#### Special Education Needs Policy in St.Colman's N.S.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

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

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

#### Inclusion:

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable children with SEN, traveller children and children whose first language is not English, to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

#### **Setting Suitable Learning Challenges**

We aim to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. In order to do this, St. Colman's N.S. will use the 'Continuum of Support Process', being phased in from October 2018 as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our SEN pupils. Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at a pupil's needs in context, and to use our resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports).

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

#### Classroom Support

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 can be informed by some or all of the following:

- 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.

#### School Support

At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:

- Teacher observation records Pupil Log on Aladdin
- Teacher-designed measures/assessments
- Parent and pupil interviews
- Learning environment checklist
- Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy
- Formal observation of behaviour
- Screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including teamteaching, small groups or individual tuition.

A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.

#### School Support Plus

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
- Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc

Data generated from this process is 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.

#### **Meeting Children's Diverse Learning Needs**

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning our support, the 'Planning Template' outlining the 6 point action plan below will be utilised.

# Planning Template to Guide the Allocation of Additional Teaching Supports for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Primary Guidelines, P19-20)

Action 1: Identification of pupils with special educational needs	Review existing information on pupils' needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals. Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests).  Identify all pupils with special educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
Action 2: Setting targets	Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.
Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches	Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. SEN team should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.
Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes	Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.

Action 5: Organising and deploying special education teaching resources	Cross-reference the needs of pupils at school support and school support plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches. Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place.  Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from	
Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress	Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:  • At whole-school and classroom support level by all teachers • At the school support and school support plus levels by class teachers and special education teachers.	

# Overcoming Potential Barriers to Learning and Assessment for Individuals and Groups of Children

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

In attempting to achieve the above objectives the BoM, principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document.

#### **Board of Management**

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

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on support for children with extra needs
- Provides adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provides a secure facility for storage of records.

#### **Principal**

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. He will work closely with the SEN co-ordinator and will keep the B.O.M informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal in collaboration with the SEN co-ordinator to:

• Develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation

- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- Co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure 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
- Liaises with the S.E.N.O.

#### **Special Needs Co-ordinator**

The Special Needs Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Organises the timetable for support teaching
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and contributing to in-service training of staff
- Liaising with and advising SNAs with regard to supporting children with special needs
- Liaising with parents of children with special needs
- Monitoring and evaluating SEN provision
- Keeps a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
- Facilitating planning for class teacher with support teacher
- Supports the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support
- Keeps teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Advises parents on procedures for availing of special needs services
- Selects children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with Aideen Carey (NEPS)
- Liaises with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN
- Stores confidential information (Psychological Assessment Reports etc.) regarding SEN children and shares same with principal, class teachers, support teachers, SNAs, other agencies where appropriate.
- Participates in and or oversees the drafting of IEPs, IPLPs, classroom support plans, school support plans and school support plus plans

#### The Role of the Class Teacher

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. 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. This will include adapting their teaching approaches for some pupils whose individual progress, application, motivation, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers are causes for concern. This may require targeted interventions to develop relevant adaptive skills related to these needs. All mainstream class teachers will implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. These include:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Heterogeneous group work
- Differentiation
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- 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 / quantity, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons/work 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

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

#### The Role of the Special Education Teacher

Special education teachers should be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs. Teaching approaches 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.

The type of support offered depends on the child's individual needs and takes the form of:

- curriculum support
- life and/or social skills training
- physical training/gross motor development
- speech training/communication and/or language development
- behaviour modification programmes
- assistance with sensory modulation
- development of anger management strategies
- a combination of some/all of the above

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

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

#### **Parental Involvement**

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

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The Parents/Guardians of the pupils of St.Colman's NS can prepare for and support the work of the school by:

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

#### **Enrolment**

The school aims to meet the needs of any child whom the parent wishes to register at the school as long as a place is available and the admission criteria are fulfilled. The Ed. For Persons with Disabilities Act 2004 states that 'A child is entitled to attend the school which is most suited to his or her overall needs'.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's special needs in advance of enrolment through a meeting with the principal. The Board of Management will request a copy of the child's medical or psychological report. No child will be refused admission solely on the grounds that s/he has SEN except where the provision required is incompatible with that available in our school.

#### **Special Facilities**

St. Colman's NS is a mainstream classroom building with two support rooms. It is wheelchair accessible with a wheelchair adapted bathroom. The G.P. room can used for sensory breaks. We are hoping to use an existing room as a sensory room / library when our new classroom is built.

#### Resources

St. Colman's NS is a well-resourced school, which constantly monitors and updates its resources.

I.T. provision is good and is updated regularly.

#### Whole School Strategies to minimise learning difficulties

Our strategies for preventing learning difficulties include:

#### 1. Promotion of Literacy:

- Whole school promotion of Reading through various initiatives such as Shared Reading, Guided Reading, AR Reading, Library Visits
- Genre Writing
- Print rich environment ,
- Shared/paired reading ,
- Story time, Library time, DEAR time, Book Week, Book Fair, Reading buddies (3rd Class and Junior Infants), Word games, Class library, visiting authors,
- Access to Literacy apps on school I-Pads and at home

#### 2. Early Intervention

We believe it is very important to identify and assess children with special needs as early as possible so that effective interventions can be put in place. Screening tests are administered in Junior Infants during their third term in school. This includes the Jolly Phonics Reading Assessment and the B.I.A.P. as required. The Test2R is administered in the 1st term of Senior Infants for children about whom the class teacher has concerns. The Drumcondra Early Literacy Test is administered to all pupils in Senior Infants during the second term of the school year.

#### **Developing Listening Skills:**

Promoting a classroom environment where children listen to others, do not interrupt the speaker and wait their turn; Circle time, Listening games/activities; Listening Programmes; Listening to music.

#### **Observation and/or Assessment:**

Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, record sheet for each child, Shared observation (2<sup>nd</sup> opinion), listening to reading, General correction of classroom work and homework.

Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, Teachers own observation.

Share concerns with: - Last year's/ next year's teacher, similar level teacher, parents, SET, SEN co-ordinator

#### **Stages of Assessment and Provision**

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher, identifies a child with SEN the class teacher consults with the SEN co-ordinator and provides interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school's usual curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher.

#### STAGE 1

Class teachers initially have concerns

The triggers for this concern could be;

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

The class teacher completes a Stage One/ Classroom Support Form

#### STAGE 2

In cases where the Classroom Support Plan indicates that progress has not been made, the class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents and Special Education Needs Co-ordinator and the child will move to a School Support Plan. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and support
- If there are others in the class with similar difficulties in one or more of the specific areas, then a group educational plan will be implemented.
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated every term.
- These children are supported by the SEN teacher by in class teaching or withdrawal.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual curriculum available to all children.

#### Stage 3

When it has been identified that a child is still struggling despite interventions, the class teacher with the special education teacher and SEN coordinator, in consultation with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

- 1. A psychological assessment will be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
- 2. Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including School Support Plus targets and strategies.
- 3. The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme the child:
- Makes little or no progress over a long period of time
- Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age
- Continues to have literacy and numeracy difficulties
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and School Support Plus Plan
- Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service
- Has an ongoing communication or relationship difficulty that prevents social development, and act as a barrier to learning.
- 4. If it is felt by the psychologist/O.T./other specialist that a child has care needs, a special needs assistant may be applied for.
- 5. If the psychologist recommends an exemption from Irish the Principal will see to this under guidance from the Department of Ed. And Skills.

#### **School Support Plus Plan**

Based on outside agency reports, tests and School Support Plan the class teacher with thespecial education teacher, parents and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary) formulate a School Support Plus Plan

#### This plan includes:

- the nature and degree of the child's abilities and skills
- the degree of the child's special needs,
- the present level of performance,
- services to be provided,
- the targets that the child is to achieve over a designated period of time,
- the strategies that will be used to attain these

The management of the School Support Plus Plan will be the responsibility of the class teacher and special education teacher

#### **REVIEW of School Support Plus Plans**

The Special Education Teachers will ensure that the review is conducted in January and May/June. The class teacher consults with the special education teacher, and SNA if appointed. They agree on the expected outcomes of the SSPP. A draft copy is formulated. The parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss the draft. Again, outside agencies may play a part in formulating the final copy.

Where progress is unsatisfactory it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently

achieving targets over the stated time, a decision will be made to revert to School Support level.

The review in May/June will help to formulate a School support Plus Plan, which will be part of the plan for the next teacher in September.

#### **Monitoring and Reviewing**

Pupils' progress in relation to achieving their targets will be regularly and carefully monitored. This stage of the process is informed by effective measurement of baseline performance, including the use of criterion-referenced tests and other methods of assessment (for example, teacher-designed tests, checklists, samples of work, observation) that allow pupils to demonstrate their progress. This will lead to the establishment of specific targets to be achieved within a defined timeframe as outlined below.

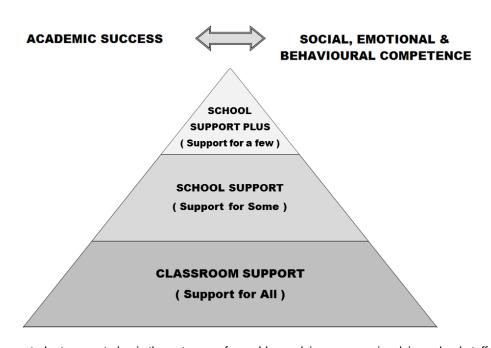


This policy will be reviewed every two years.

The following documentation are in use in our school and are available on Aladdin

Student Support File		
Name of Student:		
Date of Birth:		
School:		
Date File Opened:		
Date File Closed:		

#### **A Continuum of Support**



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concern. We gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

### **Student Support File, Log of Actions**

Date	Actions

Classroom Support F	Plan/Review				
Classroom Support F	Plan/Review	Review School Year:			
Class Teacher:		Class:	SET:		
Name		Age	Today's Date		
Student's Strengths/I	Progress Made:				
Concerns/Continued	Concerns:				
Possible Reasons :W	e think it may be h	appening because			
Targets we want to a	chieve:				
Strategies we will us	e:				
Signed:					
Teacher(s):					
Review date and out	comes (targets met	and unmet):			
Outcome of Review:					
New Classroom Support Plan to be agreed	Classroom Support Plan no longer necessary	School Support Plan to be initiated	Request consultation with other professional e.g. NEPS psychologist or S & L Therapist		

# **School Support Plan** School Support Plan School Year:\_ (Essential References: 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers' pp. 22-30; 'BESD: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers' SET: Start Date: Class: Review Date: Name: Age: Student's Strengths & Interests: Priority Concerns: Possible Reasons: (Essential references: 'SEN: A Continuum of Support – Resource Pack for Teachers' pp. 18-21; 'BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers' pp. 80-108) Targets we want to achieve: Strategies we will use: (SEN- A Continuum of Support- Guidelines for Teachers p23; BESD: A Continuum of Support-Guidelines for Teachers (pages 111-139) Staff Involved & Resources Needed:

# Signed: Parent(s):

Teacher(s):

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY – SCOILNAOMH COLMÁIN

# School Support Plus IEP Planning Sheet

School Support Plus Individual Education Plan Planning Sheet

School Year:\_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher:		Class:		SET:		
Name:		Age:		Today	y's Date	;
Progress to date/Strengths:						
The nature and degree of the student's abilities, skills and talents						
Areas for Improvement/presenting difficulties:						
The nature and degree of the student's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her progress						
	Test N	ame	Date	SS	%	STen
Present level of	Abil	ity				
educational performance	Mat	hs				
of the student	Read	ing				
	Other Test Scores and Results:					
Summary of Special Educational Needs of the student						
Summary of information from outside agencies.						
Further Information						
Signed: Parent(s):						
Teacher(s):						

# Outcome of Review:

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY – SCOILNAOMH COLMÁIN

#### **SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD\***

Classroom Support School Support (Support for SOME) School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.

For help, see 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', 'BESD: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers', 'A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers', 'Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools'.

Student's Name:		Class/ Year:		
Names of those present at review	v:	Date of Review:		
What areas of the plan have been	n most successful and why	y?		
Since the start of the plan, has an concerns? If so, what are these of them?				
Have the student's needs change	d since the start of the pl	an? If so, how?		
Recommended future actions – what, how, who, when?				
Any comments from the student?				
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s)?				
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s):				
Signature of teacher(s):				

Support Checklist			
Name:	Age:	Class:	
General Information:	Date Checked:	Comments:	
Parent(s)/Guardian(s)     Consulted:			
Information from previous school/preschool gathered:			
3. Hearing:			
4. Vision:			
5. Medical Needs:			
6. Basic Needs Checklist Completed:			
7. Assessment of learning-screening:			
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning:			
9. Observation of Behaviour:			
10. Interview with Pupil:			
11. Classroom work differentiated?			
12. Learning environment adapted?			
13. Yard/school environments adapted?			
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?			
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?			
16. Other interventions put in place in school?			
Action needed			

# **School Support Plus /IEP Review Sheet**

Name of Student:Class:	
Progress to Date/ Strengths: (The nature and degree of the child's abilities, skills and talents)	
Areas for Improvement/Presenting Difficulties: (The nature and degree of the child's special educational needs and how those needs at progress)	fect his/her
(The present level of educational performance of the child)	
Summary of Special Educational Needs: (The special educational needs of the child)	
Special Educational Provision: (The special education and related support services to be provided to the child)	
Further Information:	