



## Droichead - Student Support Plan – Post-primary

### At a Glance

The Student Support Plan/File (SSP) and the Student Support Plus Plan (SSPP) enables schools to plan appropriate interventions and to monitor and review progress. It is a working document and must be flexible in order to allow for amendments such as an emerging need. The National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) has created a Student Support File template that allows schools to format and adapt it.

The diagram shows a 'STUDENT SUPPORT FILE' template with fields for Name of Student, Date of Birth, School, Date File Opened, and Date File Closed. Below it is a 'Continuum of Support' pyramid with three levels: 'Wholeschool & Classroom Support for All' at the base, 'Targeted Support for Some' in the middle, and 'Individualized Support for Some' at the top. The pyramid is flanked by 'ACADEMIC OUTCOMES' and 'SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE'. A small text box below the pyramid reads: 'Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem-solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.'

### What Information will it Contain?

The Student Support Plan facilitates schools in documenting the needs and progress of a student with Special Educational Needs (SEN) throughout their time in the school and it keeps all this information in an accessible manner. Records should be retained from year to year.

A Student Support Plan should be opened for each student who is being differentiated for in a meaningful way, be it in class by the subject teacher/classroom teacher (CT) or an intervention by the Special Education Teacher (SET) - in collaboration with the CT. A SSP generally includes the following information:

- Student's Details: Name, Address, Date of Birth
- Background Information: Any diagnosed difficulties/documentated needs, exemption from Irish, access to assistive technology, parental input, involvement with any agency such as Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy etc
- Current Level of Educational Performance: Results of school-based diagnostic assessment including details such as name of test, date of testing, standard score, informal assessments such as behaviour summary chart, attendance records, homework completion



- Strengths and Interests: the nature and degree of the student's abilities, skills and talents
- Priority Concerns for the Student: These can relate to literacy, numeracy, social, emotional and behavioural concerns
- Targets for the Student: long- and short-term targets to be achieved
- Type of Support and Frequency/Grouping: In class support, small group support, one to one support
- Resources and Strategies to be Implemented: any special programmes used such as SNIP, Social Skills group, differentiated homework, staff involved
- Signatures: Parents and SET(s) involved
- Review: To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions

## A Collaborative Process

The formulation of the SSP/SSPP is a collaborative process involving parents, the principal, teachers, SNA, other relevant professionals and the student. Similarly, the implementation of the SSP/SSPP is a collaborative exercise involving a whole school approach in a confidential setting (DES, 2017). Each staff member has a role to play and needs to know and understand their responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the SSP/SSPP.

It is important that the SET and the class teacher(s) collaborate in deciding which outcomes/targets outlined in the plan will be worked on, what strategies will be used to achieve those targets and how progress will be tracked. It is also important for the SET to consult regularly with parents as they will be involved in target setting, implementing strategies at home in relation to specific targets and observing if those targets are met. Where possible the inclusion of the student themselves in target setting, implementation and assessment is very beneficial and is considered a good practice.





## How Often Should a Student Support Plan/Student Support Plus Plan be Reviewed?

The SSP/SSPP should be reviewed according to school policy, but it is considered good practice to review the SSP/SSPP termly. Usually, the SSP/SSPP is drawn up in late September and reviewed in late January but NQTs should consult their principal, or Professional Support Team (PST) about the practice in the school they are working in.

## Where Can I Find Additional Information on Formulating and Implementing a SSP/SSPP?

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Guidelines for Post – Primary Schools – Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs (NCSE, 2017) provides guidance on the three-step process to support students with special educational needs.

A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools – Guidelines for Teachers (NEPS, 2010) provides a comprehensive overview of identifying needs and developing and evaluating interventions to address those needs as they present on a continuum from mild to severe and from transient to enduring.

Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs, Post Primary Guidelines (DES, 2007) details specific guidance on planning at both whole-school level and for the individual student.

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process (NCSE, 2006) provides a guide to good practice in the preparation, implementation and review of individualised education plans (SSPs/SSPPS).

