



Student Support Policy

Continuum of Support Framework

May 2026

Table of Contents

1 Introduction	3
1.1 Note on Terminology	3
1.2 Context	3
1.3 Aims of the Student Support Policy	4
1.4 Definition of SEN.....	4
2 Continuum of Support	5
2.1 Phases of Education	5
2.2 Whole School and Subject Classroom Support — All.....	5
2.3 School Support — Some	6
2.4 School Support Plus — Few	6
2.5 Provision Map.....	6
3 Student Support Team	7
3.1 Coordination and Leadership	7
3.2 Teaching, Learning and Support	7
3.3 Partnerships.....	7
4 Roles and Responsibilities	8
4.1 Principal and Deputy Principal.....	8
4.2 Year Heads.....	8
4.3 Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO)	9
4.4 Guidance Counsellor	9
4.5 Special Education Teacher Link (SET Link).....	10
4.6 Subject Teachers	10
4.7 Special Education Teachers (SET).....	11
4.8 Tutors.....	12
4.9 Student Support Assistants (SSA).....	12
5 Partnership Roles	13
5.1 Students and Student Voice.....	13
5.2 Parents, Guardians and Carers.....	14

5.3 External Agencies	14
5.4 National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and SENO	15
5.5 National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)	15
6 Autism Special Classes (LS11)	16
6.1 Aims of the Autism Special Classes	16
6.2 Admission and Eligibility	17
6.3 Provision and Support.....	17
7 SEN Department Procedures.....	18
7.1 Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LP)	18
7.2 Irish Exemption.....	19
7.3 Assistive Technology.....	20
7.4 Reasonable Accommodations at State Examinations (RACE) and DARE	20
7.5 Visiting Teacher Service	21
Appendix A Provision Map	22
Appendix B Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations	28

Introduction

Galway Educate Together Secondary School's Student Support Policy is informed by the [Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes](#), which outline the principles, structures and processes required to support the meaningful inclusion of all young people in their learning and in the life of the school community.

This policy reflects a whole-school, inclusive approach to student support, encompassing academic, social, emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical and wellbeing needs. It is underpinned by the principles of inclusive education, effective teaching and learning, collaboration and evidence-informed practice, in line with the quality framework set out in [Looking at Our School \(LAOS\)](#).

The policy recognises that all students may require support at different points in their school journey, and that special educational needs/additional educational needs (SEN) encompass a broad range of needs which may impact a student's ability to access, participate in and benefit from education.

Support for students is organised through the Continuum of Support, which is embedded within proactive, preventative and inclusive whole-school practices and structures. This framework supports the early identification of need and the provision of appropriate supports for all students, including those with SEN , at each stage of their educational journey, including key transition points.

This approach ensures that supports are provided on a graduated basis, with those students who have the greatest level of need receiving the greatest level of support.

Note on Terminology

The terminology used throughout this policy reflects the language required by the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in legislation and official documentation. We acknowledge that this language may not always reflect how our students and their parents/guardians/carers identify themselves or their families.

At Galway Educate Together Secondary School, we believe that every student's voice matters. We have engaged with our students and parents/guardians/carers in open and honest conversation about this, and we are committed to continuing that dialogue. We want all members of our school community to know that where official terminology appears in this policy, it is simply to ensure we meet the requirements of the frameworks

within which we work and to ensure that every student is supported to the fullest possible capacity with all available resources.

Context

This policy is situated within the context of an Educate Together school, where equality, respect, participation and inclusion are central to all aspects of school life. The school recognises and values diversity within its community, including neurodiversity, and is committed to creating an environment where all students feel a sense of belonging and are supported to engage meaningfully in their education.

The school acknowledges that students present with a wide range of strengths, needs and experiences, and that barriers to learning and participation may arise for different reasons at different times. These may relate to learning, communication, social interaction, emotional wellbeing, attendance, sensory regulation, or access to the school environment.

In this context, student support is understood as a proactive, preventative and responsive whole-school responsibility, where all staff work collaboratively to identify and respond to need. Special educational needs are understood within this broader framework, and supports are provided to ensure that all students can access, participate in and benefit from education.

This approach is implemented through a coordinated system of supports, including teaching and learning practices, wellbeing structures, special education provision and collaboration with external agencies, working together within the Continuum of Support.

Aims of Galway Educate Together Secondary School *Student Support Policy*

The aim of this policy is to provide a coherent, inclusive and whole-school framework for student support that identifies and removes barriers to access, participation, engagement and achievement for all students.

The policy aims to ensure that all students experience belonging, connectedness and success in their learning and in the life of the school community.

The school aims to provide supports that are student-centred, needs-based, evidence-informed and responsive, and that reflect the changing needs of students over time.

Support is organised through the Continuum of Support, ensuring that students receive the right level of support at the right time, with those who have the greatest level of need receiving the greatest level of support.

Definition of SEN

In line with the ethos of Educate Together, the school is committed to providing an inclusive, equality-based learning environment where all students are supported to participate fully in school life, achieve their potential, and experience a sense of belonging, connectedness and respect.

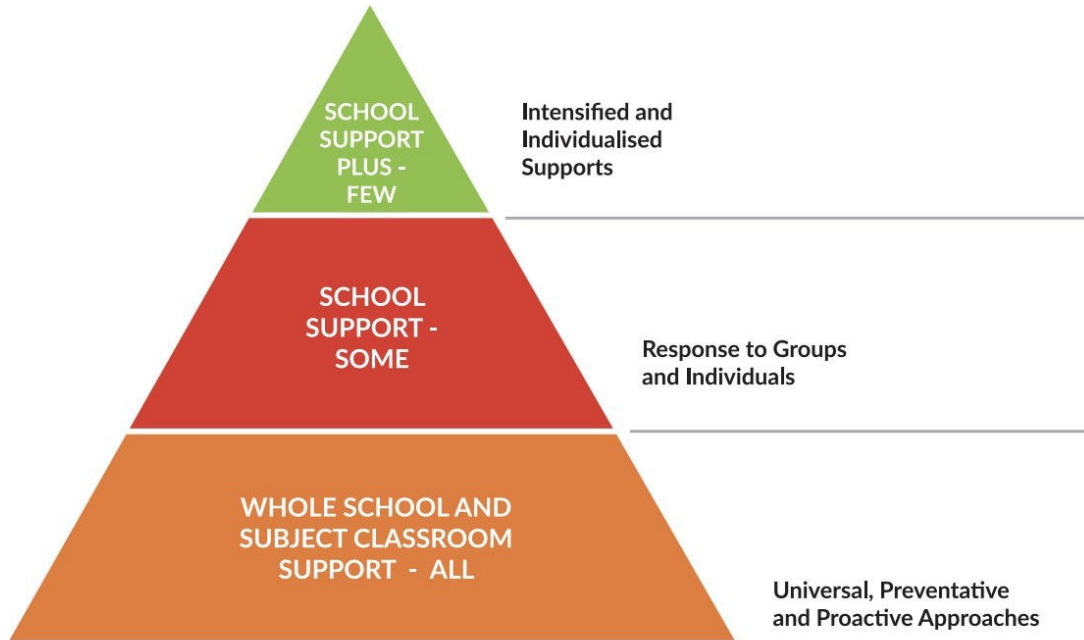
The school adopts the statutory definition of special educational needs as set out in the [Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act \(2004\)](#), which defines special educational needs as:

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

The school recognises that this definition places emphasis on a student’s capacity to access, participate in and benefit from education, rather than on diagnosis alone.

Consistent with the *Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes*, special educational needs are understood within an inclusive education system which seeks to identify and remove barriers to access, participation and achievement, and supports are organised through the Continuum of Support using a structured problem-solving approach.

Continuum of Support



The Continuum of Support (Graphic from p.30 Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes)

Galway Educate Together Secondary School uses the Continuum of Support as the framework for identifying students' strengths and needs, planning and providing support, and monitoring and reviewing students' response to intervention over time. This process follows a structured approach of identify, plan, implement and review, ensuring that supports are responsive and adjusted as required.

This approach is informed by the NCSE Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes, which promote a whole-school, problem-solving model of support.

The Continuum of Support recognises that special educational needs/additional educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to more significant, and from transient to enduring. It provides a graduated and responsive approach, ensuring that students receive the level of support appropriate to their needs, with those requiring the greatest level of support receiving the most intensive provision.

This framework is embedded within a proactive, preventative and inclusive whole-school approach, supporting all students to access, participate in and benefit from education.

The school develops and maintains a Continuum of Support log for each year group, which is reviewed and updated as supports change throughout the school year. There is fluidity and movement between stages, and students may require increased support for a short-term intervention at any point during the school year. Any movement between stages is carefully considered, taking into account the needs of the student, the supports available, and the resources within the school.

At each level of support, the Student Support Team works in collaboration with students and parents/guardians/carers regarding the programmes and supports that are in place for their child.

Phases of Education

Our school recognises that each phase of second-level education brings its own unique challenges and opportunities for our students. For example, First year marks a significant transition from primary to secondary school, Third Year and Sixth Year bring increased preparation for state examinations. Transition Year, while offering a varied and enriching experience through trips, work experience, and a wide range of activities, can also present significant challenges for many students.

For this reason, our approach to student support is proactive and responsive at every stage. These phases are reflected in our Continuum of Support and Provision Map, where additional proactive supports are put in place at a whole-school level for all students. Where further need is identified, supports can be tailored and strengthened at the School Support and School Support Plus stages, ensuring that every student receives the right level of support at the right time, and where appropriate resources are available.

Whole School and Subject Classroom Support - All

This level applies to all students and represents the foundation of the school's inclusive practice. It focuses on high-quality teaching, learning and whole-school supports which aim to prevent barriers to learning and promote participation for all students. The provision of Subject Classroom Support - All is the responsibility of the subject teacher

School Support – Some

This level applies to students who require additional targeted support. Needs are identified through assessment, observation and consultation, and supports are planned using a structured problem-solving approach.

A Student Support Plan is developed, outlining the student's strengths and priority needs, targets and strategies. Supports may include in-class support, small group interventions or short-term targeted support. Progress is monitored and reviewed regularly.

This level of support involves the allocation of one or more special education teachers (SET).

School Support Plus - Few

This level applies to students who require more intensive, individualised and coordinated support.

A detailed Student Support Plan is developed, including clearly defined targets, strategies and review processes. Supports are closely monitored and involve collaboration with parents/guardians/carers and, where appropriate, external agencies.

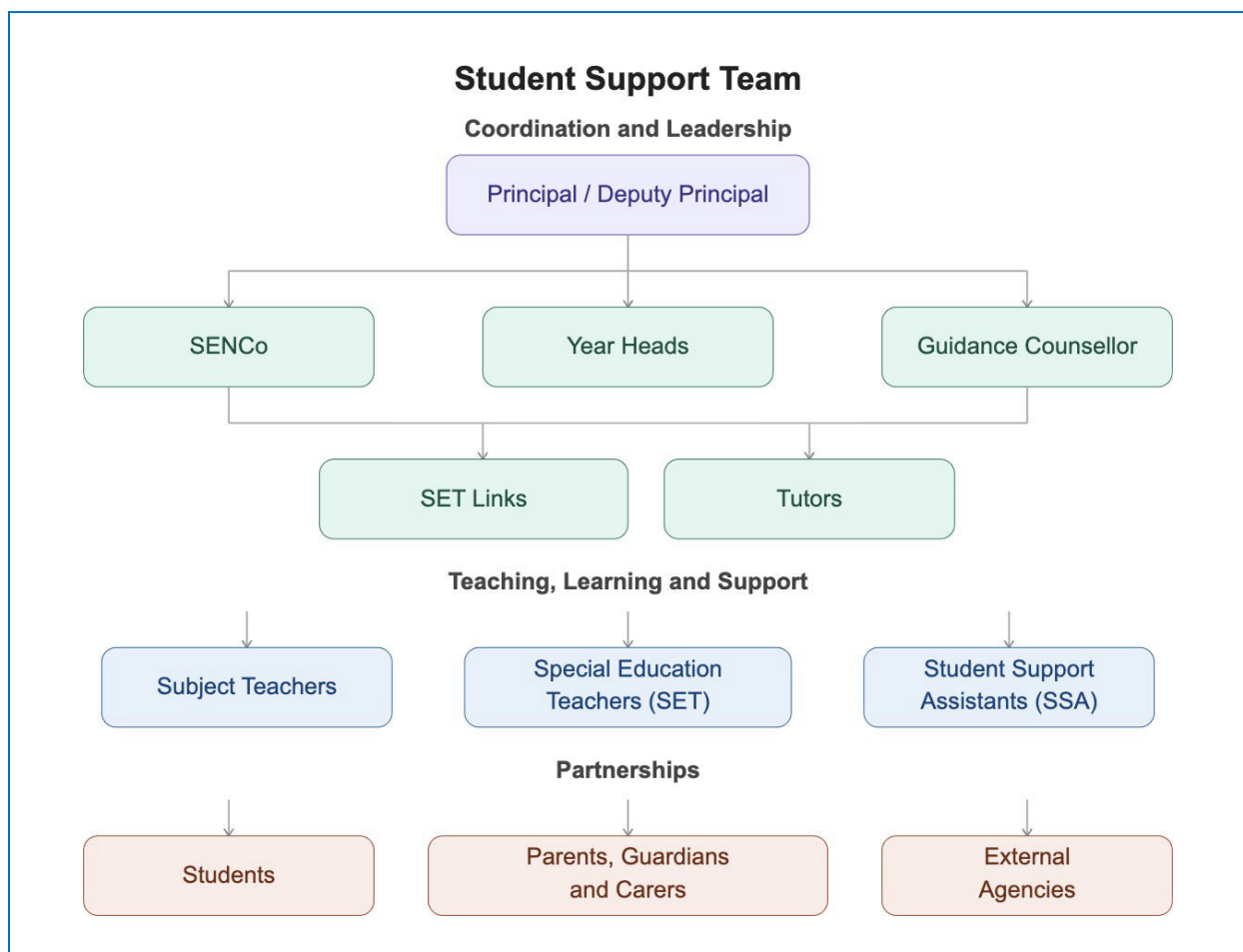
This level of support involves the allocation of one or more special education teachers (SET).

Provision Map

A Provision Map is a working log of the proactive and responsive supports available and in place within our school, providing examples of interventions at each level of the Continuum of Support. A copy of our Provision Map can be found in the Appendix.

Student Support Team

Structure of Student Support Team



The Student Support Team is a whole-school team responsible for coordinating the identification, planning, implementation and review of supports across the Continuum of Support. The team supports a proactive, preventative and responsive approach to student support and ensures that provision is consistent, coordinated and centered on the needs of the students.

Coordination and Leadership

Members of the Student Support Team at coordination and leadership level include the Principal, Deputy Principal, SENCO, Guidance Counsellor, Year Heads, Tutors, Special Education Teachers and SET Links.

The SET Link, may include staff with responsibility for key areas of provision such as EAL, Autism Special Class, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Year groups, as well as other targeted support areas within the school. SET Leaders contribute to the planning, implementation and review of supports within their area and work collaboratively with the Student Support Team to ensure a coordinated approach across the school.

Teaching, Learning and Support

Teachers and Student Support Assistants are central to the delivery of provision across the Continuum of Support. All staff are part of the Student Support Team and contribute to supporting students through their teaching and support.

In line with a whole-school, inclusive approach to teaching and learning, interventions are provided across all levels of the Continuum of Support:

- Support for All
- School Support (Some)
- School Support Plus (Few)

Partnerships

Student support is strengthened through collaboration and partnership between the School, Students, Parents/Guardians/Carers and where appropriate, external agencies.

In line with the Educate Together ethos of equality, respect and student voice, this partnership approach is central to the effective implementation of the Continuum of Support and ensures that supports are informed, coordinated and responsive to the needs of the student.

Student and parent/guardian/carer voice are valued and contribute to the identification of need, the planning of supports and the review of progress. Collaboration with external agencies further supports the school in responding to a range of needs across the continuum.

Student Support Roles

Coordination and Leadership Roles

Principal and Deputy Principal

The Principal and Deputy Principal provide leadership in the development and implementation of a whole-school approach to student support.

Principal and Deputy Principal:

- Establish and lead the core Student Support Team, delegating roles and responsibilities for the effective allocation of resources and timetabling based on identified needs across the Continuum of Support.
- Ensures the development, implementation, and ongoing review of inclusive whole-school policies and procedures, communicating with the Board of Management on the deployment of Special Education Teaching resources.
- Ensures whole-school procedures are in place to facilitate meaningful collaboration with Students, Parents/Guardians/Carers, and external professionals in all matters relating to special education provision.

Year Heads

Year Heads are key members of the Student Support Team and play a central role in the coordination, monitoring and oversight of student wellbeing, attendance and progress within their year group.

Year Heads:

- Monitor student attendance, engagement, behaviour and academic progress.
- contribute to the identification of students requiring additional supports.
- Support the planning, implementation and review of interventions across the Continuum of Support.
- Work collaboratively within the Student Support Team to ensure supports are consistent and responsive across subject and wellbeing areas.
- Maintain oversight of students receiving targeted and individualised supports within their year group.
- Support communication with Parents/Guardians/Carers in relation to student progress and wellbeing and share appropriate Student information with The Student Support Team, Tutors, Teachers and SSAs.

Special Education Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is a key member of the Student Support Team and has responsibility for the coordination of provision for students with additional and special educational needs across the school, in line with the Continuum of Support.

The SENCO:

- Coordinates the identification of student needs using assessment data, observation and consultation.

- Leads the planning, development and review of Student Support Plans.
- Oversees the Student Register, Student Support Files and Continuum of Support Plan.
- Supports teachers in the implementation of effective, evidence-informed strategies.
- Coordinates applications for supports and resources, including referrals to and liaison with external agencies.
- Works collaboratively with Students, Parents/Guardians/Carers and external professionals to support student needs.
- Supports transitions into, through and beyond the school for students with SEN
- Contributes to whole-school planning, policy development and CPD in relation to student support.

Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor is a key member of the Student Support Team and supports the wellbeing, personal development and educational progression of students across the Continuum of Support.

The Guidance Counsellor:

- Supports students in the areas of personal, social, educational and career development.
- Contributes to the identification of student needs, particularly in relation to wellbeing and engagement.
- Provides short-term individual and group support.
- Supports students in making informed decisions regarding subject choice, pathways and future planning.
- Contributes to the development and implementation of whole-school wellbeing and guidance programmes.
- Works collaboratively within the Student Support Team to support students requiring targeted and individualised supports.
- Contributes to referral processes and engagement with external supports.
- Supports transitions into, through and beyond the school for all students.

Special Education Teacher Link

SET Links are members of the Student Support Team who provide leadership and coordination within specific areas of provision across the school.

SET Links may include responsibility for areas such as Year Groups, EAL, Autism Special Class, Nurture and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS/PBST).

SET Links:

- Support the planning, implementation and review of Student Support Files and Plans within their area of responsibility.
- Contribute to the identification of student needs and appropriate interventions.
- Support staff in implementing targeted and individualised strategies and supports.
- Contribute to referral processes and applications for supports, including engagement with external agencies where appropriate.
- Monitor the effectiveness of provision within their area and contribute to review processes.
- Work collaboratively with the SENCO and wider Student Support Team to ensure a coordinated, whole-school approach.
- Contribute to the development of resources, practices and CPD within their area.

Teaching, Learning and Support Roles

Subject Teachers

Within a whole-school approach to inclusion, the subject teacher has primary responsibility for the teaching, learning, and assessment of all young people in their classrooms, including those with special educational needs ([Guidelines for Post Primary Schools Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes](#)). In this role, the Subject Teacher:

- Embed UDL principles in their planning and teaching practice, ensuring that all students can access, participate and engage meaningfully in learning through flexible and inclusive approaches to curriculum delivery, assessment, and classroom environment ([Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Reporting \(LTAR\) Policy](#))
- Actively engages with information shared by the Student Support Team in relation to individual student needs, including Student Support Files, Plans, and the Student Support Register.
- Creates an inclusive learning environment that supports the participation and wellbeing of all students.
- Uses flexible teaching and assessment approaches to support the needs of all learners.

- Identifies and communicates concerns about a student's needs to Student Support Team Leaders and Parents/Guardians/Carers as appropriate.
- Works collaboratively with the Special Education Teaching Team.
- Uses information from Student Support Files and Student Support Plans to inform planning and teaching.
- Contributes to reviews of Student Support Plans by sharing information on student progress.
- Keeps Parents/Guardians/Carers informed of their child's progress through meetings and school reporting.

Special Education Teachers (SET)

All teachers may be allocated Special Education Teaching (SET) hours as part of their timetable. Any teacher with allocated SET hours has the responsibilities of a Special Education Teacher in relation to those hours and the students they support.

The Special Education Teacher provides additional teaching support to young people in mainstream classes who have been identified as having special educational needs.

[\(Guidelines for Post Primary Schools Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes\)](#)

In this role, the Special Education Teacher:

- Leads the identification of need and provision of support using the Continuum of Support problem-solving process.
- Develops and maintains Student Support Files and Student Support Plans in collaboration with Students, Subject Teachers, Parents/Guardians/Carers.
- Uses evidence-informed teaching approaches and monitors each student's response to intervention.
- Sets and reviews appropriate SMART targets in the Student Support Plan.
- Provides support across a variety of settings including Co-Teaching, small group Learning Support, individual Learning Support, EAL Support or Autism Special Class Teaching.
- Shares relevant information with Subject Teachers to support inclusive practice.
- Engages with external agencies and services as appropriate.
- Supports transition planning for Students with special educational needs.
- Engages in ongoing professional learning to develop knowledge and skills in supporting Students with special educational needs.

Tutors

Tutors support the day-to-day monitoring of student wellbeing, engagement and organisation. Tutors:

- Monitor attendance, engagement and general wellbeing for the Students in their Tutor Class.
- Support communication and collaboration with Students and their Parents/Guardians/Carers.
- Identify concerns and refer to the appropriate members of The Student Support Team.

Student Support Assistants – SSA

The role of Student Support Assistant reflects what is referred to as Special Needs Assistant (SNA) in Department of Education and NCSE documentation. The role and responsibilities of the SNA is outlined in the Department of Education Circular: The Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme to support teachers in meeting the care needs of some children with special educational needs, arising from a disability. ([Department of Education Circular 0030/2014](#))

Student Support Assistants support students' care needs, access to the school environment and participation in school life, and play an important role in promoting inclusion and wellbeing across the school.

SSAs work as part of the wider Student Support Team and support students through a combination of proactive and responsive strategies, helping to create an environment where students can engage meaningfully in learning and school life. SSAs:

- Support students with care needs, including personal care, mobility and safety.
- Assist students in accessing the school environment and participating in school life
- Support engagement, organisation and task completion as directed by The Student Support Team.
- Assist with the use of assistive technology and equipment.
- Support student regulation and wellbeing, including movement breaks and sensory supports.
- Contribute to the implementation of agreed strategies, as directed by The Student Support Team.

- Communicate relevant observations to appropriate members of The Student Support Team.
- Develop practice documents to support the overall planning and timetabling of SSA support.

Partnership Roles

Students

Students are central to their own learning and are supported to participate meaningfully in their education and in all aspects of school life.

Students are encouraged and supported to:

- Participate in decisions about their learning and support.
- Identify and communicate their strengths, interests, preferences and support needs.
- Use agreed supports and strategies that help them access learning, regulate and participate.
- Contribute to target-setting and review in a strengths-based way.
- Have their sensory, communication, social and emotional needs understood and reasonably accommodated.
- Attend and participate in school life with appropriate support, recognising that participation may look different for each student.

Student Voice and Participation

In line with the Educate Together ethos, student voice is valued and respected at all levels of the school community. The Student Support Team recognise that some students may find it difficult to communicate their needs, and for this reason a variety of avenues are available to students to express their voice, share their needs, or request support. These include:

- Daily check-in with their Tutor each morning.
- In-person/email communication with their Tutor or Subject Teachers.
- Online communication via Microsoft Teams.

- SET or SSA Supports.
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, visual supports, or other additional means of communication for students who require alternative methods to express their needs.

Parents/Guardians/Carers

Parents/Guardians/Carers are key partners in supporting student learning, wellbeing and development. Collaboration with parents/guardians/carers supports a shared understanding of student need and strengthens the effectiveness of supports.

Parents/guardians are supported and encouraged to:

- Share relevant information regarding their child's strengths, needs and development.
- Work collaboratively with the school in identifying concerns and planning for support.
- Participate in meetings and discussions regarding student progress and intervention.
- Support attendance, organisation and follow-through on agreed strategies where possible.
- Provide relevant external report and updates, where available.
- Communicate concerns in a timely way so that supports can be reviewed.

External Agencies

The Student Support Team works collaboratively with a range of external agencies to support students with additional and special educational needs. These supports assist the school in the identification, planning, implementation and review of provision in line with the Continuum of Support. Engagement with external agencies is based on identified need and takes place at whole-school, targeted and individual levels.

The Student Support Team recognises that external agencies operate within their own policies, procedures and service availability, which are outside the school's remit.

In this context, the Student Support Team:

- Supports referral processes to appropriate services and facilitates appropriate collaboration between External Agencies and the Student Support Team.

- Supports Parents/Guardians/Carers to identify the types of professional supports required to meet students' needs.
- Works with Parents/Guardians/Carers to support access to services, where possible.
- Interprets and implements recommendations from professional reports where possible.

National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO)

The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) supports schools in the allocation and organisation of resources for students with additional and special educational needs.

This includes:

- applications and reviews for Student Support Assistant (SNA) allocation
- applications for school transport
- determination of eligibility for ASD Special Class placement
- applications for assistive technology grants

In addition, the NCSE provides guidance and support to the school in relation to:

- inclusive practice and SEN provision
- implementation of interventions and programmes
- continuing professional development (CPD) for staff
- advice on supporting students with a range of additional educational needs

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

The school is supported by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), which provides access to an assigned educational psychologist. NEPS supports the school through a consultation and problem-solving model, aligned with the Continuum of Support.

NEPS support includes:

- **Support for All:** guidance on inclusive practice, wellbeing, behaviour and policy development
- **School Support - Some:** consultation with staff to develop and implement interventions and programmes to support groups of students

- **School Support Plus- Few:** involvement in assessment and intervention planning for a small number of students with more complex needs on a priority basis, usually 1 to 2 students per school year.
- NEPS supports the staff and students at the school during critical incidents through guidance and psychological support.

Autism Special Classes (LS11)

Within the Student Support structure Galway Educate Together Secondary School has two Autism Special Classes (LS11) each with an enrolment of up to six students, as sanctioned and supported by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Each class is supported by an allocation of 1.5 SET and 2 SSAs.

The Autism Special Classes form an integral part of the school's inclusive, whole-school approach to student support, providing a structured and supportive learning environment while promoting meaningful participation in school life. Students enrolled in the Autism Special Classes are dually enrolled within a tutor group and the LS11 class.

Aims of the Autism Special Classes

The Autism Special Classes aim to:

- Recognise and respond to the individual needs of autistic students promoting meaningful inclusion within their classes and across all aspects of school life, ensuring every student can access and participate in their curriculum and community of the school.
- Support students to access, participate in and benefit from education in a way that recognises and builds on their individual strengths, interests and learning styles.
- Provide a structured, sensory-aware and predictable environment that reduces barriers to learning and promotes wellbeing.
- Celebrate and affirm each student's neurodivergent identity while supporting their emotional wellbeing and sense of self.
- Develop students' self-awareness, self-advocacy and self-determination so they can understand their own needs and communicate them with confidence.
- Support students to build meaningful connections and a genuine sense of belonging within the school community.
- Work in partnership with Students, Parents/Guardians/Carers to ensure the environment, routines and approaches reflect each student's individual needs,

collaborating to problem-solve and agree on appropriate targets and interventions that best support each student's learning and wellbeing.

Admission and Eligibility

The Admissions Policy of the school outlines the availability of places and the process for enrolment in the Autism Special Classes.

A parent/guardian/carer seeking to apply for a place in an Autism Special Class must notify the school's Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO). The SENO will determine eligibility and may issue a Special Class Eligibility Certificate where the student meets the criteria set by the NCSE.

The Autism Special Classes are established in line with NCSE policy, and enrolment criteria and review processes are subject to change in accordance with NCSE guidance and circulars.

Provision and Support

Teaching and supports are planned and delivered in line with the Continuum of Support, support is fluid and adapts to the needs of the individual students. Supports are informed by ongoing assessment, collaboration with Student and their Parents/Guardians/Carers and, where appropriate, external professionals.

Students in the Autism Special Classes are supported through a combination of:

- Individualised and small-group SET
- Targeted interventions and structured supports .
- Co-teaching within mainstream classes – SET will support students within the mainstream subject classes.
- SSA support.

SEN Department Procedures

The Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LP)

[The Level 2 Learning Programmes](#) (L2LP), developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), are designed for a small number of students with special educational needs who have General Learning Disabilities in the low mild to high

moderate range, and whose needs are such that they require a programme aligned to their abilities and level of support required to access learning.

Identification of Students for the L2LP is a collaborative, evidence-informed process involving formal and informal assessment, consultation with the Student, Parents/Guardians/Carers, the Student Support Team and where appropriate, external professionals

The programme provides a relevant, flexible and meaningful curriculum, with a strong emphasis on the development of functional skills, independence, communication, social development and preparation for life beyond school, alongside appropriate academic learning.

At Junior Cycle, students engage with the Level 2 Learning Programme (L2LP) through Priority Learning Units (PLUs) within the Junior Cycle Framework. At Senior Cycle, students may progress to the Level 2 Learning Programme – Senior Cycle (L2LP-SC), which builds on prior learning and supports transition to further education, training and adult life.

Students who successfully complete the programme are awarded certification appropriate to the level completed, recognising their learning and achievements across a range of areas.

In line with a whole-school approach, all teachers have responsibility for planning for, supporting and assessing students undertaking L2LP, ensuring that learning is inclusive, appropriately differentiated and meaningful. Ongoing collaboration with Parents/Guardians/Carers and relevant external agencies is central to supporting student progress and planning for transitions.

Irish Exemption

Irish is a core subject within the curriculum, as determined by the Department of Education (DoE). The DoE promotes an inclusive educational approach, and this is reflected in practice within the school. Students are therefore given every reasonable opportunity to participate in the learning of Irish for as long as possible and at a level appropriate to their needs.

However, in certain exceptional circumstances, it is recognised that an exemption from the study of Irish may be in the best interests of the student. The circumstances under which an exemption may be considered are outlined in Department of Education Circular 0055/2022.

The school implements the procedures for exemption from the study of Irish in line with Department of Education Circular 0055/2022. Exemptions are granted only in exceptional circumstances and must meet one of the specific criteria outlined in the Circular. Applications for exemption must be made in writing by a parent/guardian (or by the student if over 18) to the Principal.

Irish language requirements for entry to third level courses/programmes of study are at the discretion of the relevant colleges and universities. These requirements may be subject to change and it is therefore important that Students/Parents/Guardians/Carers are aware of such requirements. Information on third level entry requirements can be accessed on relevant College or University websites.

Students who have an Exemption from the Study of Irish are supported within the Continuum of Support and some may access short or long term Learning Support, alternative learning or remain with the Irish class relative to their needs and available resources.

Assistive Technology

Decisions regarding the use of assistive technology are informed by assessment data, professional reports and identified functional need, and are based on the principle that the technology is necessary to support access, participation and demonstration of learning. Consideration is also given to the criteria for reasonable accommodations in state examinations (RACE) to ensure that students are familiar with and can effectively use assistive technology as part of their normal way of working

The school applies for the NCSE Assistive Technology Grant in line with [Department of Education Circular 0010/2013 Assistive Technology Equipment Scheme](#), and in consultation with the NCSE. The Student Support Team liaises with the Department of Education and the NCSE to secure and facilitate access to specialist equipment (e.g. tablets, laptops, mobile devices, hearing devices, assistive software) for students with identified needs where such supports are required to access the curriculum.

Reasonable Accommodations at State Examinations (RACE) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)

The Student Support Team completes applications for [Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations \(RACE\)](#) and the [Disability Access Route to Education \(DARE\)](#) in line with the guidelines set out by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) and the Central Applications Office (CAO). The SEN team work collaboratively with students, parents/guardians and relevant staff to identify students who may be eligible for supports and to gather the necessary evidence to support applications.

Applications are made only where students meet the specified eligibility criteria and where there is clear evidence of need and a history of appropriate supports in place, in line with national guidelines. Decisions are informed by assessment data, professional reports and the student's normal way of working in school.

Parents/Guardians/Carers and Students play an important role in supporting the DARE application process, including liaising with relevant external professionals and ensuring that required documentation is submitted within the relevant timelines.

Visiting Teacher Service

The Visiting Teacher Service, provided by the NCSE, offers specialist support to students with hearing impairment and visual impairment in Post Primary Schools. Visiting Teachers work directly with Students, Parents/Guardians/Carers and school staff to provide guidance, resources, and strategies to support access to learning and full participation in school life. Where a student has an identified hearing or visual impairment, the Student Support Team will:

- Liaise with the Visiting Teacher Service to ensure appropriate supports and accommodations are in place.
- Support and coordinate applications to the State Examinations Commission for reasonable accommodations, in collaboration with the Visiting Teacher.
- Support applications to the NCSE for assistive technology and any other relevant resources, as appropriate.

Provision Map

Galway Educate Together Secondary School

This Provision Map is a working log of proactive and responsive supports available and in place within the school, providing examples of interventions at each level of the Continuum of Support.

Student Supports — Transition, Wellbeing and Learning		
Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome night for 6th class students transitioning to 1st year • Additional school visits for students transitioning to 1st year • Transition booklet and induction programme for all year groups • Tutor programme • Universal Design for Learning (UDL) • Restorative Practice • Nurture Programme • Ethical Education, SPHE, CSPE • Ready to Learn • Visual supports, schedules, scaffolds and proformas • Brain breaks within classes • Gross motor room, nurture room, sensory supports • Lunchtime clubs and after-school clubs • Home Learning Club • Big Brother Big Sister • Whole-school Positive Behaviour Support lessons • Study skills lessons across all year groups • Student Support Team • Student voice and Student Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with SENCO • SSA support at Welcome Night • Individual visits to GETSS with SSA support • Parent/Guardian and student meetings with SENCO and ASC teacher • Organisation support during tutor time • Tutor time in Autism Special Class • Sharing of information on students with additional needs • Adapted resources for Restorative Practice / Anti-Bullying • Assistive Technology as recommended • Differentiated home learning • Numeracy focus tutor morning and numeracy support classes • Small group maths classes • Co-teaching • Student referral system • Positive Behaviour Support Plans • EAL support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Special Class provision • Individualised Assistive Technology • Seating supports (wobble cushions, wedges) • Sensory room access • Supported and independent movement breaks • Gross motor room • OT and Physio recommendations • Use of slant boards • JC Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LPs) • NEPS / NCSE / CAMHS — outside agency links • Individualised School Support Plans • Regular SSA check-ins

Positive Behaviour Support

Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Induction programme for all year groups ● RELATE (NCSE) ● Tutor programme ● Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ● Restorative Practice (whole-school) ● Nurture Programme (universal elements) ● Ethical Education, SPHE, CSPE ● Ready to Learn programme ● Visual supports, schedules, scaffolds and proformas ● Brain breaks within classes ● Gross motor room, Nurture room, sensory supports ● Clear break-time routines and seating plans ● Big Brother Big Sister programme ● Lunchtime and after-school clubs ● Home Learning Club ● Staff supports: Tutors, Guidance, Student Support Team, SENCO, SSAs, SETs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Belonging Plus — small group interventions ● Peer interventions through Belonging Plus ● Targeted induction supports ● Small group social skills / emotional regulation supports ● Targeted Nurture Programme (group-based) ● Check-ins with a key adult ● Restorative conversations and targeted restorative circles ● Co-teaching to support engagement and behaviour ● Flexible grouping within classes ● Adjusted seating plans ● Targeted sensory strategies and movement breaks ● Organisation and self-management supports ● Short-term behaviour targets and monitoring ● Home–school communication plans ● Student Support Team review and monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check & Connect (NCSE) ● RELATE (NCSE) ● Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) — individualised plans ● One-to-one behaviour and regulation interventions ● Belonging Plus — individual intervention ● Hot to Cool programme ● Alert Programme — How Does Your Engine Run? ● Individual Nurture Programme supports ● Individual Behaviour Support Plans ● Designated support teacher ● Multi-agency collaboration (NEPS, NCSE, external professionals) ● Targeted attendance and school avoidance interventions ● Crisis support and de-escalation planning ● Reintegration planning following incidents or absence ● Safeguarding and child protection procedures ● Nurture supports — access to kitchen, preferred foods

Social and Emotional Learning

Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative Practice ● Nurture Programme ● Tutor check-ins ● Belonging Plus programme ● Student Support Team ● Wellbeing curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted nurture interventions ● Small group emotional regulation supports ● Games club ● Walking club ● Nurture social groups ● Quiet spaces at break and lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individualised emotional regulation supports ● Sensory room access ● LS11 Autism Special Class ● Use of fidgets ● Individualised School Support Plans

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stand Up Week ● Student voice initiatives 		
--	--	--

Self-Management and Organisational Skills		
Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tutor programme ● Study skills lessons ● Visual schedules and scaffolds ● Assistive Technology ● Colour-coded timetables ● Graphic organisers ● Learning-to-learn strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organisation support during tutor time ● Targeted study skills interventions ● Self-monitoring checklists ● Belonging Plus — 1st years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individualised organisational supports ● Assistive Technology for organisation ● Transition support plans ● Outside agency collaboration

Literacy		
Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● UDL approaches and visual supports ● Use of technology ● Vocabulary enrichment across subjects ● DEAR and library access ● Whole-school focus on literacy across the curriculum ● Explicit teaching of key vocabulary in all subject areas ● Reading strategies taught across subjects ● Writing scaffolds, sentence starters and paragraph frames ● Graphic organisers and planning templates ● Structured feedback on written work ● Explicit instruction in research skills and referencing ● Opportunities for oral language development across subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CAT4 and NGRT follow-up interventions ● Small group literacy support ● Targeted reading comprehension interventions ● Targeted writing support ● Assistive technology for literacy (text-to-speech, speech-to-text) ● Literacy-focused co-teaching ● Pre-teaching of subject-specific vocabulary ● Targeted support with spelling and proofreading ● Modified reading materials ● RACE accommodations ● Vocabulary enrichment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individualised literacy intervention programmes ● Individualised Literacy Support Plans ● Diagnostic assessment and progress monitoring ● Multi-agency collaboration (NEPS, NCSE, external specialists) ● One-to-one literacy intervention sessions ● Individual assistive technology support ● Exam accommodations and RACE supports

Numeracy		
Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whole-school focus on numeracy across the curriculum ● Tutor booklets incorporating numeracy and organisational skills ● Explicit teaching of mathematical language and symbols ● Use of real-life contexts to teach numeracy ● Use of technology to support numeracy ● Numeracy strategies embedded in subject teaching ● Visual supports and worked examples ● Opportunities for mathematical reasoning and problem solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small group numeracy support ● Targeted numeracy intervention classes ● Numeracy-focused co-teaching ● Pre-teaching and revision of key concepts ● Use of concrete materials and visual models ● Targeted support with mathematical language ● Modified tasks and assessments ● Guidance and SEN support input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual numeracy intervention programmes ● Individualised Numeracy Support Plans ● Diagnostic assessment and progress tracking ● Multi-agency collaboration (NEPS, NCSE, external specialists) ● One-to-one numeracy intervention sessions ● Use of assistive technology for numeracy ● Exam accommodations and RACE supports

Physical, Sensory and Medical		
Support for All <i>Whole-school and universal supports</i>	School Support — Some <i>Targeted and additional supports</i>	School Support Plus — Few <i>Intensive and individualised supports</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Movement breaks within lessons ● Whole-school break procedure ● Gross motor room ● Visual prompts ● Sensory and physical audits ● Fidgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensory room access ● Seating supports ● Assistive Technology ● Walking club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● OT and Physio recommendations ● Individualised sensory plans ● Medical care plans ● Secure medication storage ● SSA support

Appendix B — Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

The following abbreviations and terms are used throughout this policy.

AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
CAO	Central Applications Office
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CAT4	Cognitive Abilities Test 4
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSPE	Civic, Social and Political Education
DARE	Disability Access Route to Education
DEAR	Drop Everything And Read
DoE	Department of Education
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EPSEN Act	Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
GETSS	Galway Educate Together Secondary School
L2LP	Level 2 Learning Programme
LAOS	Looking at Our School
LS11	Autism Special Class designation
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
NGRT	New Group Reading Test
OT	Occupational Therapist / Occupational Therapy
PBS / PBST	Positive Behaviour Support / Positive Behaviour Support Team
PLU	Priority Learning Unit
RACE	Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations
SEC	State Examinations Commission
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENO	Special Educational Needs Organiser
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator
SET	Special Education Teacher / Special Education Teaching
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound
SNA	Special Needs Assistant (DES/NCSE term — referred to as SSA in this school)
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SSA	Student Support Assistant
UDL	Universal Design for Learning