

Understanding Support Teaching in Our School

A parent guide to the Continuum of Support and Special Education Teaching (SET)

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At Claregalway Educate Together NS, we want every child to feel welcome, included and supported to participate in school life and make progress. Children's strengths and needs differ and can change over time. This guide explains how we identify needs, plan support and share our available Special Education Teaching (SET) resources fairly across the school.

The Continuum of Support

Classroom Support – support for all

The class teacher is responsible for every child's learning. Teaching may be adapted through differentiation, visual supports, movement or regulation strategies and other classroom approaches.

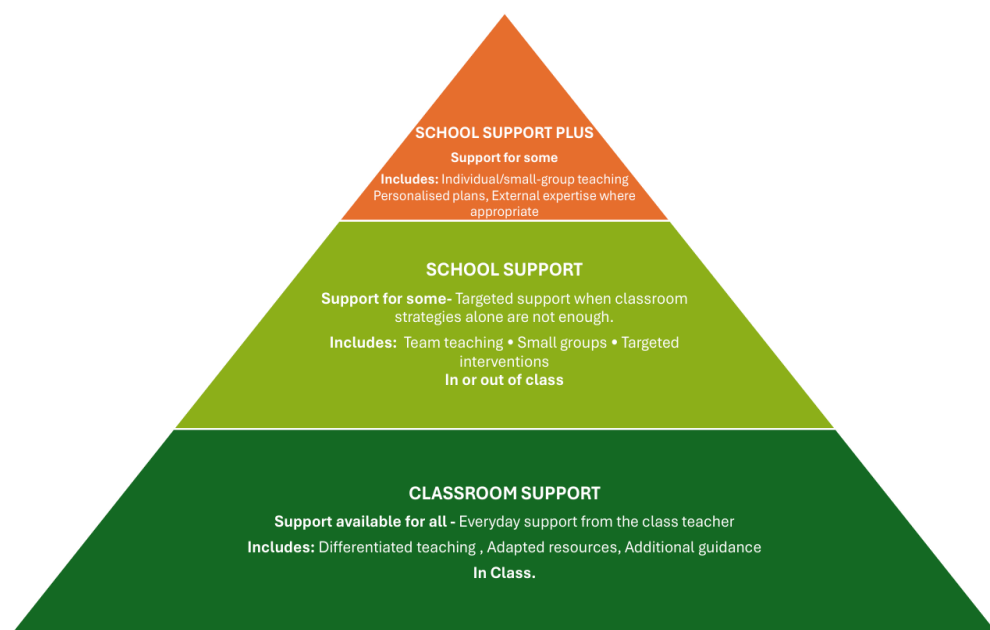
School Support – support for some

Children who need additional targeted help may receive team teaching, in-class support, small-group teaching or individual teaching, as appropriate.

School Support Plus – support for a few

Children with more significant or complex needs may require more individualised planning and intensive interventions, sometimes in collaboration with external professionals.

Our approach is to identify needs, plan appropriate support, provide it and review progress. Teachers, parents, children and SNAs, where relevant, contribute to this process.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does the school decide who receives SET support?

Support is allocated according to identified educational need across the whole school, not as fixed hours attached to individual pupils. Teachers and school leadership consider observations, assessments, progress and response to previous support, participation in learning, information from parents, relevant professional reports and the needs of other pupils. Children with the greatest identified needs receive the greatest level of support.

2. Does my child need a diagnosis to receive support?

No. A child can receive support without a formal diagnosis. Equally, a diagnosis does not automatically result in additional SET hours, one-to-one teaching or a particular programme. The school considers how a child is managing and what educational support they need.

3. What happens if I give the school a professional report?

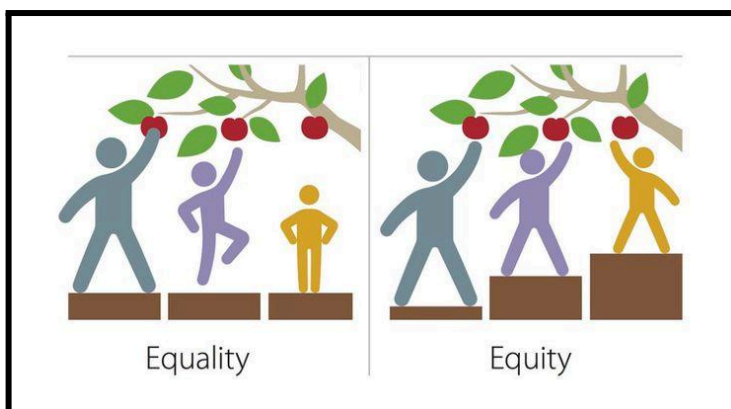
We value reports from psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and other professionals. Staff consider their findings and recommendations alongside school-based information. A report may recommend support for one child, but the school must plan within its staffing, resources and responsibilities to all pupils. Recommendations may be implemented, adapted for the school setting or, where resources do not allow, may not be possible to provide in full.

4. Will my child receive one-to-one teaching?

Not necessarily. Support may involve classroom adaptations, consultation between teachers, team teaching, small-group work, targeted programmes or individual teaching. One-to-one teaching is an option where appropriate, rather than the standard arrangement for every child.

5. How often will my child receive support, and will it continue all year?

The type and frequency of support depend on the child's priority needs and the intervention being used. Support may be provided in targeted, time-limited blocks. It is reviewed regularly and may be increased, reduced, changed, paused or concluded as needs and progress change. A child may also move between levels of the Continuum of Support.



6. If support changes or ends, does that mean my child's needs are being overlooked?

No. A change may reflect progress, a different priority or a more suitable approach. We continue to monitor the child's needs and can review support again where necessary.

7. How will I know if my child needs additional support?

Your child's class teacher monitors learning and participation through day-to-day teaching, observation and assessment. If concerns arise, the teacher may discuss them with you and consult the support team. If you have concerns, please contact the class teacher in the first instance.

8. Will there be a plan, and how can parents contribute?

Where a child receives additional support through the Continuum of Support, a Student Support Plan identifies priority needs, targets and strategies. Parents' knowledge of their child is valuable in identifying needs and reviewing progress. Children and SNAs contribute where relevant. Our planned parent meeting points are October and February, with additional communication where a significant educational need or change calls for discussion.

9. Can I request a meeting or ask how SET hours are allocated?

You are welcome to raise concerns with the class teacher. Requests for additional meetings or detailed reviews are considered where needed to support a child's education, but meetings cannot always be arranged outside the normal planning and review cycle. Teachers and SETs also need protected time for teaching, assessment, preparation and planning. We can discuss your child's support, but cannot share other pupils' needs or individual SET timetables.

10. Who makes the final decision about the support provided?

Relevant teachers and school leadership make school-based professional decisions, informed by assessment, parent consultation and professional information. Parents are partners in the process; the school remains responsible for organising and allocating its finite SET resource fairly across all pupils.

Working together

Our shared aim is for every child to access learning, develop skills and make progress. Thank you for sharing your knowledge of your child and working with us as we identify, plan, support and review.