



Coláiste Cois Siúire
Education Through Innovation & Respect



COLÁISTE COIS SIÚIRE INCLUSION POLICY



kcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach
*Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board*



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Introduction, Vision, Mission, Overarching Aim.

Introduction:

Coláiste Cois Siúire is a co-educational, multid denominational post-primary school. CCS is one of thirteen post-primary schools under the patronage of Kilkenny and Carlow Education & Training Board (KCETB).

KCETB schools are state, co-educational, multid denominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education;
- Care;
- Equality;
- Community and
- Respect.



As the state provider of education, the ETB sector defines a ‘multidenominational’ school in the following way:

In ETB schools, all students are given equal opportunities for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018. Once enrolled, our schools strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life. In all aspects of school life all members of our school communities are treated equitably regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status.

Our schools provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. They strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. Our schools promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

In ETB schools, students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. The school environment and activities do not privilege any particular group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs.



Coláiste Cois Siúire (CCS)

Our Aims

Our aim in Coláiste Cois Siúire is to provide an inclusive learning environment which will foster the academic, social and emotional development of all students and enable each to realise their individual potential. In line with our core values, provision for those with additional needs will reflect the diverse range of cultures and abilities of students in our school.

Our Ethos and Values

The Board of Management of CCS upholds the ethos of the school, ensuring that it is:

- **Promoting Excellence in Education;**
- **Caring;**
- **Equality based;**
- **Community focused and**
- **Grounded in Respect.**

CCS welcomes students with Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs (SEN/ALN) and adheres to the following principles of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004):

- The education of learners with SEN shall wherever possible take place in an inclusive environment with those who do not have such needs
- Learners with SEN shall have the right to avail of and benefit from appropriate education.
- Learners with SEN should leave school with the skills necessary to participate, to the level of their capacity, in the social and economic activities of society and to live independent and fulfilled lives

Inclusion – Definitions and Descriptions

Special Educational Needs

In the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) the term “special educational needs” is defined as:

‘a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition’.

(Government of Ireland, 2004b, section 1)

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2004/A3004.pdf>



Inclusion

For the purposes of this document, the following definition by the NCSE has been adopted.

Inclusion is defined as a process of:

- addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities
- removing barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements, to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/ her attendance at school.

http://www.ncse.ie/uploads/1/NCSE_Inclusion.pdf



Scope, Rationale, Legislative Framework

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to **all** students in CCS: those who are presenting with social, emotional or academic needs, those with emerging needs, those who require EAL support, those from minority groups, and students with exceptional ability. It is also intended to serve the school community including Board of Management, the Principal, the teaching and ancillary staff, and parents.

Rationale

This policy is written in the context of a revised model for allocating Special Education Teaching resources which was introduced by the DES in September 2017. Effective provision for students with ALN/SEN in CCS is part an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for **all** students and meaningful collaboration between the school, parents/guardians, and students. This policy should be viewed as an ‘evolving’ working document and should take account of developments in practice as they happen and of resources available to the school at the time.

3.3 Legislative Framework:

This policy takes cognisance of the following legislation:

The Education Act (1998)

The Equal Status Act (2000)

The Equality Act (2004)

The Disabilities Act (2005)

The Education Welfare Act (2000)

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004)

The Data Protection Act (2018)

Circular No: 0014/2017: Special Education Teaching Allocation

Supporting Publications:

The following publications were consulted in writing this policy:

Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (DES, 2017)

Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines (DES, 2007)

Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers (NEPS)

Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle (2017)

Other relevant policies:



Our whole-school approach to inclusion underpins the following policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- SNA Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Whole School Guidance Plan
- Wellbeing Plan
- Assessment Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Digital Strategy Plan
- Safer Internet Use Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

Guiding Principles and Aims:

- The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of *all* students, including those with additional needs.
- Students with the greatest level of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and where possible, those students will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.
- We advocate a ‘strengths-based’ approach to supporting learning and behavioural needs.
- The school has a core team of teachers who coordinate the identification of needs, planning the support, and monitoring and reviewing needs of students with SEN.
- A collaborative, whole-school approach to support provision is reflected in our in-house teams and committees.
- Supports provided to students will be used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school. Supports on offer may vary from year-to-year, depending on resources available at that time.
- Support is delivered through a variety of approaches, including offering appropriate curricular options, team-teaching/co-teaching, small group support, and 1 to 1 support.



- Supports provided to students will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with teachers, parents, and students) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- Staff members will be actively encouraged to access available Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to support the diverse needs of students.
- Students and their parents/guardians will be involved in decision making process and planning of support.
- Ensure that supports are not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole-school and community practice.

Provision in Action in CCS:

Details of provision in more depth (including specific programmes) can be viewed on a One Page Provision Map as well as comprehensive provision database (See Appendices 1 & 2)

A Three-Step Process to Support SEN Students:

In CCS we follow the NEPS Continuum of Support framework to engage in a three-step process in identifying and responding to our students' needs. Roles and responsibilities of all staff at all stages of the Continuum are outlined in more detail in Section 5 of the policy. This framework recognises that needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their individual needs. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress. (DES Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with SEN in Mainstream Schools, p.6)

Better Services, Better Outcomes for Students with Special Educational Needs Self-Reflective Questionnaire (DES, 2017) will be we used annually to review inclusive provisions and practices.

Our three-step process is as follows:

- 1) Identification of Needs
- 2) Meeting Needs
- 3) Reviewing and Recording and Monitoring Outcomes



Screening Procedure

Students will be assessed as follows:

- ✓ New Group Reading Test (NGRT) (To assess literacy levels)

- ✓ Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) (To assess student's aptitude levels)

1. Incoming first years undergo a Post Primary Transfer Review which highlights any specific resources that maybe required by a student on entry to post primary education.

2. On entry all students undertake the following assessment – CAT4 to ascertain aptitude levels.

3. This may be followed by diagnostic assessment, which involves the administration of diagnostic tests by the SENCO. The SENCO, the Principal and the SST Team will then consider the most appropriate form of intervention for the student.

4. Programme **planning** where there is a meeting between the SENCO, the Student and the Parents. The SENCO develops the Student Support File in consultation with the student's parents and the student where appropriate.

5. Programme **implementation** where subject teachers makes appropriate modification of teaching approaches. The SENCO implements the Student Support File on a term basis.

6. Programme **Review** is made at the end of each term where there is an assessment of the student's progress and an evaluation of the learning programme. There is consultation between the SENCO, subject teachers and parents and a decision is made with regard to the level of support now required by the student.



The Special Educational Needs Coordinator meet parents to:

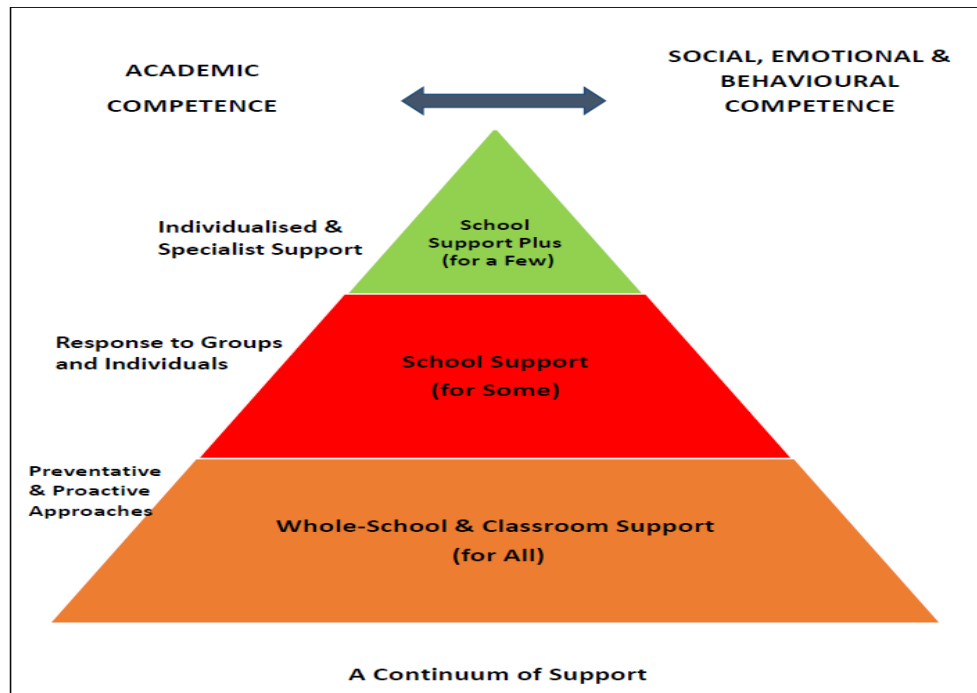
- discuss the results of diagnostic assessment
- discuss the drawing up of learning targets in the student's Student Support File
- discuss the actions to be taken by the school to meet those targets
- suggest ways in which attainment of those targets can be supported at home
- answer any queries and address any concerns the parent may have.
- Referral onto NEPS.

Continuum of Support

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support students with additional needs. Like this framework, 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 additional needs. By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

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¹ <https://www.sess.ie/documents-and-publications/government-agencies/special-educational-needs-continuum-support-guideline>



Step 1: Identification of Need

CCS operates a policy of early identification of the academic, social and emotional needs throughout a student's time in our college. We achieve this through following a reflective process as outlined in the PP-COS, Looking at Our Schools and the School-Self Evaluation Process.



Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

**Whole-School
and Classroom
(Support for All)**

The Post-Primary Continuum of Support contains a range of ideas and resources to assist in identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes. The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class.

Identification of those needing additional support can be informed by:

- Intake screening
- Collection of information from primary schools, including Student Passport
- Teacher observation
- Teacher assessment
- Learning Environment Checklist
- Student Support Team involvement
- Standardised tests of literacy/numeracy
- Student consultation
- Parental consultation

Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole-school interventions (such as differentiated teaching, a mentoring programme or social skills group), School Support (for Some) is initiated.



Step 2 – Meeting Needs

Having identified a student's needs and the educational planning required to meet those needs, the second step emphasises the importance of effective teaching and learning strategies.

Students may be allocated support at different levels: Support for Some and Support for a Few.

School Support (for Some)	<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/student interview• Learning environment checklist• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <p>Support at this level can take many forms, for example: team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, peer mentoring, inclusion in social skills groups, behaviour reward and consequence systems.</p> <p>A Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
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School Support Plus (for a Few)	<p>At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate.</p> <p>Data generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A Support Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.</p>
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Step 3 – Monitor and Recording Outcomes

Our school leaders oversee a whole-school approach to the monitoring and recording of progress. Students' progress is 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 (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation and reports from subject teachers, form tutors and year heads) that allow students to demonstrate their progress.
- This leads to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe.
- In addition to monitoring outcomes at the individual level, we review outcomes at group, class and whole-school level. This review may include measures of attainment, communication, independence, attendance, social inclusion and well-being (for example, sense of belonging and connectedness to school) for students.

Co-operative Teaching

In according to best practice, we endeavour to accommodate where possible the inclusion of all students in the classroom so where possible learning support will/may be conducted in the regular classroom during the timetabled subject time, this is achieved through co-operative teaching, i.e. the SET will attend the class and work with the subject student for the best possible outcome for the student. We do recognise that in some circumstances that this support may not be the best approach and in such situations the student will be withdrawn for intensive group or one to one teaching.



Roles and Responsibilities at all stages of the Continuum of Support

General

We are following all relevant guidelines and are no longer using the terms ‘Learning Support’ and ‘Resource’ teacher/hours in our policies and plans.

We now use the terms Special Education Teacher/Coordinator and support hours/supports/interventions.

Teams which support inclusive practice in our school are:

SEN Team

School Support Team

School Behaviour Team

Critical Incident Team

Assessment Team

DEIS Planning

Wellbeing Team

We work closely with staff from the School Completion Programme.

The role of the subject teacher

Meeting Needs through effective learning and teaching

Subject teachers in CCS have first-line responsibility for the education of all students in their classes. They adapt their teaching approaches for some students whose ability, application, motivation, communication, behaviour, or interaction with peers are causes of concern.

All subject teachers implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of all students. These include *

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Co-teaching/Team teaching
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Embedding of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment
- Collaborate with SEN team and contribute to planning



- Guiding work of the SNA in the classroom specific to their subject needs and the care needs of the student.

To cater for the range of learning needs in any class, subject teachers use a variety of methodologies and approaches to suit the learning styles/needs of all students in their class, by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs.
- Using an inclusive, differentiated, and flexible approach to student output, such as homework, assignments, projects, and tests.
- Adapting lessons for students' interests.
- Matching tasks and processes to students' abilities and needs.
- Adapting and utilising resources, including use of technology.
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly
- Providing scaffolded instruction.
- Ensuring that their classroom is adapted appropriately.

In CCS, we aim to ensure that every student is taught a curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level.

Special Educational Needs Team

CCS has a core team of teachers whose role includes developing, implementing and monitoring a whole-school approach to the education of students.

In CCS the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is the person(s) who has overall responsibility for the coordination of supports for those with additional needs.

The Special Education Teacher (SET) is a teacher who has been allocated a significant amount of support hours as part of their timetable.

Members of this team have the necessary experience and ongoing access to professional development to support the diverse needs of students. Our special education needs team takes a collaborative approach to ensure that those students with the greatest level of need have access to support from teachers with the necessary experience and expertise.

This involves developing whole-school procedures for the identification of students for supplementary teaching, assisting in the implementation of whole-school strategies to enhance teaching and learning, and providing guidance to colleagues on the implementation of students' support plans.



The core team will work closely with subject teachers, parents and with other support structures within the school, and members are often also part of the Student Support Team (See Appendix)

The role of the Coordinators within the SEN Team

Below is a broad outline of duties that may be the responsibility of a coordinator. It must be noted that these duties are dependent on the school context in any given year.

The SEN Coordinator role may include the following:

- The SEN Coordinator may be responsible for the overall co-ordination of special educational needs support within the school, including the identification of students for whom additional teaching supports are to be provided and timetabling and organising the provision of those supports.
- Assisting with arrangements for the successful transfer of students from their primary school and gathering information about students, including those with special educational needs, before, during and after this transfer
- Assisting in programme planning for individual students with special educational needs and, as appropriate, providing advice to teacher colleagues on curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, textbooks and other teaching and learning resources.
- The selection and maintenance of teaching and learning resources
- Liaising with parents/guardians of SEN students and prospective students
- Liaising with support personnel and external professionals and agencies, including the coordination of applications to the Department of Education and Skills, NCSE, SENO, NEPS, SESS, HSE and other education and health agencies, as appropriate, for resources and support services for students with special educational needs
- Maintenance, storage of and access to reports and records on students in receipt of supports.
- Communicating with relevant staff regarding the gathering and dissemination of essential information.
- Assisting with the arrangement of professional assessments, as appropriate, of students who have may have special educational needs.



- Assessing students and preparation of applications for Reasonable Accommodations at State Examinations and Disability Access Route to Education for third level colleges with the guidance counsellor
- Facilitates and chairs SEN department meetings
- Liaises with the SENO in relation to all SEN matters including; assessment reports, support provision, SNA access and applications to the NCSE for Assistive Technology
- Maintains and updates Student Support Files* as well as the yearly database of those in receipt of supports
- Compiles an overall Provision Map of Supports and list of programmes and interventions per academic year.
- Administers and maintains records of assessment tests carried out throughout the school year in collaboration with the guidance counsellor
- Developing a climate of confidentiality regarding sensitive information.
- Disseminates information about students in line with GDPR guidelines.
(VSWare/OneNote)

Role of the Special Education Teacher

The SET works closely with the SENCO. They share responsibility for setting targets and recording and monitoring outcomes for the students they work with regularly. Responsibility for the creation of Student Support Files will be dispersed based on the needs of the students in any given year.

Role of the Principal

The Principal will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the additional learning needs of students are met.

The Principal will take general responsibility for establishing and promoting school-wide policies and procedures which support the learning of **all** students.

The Principal will oversee a school-wide approach to assessment and identification of needs and ensure that opportunities are provided to all staff to support the process of monitoring and reviewing progress. The Principal will guide and support the SET team/ coordinators in their duties.

Role of the Special Needs Assistant

Role of the SNA



The duties of the SNA are assigned by the Principal Teacher in accordance with circular 30/14 (See Appendix 3)

The work of the SNA should be supervised either by the Principal or in the absence of the Principal by an SEN co-ordinator.

Those duties involve **tasks of a non-teaching nature and are based on the primary care needs of the student.**

Role of Parent

- To support and participate in their student's learning.
- To meet with class student and / or SET and participate in the setting of educational targets.

Role of Student

It is important for the students to have an input into the development, implementation and review of their own learning. By doing so they can:

- become more independent as learners
- become aware of different learning styles
- become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses or needs
- enjoy success and evaluate their progress
- excel at and enjoy many curricular and extra-curricular activities which would not be practical in the mainstream class due to class size.
- develop ownership of the skills and strategies taught during supplementary teaching and apply these strategies and skills in their mainstream class situation.

Role of Board of Management

The role here is to oversee the implementation and review of the school SEN Policy, to also oversee the provision of adequate resources and accommodations for SEN students.

Allocation, Timetabling and Target Setting

Allocation of Resources

Specialist staff must be deployed in a way that will best address the needs of students who require additional support. An important aspect of the revised allocation model is that additional teaching supports are deployed according to identified needs, rather than being based on a diagnosis of disability. Thus, CCS has greater autonomy and flexibility in how we allocate



special education teaching resources. We endeavour to deploy members of the special education team in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet students' needs (for example, in-class support, group withdrawal).

- In CCS, we place the student at the centre of planning and provision and value their voice in the decision-making process. They are invited to contribute their views on their individual support needs, prioritising their targets and monitoring their own progress.
- At the whole-school level, students have opportunities to share their views on issues that affect them in school, and so contribute to reviews of relevant policies and practices in schools.
- Effective communication and engagement with parents are critically important in moving towards a needs-based approach to the allocation of additional teaching resources. Parents are consulted in relation to their child's needs, support plan, and are involved in regular reviews of progress.
- When allocating teaching resources, we are mindful of the benefits of early intervention programmes and allocate teaching resources as required, based on identified needs and school context.
- We also aim to provide additional targeted support to students within the context of a mainstream subject lesson through team-teaching, through group or individual withdrawal or, through a combination of these modes of intervention.
- Importantly, the level and type of support should reflect the specific targets of individual students as set out in their support plans and be informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. In this way, following a period of intervention, some students may no longer require additional teaching supports, some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive supports. Accordingly, the groupings timetabled for withdrawal may change over time.
- When deploying teaching resources, we aim to maintain time for co-ordinating, planning and reviewing activities to ensure effective and optimal use of supports. Additionally, flexibility in terms of resource allocation is required to allow for emerging needs during the school year.
- The Principal of CCS gives due consideration to the professional development and acquired expertise of teachers when allocating teaching roles and supports.
- A core team of teachers be allocated timetables dedicated to special education duties.



Timetabling

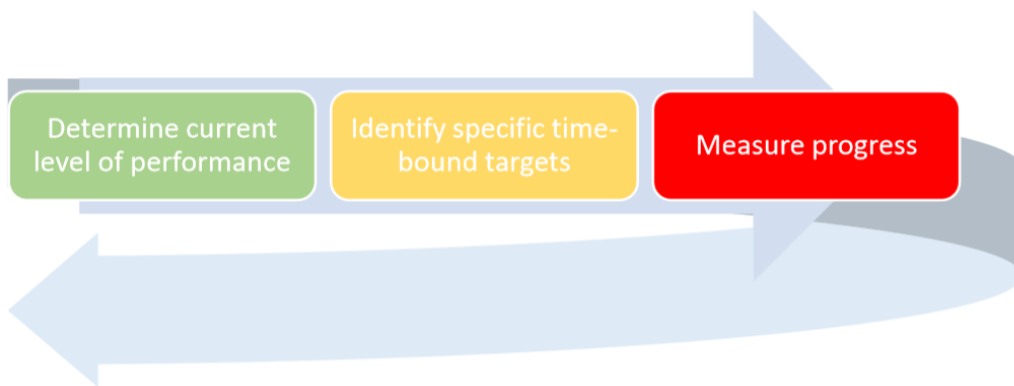
CCS adopts a flexible approach to timetabling to ensure that extra capacity is available to address changing needs during the year. Accordingly, some members of the special education team may be allocated flexible timetables with inbuilt capacity to respond to additional needs. In deciding our approach to timetabling, we consider the following:

- The overall school timetable is designed carefully to make appropriate provision for students with additional needs.
- A core special education team which is being developed and maintained in order to provide greater stability and continuity of support.
- Members of the Special Education Team are consulted when the timetable is being developed.
- Provision is made for the special education teachers to support subject teachers through team-teaching/in-class/co-operative teaching and joint planning.
- Provision is made for the withdrawal of students for focused individual and/or group intervention where warranted. Targeted small-group interventions, using evidence-informed programmes for students with similar needs, is an effective way to use resources.
- The impact of withdrawal on students' access to the curriculum with their year groups is considered.
- Timetables should be flexible wherever possible to cater for the specific or emerging needs of students.
- A continuity of support to address the needs of students in Senior Cycle is provided where possible.
- A collaborative approach to timetabling supports with other departments within the schools and outside agencies.



Student Support File

The Student Support File will allow the relevant staff to document progress over time and it will assist us in providing an appropriate level of support to students in line with their level of need.

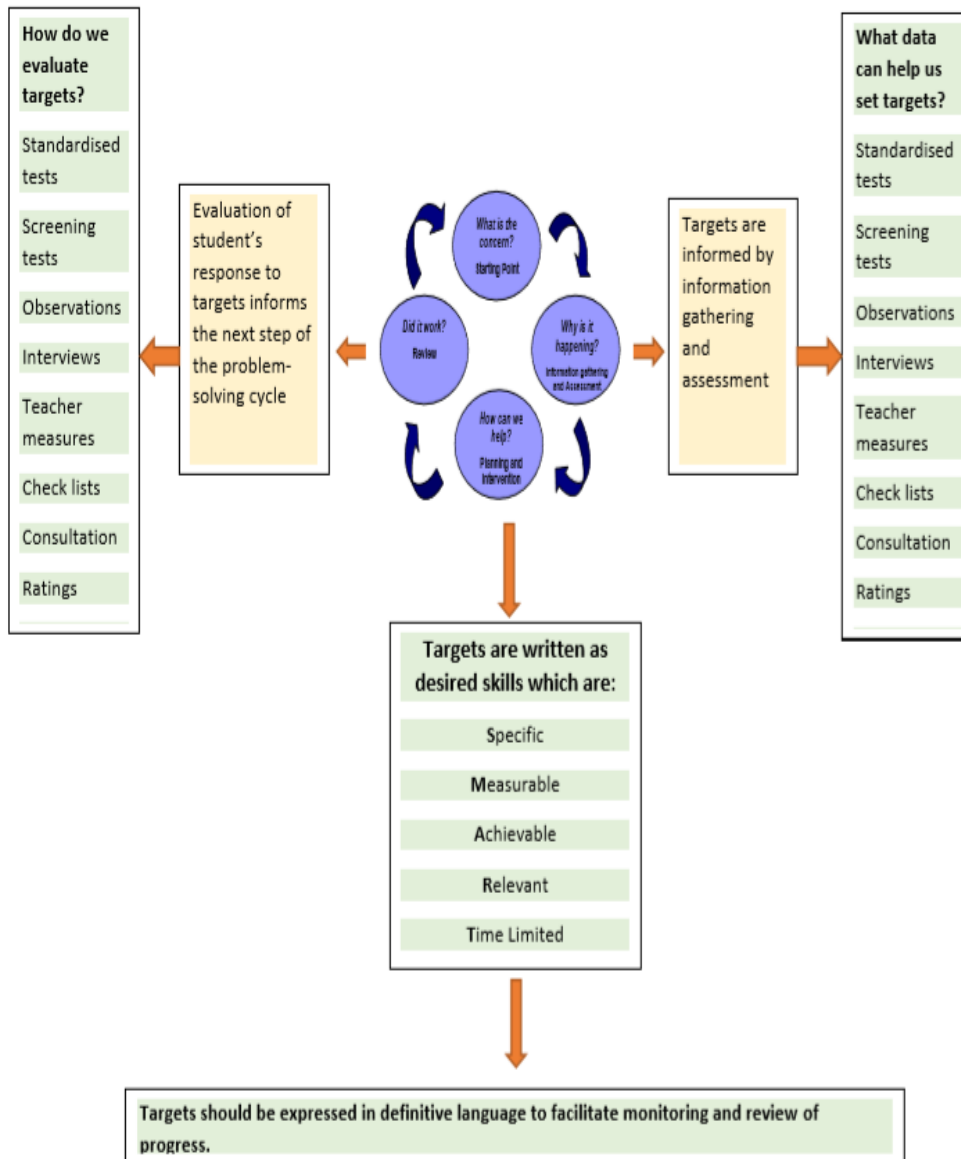


The school team, in consultation with subject teachers, plan their interventions carefully to address students' priority learning needs and to achieve the targets identified in the relevant Student Support Plan. Short-term planning reflects the support plan targets and should break down the development of skills and content into small incremental steps to address each student's specific needs.

Recommendations from Student Support Files for each student will be made available to all teachers through appropriate procedures and in line with GDPR guidelines.

Target Setting

We adopt a problem-solving approach to target setting which reflects the presenting needs of our students:





Compliance with recently updated legislation and guidelines

Data Protection

In CCS, we are compliant with GDPR Guidelines as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018. In order to comply with our legislative responsibilities under EPSEN (2004), we take the following approach to the sharing of data:

- In order to fulfil our responsibility to **all students**, every teacher needs to be aware of their **current presenting needs** in the classroom.
- All teachers need to know the diagnosis/category of Special Educational Need/emerging need/concerns about a student in order to ensure that their classroom practice is as inclusive as possible.
- It is appropriate to share professional **recommendations** from reports pertaining to learning/behavioral/medical needs that are relevant to classroom practice.
- Professional reports in their entirety should only be seen by Principal, members of the SEN team or other members of the Student Support Team who are working directly with the student

Irish Exemptions

Circular 0053/2019 outlines the revised procedures and criteria for processing exemptions. Exempting a student from the study of Irish will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The decision to exempt a student from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her future learning. The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal teacher, but it must be made following detailed discussion with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the student where he/she is the applicant, the class teacher, special education teachers, and the student.



Reasonable Accommodations

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, in consultation with other members of the SEN Department, identifies those students in need of reasonable accommodation in school and state examinations. Psychological reports that recommend reasonable accommodation for certain students must be acted on and applications forwarded to “Reasonable Accommodation” section of the State Examinations Commission.

In-School assessment will continue to be administered to those students identified as potential candidates requiring reasonable accommodation will be made for those students that meet the criteria necessary for additional supports.

Links with Outside Agencies

The school will liaise with any outside agencies in agreement with parents that will support and assist the learning of students these include

- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- National Education Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Social Workers/HSE
- A representative from Post Primary Schools to discuss transfer of 6th class students with Special Educational Needs. Meeting takes place usually in summer term.

Referral to Out-of-school Agencies

- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) co-ordinates the referral of students to outside agencies, such as National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the designated Educational Psychologist.
- The Principal and/or SENCO/or home school liaison may meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.
- The external professional visits the school to meet with the student, parents, principal, class student and the SENCO as appropriate and 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 are entitled to a safe, 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 student with SEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the student is entitled to are in place as soon as possible. Staff members will be informed of any risk, and where necessary, individual plans will be drawn up and implemented.



Coláiste Cois Siúire Student Support Team

The Student Support Team in Coláiste Cois Siúire looks after the overall general wellbeing of the student body. While it is limited to and by school time we realise that many external issues impinge on the development of students. The purpose of the Student Support Team is to provide for students who have a greater need for a higher level of intervention from the school community. The Student Support Team is a visible representation of the school's understanding and valuing of each student as an individual. The Student Support Team formally meets on a weekly basis to oversee student welfare within the school. This includes identifying students who are in need of support in ***child protection issues, learning and socialising*** and students who have ***suffered loss or critical incident***. The Student Support Team endeavour to develop strength-based intervention plans with youth development activities to form the most beneficial “packages of support” for students

The Student Support Team also supports particular programmes from time to time such as Anti Bullying Modules and various Parenting Courses.

Objectives and Rationale

Students who experience difficulties in life will find it difficult to have cognitive space for learning. Therefore, the rationale of the Student Support Team is to strive to care in a genuine way to improve the lives of students and thereby ensure access to the curriculum and learning.

The Care Team undertake to provide the following:

1. To coordinate a single transparent response to the care needs of a student
2. To share information in a confidential setting
3. To liaise with the parents/ guardians of the child
4. To liaise with external professionals about the welfare of the child where appropriate
5. To review and monitor the students with care needs



CCS School Support Team and School Behaviour Team

The Student Support Team and the School Behaviour Team work together on a weekly basis with a keymember of personnel linking between both teams. Students may be referred to the Student Support Team through the Behaviour Team. The School Behaviour Team comprises of the school's Year Heads, Deputy Principal and Principal. One member of the Behaviour Team attends all SST Team meetings and acts as a link communicator between the two teams. Students receiving additional support through the Student Support Team are obliged to continue to abide by the school's Code of Behaviour.

CCS Student Support Team and Student Wellbeing

'The goal of wellbeing is human flourishing and flourishing rests on the following: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment' (DES, 2015)

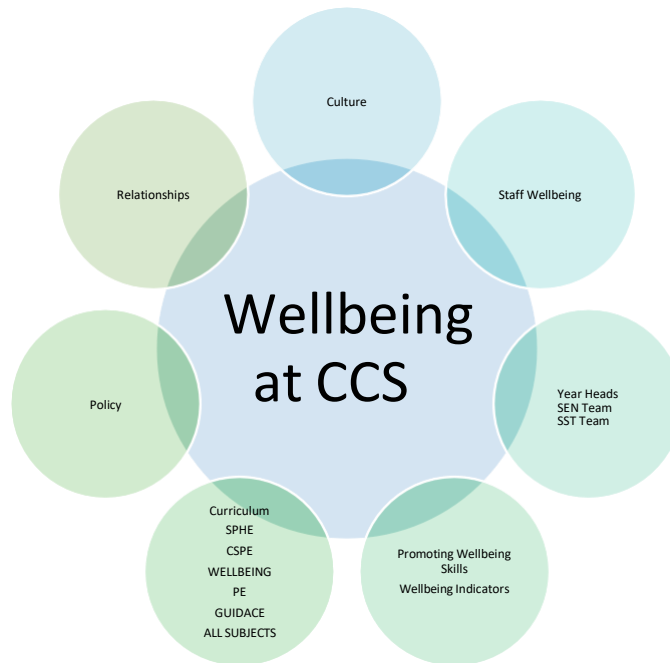
The Wellbeing Programme at CCS has a student centred in its approach. The Promotion and enhancement of self-esteem and life skills and the development of potential – academic, personal, social and emotional – leading to a greater personal autonomy for all students are its central goals. All staff members and subject departments have a vital role to play in developing student wellbeing and therefore have a role to play in the delivery of the Wellbeing Programme.

The school is also committed to the care and happiness of the entire school community within the scope of its influence. To this end a sense of welfare and care is underscored across the entire School community and at all levels of interaction – amongst all staff, students, parents and management. The school is acutely aware that a happy school is an environment where teaching and learning can flourish.

Overall our Wellbeing Programme aims to foster happy, confident, responsible and resilient students who feel connected to Coláiste Cois Siúire. We have embraced a whole school approach and aligned the design and Wellbeing programme with School Self Evaluation, DEIS planning, School policies and practices. Our Wellbeing Programme is rooted in the following subject areas: SPHE, PE, CSPE, Wellbeing and Guidance. However every



subject area reflects in their planning, planning for wellbeing and it is seen as paramount to the precursor of teaching a learning.



Members of the Student Support Team

The SST Team is made up of personnel that have direct involvement in the care issues of students and various other members depending on the students being discussed.

The following is a list of members

- School Deputy Principal (DLP)
- Behaviour Team Link Teacher
- School Guidance Counsellor
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- Home School Liaison Officer



- SCP Coordinator/SCP Project Worker

Student referral to the Student Support Team

All staff in the school community has a responsibility to be observant of the care needs of the student. Individual staff members need to trust their intuition regarding a student who needs referral. It is in the interest of the student to have a clear referral system.

We have developed a referral template where Yearheads can log a referral into our shared MS Teams channel for a student, highlighting the concern and the potential area of support required including SEN Support, Guidance, Wellbeing, SCP or Attendance. This template will serve to collate communication regarding our priority students at a whole-school level on a weekly basis.

Referrals can come to the attention of the Student Support Team through the following channels:

- School DLP/DDLP
- School Behaviour Team
- Guidance Counsellor
- Special Education Department
- HSCL

Once a student is referred to the SST Team

A Student Support Plan is created, and an appropriate Intervention Plan is developed for the student. This plan is tracked on a weekly basis by the team.

A weekly agenda is followed, and the referrals received are discussed to track progress. Health, mental health, and culturally appropriate community resources that may be needed are identified during the meeting.

Termly review meetings take place to evaluate the impact the intervention plan has had for the student.

The team addresses attendance concerns along with the National Educational Welfare Board.



Meetings

The ethos of consistent and regular meetings is central to ensuring the success of the Student Support Team. To formalise and emphasise care of the student, members of the Student Support Team will meet once a week at a scheduled time. Additionally, the Student Support Team can conduct meetings at unscheduled dates as needs be e.g. when new students that need a referral enrol throughout the year.

Essential Elements of a Student Support Team

- Child Centred/ advocate for the student
- Non-judgmental
- Solution focused as opposed to problem focused.
- Supported by staff, senior management and BOM
- Optimistic and hopeful
- Accountable through record keeping

Confidentiality

An essential element of the Student Support Team is maintaining clarity around the boundaries of confidentiality. It is essential for all members of the team, as well as all personnel and students, to understand the concept of confidentiality regarding child protection guidelines. Clear communication is essential. A person who refers a student does not necessarily need to know the details of what has been discussed in relation to the student, but they need to be assured that the student is being cared for.

Because multiple students are discussed at Student Support Team meetings, anyone outside of the team do not have access to confidential information unless otherwise stated. All



information exchanged at Student Support Team meetings is confidential; documentation is secured according to school protocol.



Evaluation

The team need to be reminded that they need to take care of themselves as well as the students. Reflection and evaluation are necessary. Evaluation forms will be used for this purpose at the end of the academic year.

Review

The Student Support Team will have an annual review each academic year. This will give an opportunity to obtain a profile of the referred students. It will also help to establish if there are clearly identifiable patterns or issues emerging, which may support identification of initiatives at the All, Some and Few levels of the school's Continuum of Support for the following year.

In addition, a review of the organisation of the team will allow for an examination of the place of the team in the support system of the school i.e. what other systems are operating that might overlap with the team's work? The need for modifications and adjustments in how the wider school system works and connects may also be identified.

Link with other policies in the school

The Student Support Team process as well as being central to the School Inclusion Policy will link in with the following policies in existence in the school:

- ***Code of Behaviour*** links the discipline structure to the work of the care team
- ***Anti-Bullying Policy*** may link with the care team in supporting both the victim and the instigator
- ***Critical Incident Policy*** - This is an important policy for the care team as it outlines procedures that a school uses when faced with a trauma such as death of a student.
- ***Enrolment Policy*** - It is important to name the care team as part of the school's commitment to caring for the student and to alert parents to the fact that those students can be



referred for internal support

- ***SPHE Policy*** - The social, personal and health education of students is an integral part of the curriculum and links in with the care team and guidance.



Coláiste Cois Siúire
Education Through Innovation & Respect

APPENDICES



Template of Referral for Student Support
Private and Confidential

Student Code:

Year Group:

Year Head Code:

What is the nature of the concern?

Learning Support

Guidance/Wellbeing

Please tick the most appropriate concern

Learning

Personal

Behaviour for Learning

Careers

ASD Support

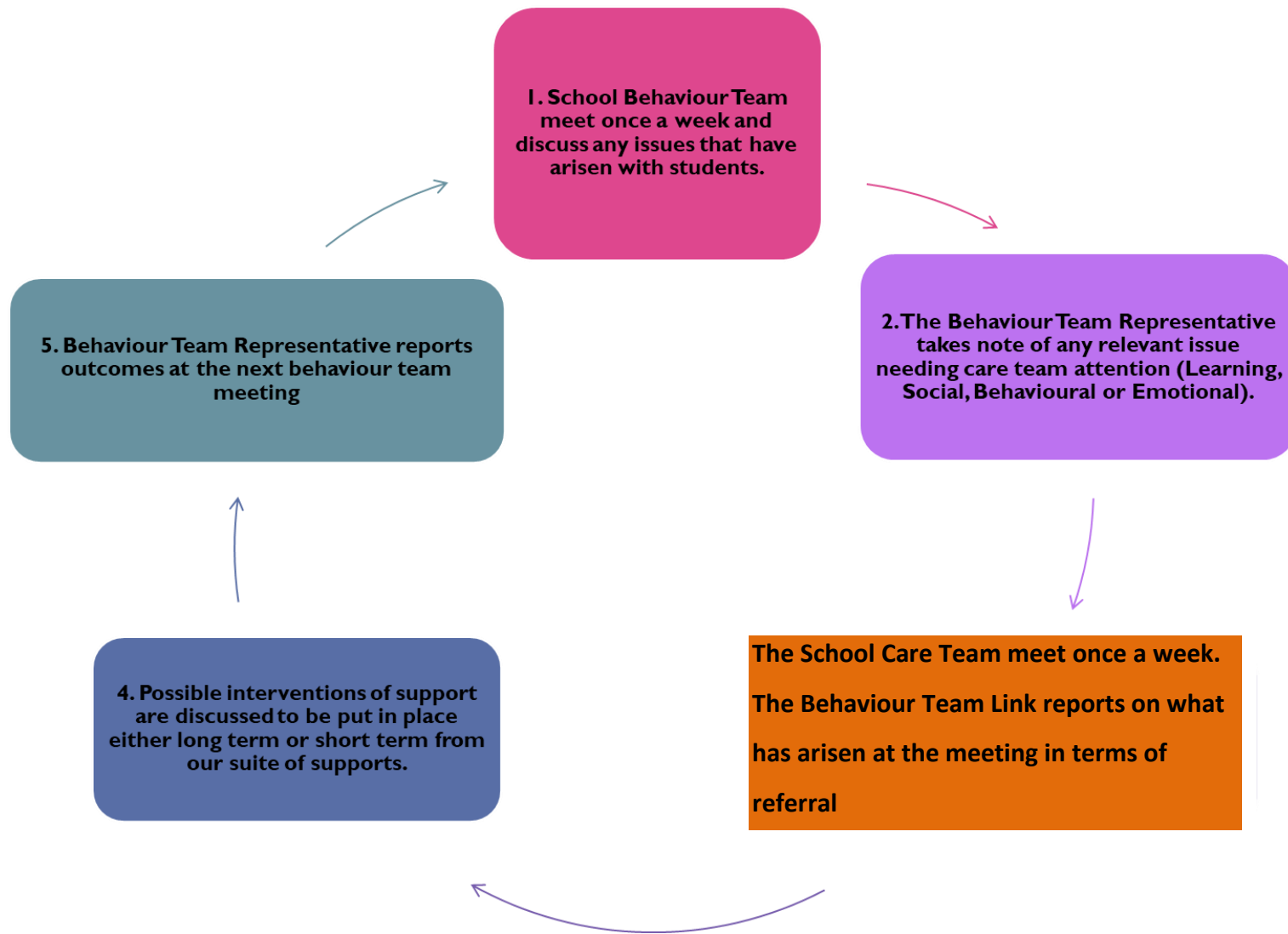
Educational

Explain reason for referral

Signed:

Date:

To be filled out by the **Student Support Team Only**



Student Support Team Communication

- Communication of appropriate information to all staff is facilitated by the circulating of the ratified minutes of the Student Support Team meeting to all Year Heads and the circulating of referrals and review updates to all Year Heads.
This is facilitated by the Behaviour Link Teacher Linda McCormack every Monday immediately after the weekly Student Support Team Meeting
- The Traffic Team Notice Board in the staffroom is updated every week. This gives student details and the Traffic Light Code is fully understood by all staff.
- Parents are made aware of the Student Support Team provision in the school and are encouraged to contact any member of the Student Support Team on general teaching staff if they had concerns which the school may be able to help with.

Traffic Light Systems

This is a system that communicates with all staff in a timely and discrete way regarding a students prioritised by the Student Support Team.

There is a hierarchy of referral/prioritisation and this system is in place to ensure that all subject teachers are aware of the issues relating to our prioritised students and act accordingly. The Traffic Light list is updated every week in the staffroom.

Red Light (Level 3)

- Student is under stress and some acting out is anticipated
- There is individual support for the student in place
- This may be a six week programme with specific targets or a shorter term programme with specific supports
- Avoid confrontation
- Students on this list need to be closely monitored but with limited direct engagement
- TLC is needed / Vulnerable in need of encouragement
- Calm / low voice
- Time out options to de-escalate situatio

Amber Light (Level 2)

- Student is under stress and some acting out is anticipated
- There is small group support for the student in place
- The normal code of behaviour still applies but some tactical ignoring could be used here
- Positive Encouragement - catch them doing something right!
- TLC is needed

Green Light

- Student is coming out of Level 3 / 2 and is striving to maintain themselves in mainstream.
- Positive encouragement is vital
- Some tactical ignoring could be used here
- TLC is needed

Blue Card System

Some of these prioritised may avail of the Blue Card System which enables them to leave class and report directly to the Deputy Principal should they need support.

Student Support Team Student Support – Weekly Student Tracking & Staff Communication System

Concern	Key Code
SEN	(S)
Home Factors	(HF)
Guidance	(G)
Wellbeing	(W)
Attendance	(A)

Week Ending:

Zone	1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	4 th Year	5 th Year	6 th Year
Red Zone						
Amber Zone						
Green Zone						

development of student support teams in Post-Primary schools

The checklist facilitates a close look at current practice and aims to identify areas for further development.

Key elements of a student support team

Team & Core Purpose	YES	NO	Action
The school has a student support team (SST)			
The SST's core purpose is defined in the context of wellbeing promotion			
The SST deals with student wellbeing promotion at all levels of the Continuum of Support: <input type="checkbox"/> Support for All <input type="checkbox"/> Support for Some <input type="checkbox"/> Support for a Few			
The SST deals with a range of student's wellbeing needs: Learning, Social, Emotional, Behavioural, Physical.			

SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team

Membership

Core Membership of the SST includes:	YES	NO	Action
1) School Leadership			
2) Guidance Counsellor			
3) SEN Co-ordinator			
4) Representative of the JC Wellbeing Curricular Planning team/whole school wellbeing team			
5) Representative from the CIMT			
6) Year Head Representative			

Non-core Membership of the team includes:	YES	NO	Action
School Completion Officer			
Home School Liaison Officer			
Behaviour Support teacher			
Chaplain			

Other	SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team		
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SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team

Roles & Responsibilities	YES	NO	Action
All SST members have clear roles and responsibilities			
The SST co-ordinator gathers the items for the SST meeting agenda in advance			
SST members are adequately prepared for meetings and have gathered appropriate information			
There is a chairperson of the SST meeting			
The role of the chairperson is defined			
There is an assigned minute-taker to the SST			
The role of the minute-taker is defined			
There is clarity about who carries out the agreed actions			

Procedures	YES	NO	Action
There are clear procedures for requesting the involvement of the SST whether for an individual case or more general issue			
SST meetings are timetabled and scheduled on a weekly / fortnightly basis			
There is agreement amongst the SST about how issues and cases are prioritised for discussion at the SST meeting			
A template for structuring and recording the SST meeting is used			
There is usually enough time to discuss what is on the agenda at the SST			

The SST use a proactive and problem-solving approach in their discussions about issues raised			
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SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team

SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team

Communication	YES	NO	Action
There is agreement by the SST about how SST meeting outcomes are communicated to other school staff			
There is a system for communication from the SST to school staff			
Parents/Guardians are aware of the role of the SST in the school			
Students are aware of the role of the SST in the school			
Other agencies are aware of the role of the SST in the school			
The SST is described on the school website			
The SST makes referrals to external agencies			

Record Keeping	YES	NO	Action
A recording template is used for SST meetings			
Actions are recorded			
Actions are reviewed at subsequent SST meetings			

SNA/Teacher Communication Log to Year Head/Care Team

Training	YES	NO	Action
SST members are familiar with Wellbeing policy and SST guidelines			
SST members have received up-to-date Child Protection training			
SST members have attended training on wellbeing promotion			
SST members have completed training courses offered by the National Organisation for Suicide Prevention (NOSP), e.g. Living Works; Safetalk, ASSIST or Understanding Self- harm			

Outside Agencies	YES	NO	Action
The SST has an up-to-date knowledge of local services with whom they can link / refer			
A member of student support team has been identified as a link person with responsibility for liaising with external agencies			

Confidentiality	YES	NO	Action
The student support team has an agreed system for sharing information that ensures confidentiality is maintained			
Records of student support team meetings are stored securely			

Policies	YES	NO	Action
The student support team role is documented within relevant school policies (e.g. enrolment) and plans (e.g. School GuidancePlan)			

Review	YES	NO	Action
Student support team membership and organisation are reviewed annually			
Student support referral trends and themes are reviewed annually			

Priority areas for Development

Reflective Practice

In CCS we regularly review provision and practice through the School Self-Evaluation Process. Looking at our School: A Quality Framework (2022) supports us as we engage in this process. Areas for development are then prioritised in our School DEIS Plan.

COLAISTE COIS SIUIRE

INCLUSION POLICY

Continuous Professional Development

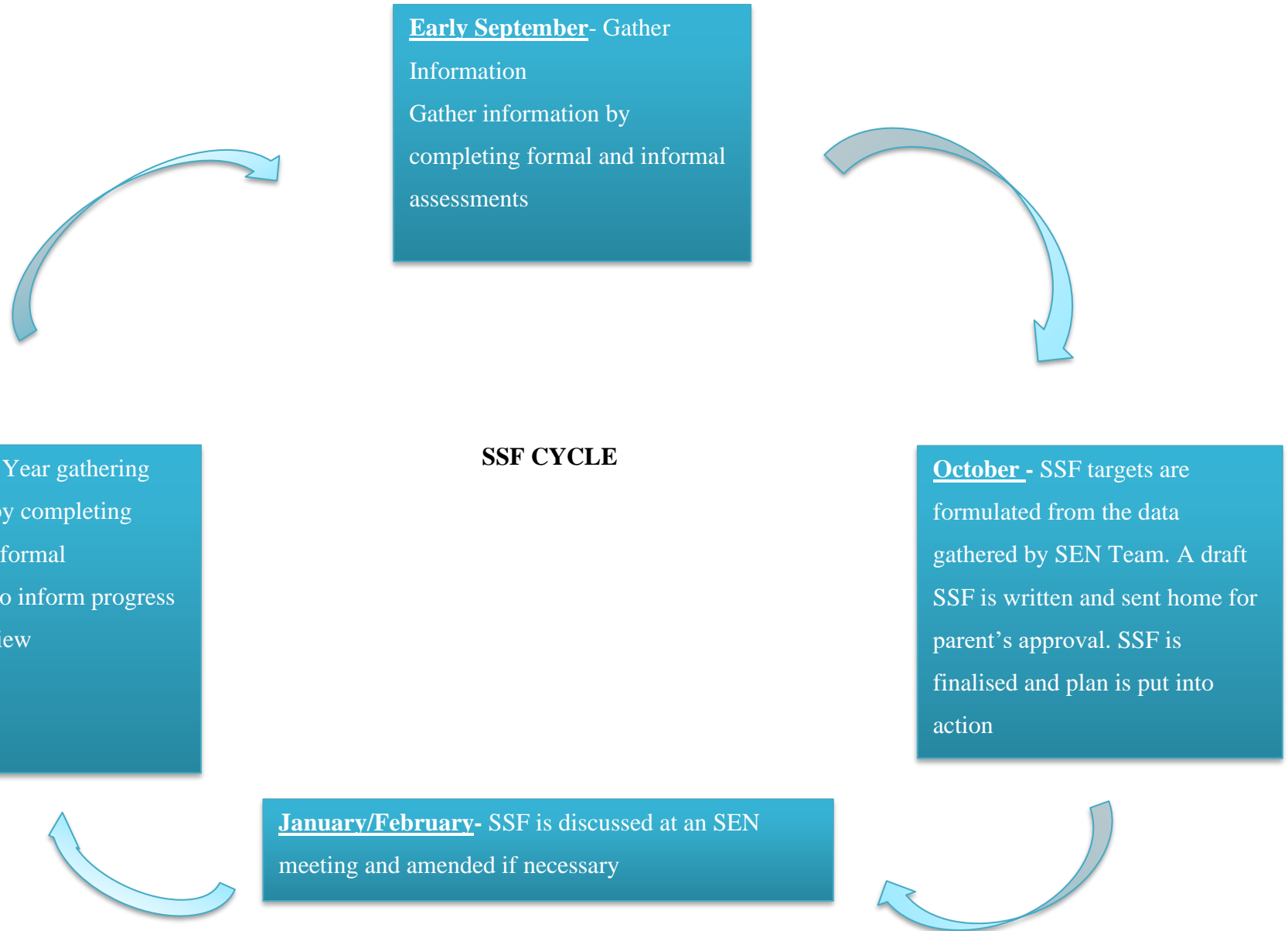
In CCS, we use Looking at our School (2022) as a framework to identify areas for training or upskilling of staff.

Areas for Improvement

To further develop our whole school approach to inclusive practice, we have identified the following areas for improvement for the academic year 2024/2025

- Teacher Professional Development
- Cooperative Teaching/Team Teaching
- Universal Design for Learning
- Using digital technology to support priority students

SSF Cycle



Link with other policies in the school

The School Inclusion Policy will link in with the following policies already in existence in the school:

- *Health & Safety Statement*
- *Child Protection*
- *SNA Policy*
- *Intimate Care Policy*

Signed:



Chairperson

Date: 21 November 2024

Signed:



Principal

Date: 21 November 2024