



Scoil Bhríde Croghan,
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Special Education Needs & Inclusion Policy

Introductory Statement

- Scoil Bhríde endeavours to serve all the children in our community and to enable them to achieve their full potential.
- This policy has been written to ensure compliance with the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), The Equal Status Act (2000), Disability Bill (2002), the E.P.S.E. N. Act (2004) and Special Education Circular No 0013/2017.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) are defined in the EPSEN Act (2004) as:
'A restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on an 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.'
- This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2023 by the school staff.

Rationale

- Set out procedures for the enrolment of children with complex learning needs in the school
- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school
- To make the best possible provision for these children in our school.
- To optimize the teaching and learning process to enable children with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school.
- To comply with legislation and department circulars, etc.
- To formalise existing good practice.

Aims

- To outline our **staged approach** to teaching in relation to pupils with complex or SEN.
- To establish **early intervention programmes** designed to enhance learning and prevent and reduce difficulties in learning
- To enable pupils with disabilities to share with their peers as **complete** an educational experience as is possible
- To establish **communication structures** for the involvement of **parents** of pupils with complex needs.
- To promote **collaboration with teachers** in the implementation of programmes for children with complex/ special needs
- To develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes to school and learning.
- To enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners within their own ability.



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Guidelines

Inclusion

- Inclusion in Scoil Bhríde means that children in every class, regardless of varying degrees of learning or behavioural difficulties will be included in the whole class activities, as much as is practicable.
- The range of teaching supports includes team-teaching, small group teaching and, where necessary, withdrawal teaching to address specific learning needs.
- Tasks and activities must be differentiated to ensure pupils with complex needs are integrated into the life of the school and the classroom as much as possible.
- The pupils can be assisted in integrating into the life of the school through S.P.H.E and the implementation of school rules.
- The class teacher will support the pupil's learning and accommodate access to all areas of the curriculum in a meaningful manner by devising and differentiating tasks and including the child in classroom activities as much as possible.
- Every effort will be made by the Class Teacher and Special Education Teacher to ensure that the child is not withdrawn from the classroom at times when the child could be missing opportunities to be meaningfully involved in other classroom activities.
- **Inclusive Practices in our School;**
- Buddy System: To enable the school to fulfil its policy with regard to the integration and inclusion of all pupils, a buddy system will be operated according to the needs arising. This is to establish a welcoming and tolerant attitude towards difference within the school community.
- To recognise that the S.P.H.E. programme can play a valuable role in supporting inclusiveness when effectively delivered to all pupils. E.g. Walk Tall, Stay Safe.
- Circle time will be used to integrate and include all pupils with additional needs.
- All pupils are entitled to their breaks and playtimes. Pupils with additional needs are supported and monitored by the S.N.As and the teachers on duty on the yard. Special arrangements and management programmes will be supported by all staff.
- The Health and Safety Policy, available to all members of staff, is applicable to all school staff and pupils. Should the question of the administration of Medication arise, refer to this policy.

Strategies employed by the class teacher to enable the pupil to participate in class include:

- Group Teaching
- Station Teaching with differentiated groups
- Co-Teaching with mixed ability grouping
- Team Teaching



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- Modifying presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of all pupils in class activities
 - Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
 - Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
 - Setting targets at an appropriate level
 - Providing learning activities and materials which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
 - Setting up “buddy systems” in class, encouraging peer tutoring, facilitating paired reading programmes
 - Providing pupils with resilience and coping mechanisms to promote social and emotional life skills.
- All school employees are made aware of these strategies to integrate pupils with complex needs into our school life via this policy.

Enrolment of children with complex needs.

- The school will gather information on a child with complex needs who wishes to enrol in the school by:
 - ~Meeting with parents/ principal/ class teacher
 - ~Requesting copies of reports, assessments etc.
- The school will establish the child’s requirements and the school’s capacity to meet them based on the information gained from above.
- The school will outline to parents the manner in which they can support the learning of the child from the time of enrolment through individual meetings /case conferences with the Class Teacher, Principal and other relevant professionals.
- If there are health and safety issues arising from the enrolment of a child we will identify them and develop strategies to address them e.g. access, toilets, supervision, administration of medicine, etc.

Procedures for early identification/screening/referral of special needs pupils from within the school

All children will be screened by the Special Education Teacher at the end of Senior Infants using the Mist Test and other simple checklists.

- In order to help teachers identify/ screen pupils who may have special educational needs the following procedures may be used
 - ~Teacher observation
 - ~Pupil portfolios
 - ~Simple checklists such as Westwood, Dolch, Phonological Awareness, Speech and Language.
 - ~ Standardised tests- Sigma -T and Micra-T, Yarc GIL Assessment



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- Any difficulties identified may be communicated to parents/ outside agencies/ to other teachers within the school through individual meetings and/or case conferences with each.

Intervention Programmes:

Provision of Support Teaching:

- The school will endeavour to meet the needs of all students by utilising the **Continuum of Support** as set out in the Learning Support guidelines. The stages of support available to a pupil within the school will be as follows; classroom support, school support and school support plus.

Stage One (Class Support):

- Upon identification of a learning difficulty, the Class Teacher will devise and implement appropriate strategies to deal with the problems, in co-operation with the parents.
- Support teaching for children with emerging learning/ behavioural difficulties is initially provided by the Class Teacher by differentiation and by using appropriate materials and resources.
- Strategies implemented by the class teacher to target specific needs must be recorded on an educational/ behaviour document and will be reviewed after a specified period of time.
- The school uses the *Special Education Needs- A Continuum of Support* model in assessing children's needs and in creating a classroom support plan for each individual child presenting learning/ emotional or behavioural problems.

Stage Two (School Support):

- Upon observation and assessment of continuing difficulties, the child will be referred to the Special Education Teacher, who will then devise, in conjunction with the Class Teacher and with parental consultation, a learning programme based on the child's needs.
- The School Support Checklist from the *Special Education Needs- A Continuum of Support* will be used in devising the school support plan for the child.
- The SEN teacher will implement the learning programme for the pupil and work with them in an in- class or withdrawal setting.

Stage Three (School support plus):

- If a pupil's needs are protracted and further impacting on their learning, the SET requests the involvement of external services in a more detailed assessment process.
- If a child presents with a Low Incidence Disability they will be referred for psychological assessment, after consultation with parents and relevant professionals.
- Following assessment and identification of resources required, the school will apply to the NCSE.



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- **Preparation of an Individual Education Plan/Individual Profile and Learning Programme:**

- The Class Teacher and Special Education Teacher are responsible.
- The Class Teacher, the Special Education Teacher, Parents and other relevant professionals contribute to the development of this plan.
- These plans may contain the following:

- ❖ Details of the pupil
- ❖ Screening/diagnostic assessments
- ❖ Formal/informal observations
- ❖ Learning strengths and attainments
- ❖ Priority learning needs
- ❖ Learning targets for each term
- ❖ Teaching strategies
- ❖ Weekly planning
- ❖ Daily records
- ❖ Monthly review
- ❖ Term review/yearly review
- ❖ Supplementary teaching timetable
- ❖ Books and materials chosen
- ❖ List of relevant professionals associated with the individual child's needs

- **Timetabling:**

- The Special Education Teacher in consultation with the class teacher and SEN Co-Ordinator and/ or principal will draw up the timetable for Special Education Teaching within the school.
- The range of teaching supports timetabled should include team-teaching, small group teaching and, where necessary, individualised teaching to address specific learning needs.
- Time is allowed for planning and consultation

- **Monitoring/ Recording Progress:**

- The pupil's progress will be monitored by the class teacher and the S.E.T.
- The pupil's progress is recorded in their SSP and/or IEP.



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▪ **Assessments:**

Assessments are an integral part of our teaching and learning. We provide for assessment **for** learning (information to guide a student's future learning) and assessment **of** learning (information on a student's achievements at that point in time). Both Screening Assessment and Diagnostic Assessment are used (circular 0138/2006)

Assessments are carried out as follows:

Assessment Tests	Administered to	Date of Assessment
MIST	Senior Infants	Second Term
Micra T and Sigma T	1 st -6 th .	Third Term
BIAP	All Junior Infants	Third Term
Wordlists (NEPS)	Infants – Second Class	First Term/Third Term
Westwood checklists	1 st - 6 th	First Term/Third Term
Renfrew Language Scales	Infants-Second Class	As Required
GIL Yarc Assessment	Infants-6 th Class	As Required
NRIT	1 st -6 th Class	Second Term

Monitoring Progress:

Monitoring the academic progress of the pupils in Scoil Bhríde will be accomplished by:

- ❖ Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils in junior classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties by the class teacher
- ❖ Formal and informal testing and observation of work by the class teacher
- ❖ Implementing the school policies on screening and selection of pupils for supplementary teaching in English and/or Mathematics by administering and scoring appropriate measures
- ❖ Standardised and diagnostic testing by the learning support teacher
- ❖ Record keeping: children have a file where records, test results and assessments are kept in a secure filing cabinet
- ❖ Observations of a pupil's progress made during supplementary teaching will be recorded on an CSP/SSP/IEP/IPLP/Group Profile

Resources/ Materials:

Resources/ materials available in the school to support pupils with special needs include:

- Alpha to Omega
- Fuzzbuzz
- Newell Literacy Scheme
- Wordshark
- Number Shark
- 100% Language



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- 100% Listening
- 100% Concepts
- SNIP Programme
- Practical Language Activities
- Talkabout
- Stop/Think/Do-Social Skills Training
- Socially Speaking
- Prim-Ed publications
- Concrete materials e.g. Sand, clay, water, flour, sandpaper letters, jigsaws, word games, number games, etc.
- Oxford Reading Tree
- Toe by Toe
- PM Readers
- ICT Padlets
- Yarc GIL Assessment
- The Power of 2
- Plus 1

Professional Development:

- Staff are supported in availing of professional development opportunities in the area of special needs by making them aware of course details that come to the school from local Education Centres and allowing them the time to attend if practicable.

Communication:

The structures which are in place to facilitate open communication between...

- Class teacher and parent – formal parent/teacher meetings, an opportunity for parents to meet with teachers when needed.
- Class teacher and Special Education teacher – regular review of learning targets and informal discussion.
- Class teacher and others (psychologist, health board etc.) – as required.
- SEN Coordinator or principal and all of above – as required.

Special Needs Assistants:

- An SNA, if assigned to a pupil with special needs in the school, will support that pupil as outlined in the Department of Education's circular regarding SNA's.



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Code of Behaviour:

- In relation to the school's Code of Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy even if the pupil has behavioural or emotional problems he/she with the help of his/her SNA/Teacher/parents will have to make a reasonable effort to adhere to them.

Equality of access and participation:

- If provisions need to be made so that the pupil with special needs has equality of access and participation (i.e. access to all areas of the curriculum - PE, swimming, extra-curricular activities, school excursions) these will be put in place as soon as possible after consultation with the N.C.S.E. and B.O.M.

Transfer to post primary:

- To assist a smooth transition to post primary education for the pupil with special needs
 - ~ An initial meeting may be held with the child's parents, class teacher and Special Education Teacher to discuss what school is most suitable for the child.
 - ~ Contact may be made with the prospective school and a representative invited to a meeting with parents/teachers to outline how the school will cope with the child's special needs.

Record Keeping:

- A file will be kept on each pupil in the school including these pupils with special needs containing all the relevant information pertaining to his/her needs.
- As deemed appropriate the Principal teacher, SEN Co-Ordinator, Class teacher, Special Education Teacher, Psychologist, Inspector, Parents and all other professionals who work with the child will have access to this file. Parental consent may be required to allow access to this information.
- These files are stored in safekeeping.
- These files are kept as per statutory regulations.

Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy are

- Inclusion of pupils with complex/ leaning needs into our school
- Progress of pupils with complex/ learning needs in our school
- Feedback from teaching staff, special needs assistant, pupil, psychologists
- Inspector's Report, etc.



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Roles and Responsibility

The people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy.

- *Parents, NCSE, Psychologist, SEN Coordinator, Teaching staff*

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community: The Board of Management, Principal Teacher, Parents, Class Teachers, Special Education Teachers, SNAs, Children and external bodies and agencies.

Board of Management

The Board of Management will:

- Oversee the development, implementation and review of school policy on support for children with additional needs
- Provide adequate class accommodation and teaching resources
- Provide a secure facility for storage of records.

Principal Teacher

The principal has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision. The principal will work closely with school staff and will keep the BOM informed about the working of this policy. It will be the role of the principal to:

- develop inclusive whole-school policies and monitor their implementation
- assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including special education roles
- co-ordinate teachers' work to ensure continuity of provision for all pupils
- ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
 - facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with special educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
 - maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching
 - select children for psychological assessment in consultation with class and support teachers and with NEPS
- liaise with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments of children with SEN



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- liaise with SENO regarding all aspects of special education provision
- arrange for exemptions from the study of Irish for pupils for whom this is appropriate.

Class Teacher

The Class Teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all children in his/her class, including those selected for supplementary teaching.

The Class Teacher will:

- create a positive learning environment within the classroom
- differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class
- contact parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- gather information and assess children presenting with needs to inform teaching and learning using the Continuum of Support
- open a Student Support File once additional needs have been identified and require Classroom Support
- Children in receipt of Classroom Support are referenced in the differentiation section of the class teacher's fortnightly/monthly plans.
- collaborate with Special Education Teachers to develop School Support Plans and School Support Plus Plans for each pupil in receipt of School Support and School Support Plus
- meet with Special Education Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority learning goals for each pupil in receipt of School Support and School Support Plus
- meet with Special Education Teachers, relevant staff to review Support Plans
- where applicable, collaborate with the SET team regarding teaching aims and activities for team teaching
- administer and correct standardised tests of achievement in literacy and numeracy, following the school's guidelines
- discuss outcomes of standardised testing with SET team to assist in the selection of children for supplementary teaching
- co-ordinate the role and responsibilities of the SNA in relation to the needs of pupils with SEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned



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Special Education Teachers (SET)

The central roles of the Special Education Teacher will be to:

- a) support the class teacher in optimising teaching and learning opportunities and
- b) provide specialised teaching to those children with identified special educational needs.

The Special Education Teacher will:

familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs

- assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at prevention and early intervention
- meet with Class Teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to review and develop School Support Plans and to identify priority learning goals for pupils in receipt of School Support or School Support Plus
- monitor the ongoing progress of each child in receipt of supplementary teaching in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets
- maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support
- update and maintain the Student Support Files of pupils in receipt of School Support and School Support Plus
- administer and interpret diagnostic tests and inform class teachers and parents of the outcomes
- meet with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress
- administer a range of formal and informal assessments and maintaining records of the outcomes of those assessments
- contribute to the development of SEN policy.
- provide advice to the Class Teacher (if requested).
- liaise with external agencies such as speech and language therapists, NEPS etc., and implementing suitable recommendations, wherever possible.



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Implementation Date

This policy will apply from 9th October 2023.

Timetable for Review

The policy will be reviewed by the SEN Co- Ordinator, SET and staff as deemed necessary.

Ratification & Communication

The BoM officially ratified the policy on _____

Signed: 
Chairperson: BOM

Principal



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Appendices

Teacher as Observer – Some Early At-Risk Indicators

Pencil Grasp:

Can the child hold a pencil or drawing instrument in an appropriate manner in order to make marks on paper?

Copying Shapes:

Can the child copy such shapes as a circle, a square, a triangle and a diamond?

Use of Scissors:

Can the child cut paper with some degree of control?

Expressive Language:

Can the child retell a familiar story from memory, or describe in detail a picture placed in front of him or her?

Vocabulary:

In speech, does the child use a reasonably wide range of different words?

Repeating Sentences:

Can the child repeat dictated sentences of increasing length?

Writing own name:

Can the child write own name unaided?

Auditory discrimination:

Can the child detect whether two words presented orally are the same or different?

Phonemic Awareness:

Can the child detect rhyming words and alliteration? Can the child identify the initial sound in a word?

Can the child blend sounds to make words? Can the child segment words into their component sounds?

Word Matching:

Can the child match two identical words on cards?

Letter names and sounds:

Can the child recognise and name some or most of the letters of the alphabet (Capital and lowercase)?

Naming five shapes and naming of five colours:

The child is shown objects of different shapes and colours.

Immediate learning and recall of words:

This is assessed by teaching the child two new words on flashcards for a few minutes, then testing recall immediately. Recall is checked later in the lesson.



A variation of this procedure is to place the two cards on the table and ask the child to point to the word you pronounce (recognition memory). Then the cards are put on the table and the child is asked to say the one you point to (recall). Finally, the cards are removed and the child is asked to write the two words from memory.

1. Checklist for Assessment of Phonological Awareness

Syllabic Awareness:

- Can the child blend syllables? E.g. doc/tor, vid/e/o,
- Can the child segment syllables? E.g. car+rot, snick+ers
- Can the children count syllables, using clapping, foot stamping, pencil tapping and using grids and counters?
- Can the child isolate syllables? E.g. isolate the first or second syllable in postman, blackbird, carrot.

Onset and rime:

- Can the child recite nursery rhymes and poems?
- Can the child detect rhyme in a story?
- Can the child tell if words rhyme i.e. rhyme judgement.
- Can the child generate rhyming words?

Phonemic Awareness

(i) Phoneme Blending:

- Can the child blend 2 phonemes a/t or p/ie?
- Can the child blend 3 phonemes p/e/t/ or f/a/t/?
- Can the child blend 4 phonemes f/a/s/t/ or c/l/o/ck/?

(ii) Phoneme Identification:

- Can the child identify initial sounds e.g. what does window begin with?
- Can the child identify final sounds e.g. what sound is at the end of cup, dog?
- Can the child identify medial sounds e.g. what sound do you hear in the middle of this word?

(iii) Phoneme Deletion:

- Can the child delete the initial sound of a word to produce another word e.g. gold/old, bus/us?
- Can the child delete the final sound of a word to produce another word e.g. fork/for, teach/tea,?
- Can the child delete the medial sound of a word to produce another word e.g. say the bend without the /n/ sound in the middle?

(iv) Phoneme Substitution:

- Can the child substitute the initial sound with another sound e.g. say the word goat but change the /g/ to a /b/?
- Can the child substitute the final sound e.g. say the word kiss but change the /ss/ to the /k/ sound ?
- Can the child substitute the medial sound e.g. say the word band but the change the /a/ to an /e/ sound?



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BIAP:

Criteria for Learning Support:

- <20 Letter Sounds Test
- = or < critical score in the following areas 1.Perceptual Processes, 2.Motor Development and 3.Language & communication.

Middle Infant Screening Test

Aims: The aims of the MIST are

- to give a profile of class performance
- to screen out children who are the lowest 20-25 percent of their peer group in reading and writing.
- to pinpoint significant difficulties and confusions which are contributing to poor reading and writing
- to yield information on which to base a follow-up programme

It is standardised in terms of its administration only.

It is a criterionreferenced, diagnostic test.

Children are considered to be at risk if they score below the cut off point in three or more of the subtests.

When is it administered?

At the start of the fifth term in school.

Children ought to be five yearseight months or more before testing.

Retest:

After the Follow-up Programme '**Forward Together**' which will take 8 weeks, children are retested on the Letter Sounds, Written Vocabulary, Three-phoneme words and Sentence Dictation subtests. Alternative words and sentences are given for this purpose.

The Subtests

1. Listening skills
2. Letter sounds
3. Written vocabulary
4. Three-Phoneme Words
5. Sentence Dictation
6. Listening skill



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Wordlists to be checked:

NEPS First Hundred Words
NEPS Second Hundred Words
Dolch : Commonly Used Words.

220 Dolch Words in Story Form

The Best Thing In The World

Once upon a time, there were four brothers who lived in a far away land. Their father was an old king. One day he said, "I will not live long now. Today you must start out into the world. In a year, bring back the best thing you have found. The one who can pick the best thing shall be the new king." The first brother said, "I will look in every city or town. I will buy the best thing I can for my father."

The next two brothers said, "We will both go on fast ships over the sea. We will find something better." The last brother said, "I am going to ask the people here in our own land to tell me the best thing." The other three brothers began to laugh. "Then you will never be king!" They said.

The last brother started off. When he had gone about six miles, he met a man. "What do you carry in those big bags?" he asked.

"The best thing in the world," said the man. "These are full of the good nuts which fall from my five nut trees."

"I don't think that would work," said the brother to himself, "I must try again." The brother went on another seven miles. He found a small brown bird. It had been hurt, so he put it in his coat where it could keep warm. As he went on, he saw a little girl crying. He ran to meet her. "Why are you crying?" he asked. "I want to get some water from the well," she said. "We use so much. We drink cold water. We wash the clothes clean with hot water. But I do not know how to pull it up. Please show me."

The brother said, "Hold this bird and I will help you. It does not fly around anymore because it got its wing hurt!"

"Thank you. What a pretty bird!" she said. "I wish you would give it to me. If you will let me keep it, I will always be very kind to it. I will take care of it myself. I will make it grow well again."

"Yes, you may have it," said the brother. So he gave her the bird and went on.



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Westwood Maths Checklist 1.

Can the child

- Sort objects given one attribute (colour, size, and shape)?
- Sort objects given two attributes?
- Produce equal sets of objects by one-to-one matching?
- Count correctly objects to ten? To 20?
- Recognise numerals to 10? to 20?
- Place number symbols in correct sequence to 10? To 20?
- Write numerals correctly from dictation to 10? To 20?
- Understand ordinal values (5th, 10th, 2nd)?
- Perform simple addition with numbers below 10 in written form (e.g. $3+5=?$) with or without apparatus?
- Perform subtraction with numbers below 10 in written form?
- Count-on in a simple addition problem?
- Answer simple oral problems involving addition or subtraction with numbers below 10?
- Recognise coins and paper money (1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20, 50c, €1, €2)