



Ballyoran Primary School

Intensive Support Policy

February 2016



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Introduction

Our School Vision states:

'As a welcoming inclusive school, we aim to provide a safe, happy, caring and stimulating learning environment which will enable each child to develop to his or her full potential – academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually, in preparation for becoming responsible citizens. We celebrate each person as an individual and as a valued member of our school and wider community. In an atmosphere of tolerance and trust, we actively encourage respect, self-worth, independence, team spirit, imagination, creativity and fun.'

In Ballyoran Primary School, our Intensive Support Policy and practice reflect the vision and aims of our school. We aim to 'enable each child to develop to his or her full potential.'

Purpose of Intensive Support

The main purpose of Intensive Support is to provide early intervention for pupils who are showing signs of underachievement in Literacy and/or Numeracy. Its purpose is to prevent an increasing skills/knowledge gap, to raise self-esteem and to ensure that underachieving pupils do not fall further behind their peers or develop a negative attitude towards learning. Intensive Support is a skills-based programme which has the purpose of teaching skills which are necessary for children to succeed in their mainstream class and throughout their lives.

Aims of Intensive Support

- ◆ To identify individual pupil needs in Literacy and Numeracy.
- ◆ To provide an effective programme of early intervention.
- ◆ To measure individual pupil progress.
- ◆ To provide feedback to parents and teachers.

Criteria for Selection of Pupils

Priority is given to Year Two pupils (Terms 2 and 3) and Year Three pupils (Term 1) in order to provide intervention as early as possible.

The following criteria are applied:

- Ø Teacher Judgement: due to the informal nature of testing in the Foundation Stage, selection is mostly based on teacher judgement. Teachers select underachieving pupils who are slightly below average ability and who display good potential for improvement in Literacy and/or Numeracy.
- Ø Reading Benchmark test results, BPVS scores and Numeracy checklists.
- Ø Outcome of individual Reading Recovery and Maths Recovery tests.
- Ø Level of attendance
- Ø Level of pupil motivation
- Ø Level of parental involvement and support

Priority is given to pupils who have not already received Intensive Support. However, if extra places are available, it may be possible to offer a second block of support to Year 3 or Year 4 pupils.

Intensive Support Diagnostic Assessment Tests

Data analysis, combined with teacher judgement, leads to pupils being selected to undergo a series of diagnostic tests for Language & Literacy and/or Mathematics & Numeracy. Each pupil is individually tested before and after a block of Intensive Support. The Intensive Support teacher sets targets which are discussed with the class teacher and parents. A Summary of Progress Report is sent to parents and teachers, at the end of the block of teaching, which contains recommendations for future progress.

The following diagnostic tests are used by the Intensive Support teacher to inform pupil selection, grouping and target setting:

Mathematics Recovery Assessment Interviews

- Ø Early Arithmetical Strategies & Numerical Knowledge
- Ø Base-Ten and Advanced Arithmetical Strategies
- Ø Early Grouping: Structuring Numbers 1 to 10
- Ø Advanced Grouping: Structuring Numbers 1 to 20
- Ø Early Multiplication & Division
- Ø Advanced Multiplication & Division

Reading Recovery Tests

- Ø Running Records
- Ø Letter Identification
- Ø Concepts about Print
- Ø Word Vocabulary
- Ø Hearing & Recording Sounds in Words

Other Language & Literacy Tests

- Ø Linguistic Phonics Diagnostic Assessment Tests
- Ø British Ability Scale (BAS) Reading Test (Summative Assessment)
- Ø British Picture Vocabulary Scale (Diagnostic & Summative)

Timetable and Groups

Ballyoran Primary School employs one Intensive Support teacher who works from 9.15am to 12.30pm for four mornings each week (Monday to Thursday).

Pupils are generally offered Intensive Support for two days per week, to ensure that they do not miss too much mainstream teaching. Occasionally, however, a group of pupils may be offered four sessions per week if they are in need of a higher level of support. The timetable is usually on a rotation basis to ensure that a pupil does not miss the same class activity each week.

Classes run from October to November (Year 3 for 8 weeks) and from February to May (Year 2 for 12 weeks). Testing takes place in September, January and June. Targets are set and reviewed at half term and at the end of term.

Pupils are placed in small groups according to their ability and needs. Group size is usually around 4 – 6 pupils. Please refer to the Appendix for a sample timetable.

Lessons are usually of the following duration

- Ø Literacy (Reading and Writing) 45 min
- Ø Reading 25 min
- Ø Numeracy 30 min

In general, groups are withdrawn for Intensive Support because this enables pupils to work in a quiet environment, free from distraction. However, Ballyoran Primary School also recognises the importance of in-class support. Occasionally the Intensive Support teacher has the opportunity to cover a class or to team-teach with the class teacher, for example, when a group is unavailable for a withdrawal session. This enables the Intensive Support teacher to observe how pupils work and behave in a whole class setting.

Literacy Lesson Format

Self Registration, Visual Timetable & Occupational Therapy Exercises (2-3min)

Familiar Book Reading (10 min) – one level behind instructional level

- Each child reads as many books as he/she can and chooses one to take home for homework.
- Teacher does a Running Record with one child, using the instructional text introduced the day before. Teacher observes and records but does not instruct. Teacher encourages pupil to self - evaluate their own reading and then chooses a few teaching points, depending on child's needs.
- Teacher records the words each child can read independently.

Making & Breaking words (2-3 minutes)

- Magnetic letters used e.g. letter sort, jumbled high-frequency word, change word by adding/removing a letter at beginning/middle/end
- These activities are very important to transfer reading – writing – reading skills. They encourage connected learning and promote the understanding of how reading & writing works.

Writing (20 min)

- Each child writes a sentence about something of interest.
- Child writes in marker and covers mistakes with sticky labels so that final sentence is perfect.
- Child and teacher use a draft page to draw boxes and sound out words using Linguistic Phonic method. Counters are used to slide sounds into boxes (early stages only). At more advanced stages, boxes are not needed.
- Teacher writes sentence on strip of paper and cuts up the words. Each child completes homework activity – putting words in order and sticking in book.
- Teacher adds to record the words each child can write independently
- Group work based on whatever needs arose from writing e.g. bringing a key word to fluency, magnetic letter work, speed writing of a newly learned word, letter identification etc. (This may be done on the following day.)

New text (10min) - I nstructional level

- Picture walk through the book mentioning key phrases.
- Each child reads the text aloud, at their own speed, at the same time.
- Teacher uses Reading Recovery prompts to encourage independence and the use of meaning/structure/visual cues.
- Teacher highlights one or two difficulties and uses this as teaching focus.
- Literal and inferential comprehension questions/re-telling of story.

Numeracy Lesson Format

Numeracy lesson format is based on the principles and framework of the Mathematics Recovery Programme. Practical problem solving sessions are aimed just beyond the 'cutting edge' of a child's current knowledge. The activities are not done on pencil and paper. Instead, counters, rows of dots, bundles of ten and other visual materials are used. Problem-solving sessions involve hard thinking and reflection on the approach each child used to solve the problem.

The Intensive Support teacher uses the outcomes from Maths Recovery Tests to decide which framework best suits the group's needs. Six topics are covered in each lesson. Approximately 5 minutes are assigned to each topic (30 minutes in total). The teacher notes down observations and 'micro-adjusts' each task to ensure that the activities are at an enjoyable and challenging level for the group. Pupils gain intrinsic satisfaction from their problem solving so there is little need for praise from the teacher.

Communication with Parents

The Intensive Support teacher communicates with parents at the beginning and end of each block of teaching in the form of Parent-Teacher Meetings and written Targets and Summary of Progress. She is also available throughout the year, should parents wish to make an appointment to meet with her.

Communication with Staff

The Intensive Support teacher communicates with the class teacher on a regular basis, for example:

- Ø Initial consultation regarding identification of underachievers
- Ø Feedback from individual testing of pupils
- Ø Discussion about group composition and timetable
- Ø Target setting for Intensive Support and IEPs
- Ø Regular informal feedback regarding pupil progress, participation and behaviour
- Ø End of term Individual Summary of Progress Reports with recommendations for each pupil

The intensive Support teacher also keeps in regular communication with the SENCO, Literacy Co-ordinator and Numeracy Co-ordinator regarding pupil special needs or concerns.

Policy Review

In Ballyoran Primary School the policy and practice on Intensive Support is regularly under review.

Appendix

Intensive Support Timetable