



Le Chéile
Secondary School
Ballincollig

Student Support Policy



Our School:

Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig, Cork is a co-educational voluntary Catholic Secondary school operating under the trusteeship of Le Chéile Trust.

The values underpinning the educational philosophy of our school leads to a wide curriculum, co-curriculum and extra-curricular provision ensuring that all students can flourish and reach their full potential.

We embrace particularly four principles of Catholic Education: Inclusion, care for the most vulnerable, promotion of the unique gifts of each student and the integration of faith and culture.

Philosophy:

The School is a Christian community where students, staff, management, and parents work together and understand the education of the student as a joint partnership.

As a school we find strength in diversity and believe the Gospel calls us to celebrate and foster the unique talents of each student.

Mission Statement:

Le Chéile Secondary School Ballincollig is a Catholic school committed to promoting Christian values and affirming the personal worth and dignity of each student. The school is inclusive of students from all cultures and backgrounds and celebrates diversity.

We aim to ensure that Le Chéile Secondary School is a place where students feel at ease and cared for, enabling them to relate to one another and to staff in an open, respectful and trusting manner. The school values the role of parents in the education of their children and seeks to work in partnership with them.

“The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the Le Chéile Charter. It is underpinned by a philosophy of education that has at its centre the unique dignity of the human person as a child of God.”

Our school motto is

Welcome

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Wisdom

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Witness

This motto is inspired by the heritage and gift of our founding congregations. We hope to take the very best from our heritage and build a great school for the future.

Our School is committed to the promotion of a value based education built on the shared purpose of:

01. WELCOME

Our welcome recognises the unique dignity and worth of each person building on the Catholic tradition of being inclusive.

02. WISDOM

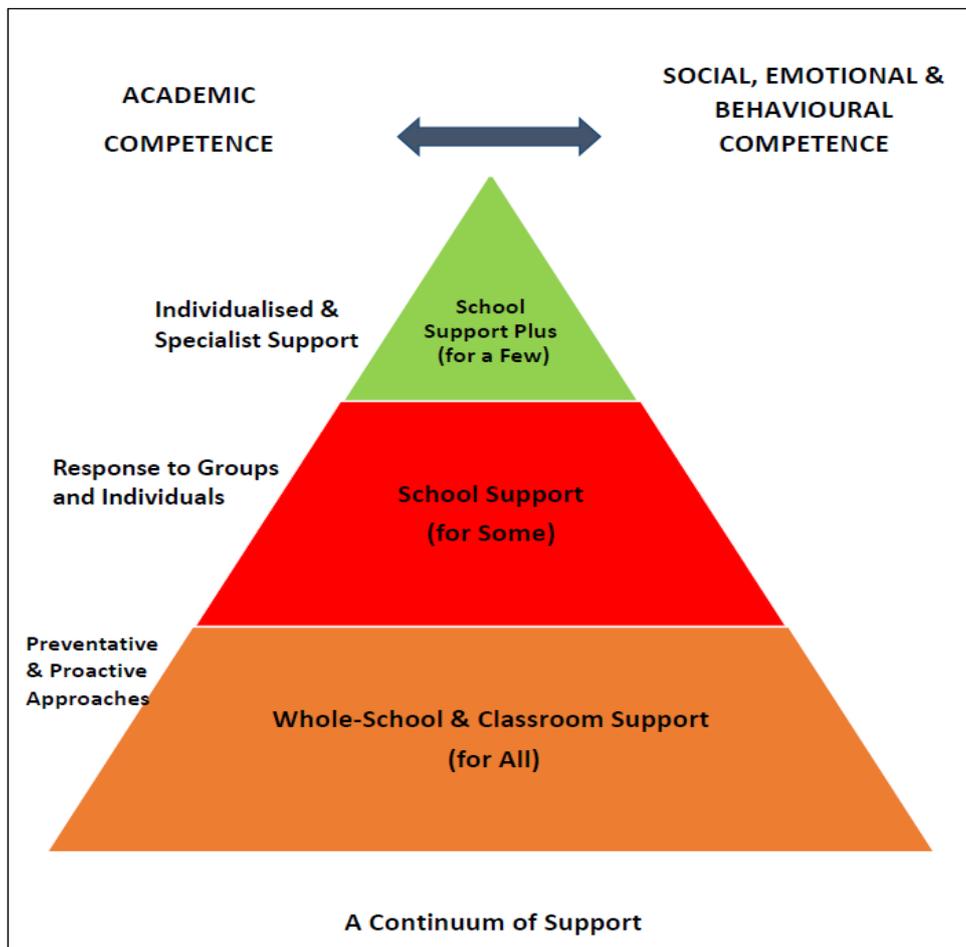
Our pursuit of wisdom and knowledge enables our students to achieve an academic excellence that supports them in understanding the world and seeking to improve it.

03. WITNESS

Le Chéile Schools witness to the Gospel values of Inclusivity, Truth, Forgiveness, Service, Concern, Spirituality, Teaching and Learning on a daily basis. We recognise that every person is made in the image and likeness of God.

Aim of the Student Support Policy

The continuum of support provided for the students of Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig, encompasses a graduated solution orientated framework of assessment and intervention, comprised of three distinct school based processes as per the diagram below:



The aims of the continuum of support are as follows:

- To ensure effective learning for all
- To provide a preventative, early intervention approach
- To implement a consultative and collaborative solution orientated framework
- To place a focus on systemic factors – instructional and environmental
- To implement timely and effective interventions for those with additional needs

Rationale of the Student Support Policy

The model of assessment and intervention outlined in this Student Support Policy, is underpinned by a recognition that additional educational needs occur along a continuum, from mild to severe and from transient to long-term. Therefore the response to the needs of the students of Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig is also offered along a continuum, from whole school and preventative approaches to individualised and specialist approaches.

Summary Description of the Continuum

School Support (for ALL Students)

Interventions at the whole-school level are intended to be proactive. It is focused on the main student body, and this phase of intervention should effectively meet the needs of about 80-90% of the school population. It aims to support and promote positive student behaviour and learning for all.

An integral part of this level of support is effective whole-school screening for learning and behavioural needs, so that there is early intervention of 'at risk' students.

School Support (For Some Students)

Intervention at this level is for those students, typically around 10-20% of the school population, who do not respond to the whole-school strategies sufficiently and who need more support. A range of approaches and interventions may be used, some of which may be short-term, while others may be longer term. These may include:

- A process of consultation and planned intervention
- Group and / or individual plans and interventions
- Subject goals
- Accommodations of support learning and social interaction

School Support Plus (for a Few Students)

These students, typically about 2-5% of the school population, have significant difficulties and may require intensive, individualised interventions. Interventions at this stage are likely to include:

- Student Support Plans Plus (including behavioural plans)
- Involvement of additional professional input, such as from psychologists / speech and language therapists etc
- Specialist interventions

SUPPORT FOR ALL

Support for ALL aims to support and promote positive learning and behaviour. All students have needs including the need to feel a sense of belonging, the need to communicate and to be communicated with and the need to be respected and valued. Meeting such needs is central to protecting and developing student mental health.

Key elements for this approach are:

Element of the Support for ALL approach	Strategies at Le Chéile Ballincollig
Creating a positive learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A focus on building positive student-teacher relationships ● Implementation of a Positive Code of Behaviour, which recognises the achievements of all. ● Positive Classroom Rules. ● A House system which helps students feel they belong, are connected and are welcome in school. ● A teacher/student mentor programme – one good adult with whom the student can connect. ● Implementation of Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig ‘Good Lesson Plan’. ● Display of students’ work around the school recognising student’s strengths. ● Wellbeing Module at Junior Cycle. ● ‘Feel Good’ Days – Halloween dress-up, Christmas jumper day, sports day, team building days.
Best practice in teaching in teaching methods and a diversity of learning opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hour long classes allow for more autonomous and interactive learning. ● Differentiation within the classroom for both the more academically able student and the less academically able student. ● Co-operative teaching. ● Mixed ability teaching. ● Assessment for Learning strategies across all subjects with consistency of approaches across subject areas. ● Positive and constructive feedback from teachers - use of the merit sheet for positive feedback.
Establishing and teaching clear behavioural and learning expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positive classroom rules worked within the school motto ‘Welcome-Wisdom-Witness’, which gives students a clear understanding of the rules. ● Weekly assembly with the Principal ● A 10 min student support class each day with the class teacher.
Systems for reinforcing and monitoring students: Rewards, awards and sanctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Merit sheet system which tracks both positive and negative behaviour. ● Positive behaviour is rewarded in a variety of ways; postcards/certificates sent home, assemblies, homework passes, vouchers, class celebrations. ● House system – highest number of points won for participation in a number of events throughout the year. ● Awards Ceremony at the end of the year to include a school spirit award and Principal’s award.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sanctions – as outlined in the code of behaviour.
Student Support Team (See appendix 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Student Support team meets once a week. The team serves a preventative or early intervention function. ● It allows for the sharing of information in a confidential setting. ● Provides a forum for key staff members to share concerns and work towards solutions. ● Encourage the formulation of a co-ordinated response to student's needs. ● Allows for the monitoring and reviewing of individual students.
Listening to the voice of the student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The involvement of the student council in Wellbeing days. ● Student input to student support plans. ● Assessment for learning strategies. ● Attendance of students at Parent/Teacher meetings.

SCHOOL SUPPORT (FOR SOME)

Through School Support (for some) a solution-oriented framework is used to respond to the needs of some students who may require additional support. In some cases support offered at the Support for All level is not enough to fully meet the students' needs and the School Support may be required. School Support (for some) requires systematic gathering of information and the development of some kind of intervention plan. This plan can take many forms and could be called a School Support Plan / Group Intervention Plan or Individual Learning or Behavioural Plan.

Some students will be placed at School Support at entry to Le Chéile Secondary School because their needs are known and are documented. For some students, needs will emerge over time and typically the student will have been at Support for ALL for some time and it will have been found that a greater level of support is required.

If a student requires School Support (for some) a solution oriented framework is used, which has three steps:

1. Identifying Concerns and gathering information
2. Planning and intervention
3. Monitoring and Review

1. Identifying the concern and gathering information

At Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig a number of systems are in place to identify students who may need additional support, whether it be on entry to the school or at any time during the child's schooling if a need is emerging.

System for identifying students who may require additional support	
Screening first year intake to identify strengths and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CAT 4 entrance assessment ● PPAD-E test the end of September ● Observation of students during a school-in-action day prior to entry ● One-to-one meeting with the Principal prior to entry
Collecting up-to-date information from Primary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal and AENCO to meet with teachers of feeder Primary Schools prior to entry ● Most recent school report to be submitted with acceptance form ● Primary Passport report
Monitoring of student progress (across the age range)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring of weekly merit sheet record (behaviour / attendance / punctuality / completion of h/w) ● Teacher / mentor programme (emotional behaviour) ● Supervision of yard (social) ● Progress reports (October / Easter) ● Examination reports (Christmas / Summer) ● Academic tracking ● Teacher observation ● Referral of concerns identified by a teacher to the student support team.

2. Planning and Intervention

Interventions may be planned to meet the needs of a group of students or they may be tailored to meet the needs of an individual student.

A School Support plan for an individual student will be opened. A member of the Student Support team will be responsible for the overall development of the intervention plan, in consultation with the student, parents and relevant teachers involved (coordination teacher).

A wide range of interventions are possible but an intervention appropriate to the individual student needs of the student will be implemented. Possible interventions are as follows:

- Participation in a learning support group
- A reduced subject load (in consultation with the student's parents and the Education Welfare Officer)
- Participation in a social skills group

- Application for accommodations in state examination situations (RACE)

3. Monitoring and Review

The coordinating teacher will have responsibility for monitoring interventions and planning and conducting reviews.

A shared document will be placed on the 'Student Support' folder so that teachers can submit feedback on agreed intervention to the coordinating teacher.

If required, testing will be completed at the end of the review period to ascertain if strategies have made a difference to the student.

A meeting will be held with parents of the students to assess the student's progress.

The outcome of the review will include deciding on whether the level of support currently offered is appropriate. School support (for some) may be continued, the student may need School Support Plus or the student support file may be closed and the student may now be able to have his/her needs met through Support for ALL processes.

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS (FOR A FEW)

School Support Plus applies to students whose needs are enduring and/or complex and whose progress is considered inadequate despite carefully planned and reviewed interventions at the previous levels. Most of these students will have been identified on enrolment, having known and documented needs. Other students may have needs that only emerge during the course of their education at Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig.

1. Identifying concerns and gathering information

- The Additional Educational Needs teacher takes on the role of coordinating, planning, monitoring and reviewing Student Support Plus.
- Where the needs of the student are known and documented, information at the time of transfer will determine if a student will be placed on Student Support Plus or not.
- For those students with emerging needs, information gathered through the Support for All and School Support processes will assist in the decision making.
- The information gathering checklist (appendix 2) will be used to ensure that comprehensive information is available.
- As part of the information gathering, the AEN coordinator may, with parental consent request the involvement of appropriate external professionals (Educational Psychologists – NEPS Psychologists work in collaboration with teachers, parents and students in clarifying problems, through consultation and further joint assessment)

2. Planning and Intervention

An Individual Educational Plan will be drawn up for the student in consultation with teachers, parents and the student. The plan will specify:

- The nature and degree of the student's abilities, skills and talents

- The nature and degree of the student’s additional educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the student
- The additional education needs of the student
- The additional education and related support services to be provided to the student to enable the student to benefit from education
- The goals which the student is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months
- Monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place

The IEP is a working document and may need amendment and review during the period of implementation.

3. Monitoring and Review

The AENCO will organise the review process. Parents will be invited to contribute to this review.

The review process will focus on:

- Progress towards targets made by the student (The IEP will be adapted accordingly)
- Any new information and/or assessment results
- The effectiveness of the strategies / methodologies used
- The effectiveness of the materials / equipment provided
- The effectiveness of the support provided
- Future action

If the student’s progress remains satisfactory following review, all concerned may decide to gradually increase the periods between reviews. Where the student’s needs have changed, it may be that all concerned decide that the student no longer needs the intensive level of support being provided at School Support Plus and could have his/her needs met through the School Support Structures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES in the implementation of the Continuum of Support

	Subject Teachers	Specialist Teachers (Learning Support / resource / language / EAL / guidance counsellor / class teacher / year head	School Management
Support for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Differentiate teaching and learning activities ● Create positive learning classroom environment, including the use of positive and constructive feedback ● Assess and monitor progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collection and analysis of school-wide screening data, including in-take screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records ● Collaboration with subject teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership in developing whole school policies: enrolment / assessment / inclusion. ● Strategic management of implementation of policies and practices

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create opportunities for success ● Communicate concerns to the students support team using the referral form ● Collaborate with specialist teachers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic support for evidence based interventions
School Support (for some)	<p>As above, plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contribute to groups or individual planning and review ● Implement agreed strategies ● Communicate progress and concerns to coordinating teacher 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diagnostic testing ● Liaising with parents ● Gathering information from subject teachers / other staff ● Plan, implement and review individual and /or group intervention ● Seek external professional advice, as needed ● Undertake tasks of coordinating teacher as needed 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assign roles and responsibilities ● Keep records of those receiving this level of support
School Support Plus (for a few)	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare information for IEP planning meetings ● Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies ● Direct the work of SNA's in the classroom 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan, implement and monitor individualised responses ● Direct the work of SNA's in the school 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compliance with statutory requirements

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually and the review will be led by the Principal and the Student Support team in consultation with staff, students, Board of Management, parents and external agencies and legal requirements where appropriate.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 27 January 2022

Signed: Tony Lee

Date: 27 January 2022

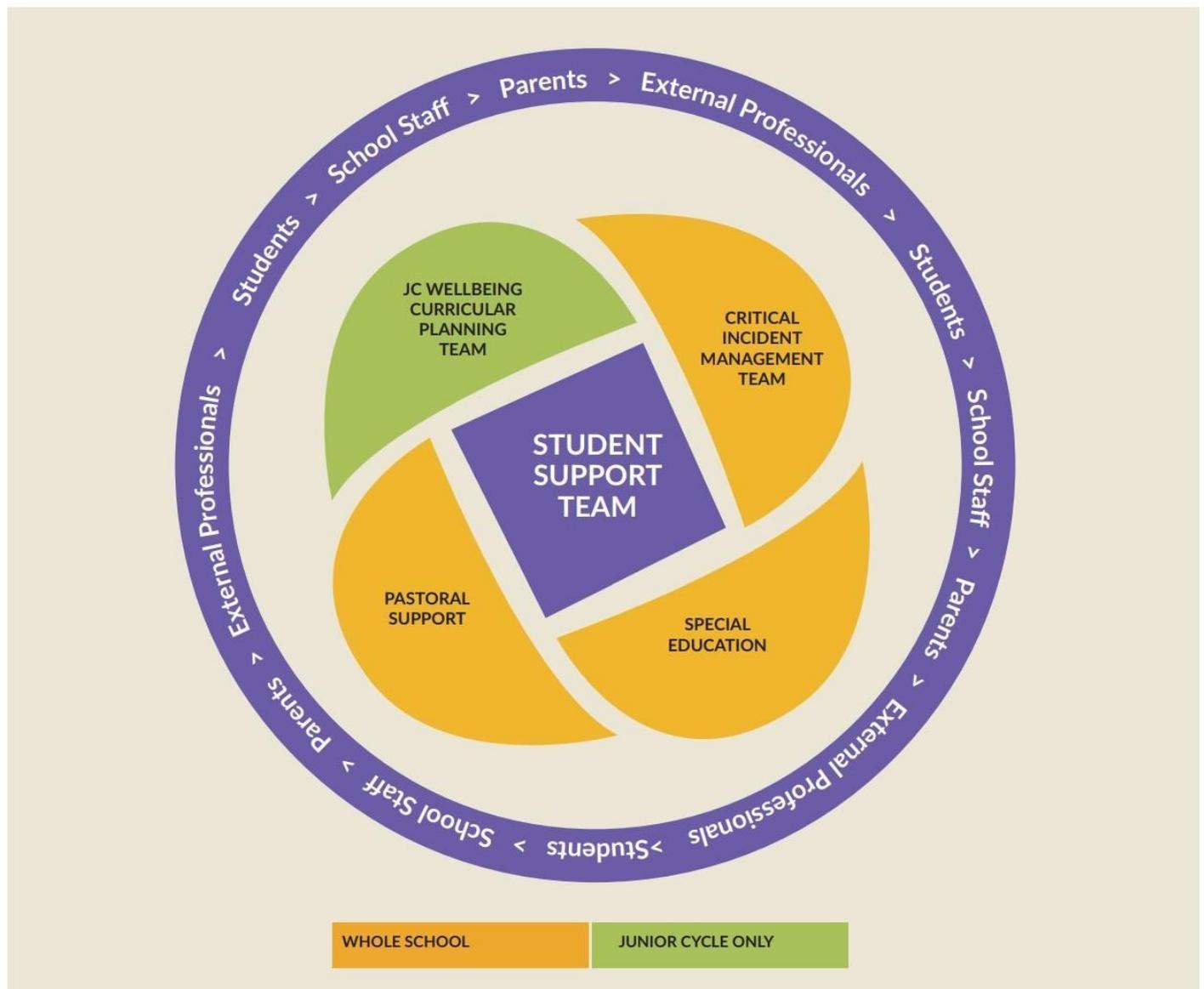
Mr. Tony Lee

Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix 1: - The Student Support Team

The student support team is a central part of the student support system in a school. It is the overarching team concerned with the progress of actions for the welfare and wellbeing of all students. It is a mechanism through which many of the existing student supports are co-ordinated and planned.

The student support team acts as a school hub, bringing coherence to the support system by co ordinating the valuable work of departments, teams and/or groups such as the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Curricular Planning team, the Special Education Needs (SEN) department, the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) along with guidance and pastoral staff (see below). School Leadership also has a significant role guiding and supporting the school's student support team.



The student support team is a student-focused mechanism put in place at Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig in order to:

- Co-ordinate the support available for students in the school.
- Facilitate links to the community and other non-school supports.
- Enable students with support needs to continue to access full education.
- Assist staff to manage those students effectively.
- Ensure new staff members are briefed about policies and procedures relating to student wellbeing and support.
- Advise school management on the development and review of effective school support policies and structures.
- To act as an early warning system for the detection of at-risk students.
- To make appropriate referrals or to allocate the task to relevant people.
- To agree to liaise with relevant agencies and if appropriate, with parents/guardians.
- To ensure relevant staff members are kept informed of appropriate decisions and actions, whilst maintaining confidentiality.
- To provide a link for parents through an individual teacher whom they know to have a special knowledge of their child.
- To provide an important conduit for relating information to students.
- To bring together all the school services and programmes in a structured and coordinated way for the benefit of the students in the care of the school.
- To ensure relevant documentation is circulated to the relevant parties.

The Student Support Team aims:

- To develop the students' self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline and to respond in a sympathetic and understanding way to the concerns, fears and worries of all students.
- To foster a culture of self-awareness, self-motivation and self-directed learning among our students; leading them to become self-assured and mature young adults.

The Student Support Team Members

- Principal
- Additional Needs Co-ordinator
- Year Head / Class Teacher
- SPHE/ Wellbeing Teacher
- Any relevant staff member from time to time where the need arises.

A student support team coordinator is agreed upon at the beginning of each year

Responsibilities of the team members

The Support Team Coordinator will:

- Organise and make preparation for the meetings
- Liaise prior to the meetings with any additional attendees and arrange relevant year heads, other teachers, parents / guardians, students to be present
- Brief any 'extra' attendees about issues and procedures
- Ensure documentation is circulated

- Make appropriate referrals or allocate the task to another person
- Liaise with the relevant agencies and if appropriate, with parents / guardians
- Provide structured feedback to those agencies
- Convene and chair case meetings or arrange someone else to chair
- Ensure relevant staff are kept informed of appropriate decision / action
- Provide support in the development of criteria for monitoring the operation of the student support system

The Principal:

- May have detailed information on particular students
- May agree to provide on-going support or specific interventions to individual students as an outcome of the meeting
- May support teachers in their work
- May liaise with outside agencies
- May be a contact for parents / guardians who have concerns about their children

The Year Head / Class Teacher

- Will collate information from teachers in relation to particular students or issues
- May be required to give feedback to individual staff
- May make contact with parents / guardians
- May liaise the school psychologist, or other professionals
- May be available to monitor/support individual students

The Coordinating Teacher for Additional Education Needs:

- Will have specialised information on students with learning difficulties
- Can advise on appropriateness of supports for particular students

The SPHE / Wellbeing Coordinator:

- Will through the SPHE /Wellbeing programme, work with year heads / class teachers
- And may be required to provide input on a range of topics from time to time related to whole school issues, e.g bullying, building resilience, keeping well

Operation procedures of the Student Support Team

Meeting Time: A student support meeting will take place once a fortnight

Meeting Procedures: The meeting procedures for each meeting will follow the following principles:

- Clarifying the purpose of the meeting
- Ensuring that all views are heard
- Staying with time schedules
- Recording actions

Each meeting agenda will address the continuum of support set out in this policy: Support for ALL, School Support (for a few), Student Support Plus (for some).

- The team will review the needs of all students.

- The agreed action from the previous week will be reviewed.
- The meeting will look at referrals.
- The meeting will discuss each year group and highlight students who are a cause of concern.
- Appropriate action on new cases and who will follow through on that action is decided.

There will be a solution-focused approach which will provide a way of implementing a short-term intervention that can be readily evaluated. This approach will:

- Emphasise short-term, goal-focused interventions.
- Focus on constructing solutions, rather than analysing possible causes.
- Seek to have elements of the solution already present, i.e. start with a target that can be easily achieved.
- Explore how things will be different and what it will take to make this happen.
- Develop an action plan.
- Include monitoring and review of the action plan.

Referral procedures:

The Student Support referral procedure at Le Chéile Secondary School, Ballincollig is as follows:

- A student referral form is available in the 'Forms Template' folder on the shared drive.
- If a staff member has a concern about a student, they must click 'make a copy' on this form and rename it as the student's name.
- Once the form has been completed, the staff member must then email the Student Support Team at studentsupportteam@lecheileballincollig.ie to say that a referral has been made.
- The Student Support Team will act without delay to place the referral in the 'Student Support Team' folder; to which only team members have access.

Annual Review

An annual student support team review will review the team's work. This review allows an opportunity to obtain a profile of the referred students and establish if there are clearly identifiable patterns or issues emerging. This review will inform any necessary changes for the following academic year.

The School Self Evaluation Questionnaire of the Well-Being in Post Primary Guidelines will be used as a tool in supporting the annual review

Confidentiality

A balance will be found between keeping teachers informed to help them carry out their duties and unnecessary disclosing of personal information about students and their families.

The welfare of the student will always be the deciding factor in relation to the disclosure of information.

The Student Support Team will make the decision about how much information should be shared in consultation with parents / guardians / students.

More serious Child Protection issues will be referred to the Designated Liaison Person, (DLP). Procedures outlined in the Le Chéile Secondary School's Child Protection Statement will be followed where a student's welfare / safety is at risk.

Signed parental consent will be sought when a non-staff member is participating in a discussion relating to their child.

Record Keeping

There is a record of all meetings taken in the form of minutes and the minute taker is agreed each week. All minutes are filed in the Student Support Team Folder on the shared drive.

Student referrals and actions to follow are printed and put in the student's file in the Principal's office.

Once the case is closed it is deleted from the shared drive.

Appendix 2

Gathering Information Checklist (Student Support Plus)

Name: _____ DOB: _____ CLASS: _____ DATE: _____

General Information	Checked (Yes / No)	Summary of Information
Parent's Consulted		
Post-Primary Transfer Review		
Information from previous school, or previous teachers gathered		
Hearing / Vision		
Motor Skills / Coordination / Movement		
Communication skills/ oral language/ listening		
Medical Needs		
Intake Screening information		

