

Policy: Learning Support

School Details

Name: Gaelscoil Uí Drisceoil
Address: Dúncitil,
Gleann Maghair
Co. Chorcaí

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Category: Multidenominational Gaelscoil
20 teachers

Number of Pupils Enrolled: 401

Introductory Statement

This policy was originally written in March 2011 and was reviewed in November 2012. This policy was reviewed again in line with the Special Educational Needs – A Continuum of Support/ A Guideline for Teachers in December 2014. Teachers, members of the Board of Management and Parents were involved in the process.

School Ethos

Gaelscoil Uí Drisceoil is a multidenominational Gaelscoil whose ethos is

- Gaelscoil - a school in which all subjects are taught through the medium of Irish in an attractive encouraging environment.
- Irish is the language of the school community, between children, teachers and management.
- Multi-denominational i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected.
- Co-educational and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities
- Child centred in their approach to education
- Democratically run with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers

The Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management are

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satisfied to clarify any uncertainty regarding this policy. In the case where there is a slight discrepancy between the Irish version and the English version, then the Irish version will take precedence.

Rationale

Effective learning support programmes are based on the following principles

- Having effective policies throughout the school where parents are involved in the programmes
- Avoiding failure
- Provide intensive early intervention
- Providing resources to those with the greatest needs

Continuum of Support

A staged approach is advised in assessment and intervention in schools as an approach to solving problems within the continuum of support

- Classroom support is a classroom based process of assessment and intervention which is co-ordinated by the class teacher and takes place in the classroom.
- School support is a process of assessment and intervention that is co-ordinated by the learning support team in conjunction with the Principal and the class teacher. Interventions which occur at this point will be in addition to those that take place in classroom support.
- School support plus is a process which is provided for when the school require certain professional services to assess and further develop their intervention plans. This level pertains to children with more complex / long term needs where it is felt that these children are not progressing satisfactorily despite carefully planned interventions up to that point.

We recognise that there are different levels of special educational needs – from mild to more complex

Aidhmeanna

Primary Aims

The primary aim of Learning Support is to ensure the best is made of the teaching and learning process in order to enable children who have learning difficulties to reach a satisfactory level of competence in numeracy and literacy prior to leaving primary school.

Secondary Aims

- To assist children with learning difficulties to take part in the school curriculum at their own level.
- To promote self esteem in children with learning difficulties as well as promoting a positive attitude to school and towards learning.
- To enable these children to monitor their own learning to eventually enable them to become independant learners.
- To provide additional teaching as well as resource and learning support to children with learning difficulties in the areas of Irish, English and Maths as appropriate.
- To enable parents to have a role in the learning support of their children through the use of an appropriate learning support programme.
- To encourage co-operation between teachers in the administration of the whole school policy regarding learning support for these children.
- To use an Early Intervention Programme to support learning and endeavour to minimise or reduce learning difficulties.

Policy Content

1. [Whole-School Strategies to help minimise Learning Difficulties](#)

Learning difficulties may be avoided or at least reduced through the use of suitable whole school programme in the areas of Irish, English and Maths. **The whole school programmes are listed in the school plan for these subject areas.**

- To resolve issues through observation of language development and other aspects of the teaching of English and Maths so as to ensure development, progress and continuity from class to class.
- To provide further support in Language development and in the development of early literacy skills and mathematical skills for children who experience difficulty/delay.
- To implement reading programmes involving adults and children in the school community.
- Continuos observation and assessment of childrens early literacy and early numeracy skills in all Infant classes so as to facilitate the early identification of possible learning difficulties/ behavioural difficulties which may impede learning.
- Co-operation and discussion between class teachers, learning support teachers and the Principal so as to identify children who are not reaching their potential and may have a learning/behavioural difficulty.

2.Procedure for Identification/Screening/Referral and review of Pupils

Initial Screening

The Screening Tests are administered by classteachers in their own classrooms. They will correct and score these tests according to the procedure laid out in the test manual. They will then inform the learning support team and the Principal and Parents of the results and the results will be discussed in the context of the individual child and class.

The tests that are administered are as follows:

Junior Infants	Belfield
Senior Infants	Mist
	Drumcondra Numeracy Screening Test
	Drumcondra Literacy Screening Test
	Drumcondra Gaeilge
First – Sixth Class	Drumcondra Gaeilge/ English/ Mathematics

The NRIT is also used for the 2nd Class Screening.

Learning Support

Class Support

Class Support is generally the 1st step in dealing with learning or behavioural needs that may arise. This solution deals with children who have special educational needs which are different or individual and which require teaching methodologies for learning and/or behaviour which are different from the teaching methodologies that are required for other children in the class. Generally this is the starting point in solving issues at this level when teacher/parent have concerns and worries about a child in their class. The teacher and parent discuss the concerns and strategies that might be affective are discussed. The approach at this stage is simple and is used by teachers regularly in the classroom to assist with the needs of children as they arrive.

School Support

Class based differentiation is not always enough to fully cater for the special educational needs of some children. As a result there may be a need for School Support. The class teacher should seek assistance from the learning Support/ Resource teacher to assist in the learning process. Information is gathered systematically through informal and formal assessments and an Individual Pupil Learning Profile (I.P.L.P) are drawn up and progress is continuously monitored.

School Support Plus

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In cases where there is a severe need and/or continuous need and/or special educational need it is more likely that an intensive support plan will be required. It is common practice that outside services other than members of the school staff are involved in Assessment, Diagnosing and Interventions, as part of the School Support Plus.

Regular consultation with the SENO and NEPS Psychologist are undertaken by the Principal and learning support team as and when necessary.

Choosing children for Learning Support

Criteria

First priority is given to children with a STEN 2 or below in the standardised tests in English, Maths and Irish and/or the children who have been diagnosed with learning /behavioural /physical difficulties.

Children between a STEN 3 – 5 will also be prioritised for learning support as per General Allocation Hours (GAM) assigned to the School.

Diagnostic Testing

The learning Support team carry out the diagnostic testing to determine the children's strengths and difficulties. The results are discussed with the class teacher and the parents and in all cases the most appropriate support is discussed.

Resource Teaching

Resource teaching hours are sanctioned by the S.E.N.O. (Special Educational Needs Officer) on a case by case basis, based on the recommendations by Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language therapists, Audiologists, Psychiatrists, Ophthalmologists etc for one or other of the following categories of disability: Physical Disability, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Severe Emotional Disturbance, Moderate General Learning Difficulty, Severe/Profound Learning Difficulty, Autism/ Austistic Spectrum Disorder, Specific Speech and Language Disorder.

Children are not entitled to one to one resource teaching without a diagnosis of one of the above.

A diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty in reading (such as dyslexia) or maths (dyscalculia) does not entitle children to resource teaching hours under the Department of Education regulations.

Parental Consent

Parental Consent is required prior to conducting any diagnostic tests on children and prior to children attending learning support outside of classroom learning support.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

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Formal Parent/ Learning Support Teacher meetings will be conducted annually during the Parent/ Teacher meeting schedule. Supplementary meetings may be arranged as the need arises and may involve the Learning Support teacher, Class teacher, Principal and Parents and/or outside agencies.

3. Record Keeping

The learning Support teacher will record the following

- results of all tests carried out
- I.E.P and I.P.L.P where appropriate
- Monthly Evaluation (Cúntas Míósúil)
- Samples of children's work

4. Continuing/ Discontinuing learning Support

At the end of each instructional term (mid-term February and June), the child's progress is evaluated in consultation with Class Teacher, Learning Support Teacher, Resource Teacher and outside agencies if necessary, and a decision is taken as to the correct course of action for the child. If it is considered that the child has reached a level where he/she can cope in class without intervention, then supplementary teaching is discontinued and the child is monitored by the class teacher.

5. Monitoring Progress

Test results are kept in a filing cabinet by the Learning Support Teacher and a copy is kept by the Principal, as are all psychological reports. The Learning Support Teacher/Resource Teacher liaise with class teacher and/or parents to draw up an IEP as appropriate. Planning and progress records are completed for each group of pupils in receipt of supplementary teaching. Each class group has their individual folder containing a tracking form and test results to date.

6. Liaising with Parents

Following screening tests, Class Teacher with consent of the Principal contacts parent if he/she has a concern about a child. This is usually done by note home or Learning Support Teacher may telephone parent and arrange for further diagnostic testing. Parents are invited to discuss their child's results and are always informed of a decision to include their child in a Learning Support group. Parents are encouraged to meet with Learning Support or class teacher by appointment and also at a formal annual Parent/Teacher Meeting (usually in November/December).

Links with outside Agencies

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The Principal and Learning Support team are in regular consultation with the SENO and NEPS Psychologist following discussion with Class Teacher. The Principal in consultation with the Learning Support Teacher, Class Teacher and NEPS informs parents of the school's concerns regarding the child and recommendations are made. Each and every consultation are recorded in the document 'A continuum of Support'.

Regular consultation with the SENO and NEPS Psychologist are undertaken as and when necessary.

Ratification and Rationale

This policy was drawn up by the Staff and Board of Management of Gaelscoil Ui Drisceoil in consultation with Cairde na Scoile.

Sínithe _____ Cathaoirleach

Comhsínithe _____ Rúnaí

Dáta: _____

Review Date

This policy was reviewed by the Staff of Gaelscoil Ui Drisceoil and ratified by The Board of Management in December 2014. The policy will be reviewed in January 2017.

Sínithe: _____ Cathaoirleach

Comhsínithe: _____ Rúnaí

Dáta: _____

Aguisín 1

Liosta acmhainne ar fáil sa scoil

1. Screening Assessments

Middle Infant Screening test (M.I.S.T)
Drumcondra Primary Reading tests (Rang 1 go Rang 6)
Drumcondra Screening Tests – Senior Infants
Micra-T (rang 1 go rang 6)
Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test
Drumcondra Primary Irish Test
Jolly Phonics Screening Tests

2. Diagnostic Assessments

Belfield Infant Assessment Profile
Neale Analysis
N. R. I.T.
Junior Dyslexia Screening Test
Drumcondra Diagnostic Tests –Senior Infants (Maths and English)

Literacy resources

Springboard Series
Oxford Reading Tree Series including Tree Tops
Crown Readers
Red, Yellow, Green, Blue Reading Books on CD-Rom
O'Brien Panda Cubs, Pandas, Flyers etc
Range of Ladybird titles
Ruth Miskan Readers
Ruth Miskan Phonics readers
Jolly Phonics Readers
Reading Zone boxes and class readers
Library Books

Phonics

Jolly Phonics Programme and support materials incl. CD-Rom game
etc
Newell Literacy Programme
Phonics Photocopiable Worksheets – Prim-ed
Alpha to Omega Books and worksheets

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Range of games in the resource room including daisy chain phonics etc

Toe by Toe

P.A.T. programme

Oral Language

Drumcondra Oral Language Programme

Oral Language materials from the Folens Reading Zone series

Fast Forward Language Programmes

EAL Primary Assessment Toolkit

Comprehension

Stride Ahead

Matamaitic

Línte Uimhreacha

Cearnóg Céad

Dienes

Codáin

Multiplication Square

Selection of Maths board games and computer games

Mata le Chéile

Spelling

Stareway to Spelling

ICT

Computers and Software Typing Programmes

Reading Assistant Programme from Neuron Learning

A Thuismitheoirí,

Ba mhaith linn am Tacaíocht Foghlaim a ofráil dod' pháiste don scoilbhliain 2014/2015. Is iad na múinteoirí tacaíochta foghlama a thugann an tacaíocht foghlaim. Tá fáilte romhat bualadh leis na múinteoirí tacaíochta foghlama, ní gá ach glaoh a chuir ar rúnaí na scoile chun coinne a dhéanamh.

Más mian leat go bhfaighfidh do pháiste tacaíocht foghlaim ní mór an fhoirm seo a líonadh agus é a sheoladh thar nais chuig an múinteoir ranga.

Tugaim cead do mo pháiste _____ tacaíocht foghlaim a fháil ón múinteoir tacaíochta foghlama don scoilbhliain_____.

Ní thugaim cead do mo pháiste _____ tacaíocht foghlaim a fháil ón múinteoir tacaíochta foghlama don scoilbhliain_____.

Sínithe

We would like to offer your child Learning Support time. The learning Support will be carried but by the learning support teachers. You are welcome to meet the learning support teachers at any time. Appointments can be made by ringing the school secretary. Please sign the permission slip below and return to the class teacher.

I give permission for my child _____ to avail of learning support from the learning support teacher during the _____ school year.

I do not give permission for my child _____ to avail of learning support from the learning support teacher during the _____ school year.

Signed

Míle Buíochas,
Siobhán Ní Chatháin
