, target setting, and review, which in turn should lead to adjustments in support plans. The Student Support File provides schools with a useful resource to support and record this process. It includes a Support Review Record to guide teachers when monitoring progress and reviewing outcome with parents and pupils. Such monitoring of progress, and subsequent adaptation of support plans, are key drivers of effective practice. It is also important that we review outcomes at group, class, and whole-school level. This review will include some of the following measures: attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being for pupils with special educational needs.

The BOM will ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of the school development plan and will evaluate the effectiveness and success of this policy by monitoring:

- The standards obtained by children with special needs.
- The number of children at each of the three stages: Differentiation within Class, School Action and Resource.
- The level and pattern of help- average time allocated and the balance of in-class and withdrawal support
- Views of parents.
- Children's views.
- CPD for teachers.

Implementation and Review

The implementation of this policy will commence in January 2018. It will be reviewed at the end of every third school year or as circumstances warrant.

	Date
Staff Consultation	December 6 th 2017 Staff Meeting
Ratified by BOM	12.12.2017.

Signed: Kian Juppell
Chairperson BOM

Date: 13.12.2017