



# Powerstown Educate Together National School

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POWERSTOWN EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL

## Continuum of Support (C.O.S) Policy for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN FORMULATED BY POWERSTOWN ETNS TO ASSIST TEACHERS, PUPILS AND PARENTS IN MAKING AN INFORMED DECISION IN RELATION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES AND TO COMPLY WITH NCSE AND DEPARTMENTAL CIRCULARS.

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## INTRODUCTION

Special Education Needs are defined in the “Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004” as follows: ‘A special education need refers to a person who has a restriction in capacity to participate in, and benefit from education, due to an enduring physical, sensory, mental health, or learning disability, or any other condition (including exceptionally able pupils) which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition.’

For the purposes of this policy, we define inclusion as ‘The process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by considering and adapting its curricula, organisation and provision.’ The goal of inclusion is not to erase differences, but to enable all pupils to belong within an educational community that validates and values their individuality.

This policy was formulated by the Principal and staff of Powerstown Educate Together National School, assisted by guidelines from the PDST and SESS facilitators. This policy reflects D.E.S. circulars 07/02, 08/02, 24/03 and 02/05.

## AIMS

This policy is intended to provide practical guidance to teachers, parents and other concerned persons on the provision of effective learning support to pupils experiencing or likely to experience learning difficulties. The policy will also fulfil our obligations under the Education Act 1998, Education and Welfare Act 2000 and Disability Bill 2002.

- To outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to pupils with special educational needs.
- To enable pupils to participate in the full curriculum.
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning in pupils.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- To provide supplementary teaching and additional support in English and/or Mathematics and other areas as required.
- To involve parents in supporting their children.

- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole school policies on continuum of support strategies for pupils.
- To provide suitable teaching for those with high and low incidence needs.
- To establish testing and assessment guidelines so intervention (in or out of class) can be more immediate.
- To establish early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and to prevent difficulties in learning.

## PRINCIPLES

Effective learning programmes are based on the following principles:

- An ethos of inclusion, well-being, high aspirations and goal setting for social and academic needs.
- An enabling environment.
- Staff knowledge, reflection and continued professional development.
- Effective relationships and collaboration with parents, students, peers, professionals and school staff.
- Effective whole school policies and parental involvement.
- Individualised learning programmes through assessment of curriculum, social skills, emotional skills, motor skills and behaviour.
- Differentiation through a variety of strategies and approaches.
- Provision of intensive early intervention.
- Direction of resources to pupils in greatest need.

## SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Powerstown Educate Together National School promotes an inclusive learning environment that is equality based, co-educational, child centred and democratically run. We aim to provide a holistic approach to education, taking account of individual needs, abilities, interests, and social and cultural backgrounds. We strive to create a positive, caring and inclusive environment conducive to learning, enabling each child to reach his /her full potential with confidence and enthusiasm. We promote an atmosphere where staff and pupils respect themselves and others and where each person takes responsibility for his/her own actions.

## ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

### ENROLMENT IN A MAINSTREAM CLASS

Parents are given an enrolment and information form to complete prior to their child enrolling in the school. On this form parents are asked to give details of assessments the child may have had.

***The school stresses the importance of parents informing the school of any 'special need' their child may have.***

If a pupil has an identified special need and is already receiving a service from another organisation, it is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school. The Special Education Needs Organiser (S.E.N.O.) is contacted at the earliest opportunity so as to apply for resource teaching/S.N.A. assistance for the pupil. The principal and Special Needs Co-ordinator will read all current reports on the child prior to receiving the child in school. Having gathered the relevant information, the Board of Management will ensure that a child with Special Education Needs will be educated in an inclusive environment, unless the degree or nature of those needs is not in the best interests of the child and that it does not interrupt the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

**Please see PETNS Enrolment Policy for further details.**

Programmes will be designed by the Class Teacher to facilitate inclusion of pupils with additional needs in all aspects of the curriculum at their ability and competence levels. This could include oral and group work, social skills activities, communication and language activities, practical learning experiences, a buddy system, circle time, computer skills etc. Relevant school personnel will be made aware of the special educational needs of the pupils and of the strategies necessary to integrate them in all aspects of school life.

### ENROLMENT IN CLASS FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISORDER (DLD)

Powerstown ETNS has one class for children with DLD, which caters for children with a diagnosis of DLD from Senior Infants to 3<sup>rd</sup> class. The maximum enrolment in the class is 7 children, in line with Department regulations, in order to allow for intensive educational and Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) programs suited to each child's needs. The class is staffed by a full-time teacher, and a part-time Special Needs Assistant (S.N.A.). The HSE provides the services of a Speech and Language Therapist for 2.5 days per week. Eligible pupils may spend up to a maximum of two years in the SSLD class.

In order to enrol a child in the SSLD class, he or she must meet specific criteria as outlined in the PETNS **Specific Speech and Language Disorder Enrolment Policy**.

#### ENROLMENT IN AUTISM CLASS

Powerstown ETNS has two classes for children with ASD. The maximum enrolment in the class is 6 children, in line with Department regulations, in order to allow for intensive educational and individual programs suited to each child's needs. The class is staffed by a full-time teacher and two Special Needs Assistants (S.N.A.).

In order to enrol a child in the ASD class, he or she must meet specific criteria as outlined in the PETNS **Specialised Class for Children with Autism Enrolment Policy**.

#### CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT TEAM

The Continuum of Support (C.O.S.) team consists of the Principal, Continuum of Support (COS) Coordinator, COS teachers and S.N.A.s where applicable.

The C.O.S. team meets weekly to discuss any COS queries relating to children in the school. An agenda is written up by the C.O.S. Coordinator and shared with the C.O.S. team and Principal several days before the meeting. Items to be discussed may include upcoming testing, I.E.P. meetings, development and review of Support Plans, children in need of additional support etc. There is an option to add 'Any Other Business (AOB)' at the end of each meeting.

The C.O.S. Teachers meet fortnightly with the relevant mainstream teachers and SNAs. As part of this planning meeting, they discuss the nature and focus of support for the children currently receiving additional support. This is an information sharing meeting of these children's Support Plans Targets.

These targets are more formally reviewed and updated by relevant teachers at 6-week intervals. The COS teachers facilitate these meetings and all relevant teachers including SNAs attend this meeting. It may also be a time for discussing observations, assigning responsibilities for implementing strategies, clarifying what needs to change regarding targets (if anything) and to reinforce what the targets will be for the next 6 week period.

School-wide Parent Teacher meetings are held in November and May/June each school year. However, parents may request a meeting with the class teacher or members of the C.O.S. Team at other times of the year to discuss concerns or queries in relation to the learning progress of their child.

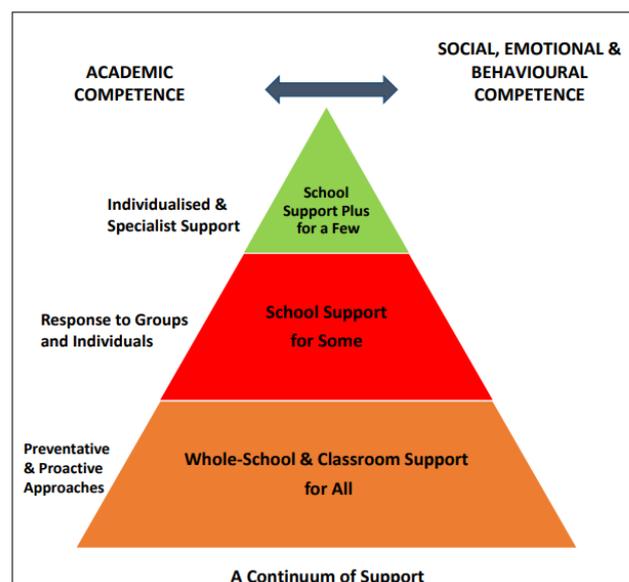
The C.O.S. team schedule School Support Plus Parent-Teacher meetings bi-annually (October and February). C.O.S. team schedule Continuum of Support Meetings (for CS and SS plans) with parents as necessary throughout the year.

## CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT APPROACH

The C.O.S. Team along, with the Principal and relevant teachers, adopt the C.O.S. approach to intervention.

The C.O.S. guidelines encompass a problem-solving approach to understanding and developing interventions for pupils experiencing a range of learning, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The needs of pupils with special educational needs can be best considered in terms of a continuum and therefore the support given is also based on a continuum.

The Continuum of Support enables schools to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way. This means that needs can be responded to as early as possible. Of course, the principle that **pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support** is of primary importance. This approach is also supported by information and engagement with external professionals, as required.



We aim to collect evidence about pupils' educational needs at each level of the Continuum of Support. This evidence can then be used to adapt teaching, to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and to gauge their responses to interventions. When data is carefully collected, shared and compared, the COS team can identify and respond to all those pupils who have special educational needs.

### STAGE 1: CLASSROOM SUPPORT

***Classroom Support: An intervention process co-ordinated by the class teacher and carried out within the classroom***

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.**

This is informed by:

- 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

A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review (minimum every 6 weeks).

#### STAGE 2: SCHOOL SUPPORT

***School Support: An assessment and intervention process which is usually co-ordinated by the C.O.S. teacher working alongside the class teacher. Interventions at this stage will be additional to those provided through classroom support.***

At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:

- 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

While the classroom teacher retains responsibility for the teaching and learning of the pupil, the C.O.S. teacher will be more formally involved at this stage.

### STAGE 3: SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS

***School Support Plus: Intervention for pupils with more complex and/or enduring difficulties, whose progress is considered inadequate, despite carefully planned interventions at the previous levels. The school may request the involvement of relevant external services at this stage in order to carry out more detailed assessments and to develop intervention programmes.***

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:

- 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.

Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress.

A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation.

### EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced through the school's clear identification processes (outlined above) and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs.

Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process. The process involves the Class Teacher, Continuum of Support Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, parents, the pupil and relevant professionals. Interventions should draw on evidence-informed practice and the professional knowledge and experience of teachers.

These interventions should reflect the priority learning needs of pupils, as well as building on their strengths and interests. **Support plans should set out the agreed targets, the resources required, the strategies for implementation and a time-frame for review (minimum of every 6 weeks).**

#### PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT WITH CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT PROCESS

- Parents are formally met to discuss support plans bi-annually (Week 4 September/Week 1 October **and** Week 4 January / Week 1 February) or when teacher is of the opinion child would benefit from the Continuum of Support.
- Targets are reviewed at minimum every 6 weeks at every support level, with targets shared with parents (sent via Aladdin App). Parents are encouraged to give feedback on targets.
- One Home target is included in CS, SS and SSP planning.
- Parents (and pupils) meet with relevant staff when
  - Parents request a meeting to discuss child's progress and/or any concerns they may have
  - Child is being moved a level on Continuum of Support
  - Child is being signed off Continuum of Support
- The school may host "professional meetings" whereby services that a child may access (e.g. School Age Team, Daughter's of Charity) can provide guidance to school staff. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings.
- School/services may recommend courses for parents, to support their child at home. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend any courses recommended by professionals.

#### STUDENT SUPPORT FILE

##### RATIONALE FOR THE USE OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT FILE:

- The Student Support File allows the school to track the student's pathway through the Continuum of Support – right from the start of the support process, and onwards, if necessary, through to the School Support (for Some) and School Support Plus (for a Few) levels.
- The Student Support File allows the school to document progress and needs over time
- The Student Support File ensures continuity of support for a student, including transition from primary to post-primary school
- The Student Support File may encourage parental collaboration and parental engagement in the student's learning

- The Student Support File assists schools in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need
- The Student Support File keeps together all the information about the support of the student: information gathered, plans and interventions, consultations and reviews
- The Student Support File is a **confidential working document, stored on the school's administrative system and is password protected.**
- **The Student Support File is opened at classroom support level.**

#### CLASSROOM SUPPORT FILE

Classroom support is the most common and typically the first response to emerging needs. The starting point for the Classroom Support process is when a teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s) share concerns regarding a student's learning and/or social development in school.

At this point some simple **classroom interventions** will have already been tried - such as differentiation, adjustments to the learning environment and/or adjustments to teaching style. Concerns, however, will have remained about:

- student skills and/or behaviour that appear to be falling below the typical range for his/her age and appear to be impacting on the student's learning and/or socialisation
- the student's response to the simple classroom interventions that have been already tried.

These concerns will have suggested that this student has distinct and individual needs that will require a Classroom Support Plan.

The next steps to develop a Classroom Support Plan include:

- Student Support File is opened by the class teacher on Aladdin.
- Concerns **are recorded**, as well as the student's strengths and interests. This step in the process may be informed by the data gathered when completing some/all of the Support Checklist.
- Ideas are discussed with regard to **strategies/interventions** to address the student's needs within the classroom.
- A Support Plan is drawn up and signed by the **class teacher** and parent(s)/guardian(s) and implemented for an agreed time span. The plan is reviewed on an on-going basis
- Targets are reviewed at minimum every 6 weeks.

The Classroom Support Plan, together with C.S. Target reviews (minimum of every 6 weeks), checklists used, and other related documents (such as a records of consultation with the NEPS psychologist) will be kept within

the Student Support File – a file specifically allocated for that particular student - allowing the school to track the student’s progress and needs over time.

#### SCHOOL SUPPORT FILE

While most student’s initial needs will be met through classroom based interventions, in some cases interventions at Classroom Support level are not sufficient to fully meet the student’s educational needs.

A School Support Plan may be needed. The decision to initiate a School Support Plan is usually taken as a result of the review of a Classroom Support Plan, (after at least 12 weeks of the plan being in place) by the class teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s), in collaboration with the COS teacher(s) in the school.

#### **Steps in developing a Support Plan**

- The concerned teacher(s), parent(s)/guardian(s), and COS teacher(s) share and record ongoing concerns regarding the student’s progress in school, as well as noting the student’s strengths and interests.
- The concerned teacher is required to involve the COS teacher in the problem-solving process at this point.
- The School Support Plan will be informed by a more systematic gathering of information about the student, which may include diagnostic assessment and observation of the student’s learning and/or behavioural/emotional/social skills.
- This step in the process may be informed by data gathered when completing the Support Checklist.
- The School Support Plan is co-ordinated by the COS teacher.
- The School Support Plan is drawn up in collaboration with concerned teacher/ support teacher(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s) and implemented for an agreed time span.
- Targets are reviewed every 6 weeks (minimum) , with a SSP Review Record taken.

The plans targets are reviewed on an on-going basis at Team Meetings.

The School Support Plan, together with reviews, checklists used and other related documents (such as a record of consultation with the NEPS psychologist), will add to the body of information that is already contained within the Student Support File – a file specifically for that particular student. This allows the school to continue to track the student’s progress and needs over time.

#### SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS FILE

The School Support Plus process will be initiated if, in reviewing the Support Plan, it is agreed that the student is not making adequate progress, despite purposeful efforts.

- **Evidence of same is added to child's support file.**

This process will generally involve external professionals and support services in a more detailed problem solving process.

It is expected that the students who are receiving support at the level of School Support Plus, will be those with greatest need. Students needing support at this level will have their needs and interventions detailed and monitored in a School Support Plus Plan.

- The School Support Plus Plan is co-ordinated by the COS teacher.
- A review of work already done at the levels of Classroom Support and School Support, and contained within the Student Support File, will provide important information for this School Support Plus Plan.
- The School Support Plus Plan, together with reports from other professionals, consultation records and other relevant documents, will add to the body of information that is already contained within the Student Support File – allowing the school to continue to track the student's progress and needs over time.
- The School Support Plus Plan is drawn up in collaboration with concerned teacher/ support teacher(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s), relevant professionals (as applicable), and implemented for an agreed time span.
- SSP Targets are reviewed every 6 weeks (minimum) and a copy of the target Review Record is shared with parents.

#### REVIEWING OF SCHOOL SUPPORT PLANS

- Targets must be as specific as possible. B.C.C Targets (Behaviour-Condition-Criteria) and SMART Targets (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timed) are used to guide formulation and review of all School Support Plans Targets.
- Targets are reviewed at minimum of every 6 weeks.
- Through discussion, parents, staff (and pupils if relevant) may agree that targets have been consistently met and the child would no longer benefit from the level of support being received, a support file review is completed.

- Through discussion, parents, staff (and pupils if relevant) may agree the child may require more supports than those being provided at current level of support, a support file review is completed

## ROLE OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER (L.S. GUIDELINES PG.42)

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class, including those accessing the Continuum of Support Model. The role of the classroom teacher in supporting pupils with additional needs is outlined below.

### CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The classroom environment should promote the **emotional and social well-being** of the child through use of school recommended programmes such as; You Can Do It, Fun Friends, Friends for Life, Circle Time, Mind training, Restorative practices, Walk Tall, Stay Safe, RSE etc.

A particular responsibility of the class teacher is to create a classroom environment that promotes **differentiation**.

Children with additional needs should be provided with a learning environment that is well-organised, structured and predictable e.g. visual timetables, now and then charts, table trackers, token economy systems etc. (See learning environment checklist for further information).

Children with anxiety, sensory or attention difficulties may be provided with additional resources or strategies to minimise distraction and /or assist with regulation within the classroom.

### PLANNING

Where a pupil is in receipt of support through the Continuum of Support model, it is essential that the class teacher contribute to the development of learning targets in the pupil's Support Plan (**at every level**).

- Collaborate with relevant persons in setting of targets
- There should be approximately 4 targets
- There should be a home target
- Targets must be specific
  - BCC – Behaviour Criteria Condition
  - SMART – Specific Measurable Attainable, Realistic, Timed
- Targets should be shared with parents/guardians, pupil (if appropriate) and COS teacher.

- Targets should be identifiable in Short Term Planning
- Targets should be active and evident in everyday classroom life of the child
- Targets achieved should be recorded in Cuntas Míósúil

## LEARNING CONTENT

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. Mainstream 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. They may need to adapt 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 should 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
- Active learning
- Heterogeneous group work
- Small group tuition
- Individual instruction
- Scaffolded instruction
- Differentiated tasks (see below)
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence, e.g. taught and modelled group roles
- Embedding Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment

Every pupil needs to be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level. pupils' levels 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 account of pupils' interests
- Matching tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including the use of technology

- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly

## ROLE OF CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT TEAM

Continuum of Support 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 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 should be based on careful identification of strengths and needs, including multi-disciplinary assessment, when necessary.**

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.

## EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

In view of substantial international evidence that early intervention and prevention programmes can lead to improved outcomes for pupils; the following early intervention and prevention strategies are in place in Powerstown E.T.N.S;

- Team planning
- Co-operative team teaching, e.g. Station teaching

- Junior Classes – Play based curriculum (Aistear, [A balanced approach to Literacy Development in Early Years](#), NI [Learning Through Play](#))
- Senior Classes – Project based curriculum
- Programmes to support behavioural and emotional needs (Incredible Years Programme, Friends for Life, Roots of Empathy, You Can Do it – **Classroom based programmes**)
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Programme
- Advice from COS team / Principal
- NCSE / SESS / NEPS courses
- NEPs support / unanimous advice.

## SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS

SNAs are members of the Continuum of Support Team. A S.N.A. may be appointed to the school to support a child/children. The Principal has the sole responsibility of allocating S.N.A. support throughout the school.

***Those with the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support.***

- SNAs attending fortnightly target meetings with class teacher and COS teacher
- SNAs are consultant in the drafting and reviewing of child's targets
- SNAs are actively supportive of child's targets in the school setting
- SNAs record observations based on agreed targets to monitor child's progress and inform the review process

## ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal's leadership role is central to the Continuum of Support model and includes the following:

- Developing inclusive whole-school policies and monitoring their implementation
- Assigning staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinating 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
- Ensuring that 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, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area

## WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

Powerstown ETNS engages in best practice in the identification of needs, education planning and the allocation of special education teaching. We aim to;

- Address and respond to the diversity of needs of learners
- Remove barriers so that each learner will be enabled to achieve maximum benefit from his/her own schooling.

The following outlines the key elements to our whole-school approach to supporting pupils with special educational needs:

- Inclusive Education Model ([Click here](#))
- Whole School Planning
- Role of Principal
- Agreed framework for prioritising the allocation of COS Model
- Parental engagement
- Pupils engagement
- Engagement with external bodies and agencies
- Transitions
- Continuous Professional Development

## PRIORITISING THE ALLOCATION OF CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT MODEL

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of pupils. ***Importantly, those with the highest level of need should have access to the***

**greatest level of support.** In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many pupils will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development and application to learning.

<b>Prioritising children for access to COS model</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Testing / Data Gathering</b>	<b>Scoring</b>	<b>Focus of Support</b>
1.	Standardised Tests 1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drumcondra Reading</li> <li>● Sigma – T</li> <li>● Drumcondra Spelling</li> </ul>	<math>\leq 13^{\text{th}}</math> percentile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In class</li> <li>● 1:1 Withdrawal</li> <li>● Small group withdrawal</li> <li>● Team teaching</li> <li>● Station teaching</li> <li>● Support of SNA</li> <li>● Scheduled movement breaks/activities</li> </ul>
2.	Standardised Tests Senior Infants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MIST</li> <li>● Drumcondra Early Numeracy</li> </ul>	Mist: Total score <math>\leq 50</math> DEM: <math>\leq 35\%</math>	
3	Baseline Screeners: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infant Literacy Profile Screener</li> <li>2. Ready Set Go Maths Progress Report (RSGM)</li> <li>3. Basic Life Skills Checklist</li> </ol>	1. <math>\leq 35\%</math> 2. <math>\leq 35\%</math> for 1 <sup>st</sup> Significant goal in RSGM	
4	Diagnostic Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dyslexia Screening Test</li> <li>● ACE</li> <li>● NVRT</li> <li>● NRIT</li> </ul>		
5	Children with a diagnosed disability		
6	Exceptionally Able Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● &lt;math&gt;\geq 90^{\text{th}}&lt;/math&gt; percentile in standardised test</li> </ul>	

## PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. This is recognised by Powerstown ETNS and is seen in the many good practices and initiatives we use to promote parental involvement such as;

- Parent meeting in September annually
- Bi- annual parent teacher meetings
- Bi-annual student support meetings
- Parents collaborate with staff in setting of targets (every 6 weeks minimum emailed via Aladdin app)
- Home target included in CS, SS and SSP planning

- Regular coffee mornings & support for parents of children with Special educational needs
- Recommend courses for parents
- Support parents to engage with outside agencies (e.g HSE)
- Open Door Policy for parents

## PUPIL ENGAGEMENT

Good engagement and participation in their own education has many associated benefits for pupils. This is particularly important for pupils with special educational needs and can help enhance their academic and social and emotional outcomes.

Examples of how Powerstown ETNS endeavours to engage pupils (at an age & ability appropriate level) in the COS model include:

- Including pupils in a shared assessment for learning process (e.g. children self-assess and evaluate their learning targets when appropriate)
- Setting shared learning objectives, where possible
- Jointly reviewing progress, where possible
- Teacher facilitated play-based and project-based curriculums
- Observation and assessment of pupil's interests (e.g. using reinforcement assessment) and inclusion of pupil's interests in designing educational or behavioural programmes

## ENGAGEMENT WITH EXTERNAL BODIES AND AGENCIES

The school may engage with external bodies and agencies if, after support file review, relevant parties are have identified more significant and enduring needs, whereby children would benefit from a multi-disciplinary approach to identification of needs and the development of interventions.

In such cases, the following actions will be carried out:

- The child has an open School Support File, whereby the school has supported the child at relevant levels for a period of at least 12 weeks.
- The C.O.S. teacher and class teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the child's progress and concerns
- Through discussion, the need for referral may be addressed.
- ***Parents/Guardians can complete referral independently***

- If agreeable by all parties, class teacher, COS teacher and parents (and child if applicable) can collaboratively complete the referral
- The Principal co-ordinates the referral of pupils to outside agencies at parents’/guardians’ request e.g. N.E.P.S., AON Officer, SAT officer, EIT officer, CAMHs, Mensa, Barnardos, Foróige.
- Powerstown ETNS promote an inclusive model of support whereby the relevant support professionals are invited to visit and/or liaise with the school.
- Recommendations will be considered and appropriate planning will take place to address the needs of the pupil.
- Transition programmes will be put in place for a child on COS who is transferring to secondary school/another school.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018.

The following applies to Powerstown ETNS and our data as part of GDPR:

1. Personal data must be fairly and lawfully processed.
2. Accuracy - Personal data must be accurate and kept up to date.
3. Security - Personal data should be kept secure in terms of encryption and accessibility.
4. Keep data for no longer than is necessary.
5. Individuals rights - right of access to information, right to rectification.
6. Information is only shared with those who need it.

Through the COS model:

- Child’s Initials are used in all support files.
- Electronic (word doc) support files are password protected by the author.
- Support files are shared with parents and agreed by parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians are asked to sign support files.
- Signed support files are password protected through PDF software .
- Protected support files are uploaded to school administrative system “Aladdin” with access only to staff that work with that child at that particular time.
- A hardcopy of the Classroom Support file is kept in a locked press in the child’s classroom and the Principal’s office.
- A hardcopy of the school support and school support plus files are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the COS teacher’s room and the Principal’s office.
- Professional reports and referral forms are scanned and added to the school administrative system ‘Aladdin’ as password protected PDFs; only relevant staff have access
- Hard copies of professional reports and referral forms are kept in locked cabinets in the COS teachers classroom and the principal’s office.

## PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL

Parents of a pupil with Special Needs transferring from another school are asked to provide the school with copies of all reports regarding the needs of the child, the child's School Support Plus Plan and school reports. If resources have been granted to the previous school, for the benefit of the child a new application will be made to the S.E.N.O. for those resources to be continued after the transfer. Pupils transferring who had been receiving additional support in the previous school will continue to get support if they meet the criteria set out in this policy.

## TIMETABLING

- The Principal allocates specific time for in-class support per class level, to ensure ***the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support.***
- Children are prioritised for support, based on criteria outlined in this document.
- COS teachers will draft timetables in consultation with planning team and the Principal.
- The class teacher and the Principal will be given a copy of each C.O.S. teacher's timetable and same is accessible on school planning website.
- Positive and consistent communication with planning team is required to ensure that timetabling is successfully implemented.
- If pupils are being withdrawn, care must be taken to ensure that pupils are not missing the same subject on a regular basis e.g. withdrawal after lunch time. Children are not withdrawn during SPHE lessons.
- Timetables are reviewed regularly in line with target reviews and planning meetings.

## ROLE OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- Oversee the development and implementation of the Special Education Needs programme
- Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and facilities to allow for the service to be implemented
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to pupils with S.E.N.
- Support on-going Professional Development for staff
- Ratify the COS Policy and initiate a review in line with changing guidelines

## IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The implementation of this policy will commence in 2011/2012 and it will be implemented in full by the end of 2013/2014. The policy will be reviewed in line with any new directives from the DES.

This policy was most recently reviewed in June 2018.

## RATIFICATION

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in 2011. Changes to policy were ratified by the Board of Management in September 2016 and again in June 2018.