



# Starting Post Primary School

## Young People with Special Educational Needs

An Information Session for  
Parents/Guardians





**You can find out how the NCSE supports Children with additional needs in school at the following website:**

**[www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie)**

# The National Educational Psychological Service

NEPS is a **consultation-based service** provided by the Department of Education and Youth. NEPS psychologists work with primary, post-primary and special schools.

Psychologists are concerned with **learning, behaviour, social and emotional** development as well as students at risk of educational disadvantage.

Each NEPS psychologist is assigned to a group of schools.

# What can you do as a Parent Tips for Transitioning

## Visit

Visit prospective placements to gather information on the new school/setting

## Discuss

Discuss with school staff and involved professionals their views on the student's needs and the supports required to assist with the transfer to the new setting.

## Provide

Provide permission for information sharing between schools e.g. previous reports, strengths and difficulties, organisational skills, transition documents etc

## Prepare

When a decision has been made on placement, make arrangements for the student to visit and familiarise themselves with the new setting.

# What can you do as a Parent

## Tips for Transitioning

### Gather

Gather key information e.g. key staff members, map of school, information on locker system etc. This can be collated in a booklet or folder.

### Speak

If possible, speak to the SEN Coordinator in the Post-Primary school about the structure of support in school. Special Education Teaching time is not as structured as in primary school.

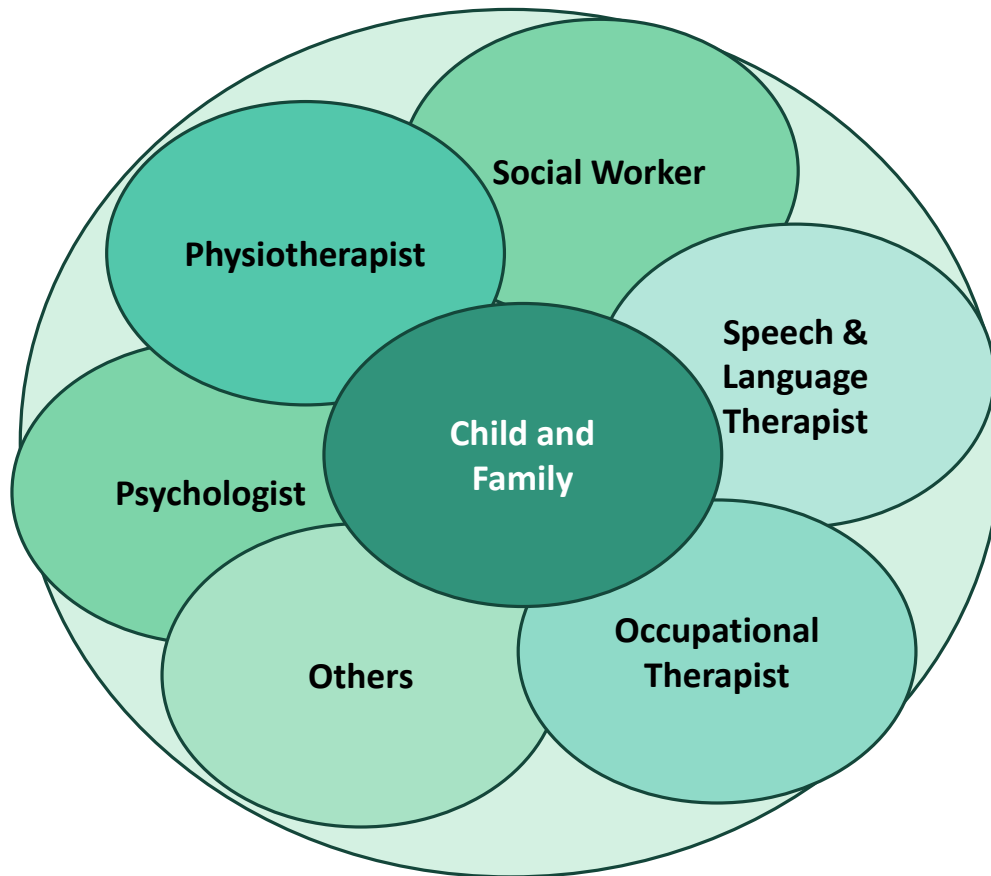
### Find

Find an appropriate way to communicate with your new school's staff e.g. email, phone, online communication e.g. MS teams, Homework journal

### Familiarise

Familiarise yourself with range of learning pathways (QQI, National Learning Network)

# North Tipperary Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT)



The CDNT is a team of professionals working together to support:

- Children and young people from **birth to 18 years of age**
- Who live in the **North Tipperary area**.
- Who present with **complex needs** arising from a confirmed or suspected disability & require an **interdisciplinary team**

# Our Bases



**Belmont, St. Conlon's  
Road, Nenagh,  
E45E208**



We also have a base at the Guardian Angel Centre on the grounds of Pallottine College, Thurles.

# CDNT Role in School Placement

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Only on request from parent will a School Placement Review be initiated.

The school placement review can commence from as early as Easter of 5<sup>th</sup> class.

Clinicians are ethically and professionally required to recommend what is in the child's best interests. As health care professionals we have to consider the global needs of the child and not just the educational needs.

*What is not included in our review:*

*Standardised assessment of learning/academic skillsets e..g cognitive assessment, literacy and numeracy attainments assessments*

# Equipment Provision for School

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The CDNT can assess the need for the child to have specialised equipment to access the curriculum at school.

Equipment : Specialised tables and seating, manual or ceiling trak hoists, bathroom equipment, changing benches, sloped writing boards, Assistive Technology, communication device

With regard to handwriting and Assistive Technology assessment requests, a child will need to have typing skills in order to progress with this request.

# Environmental Changes

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Support and advice can be offered to schools in relation to :

Access to and from the school building and within the school building and classroom

The provision of accessible entry points, toileting and changing facilities and equipment

Provision of Sensory Motor equipment and spaces

Parking spaces

School tours – accessible bus etc.

# Foundation to a Smooth Transition

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Establish a consistent school day routine

Allow enough time for morning routine

Ensure your child is eating and sleeping well

Set healthy boundaries with online/screen use



Encourage your child to be as independent as possible

- Preparing their school bag and uniform the night before school
- Preparing their lunch
- Checklists can be helpful



# The Timetable



## Colour code

Be Proactive - make multiple copies of the timetable and put it on the fridge, the bedroom desk, inside locker

Print a map of the school classrooms out and stick this in homework diary. Place a star \* in each room that you have a subject in, choosing a colour that matches your colour coding.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.50	Assembly Hall	Assembly Hall	Assembly Hall	Assembly Hall	Assembly Hall
9.00	Maths 3	Irish 13	Ger 3	SPHE 15	Ger 3
9.40	Irish 13	Sci 6	Eng 8	Eng 8	PE Hall
10.20	R.E. 7	Sci 6	Geog 9	Irish 13	PE Hall
10.50	B	R	E	A	K
11.10	Hist 12	Maths 3		Ger 3	Tech 11
11.50	Geog 9	Geog 9	Maths 3	Maths 3	Tech 11
12.30	L	U	N	C	H
1.20	Sci 6	R.E. 7	Hist 12	Bus Std 1	Eng 8
2.00	Bus Std 1	Ger 3	Sci 6	Bus Std 1	Hist 12
2.40	Eng 8	Bus Std 1	Irish 13	Tech 11	Maths 3
3.20	CSPE 15	Tech 11	Study 10	Eng 8	Irish 13







# The School Bag

- For the first few weeks (or as needed) check the bag every night with your son/daughter to ensure the right books and copies are ready for *at least* the first 3 classes the following morning.
- Colour coded books/copies that correspond to timetable.
- Top opening bag , easy to see and take out of bag
- See through pencil case.
- If you encourage this regularly now it will make for good habits later on.



When I pack my Schoolbag,  
this is what I need.....



Homework	
Books	
Homework Journal	
Pencil case	
Lunch	
Other things	

# The Locker Key

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When your child gets his / her locker key it is a very good idea to ***get a copy of the key cut*** so there will always be a spare.

Your child may want to request a locker at eye level on the end of a row.



# School Uniform Tips

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School tie – consider using an elasticated tie.

Laces – if laces are tricky, try elasticated laces. Try school shoes that are slip on/slip off or Velcro.

Changing before and after P.E. – practice this at home and identify the areas that are more challenging.

Changing in and out of your shirt – try unbuttoning the top 2 buttons and bottom button – putting on and off your shirt like a t-shirt (this means you have less buttons to fasten)



# Understanding Strengths and Needs

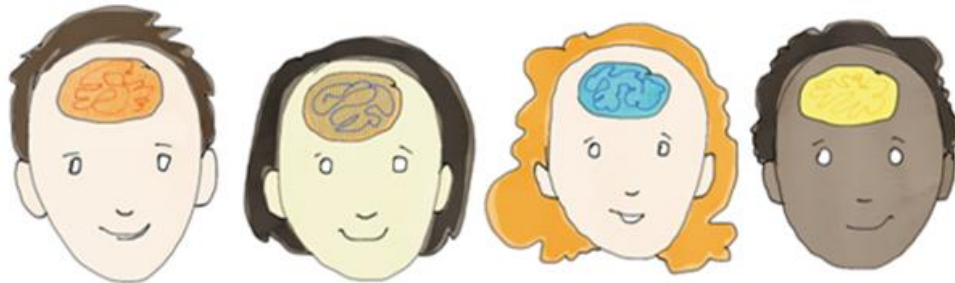
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Talk with your child about their diagnosis



Equip them with an understanding of their strengths and needs

Ensure they have the language to speak to others about their needs



# Self-Advocacy/Assertiveness

- Quiet
- Says sorry all the time
- Doesn't tell others how they feel
  - Blames themselves
- Doesn't stand up for themselves

- Fair
- Honest and open
- Listens to others
- Stands up for themselves
- Confident
- Respectful

- Unfair
- Doesn't listen to others
- Blames others
- Uses loud voice
- Interrupts others
- Doesn't respect others

<b>Passive</b>	<b>Assertive</b>	<b>Aggressive</b>
		

Sometimes I struggle with processing information, could you please give me time to think about that please?

I rely on my headphones and stim toys as disability aids. I am still listening. These aids help me to take in information more easily.

# Problem Solving

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Problem solving within social situations is a key skill for students to develop over time.

Introduce problem solving by targeting simple situations first.

It can be used in retrospect or with problems within social situations that could potentially occur in the future

These visuals can be kept to help support students in managing difficult social situations

# 5 Step Problem Solving Plan

**1. What is the Problem?**

**2. What could I do?**

a.

b.

c.

d.

**3. What might be a good outcome of this?**

**4. What might be a bad outcome of this?**

**5. On balance, what is the best solution?**

**Do it!**

# Managing Emotions

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Transitioning to a new school can generate mixed emotions for all children.

Strong emotions can also arise for parents.

Support your child's understanding of their own emotions

- labelling emotions
- increasing awareness of emotional body cues
- triggers to emotions
- strategies to manage their emotions



# Supporting your child to manage strong emotions

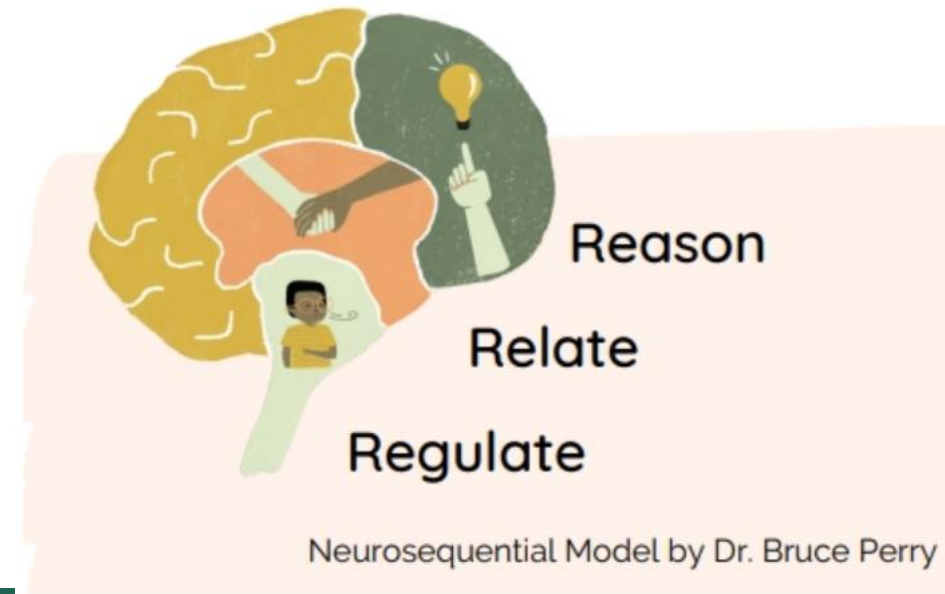
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## 1. **Regulate:** Calm

- Calming resources and activities e.g. favourite book, calming music, going for a walk, a drink of water, sensory activities, time with interests/hobbies
- Breathing

## 2. **Relate:** Acknowledge and validate child's feelings

## 3. **Reason:** Support coping and problem solving



# The Transition Plan




It can be helpful to set specific targets for your child's skill development in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class at school to inform their transition.

These targets could be recorded by your child's SET teacher in your child's School Support File

Skills areas for development could focus on,

- Organisational skills
- Daily living skills
- Self-advocacy skills
- Emotional regulation skills


Insert school logo here



STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	

**A Continuum of Support**

ACADEMIC SUCCESS ↔ SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCE



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.

# Transition workbooks

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Transition workbooks can be used to provide structure to learning about the new post-primary school.

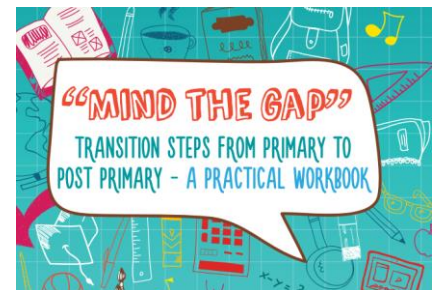
**NEPS** and **NCSE** have sample transition workbooks free to download from their websites.

The transition workbook could include information on,

School details - school map, pictures of the classrooms

School staff – principal, year head, class tutor, SET teacher, class teachers, SNA

Choice of subjects, timetables, school rules, school uniform



Thank you

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*Questions and Answers*