

A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools

Resource Pack for Teachers



Introduction to Resource Pack

This resource pack should be used in conjunction with the document, **A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools**. It is a publication by the National Educational Psychological Service which aims to support post-primary schools in their work with young people. Briefly, the Continuum refers to three levels of support in schools; Support for ALL, School Support and School Support Plus.

Support for ALL is a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching and early identification. These systems are available to **all** students and effectively meet the needs of most students.

School Support (for Some) is an assessment and intervention process which is directed to **some** students, or groups of students who require some additional input.

School Support Plus (for a Few) is generally characterised by more intensive and individualised supports. This level of intervention is for students with complex and/or enduring needs and relatively **few** students will need this level of support.

The pack is organised into five, colour-coded sections, as follows:

Creating Positive Learning Environments

Gathering Information

In-School Screening and Assessment

Planning, Monitoring and Review

Effective Interventions

Schools are encouraged to use and adapt the resources to fit their specific context. NEPS is committed to the on-going development of services in schools and welcomes feedback about these resources. The resource pack is available on-line at www.education.ie

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A Psychological Understanding of Adolescence

Adolescence has been aptly described as the 'wonder years' and the 'apprenticeship years' and it is a time of phenomenal growth and change in the young person. Likened to a 'biological revolution' the vigorous growth that is experienced at this time is greater than at any other time in the lifespan, except for the first two years of life. It is a remarkably impressionable and formative stage of the life cycle. Hormonal and chemical changes set in train a range of physical, intellectual, social, emotional and ethical changes which will transform the adolescent into a young adult. Adolescents and the 'significant others' interacting with them, particularly parents and teachers, may feel challenged by the changes occurring during this uneven transitional period between childhood and young adulthood.

Psychologically, the task of adolescence is to move from the identity as a dependent child to the identity as an independent person. Typically this involves a movement away from reliance on family (and from parental influence) and friends and peers assume a far greater significance and influence. The adolescent phase of development is also characterised by a certain amount of experimentation, (for example with fashion, music, drink, drugs or sexual expression). Adolescents are often intensely self-conscious, vulnerable and lacking in self confidence. The transition from child to young adult is often difficult and many young people feel ambivalent or confused. For example, a young person might resent parental enquiries about project work, experiencing this as intrusion and nosiness, but may also complain of the parent not taking an interest. Some amount of sullen and hostile behaviour may be evident. Equally, adolescents may be energised and enthusiastic and may show particular commitment to interests or causes. It can be helpful to consider that, 'Adolescents have hearts hopes and dreams to be nurtured'. (Brooks 2002)

The following list of generalisations about adolescence is adapted from John H. Lounsbury's 'Understanding and Appreciating the Wonder Years' (National Middle School Association, 2000).

Summary of Key Generalizations About Young Adolescents

- Early adolescence is a distinctive developmental stage of life
- These are the years during which each individual forms his/her adult personality, basic values, and attitudes
- Adolescents reach physical maturity at an earlier age than their grandparents and they acquire apparent sophistication earlier than in previous generations
- They seek autonomy and independence
- They are by nature explorers, curious and adventurous
- They have intellectual capacities seldom tapped by traditional schooling
- They learn best through interaction and activity rather than by listening

- They seek interaction with adults and opportunities to engage in activities that have inherent value
- Their physical and social development become priorities
- They are sensitive, vulnerable, and emotional
- They are open to influence by the significant others in their lives

Effective teachers who value working with this age group will be attuned to the vast developmental changes which their students undergo across so many facets of their development during adolescence. They will respond to the challenge posed and to the implications it holds for planning and delivering a 'holistic' education.

They will be mindful of the critical importance of providing:

- A **school environment** which is responsive to their developmental needs, is welcoming and nurturing and treats the adolescent as a valued member of the school community.
- **Teachers** who are 'encouragers' and actively engage their students in meaningful learning
- Offer each student **an equal chance to participate**, learn, grow and succeed.
- A **holistic curriculum** that is relevant, challenging, integrative and exploratory.
- **Organisational structures** that support meaningful relationships and foster the growth of high self esteem, self-efficacy and resilience.

Given the particular demands of adolescence, it is clear that support systems in post-primary schools will need to be flexible, inclusive, well-managed and responsive to individual need.

Completion of Learning Environment Checklist (LEC) Notes

Certain factors present in the environment can affect how well learning takes place.

This checklist is intended to offer assistance in identifying those aspects of the learning environment that are working well and those that may need action.

There are three sections to the LEC.

- Section A - Whole School Environment
- Section B - Classroom Environment
- Section C - Social Environment

The LEC may be used at different stages in the continuum of support at post primary:

a) **Support for ALL** - different staff groups may use it in order to arrive at whole school priorities for actions. (Sections A & C which focus on whole school environment and social environment are useful for this purpose)

b) **School Support (for Some)** -member/s of staff may complete the checklist following identification of 'at risk' student/s, in order to arrive at priorities for targeted groups of 'at risk' students. (Sections B & C which focus on the classroom environment and social environment are useful for this purpose)

c) **School Support Plus (for a Few)** -staff may complete relevant sections of the checklist in order to arrive at priorities for individual students who have documented a known needs on arrival at school. (Sections B & C which focus on the classroom environment and social environment are useful for this purpose)

Some sections will be more applicable than others-this is dependent on the purpose for which the checklist is completed.

It is very likely that a number of different subject teachers will be involved in completing a checklist. Thus checklists can be collated on LEC summary charts. It is suggested that one teacher takes on role of 'co-ordinator' for the purposes of collating the information from completed checklists from subject teachers. This collated information is transferred onto **LEC Summary Charts**.

Once checklists and a summary chart have been completed, they provide the basis for devising a Learning Environment Plan.

The following rating scale is used when completing the LEC.

Rating scale:

1 = priority for development/action needed

2 = room for improvement/some action needed

3 = working successfully/no action needed

****Please note: This checklist is adapted from 'The Birmingham Framework Behavioural Environmental Checklist and The Positive Learning Environment Checklist (Leicestershire Educational Psychology Service)***

Learning Environment Checklist – Post-Primary

Rating scale:

1 = priority for development/action needed

2 = room for improvement/some action needed

3 = working successfully/no action needed

A. Whole School Environment:

1. Policies:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. A policy exists to promote positive behaviour | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. The behaviour policy is understood and has been adopted by staff | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. A system is in place to monitor and review the policy regularly | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. The policy differentiates, to take account of a range of needs | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Students are dealt with in accordance with equal opportunities policy | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. A policy exists for SEN provision within the school/ there is an effective and inclusive SEN policy in school | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. SEN policy is understood and has been adopted by staff | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. There are effective student welfare policies in the school, ie anti bullying policy | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. There is an effective health and safety policy in this school | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. The teaching and learning policy is understood by all staff | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. School policies support student achievements and success | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Students know what is expected of them | 3 | 2 | 1 |

2. Around the school/out of class:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Routines for movement around the school are clear | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Students move around the building in an orderly fashion | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Breaktime and lunchtime systems/structures are followed by all staff | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Staff clearly understand their breaktime responsibilities/supervision | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Breaktime and lunchtime rules are understood by students | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Corridors and social areas are well supervised /monitored | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Systems are in place for the effective resolution of student conflict | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Staff model the behaviour they expect from students | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Breaktimes rewards/sanctions system clear | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Corridors and social areas are well designed and monitored | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Problem areas are identified and adequately monitored | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Suitable activities/equipment available for breaktimes | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. There is adequate supervision at breaktimes | 3 | 2 | 1 |

B. Classroom Environment

1. Physical factors:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Classroom looks and feels like a good work environment | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. There is sufficient lighting | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. There is appropriate heat and ventilation/temperature and ventilation is appropriate/conducive to learning | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Appropriate sound levels in classroom which are conducive to learning | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. External noises levels do not interfere with learning | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Students are seated according to a seating plan | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Adequate working space for students and teacher | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. There is adequate space for ease of movement in room | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Furniture and equipment are arranged to best effect for teaching and learning | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Furniture suitable & organised appropriately for different curricular activities | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Appropriate equipment, materials/resources clearly labelled organised and easily accessible/available for all pupils | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Adequate working space for students and teacher/students and teacher have adequate personal workspace | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. Students can easily see the teacher and the black/whiteboard/all students have clear visibility of chalkboard/whiteboard | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. Classroom furniture is well maintained and appropriate/suitable | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. Physical space appropriately accommodates/differentiated according to student need/students with SEN | 3 | 2 | 1 |

2. Teaching and Learning/curriculum factors:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. The timetable is arranged to make best use of available support | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Curriculum delivery is varied to take account of different learning styles | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Students are involved in the setting of their individual targets | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Materials are differentiated to help students achieve success | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Home school systems ensure that students bring the correct equipment | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Students have opportunities for modelling rehearsing consolidating and transferring learning skills form one situation to another | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Students have feedback about successes and suggestions for improvement | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Teacher arrives at classroom/lesson before pupils | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Instructions to students are clear | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Materials and equipment are prepared before class | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Curriculum is appropriate and delivery is differentiated/ delivery of the curriculum is differentiated where appropriate | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Timetable is arranged to best effect for teaching and learning | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. Peer support is used to best effect | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. Adult support is used to best effect | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. Tasks set are appropriate for the pupils level and understanding and skills | 3 | 2 | 1 |

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 16. Learning goals are clearly defined and shared with the pupil | 3 2 1 |
| 17. Opportunities are provided for the pupil to engage in activities in which s/he can be successful | 3 2 1 |
| 18. Steps in learning goals are small enough to ensure progress | 3 2 1 |
| 19. Regular monitoring and recording of progress occurs | 3 2 1 |
| 20. Appropriate accommodations are in place for students with SEN | 3 2 1 |
| 21. Clear instructions are given about tasks in a variety of ways | 3 2 1 |

3. Rules, routines rewards sanctions:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Routines exist for movement around the room | 3 2 1 |
| 2. Clearly established routines for students entering and exiting the room | 3 2 1 |
| 3. Routines exist for distributing and collecting materials | 3 2 1 |
| 4. Routines exist for changing activities | 3 2 1 |
| 5. Routines exist for gaining silence or attention | 3 2 1 |
| 6. Routines exist for clearing up | 3 2 1 |
| 7. Rules are negotiated with and understood by students | 3 2 1 |
| 8. Rules are few in number, clearly phrased and regularly referred to | 3 2 1 |
| 9. Rules are positively framed and reinforced | 3 2 1 |
| 10. Rules are clearly displayed/clearly displayed in the classroom | 3 2 1 |
| 11. Rules and routines of positive behaviour are taught | 3 2 1 |
| 12. Rewards are small and achievable | 3 2 1 |
| 13. Rewards are named | 3 2 1 |
| 14. Rewards are rewarding to class | 3 2 1 |
| 15. Rewards are given fairly and consistently | 3 2 1 |
| 16. Rewards are linked to a school reward system | 3 2 1 |
| 17. Sanctions are administered fairly and consistently | 3 2 1 |
| 18. Sanctions are understood by students | 3 2 1 |
| 19. Sanctions are understood by parents and carers | 3 2 1 |
| 20. Sanctions are clear and appropriate | 3 2 1 |
| 21. Classroom procedures and rules are made clear and understood by all pupils and consistently applied | 3 2 1 |

C. Social /emotional environment/people environment/CARE environment

1. Staff:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a collective responsibility for behaviour management | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Successes and difficulties are shared | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. There is a clear means for gaining support from colleagues/staff have clear means of gaining help | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Effective guidance for resolving conflict is available | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Staff roles are clearly defined | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Support services are used systematically efficiently and effectively | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Staff talk to each other about their concerns | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Staff seek advice from colleagues | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Staff peer support is valued and easily accessed | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Staff supported in providing differentiated curriculum to students with SEN | 3 | 2 | 1 |

2. Students:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Opportunities are available to help students feel valued | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Opportunities exist for students to discuss learning, personal & emotional issues | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Strategies are adopted to promote interpersonal skills and friendships | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Trust and mutual support are actively fostered | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Group co operation is encouraged | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Opportunities exist for students to practise listening and negotiating | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Adults act as role models for desired behaviour | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Good behaviour is noticed and acknowledged | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Procedures are in place for responding to behavioural emergencies | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Students have 'a voice' | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Positive expectations for students' learning exist and realistic goals and targets for learning are worked towards | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Accommodations for students are in place & regularly monitored and reviewed | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. The school environment is pleasant orderly and safe | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. Students feel cared for and valued | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. All students are encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their learning and behaviour | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17. Students know what to do next without asking | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18. The class is generally on task | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19. Different actions (academic & behaviour) are frequently noticed & praised | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20. A variety of praise and rewards are used | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 21. Pupils can be monitored sufficiently during a task to ensure understanding and continuing progress | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22. Good communication & feedback between teacher & each pupil about progress is maintained | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23. A pupil's good behaviour and learning is 'named' and reflected back | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24. Small achievements are recognised | 3 | 2 | 1 |

3. Parents/guardians:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Parents are involved in supporting students' learning and positive behaviour | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Parents know that their son/daughter is learning and behaving well | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Parents are routinely told of students good behaviour | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Parents are informed of students learning progress on a regular basis | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Parents are encouraged/involved in supporting differentiated curriculum of school | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Completion of Learning Environment Checklist Summary Chart (LEC) Notes

The information recorded on the Learning Environmental Checklists are summarised on 3 separate summary charts:

Summary Chart Section A - Whole School Environment

Summary Chart Section B - Classroom Environment

Summary Chart Section C- Social Environment

Instructions for completion of Summary Charts.

1. Dedicate each column of a blank summary chart (Sections A/B/C) to a particular subject. (Eg. column 1 = English; column 2= Maths; column 3= Irish etc).
2. Select a completed LEC - e.g. the responses from the English teacher.
3. Transcribe the rating scale scores (1, 2 or 3) from the LEC (English) to the first item (e.g. Section A, Q1) into the first cell of the first column - e.g. if 'policy to promote positive behaviour' is a priority for action, the number 1 is inserted into the top cell ; if question Section A, 2.2' 'students move around the building in an orderly fashion' needs some action, then the number 2 is inserted into first column beside question 2.2; if question Section A, 2.7 'staff model the behaviour they expect from students' is working successfully then the number 3 is inserted into the first column beside question 2.7.
4. This procedure continues until all of cells in column 1 are completed.
5. Repeat procedure for each LEC completed by different subject teachers.
6. Highlight in different colours the rating scores with a different colour - e.g. 1 = red; 2=yellow; 3=green
7. Colour coding makes interpretation of the summary charts easier. The areas where action is needed can then be identified at a glance. From this information, priorities for the Learning Environment Intervention Plan can be identified.

Summary Chart, Section A Whole School Environment - extent to which action is needed for each area by each SUBJECT

Name of Class Group/student	1	2	3	4	5	6
Subject	Eng	Irish	Maths	History	Geog	Sci
A.1. Policies:						
1.1 A policy exists to promote positive behaviour						
1.2 The behaviour policy is understood and has been adopted by staff						
1.3 A system is in place to monitor and review the policy regularly						
1.4 The policy differentiates, to take account of a range of needs						
1.5 Students are dealt with in accordance with equal opportunities policy						
1.6 A policy exists for SEN provision/effective and inclusive SEN policy						
1.7 SEN policy is understood and has been adopted by staff						
1.8 Effective student welfare policies in school, ie anti bullying						
1.9 Effective health and safety policy						
1.10 Teaching and learning policy is understood by all staff						
1.11 School policies support student achievements and success						
1.12 Students know what is expected of them						
A.2 Around the School:						
2.1 Routines for movement around school are clear						
2.2 Students move around the building in an orderly fashion						
2.3 Breaktime and lunchtime systems/structures are followed by all staff						
2.4 Breaktime and lunchtime rules are understood by students						
2.5 Corridors and social areas are well supervised/monitored						
2.6 Systems are in place for the effective resolution of student conflict						
2.7 Staff model the behaviour they expect from students						
2.8 Breaktimes rewards/sanctions system clear						
2.9 Corridors and social areas are well designed and monitored						
2.10 Problem areas are identified and adequately monitored						
2.11 Suitable activities/equipment available for breaktimes						
2.12 There is adequate supervision at breaktimes						

Summary Chart, Section B Classroom environment - extent to which action is needed for each area by each SUBJECT

Name of Class Group/student	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Subject									
B.1. Physical factors:									
1.1 Classroom looks and feels like a good work environment									
1.2 There is sufficient lighting									
1.3 There is appropriate heat and ventilation/temperature and ventilation is appropriate/conducive to learning									
1.4 Appropriate sound levels in classroom which are conducive to learning									
1.5 External noise levels do not interfere with learning									
1.6 Students are seating according to a seating plan									
1.7 Adequate working space for students and teacher									
1.8 There is adequate space for ease of movement in room									
1.9 Furniture and equipment are arranged to best effect for teaching and learning									
1.10 Furniture suitable and organised appropriately for different curricular activities									
1.11 Appropriate equipment, materials/resources clearly labelled organised an easily accessible/available for all pupils									
1.12 Adequate working space for students and teacher/students and teacher have adequate personal workspace									
B.2. Teaching and learning/curriculum factors:									
2.1 Timetable is arranged to make best use of available support									
2.2 Curriculum delivery is varied to take account of different learning styles									
2.3 Students are involved in the setting of their individual targets									
2.4 Materials are differentiated to help students achieve success									
2.5 Home school systems ensure students bring the correct equipment									
2.6 Students have opportunities for modelling, rehearsing, consolidating and transferring skills from one situation to another									
2.7 Students have feedback about successes and suggestions for improvement									
2.8 Teacher arrives at classroom/lesson before pupils									
2.9 Instructions to students are clear									
2.10 Materials and equipment are prepared before class									
2.11 Curriculum is appropriate and delivery is differentiated/delivery of curriculum is differentiated where appropriate									
2.12 Timetable is arranged to best effect for teaching and learning									
2.13 Peer support is used to best effect									

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2.14 Adult support is used to best effect									
2.15 Tasks set are appropriate for the pupils level and understanding and skills									
2.16 Learning goals are clearly defined and shared with the pupil									
2.17 Opportunities are provided for the pupil to engage in activities in which s/he can be successful									
2.18 Steps in learning goals are small enough to ensure progress									
2.19 Regular monitoring and recording of progress occurs									
2.20 Appropriate accommodations are in place for students with SEN									
2.21 Clear instructions are given about tasks in a variety of ways									
B.3.Rules routines rewards sanctions:									
3.1 Routines exist for movement around the room									
3.2 Clearly established routines for entering and exiting the room									
3.3 Routines exist for distributing and collecting materials									
3.4 Routines exist for changing activities									
3.5 Routines exist for gaining silence or attention									
3.6 Routines exist for clearing up									
3.7 Rules are negotiated with and understood by students									
3.8 Rules are few in number clearly phrased and regularly referred to									
3.9 Rules are positively framed and reinforced									
3.10 Rules are clearly displayed/clearly displayed in the classroom									
3.11 Rules and routines of positive behaviour are taught									
3.12 Rewards are small and achievable									
3.13 Rewards are named									
3.14 Rewards are rewarding to class									
3.15 Rewards are given fairly and consistently									
3.16 Rewards are linked to a school reward system									
3.17 Sanctions are administered fairly and consistently									
3.18 Sanctions are understood by students									
3.19 Sanctions are understood by parents and carers									
3.20 Sanctions are clear and appropriate									
3.21 Classroom procedures and rules are made clear and understood by all pupils and consistently applied									

Summary Chart, Section C Social environment - extent to which action is needed for each area by each SUBJECT

Name of Class Group/student	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Subject									
C.1 Staff:									
1.1 There is a collective responsibility for behaviour management									
1.2 Successes and difficulties are shared									
1.3 There is a clear means for gaining support from colleagues/staff have clear means of gaining help									
1.4 Effective guidance for resolving conflict is available									
1.5 Staff roles are clearly defined									
1.6 Support services are used systematically efficiently and effectively									
1.7 Staff talk to each other about their concerns /peer support is valued and easily accessed									
1.8 Staff seek advice from management									
1.9 Staff peer support is valued and easily accessed									
1.10 Staff supported in providing differentiated curriculum to students with SEN									
C.2 Students:									
2.1 Opportunities are available to help students feel valued									
2.2 Opportunities exist for students to discuss learning personal and emotional issues									
2.3 Strategies are adopted to promote interpersonal skills and friendships									
2.4 Trust and mutual support actively fostered									
2.5 Group co operation is encouraged									
2.6 Opportunities exist for students to practice listening and negotiating									
2.7 Adults act as role models for desired behaviour									
2.8 Good behaviour is noticed and acknowledged									
2.9 Procedures are in place for responding to behavioural emergencies									
2.10 Students have 'a voice'									
2.11 Positive expectations for students' learning exist and realistic goals and targets for learning are worked towards									
2.12 Accommodations for students are put in place and regularly monitored and reviewed									
2.13 The school environment is pleasant orderly and safe									
2.14 Students feel cared for and valued									
2.15 All students are encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential									

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2.16 Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour									
2.17 The class is generally on task									
2.18 A variety of different actions (academic and behaviour) are frequently noticed and praised									
2.19 Pupils can be monitored sufficiently during a task to ensure understanding and continuing progress									
2.20 Good communication and feedback between teacher and each pupil about progress is maintained									
2.21 A pupil's good behaviour and learning is 'named' and reflected back									
2.22 Small achievements are recognized									
C.3 Parents/guardians:									
3.1 Parents are involved in supporting students' learning and positive behaviours									
3.2 Parents know that their son/daughter is learning and behaving well									
3.3 Parents are routinely told of students good behaviour									
3.4 Parents are informed of students learning progress on a regular basis									
3.5 Parents are encouraged/involved in supporting differentiated curriculum by school									

Learning Environment Intervention Plan

Checklist completed by: _____

Date: _____

Focus of intervention: (please tick) -

Whole School Support

Classroom Support

Priority areas: (please tick)

Whole school environment

Classroom environment

Social environment

Factors within priority area/s requiring action (identified from the checklist):

	Actions	Action possible - yes/no	If yes how:
1			
2			
3			
Review Date: _____			

Signed: _____

Review of Learning Environment Intervention Plan

Outcome of Review:

Further Actions agreed:

How- By Who-When?

Signed:

Positive Classroom Rules – some examples

It is suggested that when choosing classroom rules, that school communities use a positive focus rather than a negative one- i.e. use 'do' rather than 'don't' language. However, in some comparative models the use of 'don't' language can be very effective (see the example at the bottom of the page). The following are some different examples of sets of classroom rules. Schools may wish to choose from these as templates when devising appropriate positive rules for their own school setting. Of note, when devising rules, 3-5 rules are considered sufficient.

Example A:

1. Be on time, be prepared, be on task
2. Demonstrate respect for yourself , other students and property
3. Behave appropriately at all times

Example B:

1. Follow directions first time given
2. Carry school journal at all times
3. Be on time for all classes
4. Have books, equipment and homework needed
5. Speak and act courteously

Example C:

1. We raise our hand to speak
2. We are kind and respect each other
3. We keep our room tidy
4. We listen when our teacher or classmate is speaking

Example D:

1. I will raise my hand to speak
2. I will enter and exit the room quietly
3. I will complete all assignments on time
4. I will actively listen when the teacher is speaking

Example E:

1. Be in the room when the bell rings
2. Bring materials
3. Follow directions
4. Speak appropriately
5. Be helpful and kind when working with others in the class

Example of Jenny Mosley's 'Golden' rules:

An example rules as 6 statements with a 'do' and 'don't' is as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Do listen | Don't interrupt |
| 2. Do work hard | Don't waste your time or other people's |
| 3. Do look after property | Don't waste or damage it |
| 4. Do be gentle | Don't hurt anybody |
| 5. Do be kind | Don't hurt anyone's feelings |
| 6. Do be honest | Don't cover up the truth |

Guideposts to Providing a Positive School Climate for Students

- I. Helping students to feel they belong, are connected, and are welcome in the school.**
- Is there at least one staff member whom the student believes cares about him or her? How is this caring communicated to the student?
 - What are strategies that teachers might use to help this student feel they are genuinely interested in him or her?
 - Is this student accepted by other students? If so, who are these other students?
 - If the student is isolated, what can be done to help this student develop closer relationships with other students?
- II. Fostering self-determination and helping students to have a sense of ownership.**
- What choices would this student say he or she has had in the past few months in school? What decisions would the student say he or she has made about his or her educational plan during this school year?
 - Is the student invited to individualised education program (IEP) meetings and parent conferences? If so, who prepares the student for what will occur in the meeting and what will be expected of the student?
 - Does the student have an opportunity to discuss issues and possible solutions pertaining to his or her school program?
 - If the student is not in attendance at IEP meetings and parent conferences, is the student asked what he or she would like to have discussed at the meeting or conference and are suggestions elicited from the student?
 - If the student is not in attendance at the meeting or conference, who will meet with the student to discuss what occurred?
 - If the student is on a contract, does the student feel he or she was an active participant in the development and implementation of the contract?
 - If educational and/or psychological testing was conducted, did the student receive feed back about the results of the testing, both in terms of areas of strength and areas of weakness?
 - Does the student have a clear understanding of why certain interventions have been implemented?

III. Identifying, reinforcing and displaying a student's islands of competence.

- What are the student's competencies or strengths?
- Has anyone asked the student what he or she believes are his or her areas of strength?
- How are these strengths displayed in the school setting (e.g. if a student is an excellent artist, is the student's artwork displayed in school?)
- If the student has an IEP, are the areas of strength listed and does it also indicate how these strengths will be used?
- What does this student contribute to the school? One of the best ways to help students to feel competent is for them to feel that they are making a contribution to the school (i.e., they have at least one responsibility that helps them to feel that, because they are in the school, the school is a better place).

IV. Identifying a student's coping strategies.

- What are the main ways this student copes with school and with mistakes (e.g., asking for help, being a bully, quitting, being a class clown)?
- Does this student's main ways of coping lead to positive or negative outcomes?
- How can we help this student to develop more adaptive coping strategies (e.g., asking for and accepting assistance, developing new strategies for learning)?

From Brooks (2002) Creating Nurturing Classroom Environments: Fostering Hope and Resilience as an Antidote to Violence. Copyright 2002 by the National Association of School Psychologists, Bethesda, MD. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. www.nasponline.org

**Post Primary Transfer Review
Confidential**

Name: _____ **Home Language:** _____
Address: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Present School: _____

SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Assessment**

Has student undergone assessment/s? Yes No

Date(s) of Assessment(s):

Nature of difficulties indicated?

Has the student been involved with any agency providing
 Psychological/Psychiatric Services, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy
 etc ?

Yes No

If yes, please give details:

Exemption from Irish? (Please circle) Yes No

Access to specialist IT supports? Yes No

If yes, please give details:

Specify what (if any) equipment will transfer with this student.

- **Results of recently administered tests**

AREA	NAME OF TEST	DATE OF TESTING	STANDARD SCORES/ QUOTIENT	PERCENTILE RANK
Ability				
Reading				
Spelling				
Numeracy				
Other				

- **Strengths/ needs and recommendations**

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p>
<p><u>Identified Needs:</u></p>
<p><u>Recommendations:</u></p>

SECTION TWO: PROVISION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Type of Support
Learning Support/ Resource/SNA

Frequency/ Grouping

Key Areas of Learning/ Behaviour Addressed:

Any special programmes/ methodologies/materials used? (e.g. Specific reading programme, Social Skills groups etc)?

Any special arrangements in place? (e.g. differentiated homework/ use of technology/ positioning in the classroom)

Please attach copy of recent IEPs/ ILPs/ Reviews.

SECTION THREE: PLANNING FOR TRANSFER

Curriculum Needs (able for a full subject choice/ reduced timetable/ subject strengths & difficulties)

Learning Skills (following instructions/ reading/ writing/ contributing to oral work)

Organisational Skills (ability to find way around the school/ manage locker/ keep equipment)

Social Skills (particular friendships/ ability to get on with others)

Other (any particular issues/challenges)

Names of persons involved in review:

Do parents give consent for this information to be passed to post-primary school? Please name school _____

Date:

Sample Wording of Parental Consent section, for inclusion in School Enrolment Form

We/ I give our/my consent to teachers from *Named School* to collect information, both written and verbal from my child's primary school.

Signed _____

We/ I give our/ my consent to teachers from *Named School* to receive copies of any professional reports concerning my child's education and development, provided by the primary school.

Signed _____

Subject Teacher Survey

Student	Teacher	Subject
<p>This section is to record factors that may affect a student's ability to learn. The number circled allow for comparisons over time.</p>		
Area of Concern	Scoring Criteria	Comments
Attitude towards staff	Negative -----Positive and appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Co-operation with peers	Unable to share -----Enjoys group with others play/work 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Motivation	Very little -----Self motivated will motivate 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Participation and oral response	Withdrawn ----- Keen to take part or shy 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Enthusiasm for written work	Seldom wants ----- Works hard most to work pride in work 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Presentation of work	Takes little ----- Always takes care of work pride in work 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Following verbal instructions	Needs further ----- Can work direction alone 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Following written instructions	Unable to work ----- Can work alone alone 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Group size required	Needs constant ----- Can function one to one in any group 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Behaviour in class	Disruptive ----- Never disrupts most lessons 1 2 3 4 5 6	
General progress	No progress ----- Skills/knowledge Increasing 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Creativity and innovation	Shows little ----- Creative and imagination innovation 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Aggressive towards Staff and peers	Assertive and fair ----- Passive 1 2 3 4 5 6	
Tantrums / Sulks	Copes with failure ----- Depressed Appropriately and withdrawn 1 2 3 4 5 6	

Please return to _____ By _____

My Thoughts about School Checklist

NAME

CLASS

DATE

The things I like best at school are:

The things I don't like about school are:

The things that I am good at are:

The things I find hard are:

I am happy in class when:

I am happy during break and lunch times when:

My friends are:

I need help with:

Teachers in school can help me by:

Teachers would describe me as:

My parents would describe me as:

My Thoughts about School Checklist

Adults I get on best with in school are:

I get into trouble in school when:

The things I do that make my teachers feel unhappy are:

The things my teachers do that make me feel unhappy are:

I make my teachers happy when:

The things my teachers do that make me feel happy are:

The class rules are:

If someone breaks the rules:

Rewards I like best are:

The things that I need to change are

Gathering Information Checklist

NAME

DOB

CLASS

DATE

GENERAL INFORMATION	CHECKED (YES/NO)	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION
Parents consulted		
Post-Primary Transfer Review		
Information from previous school, or previous teachers gathered		
Hearing/ Vision		
Motor Skills/ Co-ordination, movement		
Communication skills/ oral language/ listening		
Medical Needs		
Intake screening information		

GENERAL INFORMATION cont...	CHECKED (YES/NO)	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION
Diagnostic testing/ further assessments		
Observation of learning style/approach to learning		
Observation of behaviour		
Interview with student		
Exemption from Irish		
Reduced Subject Load		
Special Curriculum		
Differentiation in Class		
Adaptations to learning environment		
Yard/school environments adapted		
Consultation with outside professionals		
Other interventions in place in school		
ACTION NEEDED		
ACTIONS AGREED WITH PARENTS AND RELEVANT STAFF		

Communication skills/ oral language/ listening		Information about the student's ability to communicate can be collected from teachers. It may include information about the student's ability to listen and follow instructions, to express a point of view or articulate feelings and something about the student's willingness to participate orally (in small groups and within the wider class group)
Medical Needs		Check whether with student is generally in good health. If not, gather relevant details e.g. medications/ treatments/ asthma/ eczema/ allergies etc
Intake screening information		Gather information from the following type of screening tests, as needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests of general ability and reasoning, such as CAT-3, Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT), Drumcondra reasoning tests • Reading and spelling tests, such as NFER Group Reading Test • School designed tests in particular subject areas (Irish, maths, writing skills) See Resource Pack, page 40
Diagnostic testing/ further assessments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further testing may be helpful in determining the nature and extent of difficulties, see Resource Pack, page 43 for further details
Observation of learning style/approach to learning		Consider the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the student learns best through seeing, listening or doing • How they approach a task (with confidence, anxiety) • How they engage with others when learning • How they plan their work and approach it • How do they attend to a task? • What feedback do they require? • Do they work accurately or speedily? • Do they pay attention to detail?
Observation of behaviour		Observe the student's behaviour in a range of situation (class, small group, during paired work, in the yard, around corridors). Record what can be seen or heard (e.g. concentration, social skills) Observe the student's behaviour in a range of situations. Record what can be seen or heard. Make a note of the frequency of the behaviours (once a week, 3 times a day, 10 times a lesson). Record the triggers to the behaviour (when, where, with whom, what lesson/task). Note the consequences of behaviour (what happened as a result e.g. how did the teacher/student respond? Was work avoided? Did consequences maintain the problem? Analyse results with support staff or other professionals.

Interview with student		Depending on the nature of the student's needs ask the student what they feel they are good at and not so good at in school, what they like and dislike, who they enjoy playing with or working with. If the student has a behavioural difficulty, ask if they know what is causing them concern or getting them into trouble. Find out how the student feels in these situations and if they have any ideas how they could improve the situation (see My Thoughts about School checklist, Resource Pack, page 30-31)
Exemption from Irish		Note whether the student has an exemption and what alternative educational provision is in place during Irish tuition
Reduced Subject Load		Note whether the student has a full subject load and specify any subject(s) which the student is not studying
Special Curriculum		Note whether the student is accessing any particular curriculum, such as JCSP, LCVA etc.
Differentiation in Class		Check whether: the student's ability and levels of attainment match with the tasks that are set; tasks are achievable for the student; the content methodology and resources are varied and match their learning style.
Adaptations to learning environment		Consider the classroom environment, social factors, relationships, teaching and learning (See Learning Environment Checklist, Sections B & C, Resource Pack, page 9-12).
Yard/school environments adapted		Consider the play area, corridors, PE hall, assembly area and whole school issues that may affect learning or behaviour.
Consultation with outside professionals		Seek any relevant professional advice or information from, for example: Visiting Teacher; NEPS Psychologist; Speech and Language Therapist.
Other interventions in place in school		List any other interventions put in place such as breakfast club, homework club, peer mentoring, buddy systems, art therapy, drama therapy.
ACTIONS NEEDED		These actions should be specific and manageable for both the teachers and the parents. Only a small number of actions should be agreed (about four). Please see the Class/ Subject Support Plan template OR School Support Plan template.
ACTIONS AGREED WITH PARENTS AND RELEVANT STAFF		Following an agreed period of intervention, the outcome of the actions should be shared with parents and relevant staff. (See Class/ Subject Support Plan OR School Support Plan Review template for examples of how to record this review). At Stage 2 the Principal should be advised of the student's needs and progress.

Understanding Psychological Reports

Tests of intellectual or cognitive ability are often reported in terms of the student's category of ability, but sometimes also in terms of numerical scores. Different tests use different definitions and even the same test uses different definitions in different versions. The most commonly used test in Ireland is the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, now in its fourth edition (WISC IV, 2004).

IQ (standard scores), percentiles and ability classification

IQ score (standard score)	Percentile	Classification of Ability
130+	98-99	Very high, very superior, gifted
120-129	91-97	High, superior
110-119	75-90	High average, above average
90-109	25-74	Average
80-89	9-24	Low average, dull normal
70-79	3-8	Low, borderline
Below 70 (50-69)	1-2	Exceptionally low, mild learning difficulties/ disabilities, mild mental handicap
Below 50	0.1	Moderate learning difficulties/ disabilities, moderate mental handicap

Standard Scores

Many types of tests report standard scores, including tests of literacy, as well as tests of intellectual ability. A test is standardised on a particular population and standard scores show where the assessed person is, relative to the cohort on whom the test was standardised. Standard scores can readily be converted into percentiles. A standard score of 100 is exactly average, while a standard score of 70 is very low and a standard score of 130 is exceptionally high.

Percentiles

A percentile is how well a person performs compared to 100 people of the same age. Therefore a student who achieves a percentile of 27, performed as well as or better than 27 out of 100 children of the same age- which is within the average range.

Components of Tests of Intellectual / Cognitive Ability

IQ tests are traditionally broken down into verbal tasks (involving explaining, listening, remembering what is heard, etc.) and performance tasks (generally activities such as making puzzles and looking and doing tasks, which sometimes have time limits). Often a result is given for the verbal IQ and the performance IQ, which are then calculated into the overall, full-scale IQ. The WISC IV breaks this down further by giving scores for perceptual reasoning (performance), verbal comprehension (verbal) and two further factors, speed of processing and working memory.

Core Subtests of the WISC IV

Below is an example of the subtests used in the WISC IV. A scaled score of 10 is average, with a range from 1 to 19.

Verbal Comprehension

Similarities (saying how things go together, e.g. blue and red)

Vocabulary (explaining what words mean)

Comprehension (common sense questions)

Working Memory

Letter-Number sequences (remembering and ordering letters and numbers)

Digit Span (remembering and repeating sequences of numbers)

Perceptual Reasoning

Block Design (making patterns with cubes)

Picture Concepts (working out classification rules using pictures)

Matrix Reasoning (selecting the correct pattern to complete a sequence)

Processing Speed

Coding (transcribing a code)

Symbol search (finding and marking visual symbols from a selection)

General Ability Index

If there are statistically significant differences between the four areas tested on the WISC IV, it may not be appropriate to report a full-scale IQ result. Depending on the pattern of scores, the psychologist may instead report a **General Ability Index (GAI)** which uses the verbal comprehension and perceptual reasoning scores as the basis of ability, while processing speed and working memory scores are reported separately. This may be particularly relevant in the case of students with dyslexia, who often have specific weaknesses in working memory and/ or processing speed.

Limitations of Psychometric Tests

Results of any individual psychometric test cannot be interpreted in isolation. Information from attainment tests, teacher observation and parental reports are also very important aspects of a thorough assessment.

Psychometric tests have been standardised on a specific population, and it is important to realise that tests such as the WISC and the WIAT (Wechsler Individual Achievement Tests) are not standardised on an Irish population and testers are relying on the data generated by British norms. There are very particular difficulties associated with children whose home culture is markedly different from the group on whom the test was standardised. This may be a factor and should be considered when considering results for Traveller children and children who are newly arrived from cultures outside of the western world.

Guidelines for Intake Screening

While neither NEPS nor the DES endorses any particular tests, information provided here highlights tests which may be particularly helpful to post-primary schools in screening and diagnostic testing. A full list of approved tests has been produced by the DES, in consultation with the National Council of Guidance in Education, NEPS, Irish Learning Support Association, Church of Ireland College of Education and the Inspectorate. The list, *Tests approved for use in 2009/2010 for guidance and/or learning support in Post-Primary Schools* can be accessed through the following link:

<http://www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?maincat=&pcategory=10815&ecategory=20066§ionpage=&subject=20157&language=EN&link=&page=>

Results of any one test should not be considered in isolation and tests results should always be considered alongside other information: parental information, information from the primary school, information from teachers etc. It is recommended that intake screening is a joint endeavour between the guidance counsellor/ learning support teacher/ subject teachers, as relevant.

Additionally, schools need to be aware of the risks associated with early labelling, which may place a ceiling on expectations or consign students to particular groups.

Tests of General Ability

These tests can be used to gain an understanding of the student's general intellectual or cognitive ability. As well as helping to identify those who may find academic learning difficult, information from such tests can be used alongside literacy tests to highlight students who may have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia. In such cases, the administrator is looking for a significant discrepancy between general level of ability, and attainment in any area of literacy.

Generally, schools will choose one test of general ability to include in the screening process, although supplementary tests can also be used at a later date if further information is required.

Non Reading Intelligence Test, Level 3, 1989, D Young, Hodder and Stoughton

This group administered test focuses on verbal skills. Importantly, reading skills are not required (although some knowledge of the alphabet is needed). This test takes about 45 minutes to administer and is suitable for use by qualified teachers. Level 3 is standardised up to the age of 13 years, 11 months. At this age range, the NRIT will usefully identify children at risk of general learning difficulties, but it does not give standardised information about those in the

upper part of the average range, or about children whose ability may be above average. Research by NEPS psychologists suggests that the NRIT results correlate reasonably well with the results of the WISC IV.

Drumcondra Reasoning Test, 1998, Education Research Centre

The Drumcondra Reasoning Test (DRT) is an objective, group-administered test of cognitive skills which can be used to assess students in transition between primary and post-primary schooling, or in the early years of post-primary schooling. There are two parallel forms of the DRT (Form A and Form B). Each form contains two subtests, Verbal Reasoning and Numerical Ability. The test takes approximately 1½ hours to administer. Students mark their answers on a hand-scorable answer sheet, (which can be scored using a scoring stencil), or on a machine-scorable answer sheet, (which can be returned to the Educational Research Centre to be scored by machine).

Use of the DRT is restricted to qualified persons with training in the administration and interpretation of psychological tests (e.g., guidance counsellors, psychologists). This test has the advantage of having been normed on Irish students.

Cognitive Abilities Test, third edition (CAT 3) 2003, gl-assessment

This test is group administered and explores three areas of ability: verbal, quantitative and non-verbal. It is suitable for students in the age range 7 years 6 months to 17 years. Irish norms for the CAT 3, Level E (11.06-14.00+) and Level F (13.06-15.00+) are available to download free from Educational Evaluation (www.edev.ie) Level E is appropriate for first year students in post-primary schools. The CAT 3 can be used by teachers, but they must be registered users. The Irish CAT 3 Level E is only available from Educational Evaluation, see www.edev.ie

Tests of Literacy Skills- Reading

There are many ways of testing reading, including word reading, sentence completion and close exercises. Word reading tests, by their nature, are individually administered, while group tests, used at screening, usually depend on some element of comprehension. Teachers should be aware that some students can perform well on a reading comprehension task, but still have significant difficulty with reading accuracy and fluency.

MICRA-T (2004) Mary Immaculate College Reading Attainment Test

Level 4 of this test is intended for use with fifth and sixth class students of primary age and therefore may be suitable for summer in-take screening. The test is group administered and Irish normed.

Drumcondra Primary Reading Test- revised 2007

This group administered test takes about one hour and 35 minutes. It tests both reading vocabulary and reading comprehension and Level 6 of the test is suitable for end of sixth class (and therefore for intake screening). The test has Irish norms

Please note, if the school chooses to use a test that is standardised for use with 6th class students, it may be helpful to check the practice in primary schools, so there is no unnecessary duplication or practice effect risks.

Group Reading Test, GRT II, gl-assessment (2005)

The sentence completion forms (C & D) and context comprehension forms (X & Y) are standardised (using British norms) for students aged 9 years to 15 years, 3 months. This is a group administered tests and takes about 30 minutes.

Tests of Literacy Skills- Spelling

A test of spelling skills can be very helpful in identifying those who may be at risk of dyslexia. Teachers should pay special attention to those students who appear to be significantly underperforming relative to their general level of ability.

Many schools found the **Single Word Spelling Test, (SWST 2003) nfer-nelson** (standardised up to age 14) useful but this is going out of print. **The British Spelling Test Series, (1996), gl-assessment, level 3** is a suitable alternative. It is standardised from ages 9 to 15 years, 11 months and can be group or individually administered. It takes 30-40 minutes and uses UK norms. The **Graded Word Spelling Test (2006)** is also suitable. It is a revision of the Vernon tests. It is standardised for the ages 5 to 18+ and can be administered individually or to groups, in 20-30 minutes. It uses UK norms.

Other tests of literacy**Informal Dictation**

It may also be helpful to ask students to complete a short piece of dictation. Such a test can yield useful information about a range of skills, including: rate of writing, handwriting legibility, listening skills and spelling skills. While standardised results are not available, an experienced teacher should be able to identify students who have weaker skills in key areas. These students may need further diagnostic testing.

There is also the **Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting Test (DASH 2007, Harcourt Assessment)** which can be group administered and is standardised from ages 9 to 16 years, 11 months. It takes 30 minutes and involves five short subtests, including a 10 minute free writing activity. See www.pearsonpsychcorp.co.uk

Testing Mathematical Skills

While there are a number of group administered maths tests available, many British and American tests do not reflect the Irish curriculum and, of course, may use inappropriate currency in money questions. **The Drumcondra Reasoning Test** and the **Cognitive Abilities Test- 3** both have mathematical components (numerical reasoning in the former and quantitative reasoning in the latter) and many schools find this information adequate for the purposes of intake screening.

Guidance on the use of Diagnostic and Individual Tests and Tests for Older Students

Tests of Ability/ Aptitude for Older Students

The **CAT 3** (see above) is standardised up to the age of 17 and therefore can still be useful, with older students. Additionally, some schools find the **Differential Aptitude Tests for Schools (DATS 1997)**, to be useful in identifying aptitudes towards the end of the junior cycle. It can also be used with older students and has Irish norms. DATS has 8 subtests, verbal reasoning, abstract reasoning, perceptual speed and accuracy, mechanical reasoning, space relations, spelling and language usage. This test is for use by guidance counsellors.

Tests of Ability for Students who Do Not Have English as a First Language

Testing students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (including Traveller children) is problematic. These tests can be used by special needs teachers. However, the Naglieri (see below) test is relatively expensive and may be best as a shared resource between a number of schools, perhaps available through the local Education Centre.

The **Ravens Progressive Matrices- Revised 2008** may be useful. This is considered a language-free and culturally-fair test. It is suitable for group and individual administration and covers the full age range (5 years to 80 years).

The **Naglieri Non-Verbal Test (1996)** is also a language free, culturally fair, group administered test, with British norms, covering the age range 5 to 17 years. A more up-to-date version (2003) is available for individual administration.

Test of Literacy for Older Students

The **Adult Reading Test (2004)** is suitable for the age range 16 - 55 years. It is a test that needs to be individually administered. It has UK norms and is published by the Psychological Corporation.

The **Wide Range Achievement Tests (WRAT 4 2006)** includes word reading, reading comprehension and spelling tests. It is suitable for the complete age range and uses US norms. This individually administered test also includes a maths assessment. This test may be particularly helpful in considering RACE applications.

Diagnostic Reading Tests

The **Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA II 1997)** has been widely used, but is of limited utility in Post-Primary schools as it is only standardised up to the age of 12 years, 11 months. It offers a comprehensive assessment of reading rate, accuracy and comprehension. This test uses British norms.

A more up-to-date alternative, which covers a wider age range is the **Diagnostic Reading Analysis (2006)** published by Hodder. This covers the age range 7 to 16 years and is particularly suitable for testing less able students. It is individually administered and covers reading accuracy, comprehension, fluency and rate of reading.

Finally, there is also Wechsler Individual Achievement Test for use by teachers. This **WIAT for Teachers II (2006)** can be used across the age range and has both US and UK norms. It is an individual assessment which covers the following areas: word reading, reading comprehension, reading rate and spelling.

Individual and Diagnostic Tests of Maths

The **Progress in Maths series** offers tests for the age groups, 12, 13 and 14. It is group administered test, but can be used individually. This is a diagnostic test which gives information about learning needs. It uses British norms and is published by gl-assessment.

As noted above, the **WRAT 4 (2006)** contains an individualised maths test and this is standardised across the age range using US norms.

Screening for Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

There are fewer instruments for screening young people for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most schools rely on information based on teacher observation and may use non-standardised methods, such as the **Screening for Behaviour Framework (Resource Pack, page 45)** or the **Subject Teacher Survey (Resource Pack, page 29)**. However, schools may find the **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** helpful. The SDQ 1997 is a brief behavioural screening questionnaire. It has versions that can be used by students, parents and teachers and explores the areas of emotional difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationships and pro-social behaviour. The student version is suitable for children in the age range 11-16. It can be downloaded for free! www.sdqinfo.com

In terms of gathering information and planning for effective interventions, another useful tool is the **Special Needs Assessment Profile-Behaviour (SNAP-B 2006)**. This is a behavioural assessment and intervention pack, covering the age range 5 -16 years. It includes material on structured observations, structured questionnaires for students, parents and teachers and a CD-Rom component collates the information into a graphic profile of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, which then will generate a range of support and intervention strategies for teachers and parents.

Additionally, the **Towards Better Behaviour** resource pack (Jolly and McNamara 1991) can be helpful to schools, both in considering whole class interactions and for assessing students about whom there is a behavioural concern. This resource supports teachers in identifying problematic behaviour, understanding the context of that behaviour and prioritising behaviours to target for intervention.

It is most important that teachers are made aware of the limitations of screening instruments. Such tests should be used sensitively and teachers should consult with their NEPS psychologists as necessary.

The Screening for Behaviour Framework

Screening provides a basis for effective intervention. It is recommended that as a prerequisite before starting a screening process for behaviour that the following is in place in whole school:

- Clear expectations for students
- Clear procedures and processes for teaching positive expectations
- System for reinforcing and monitoring students demonstrating positive expectations

Steps in Planning Interventions for Students with Behavioural Difficulties

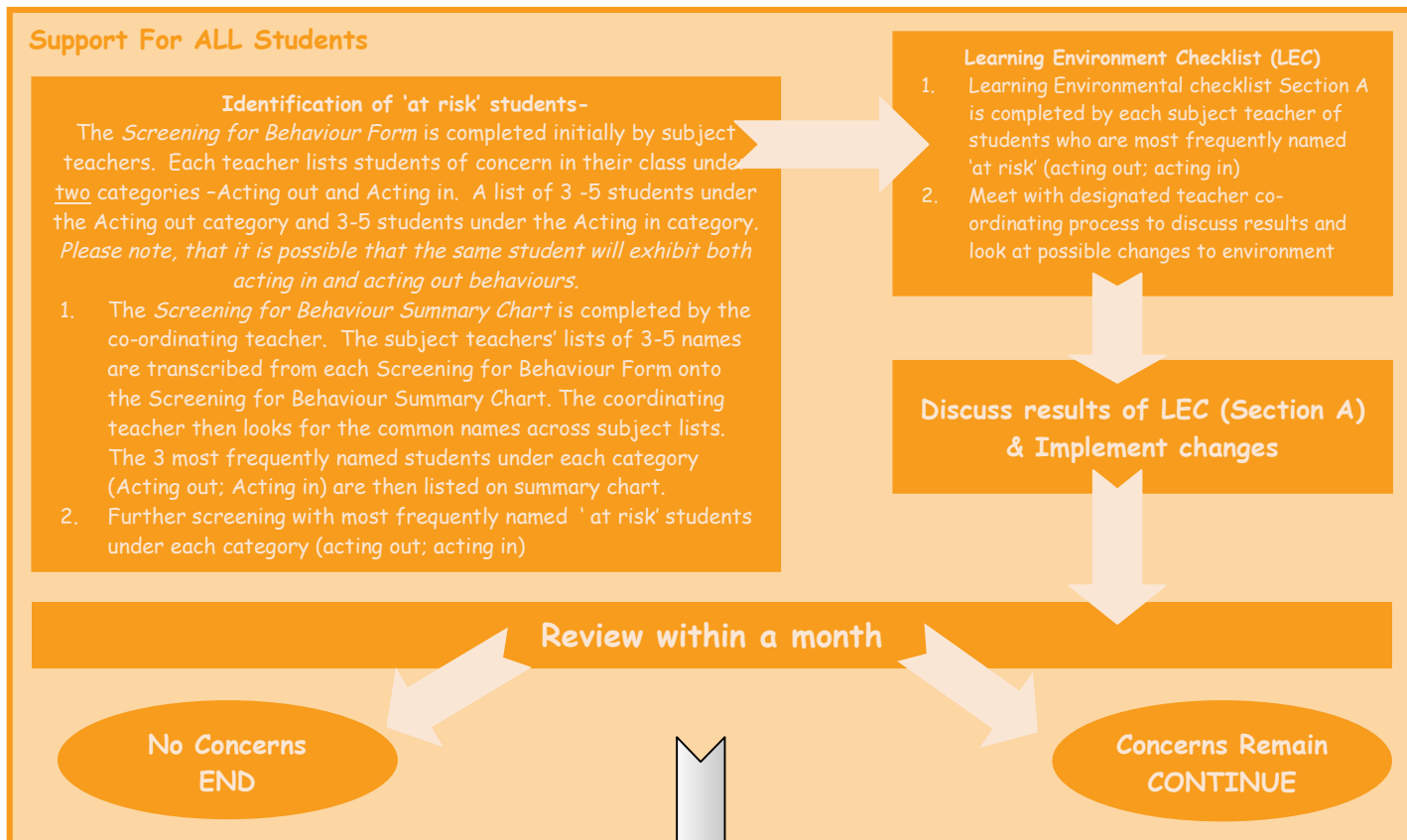
1. The identification of students who may be 'at risk' of developing externalising or internalising behavioural or emotional difficulties
2. Further screening takes place with a focus on the behavioural and learning environment of the student
3. Implementation of changes in the environment
4. Review: If there have been no positive changes with regard to behaviour, informed consent is obtained for a process consultation meeting
5. Process consultation meeting in school
6. One month later a review meeting takes place
7. If there is still no progress with regard to student's behaviour, further diagnostic screening takes place
8. Subsequently, interventions are planned and implemented with ongoing review
9. If concerns remain, there then is a need for more individualised intensive intervention through a Positive Behaviour Programme of Support

The following table places Screening for Behaviour within the Continuum of Support

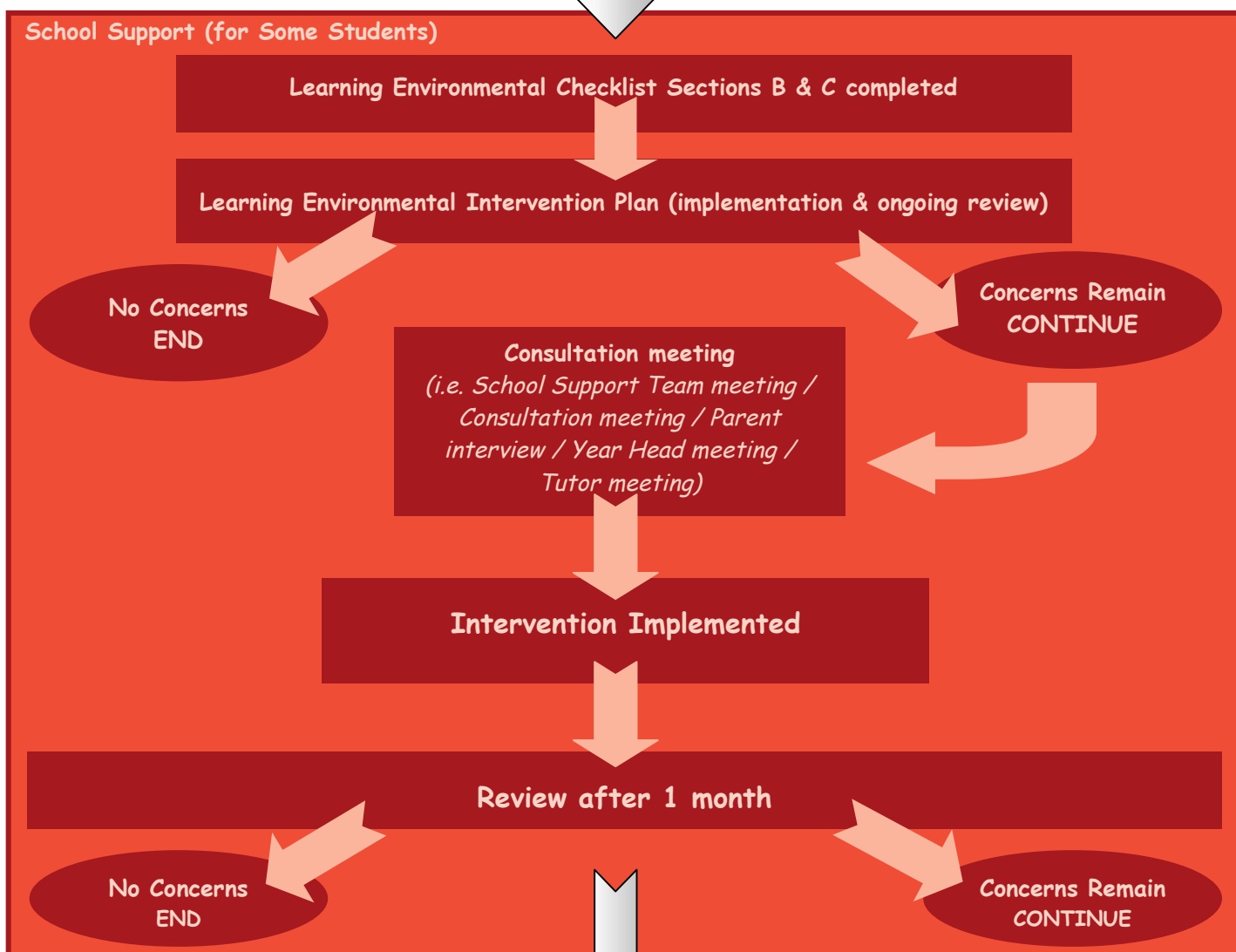
Continuum of Support	Screening for Behaviour	Level of support
Support for ALL	Identification of 'at risk' students LEC-Section A	Indirect
School Support	LEC - Section B & C Consultation & review	Indirect & direct
School Support Plus	Building on information from previous stages- may require more individualised screening, such as My Thoughts About School or Subject Teacher Survey	Direct

Screening for Behaviour Framework

The following diagram outlines the process for screening for behaviour.



Concerns Remain



Concerns Continue

Concerns Continue

School Support Plus (for a Few Students)

Obtain informed consent

Diagnostic Screening for Baseline Data
(i.e. Individual Behaviour Checklists)

Interventions planned and implemented

Ongoing Monitoring &
Review

Screening for Behaviour Form
(identification of 'at risk' students)

Class Group:

Subject:

Name of subject teacher completing form:

Date:

	Acting Out – name of students	Acting In – name of students
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Examples of Acting out and Acting in behaviours

Acting out	Acting in
Defiant	Painful shyness
Verbally abusive	Sad affect, low mood & feelings of worthlessness
Physically abusive	Is teased, neglected and/or avoided by peers
Teasing	Gets lost in own thoughts
Outbursts	Withdrawn behaviour
Damages others' property	Anxiety
<i>Please note that some students may show both acting in and acting out behaviours and can therefore be noted in both sections.</i>	

Please return this form to:

By:

Screening for Behaviour Summary Chart

ACTING OUT											
Student Names	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
The 3 most frequently named 'acting out' / 'at risk' students across subjects: 1 2 3											
ACTING IN											
Student Names	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:	Subject name:
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
The 3 most frequently named 'acting in' / 'at risk' students across subjects: 1 2 3											

Student Support Team Meeting Record

Date of meeting:

Present:

Updates since meeting:

<i>Current cases:</i>	<i>Actions/Decisions (who; what; when)</i>
<i>New cases:</i>	<i>Actions/Decisions (who; what; when)</i>

Date for next meeting:

Student Support Team Action Plan

Action Plan for:

What actions?	How?	By who?

Co-ordinating teacher:

To be Reviewed:

File Note
 Review of Care Team Action Plan
 Date of Discussion:

Signed:

Individual Educational Plan - Positive Behaviour Target Sheet

Name:	Parent(s)/Guardian(s) consent obtained: Yes ___ No ___		
Class:	Parent(s)/Guardian(s) attended: Yes ___ No ___		
Behaviours causing concern: Student's strengths: Priority Goals			
Targets:	Strategies:		
1. 2. 3. 4.			
Signed by student: Signed by parent(s)/guardian(s): Signed by co-ordinating teacher:		Date:	Review Date:

IEP (Positive Behaviour) Review Meeting Date:

Attended by:

Student:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Teacher:

Priority Targets

Progress

1.

2.

3.

Student's view of what went well:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) view of what went well:

Teacher's view of what went well:

Outcome of Review:

Continue with current targets: Yes/No

Draw up new targets: Yes/No

Targets achieved: Yes/No

Next Review Date:

Signed by Student:

Date:

Signed by Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Signed by Co-ordinating Teacher:

Guidelines for Positive Behaviour Target Meetings

Steps for Positive Behaviour Targets for an individual student:

1. Consultation between co-ordinating teacher and concerned teacher(s) regarding completed Subject Teacher Survey Checklist. Behaviours of concern then prioritised.
2. Consultation between co-ordinating teacher, concerned teacher(s) and student.
3. Positive Behaviour Target meeting with student, teachers and parents in attendance. Targets identified and clarified at this meeting. Agreed and signed by all parties involved.
4. All work on target implementation for next 2-4 weeks.
5. Informal reviews between student and teacher during this time (daily if possible - check- in on positive progress). Use Student Target Sheet as information for reviews.
6. Positive Behaviour Review meeting at end of 2-4 week period, with student, parents and designated and concerned teachers. Important that co-ordinating teacher chairs meeting and keeps focus of on positive progress, no matter how small.

Student Target Sheet

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

My 3 priority targets are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Signed by student: _____

Signed by co-ordinating teacher: _____

Teachers are requested to indicate student's progress in relation to priority targets, and add positive comment where possible					G = good, well within target T = on target T- = target almost achieved U = serious difficulties	
Class period	G	T	T -	U	Teacher's signature	Positive Comment
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						

Effective Interventions for Students with Literacy Difficulties

The following is a list of possible interventions for students with literacy difficulties. NEPS does not endorse any one approach and schools may be aware of many other effective interventions. However, it was thought that it would be helpful to schools to be made aware of interventions which are readily available in Ireland and for which there is reasonable evidence of efficacy. Much of the material presented here is based on action research carried out by NEPS over a three year period, which aimed to identify effective interventions for students with literacy difficulties.

Accelerated Accelwrite is a computer based intervention which can be used for individual students. Some schools have found that one teacher can effectively supervise 2 or even 3 students at the same time. Each student would need access to a computer. It is available in Ireland through software providers. It can also be purchased on line through www.dyslexia.com

Approx. €139 for CD and manual, including colour cards. Additional colour cards can be printed from the CD.

Toe by Toe is typically used in one to one or small group settings. It is a highly structured phonological programme, with all the activities and teacher instructions contained within the one book. It is available in Ireland from a range of educational suppliers.

It can also be purchased directly through the website: www.toe-by-toe.co.uk

It costs approx. €45 for a single copy
€225 for a pack of 6

Reading Partners/ Peer Reading

The use of peer tutors to enhance reading skills is well documented. In Irish schools, cross age tutoring between transition students and first year students has been particularly effective. Extensive information about peer learning can be found through the Centre for Paired Learning at the University of Dundee www.dundee.ac/psychology/TRWresources

NEPS has also produced a booklet, The Rough Guide to Reading Partners which can be downloaded from www.education.ie

Literacy Acceleration

This is a whole school approach to literacy and may be particularly suitable for schools where significant numbers of students come into first year with very low reading ages.

The Literacy Acceleration Teachers' Pack of Resources can be purchased for ST£29, plus VAT from:
 AWLED Consultancy Ltd
 PO Box 33
 Newquay
 Cornwall
 TR71YP

This can be ordered on line through www.awled.co.uk

Precision Teaching Approaches

These approaches build on the theory of instructional psychology. The SNIP package introduces students to key curriculum vocabulary for post-primary education, as well as general reading skills. The package involved learning and practising sight words. It can be used on a one to one basis, with groups, or indeed with a whole class group, particularly an extra English group. It is also suitable for a home programme.

SNIP Precision Teaching Pack (credit Carol and Phil Smart)

www.snip-newsletter.co.uk This is a free download.

You can also make your own word probe sheets using the free material from John Taylor's Freebies, www.johnandgwyn.co.uk

Briefly, these are the steps you need to follow once you get online

1. Enter site
2. Choose 'A precision Teaching Probe Sheet Generator'.
3. Choose whichever version suits you best (The larger print version is recommended).
4. Choose the number of words you want on the sheet, by pressing the number on the bottom of the page (e.g. 6, will allow a total of 6 words on the sheet).
5. Insert the 6 words on the grid. You only have to do this once and then the grid will allocate the words in a random pattern throughout the rest of the sheet.

Taskmaster blank playing cards, Catalogue No T428, ST£5.95

Phone 44 (0) 116 270 4286 or contact www.taskmasteronline.co.uk

NEPS has also produced a booklet, *The Rough Guide to Teaching a Sight Vocabulary*. www.education.ie

Resources for Developing Reading Comprehension

New Reading and Thinking, Books 4-6, by AJ Evans. These books provide lots of practice in developing comprehension skills, including deductive reasoning. They are suitable for one to one teaching or for use with a group of students.

There is also a very useful article on how to teach reading comprehension strategies. It is entitled, Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities (in the US the term 'learning disabilities' broadly corresponds with our terms 'specific learning difficulty' or 'dyslexia'). However, the strategies outlined could be used with a wide range of students, although more suited to upper primary and post-primary level. This is a free download from the US National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities.

www.nichcy.org/pubs/newsdiq/nd25txt.htm

Effective Interventions for Teaching Maths Skills

Measuring Up

Produced by Protea Textware Pty Ltd

Measuring Up is a CDROM which can be used in the classroom as a builder of mathematical concepts which have been taught previously by the teacher. It can also be used as a self-paced journey for the student to discover ways of using mathematics in everyday life.

The different aspects of the CD Rom cover everyday needs such as:

- shopping and calculating costs of items per kg
- entertaining and calculating what quantity of meat is needed and what cost this will be
- weighing amounts on scales and estimating
- working out which category this weight will be classed as
- length measured in sporting events as well as in cutting cloth

Dave Tout and Beth Marr have endeavoured to show that the science of Mathematics is part of the everyday weft and weave of living and is nothing to be frightened of.

The graphics add to the enjoyment of the learner as they manipulate the images to work out the quantities and calculate the answers. If they are incorrect, there is help for the learner and a ready reckoner as a calculator is available for the answers but if the learner does not need the calculator, it can be put aside. The basic facts are also taught through graphics with explanation for the fractions and decimals.

For the teacher who has a multi-level class and is catering for individual needs of the various learners, this resource is an invaluable aid in the classroom where the learners can have their individual needs met as they work through the exercises at their own pace with encouragement from the teacher.

More often than not, mathematics is an area which can be left and not tackled with students, by language teachers, as time is taken up with other aspects of language teaching. However this resource combines the language of mathematics with the calculations necessary to find the answers, thus making the mathematic calculations come alive and give the language necessary to interact in everyday situations that the students may come across.

Reviewed by Christine Rhodes, Mount Isa Institute of TAFE

Effective Interventions for Students with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

The following is a list of possible interventions for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. NEPS does not endorse any one approach and schools may be aware of many other effective interventions. However, it was thought that it would be helpful to schools to be made aware of interventions which NEPS psychologists have found useful.

Retracking (Jenny Bates, 1996). This programme was developed for use with students of post-primary school age who are experiencing difficulties in school which puts them at risk of school exclusion. It is a photocopiable resource and works on building the student's awareness and understanding of their behaviour (and the behaviour of others) and helping the student develop new skills. Topics covered include: self-esteem, problem identification, self-control, anger management, problem solving, relaxation and listening skills. It can be used with individuals or small groups.

Published by Devon Educational Psychology Service, this is available in Ireland through ETC and costs approximately €40.

STOP, THINK, DO, Social Skills Training: Supplement for middle years of schooling ages 12-15

(Lindy Petersen with Phil Lewis, 2004).

This manual contains a personal and social skills training program for pre and young adolescents, transitioning from primary to post-primary school. It is a supplement to more comprehensive primary school manuals. This manual also contains strategies for mainstream teachers and coordinators who want to teach specific topics or key competencies in their curriculum that relate to personal and social skills.

Various applications in the middle school are discussed; for students with special needs, for mainstream students, for peer mediation, for developing home-school collaboration and for improving the behaviour management skills of teachers and other school staff.

Order from: lindy.petersen@stopthinkdo.com or from [ACER](#)
Cost approximately €50.

Skillstreaming the Adolescent

Skillstreaming addresses the social skills needs of students who display aggression, immaturity, withdrawal, or other problem behaviours. This newly revised book utilises modelling, role playing, performance feedback, and homework tasks. Students develop competence in dealing with interpersonal conflicts and learn to use self-control. The curriculum contains 50 skill lessons and includes six skill groups: beginning social skills, advanced social skills, dealing with feelings, alternatives to aggression, dealing with stress, and planning skills. The resource includes a book, student manual and program forms booklet. It is by Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein and Dr. Ellen McGinnis and costs approximately €65. ISBN 0-87822-369-X

Escape from Exclusion

This is a 15 session programme for students who are disaffected and at risk of school exclusion. It is for use with students of upper primary and post-primary age. The programme addresses self-awareness, self-regulation, accountability and motivation and involves students in setting their own targets and monitoring progress. It is by Brian Marris and Tina Rae, and published by Paul Chapman and costs in the region of €40.

ISBN 97819043153

Crucial Skills: An Anger Management and Problem Solving Teaching Programme for High School Students

This programme by Penny Johnson and Tina Rae, involves 10 sessions and covers areas such as behaviour and consequences, understanding feelings, strategies for controlling anger and resolving conflict. It is published by Lucky Duck and costs in the region of €30.

ISBN 9781873942673

Anger Control Training

This publication is in three volumes and uses a cognitive behaviour approach to address anger. Therefore the focus is on looking at thoughts, feelings and behaviour and includes role play and relaxation activities. It is by Emma Williams and Rebecca Barlow and costs approximately €85.

ISBN 9780863883347

Quality Circle Time in the Secondary School

This book by Jenny Mosley and Marilyn Tew is published by David Fulton Publishers. It is a handbook of good practice.

Important issues relating to the promotion of Positive Behaviour and Self-Esteem in Secondary Schools

Another resource from Jenny Mosley, this was published by Positive Pres (2005).

101 Games for Social Skills

This resource pack is suitable for adolescents and focuses on five key areas in school; looking, listening, speaking, thinking and concentrating. It is intended for group work. It is written by Jenny Mosley and Helen Sonnet and costs approximately €23.

ISBN 9781855033702

Talkabout- A Communication and Social Skills Package

This resource book is suited to group work and can be used with students of limited ability and those with Asperger's syndrome. It covers self-awareness, communication, conversational skills and assertiveness. The author is Alan Kelly and it is published by Speechmark. It costs approximately €40.

Towards Better Behaviour, Jolly, M and McNamara E. (1994)

The 3 part resource provides a framework and set of practices for Secondary school teachers. The 3 part resource is made up of *The Behaviour Survey Checklist for Secondary Schools (Part I)*, *Assessment (Part II)* and *Intervention (Part III)*.

The behaviour survey checklist and summary chart is a schedule designed for post-primary teachers to:

- i) identify the problematic behaviour of pupils who disrupt lessons
- ii) provide a profile of the lessons in which disruptive behaviour occurs
- iii) identify the circumstances which are associated with disruptive behaviour
- iv) provide a profile of the nature of the disruptive behaviour
- v) describe the pupils academic ability and social skills in the context of his class

The Assessment section consists of four checklists/observation schedules, an assessment model for pupil motivation and an assessment strategy for pupil compliance.

- The Pupil Management Checklist.
- The Pupil Behaviour Schedule.
- The Classroom Situation Checklist.
- The off-Task Behavioural Analysis Schedule.

This intervention section of the pack is a resource consisting of a wide range of protocols, templates, contracts, teacher monitored on report protocols, pupil/teacher conjoint on report protocols, and pupil self- management materials. Purchase of this resource includes photocopying rights.

Websites

SEAL

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning for secondary schools (SEAL) is a whole school approach to promoting social and emotional skills development, in the UK. This site has downloadable resources to assist schools in planning and implementing a social and emotional curriculum.

Resources for Working with Parents

In developing work with parents, this text is helpful and clearly presented.

Parent-Teacher Partnership: Practical Approaches to Meeting Special Educational Needs. Resource Materials for Teachers (Blamires, Robertson and Blamires (1997) London. David Fulton Publishers.

