



Cedarwood School School Based Support Team Policy

This policy has to be read in conjunction with the School Inclusion Policy

Purpose of this Policy:

To maintain a whole School Based Support approach to the following:

1. An assessment system that works to inform us about student-risk status—which students may be having Language/Mathematics or other achievement-related difficulties
2. An assessment system that informs us about student progress within grade level or curriculum standards
3. Curriculum support that is evidence-based
4. An Individual Education Plan that is based and measured against an existing grade and level appropriate curriculum
5. An understanding about how curricular elements link across tiers and grade levels
6. Assurance that our instructional practices are evidence-based
7. Staff have a clear sense of what support their learners require and how to implement it
8. Staff know when the fidelity checks are going to be completed and that they are routinely applied so that the information is used to improve instruction
9. Whole School / Systemic practices integrated so that the overall framework can be sustained
10. Staff have an agreed-upon vocabulary and agreed-upon procedures and practices to support implementation at school level

Policy Background

At Cedarwood prospective pupils are invited to attend a trial week. A full report on the academic, social and emotional abilities is completed by the teachers who observe the visiting child and the feedback thereof is given to the parents at the end of the trial week. Parents are required to submit a recent Psychoeducational Assessment report (not older than 2 years) and latest school report. Should Cedarwood College be able to assist the pupil with his/ her specific barrier to learning, final acceptance can take place. Information gained from the process of application, observation during the trial week and further assessments result in a holistic understanding of the child and their support needs, which can be addressed by the SBS team.

Important points to keep in mind:

1. Pupils causing concern are highlighted or 'flagged' by individual teachers in the SBS files and/or discussed during phase meetings. The Educational Psychologist is present at this level and continues to form part of the team managing each individual case.
2. Current intervention is evaluated and further referral decided on. This may take the form of referral for emotional support or individual or small group remedial support.
3. Ongoing individual contact is made with parents for progress/ feedback about their children.
4. The school must keep concrete evidence of on-going support for the pupils and monitor progress.
5. The nature of the barriers experienced must be specified.
6. IEP or alternative curriculums are decided upon in agreement with parents who are required to sign acceptance and acknowledgement before changes can be made.
7. Concession applications are completed and handed to the relevant district representative early each year.
8. Learners without sufficient evidence of experienced barriers to learning may not be retained.

Elements to keep in consideration

1. Assessment for learning (and Core Skills for Learning) occurs on a continual basis
2. Team approach is essential for strategizing interventions, support and accommodations for each child; thus collective strategizing
3. Team approach to implementing the above (Grades, Years, Levels and tiers)
4. The team is involved in teaching approaches which take into account continually evaluating/ reviewing the effectiveness of the above
5. Team approach to the Assessment of Learning performance and potential
6. Team approach to authentic recording, communicating and reporting using the SBS file
7. Collecting of authentic evidence to support the above (in the context of an existing core curriculum)
8. Members and roles of the SBST
- 9.

SBS Team Roles and procedures

School/ Educational Psychologist

The school psychologist works as a case manager, with intention to oversee the overall development of each learner. All the information on the academic, emotional and social functioning of each individual is thus required. All information needs to pass through the case manager in order to be allocated to appropriate professionals for support. Each professional giving additional support also gives feedback with regards to progress and difficulties. Parent meetings and parent contact need to be communicated to the case manager (SBS files used).

Academic support

SBS members responsible for academic support are involved in assessing, monitoring and supporting learners with barriers to academics. Their primary information comes from concerns raised by teachers (flagged in the SBS file), which is summarized and prioritized in collaboration with the team. Support is offered in class as well as in small groups and individual sessions taken out of class. The support they give is tracked, alongside monitoring class progress, in order to give an overall understanding of development.

Emotional Support

An educational Psychologist is also in place to support all learners with emotional difficulties, whether short term crisis or ongoing traumas. Concerns are addressed through emergency pop-in sessions as well as regular monitoring of learners. A note is given if a child misses class, as one cannot always predict the time required to manage an emotional crisis.

Intern Educational Psychologists

The interns will see learners who are allocated by the case manager and work under the supervision of a Psychologist at the Prep. They will arrange weekly sessions that are structured and planned in advance. Careful consideration is given to the timetable when choosing a suitable slot and the therapy is re-evaluated termly. Referrals to the interns need to be conducted through the SBS team. Interns are also involved in assessing learners and will arrange suitable times with teachers and parents for this process.

Music support

A music therapist sees learners in small groups and individual sessions for music support. Slots are allocated after consultation with teachers. The therapist is also available to contain and support learners in times of crises, as well as working through long term emotional difficulties.

Tiered approach to support and interventions

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a framework used for organizing, allocating and evaluating educational resources to meet the instructional needs of all students to prevent long-term school failure. The SBS team makes use of a tiered approach to intervention in order to evaluate and monitor progress of learners who are in need of support, alongside teachers. The first Tier of intervention is teacher driven and refers to the instruction given to a whole class. Tier 2 refers to small groups within or outside of the class environment alongside academic support. Tier 3 refers to individual attention and instruction given to a child within or outside of the classroom structure with the involvement of academic support.

Core skills teaching and curriculum

Core Skills is a lesson allocated within the timetable for learners in the Senior Phase, with the goal of specific focus on studying skills. Learners are supported in understanding individual differences in thinking and personal management strategies which will support their overall learning across all subjects in the curriculum. This period in the timetable is also used by the academic support team when intervention is required for underlying learning difficulties, as these interventions require working on skills which are not linked to curriculum material.

Tracking recording and reporting

The following evidence of interventions and support need to be kept up to date:

1. Assessment for Learning (formative assessment through the process of seeking and interpreting evidence in order to inform support requirements)
2. Assessments of effectiveness of interventions
3. Paper based tracking and flagging system in the SBS file
4. IEPs, PreVocational adaptations, Skills based programmes, core skills teaching etc.
5. Strategies, review and implementation of support and intervention
6. Core Skills curriculum, content and approach
7. Assessment of Learning (summative assessment used to compare learners performance against national or grade standards)
8. Copies of pupils work
9. Assessment / school reports
10. Assessment of teacher and the SBST practices in accordance with staff development and training
11. Proof of review of practices
12. Proof of implementation of best practices

Concessions

Concessions are applied for through the GDE when adequate evidence exists with regards to a barrier to learning which will negatively impact test and exam performance. Assessments are conducted and applications are made on behalf of the learner and family. The GDE approve concessions according to strict criteria in order to ensure the learner is not gaining an advantage over his or her peers. Parents are responsible for the payment of tutors used to provide concessions.

Case discussions

Case discussions provide an opportunity for the staff to discuss all learners on a regular basis in order to provide information and coordinate a team approach to working with an individual. Case discussions occur on a weekly basis and Grades are rotated in order to discuss each learner. Any concerns raised can be picked up by the SBS team and support put in place. Round table discussions with parents are set up with staff and parents if and when the need arises.

Staff and parent involvement and feedback

The nature of our school requires continuous information and feedback with regard to an individual's performance and coping within academic, emotional and social wellbeing. Staff are regularly involved in information sharing, as per case discussions, due to the learner being taught by subject teachers and class or register teachers. Parents are frequently contacted via telephone, sms, email and meetings in order to work together as a team for the benefit of the individual. Regular feedback is required from teaching staff, support staff and parents in order to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in place and the overall progress of a learner as an individual.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Learners who do not meet the pass requirements within a specific subject area due to a barrier which negatively impacts their ability to progress within that subject are identified as requiring an IEP. Parents are engaged in a discussion with the relevant teachers in order to make a decision in the best interests of a child. A child who cannot progress in a subject area because of foundations which are not consolidated, work on a lower grade level in order to progress through mastering skills required by the curriculum. IEPs are offered within the core subjects of Maths, English and Afrikaans up until the Senior Phase. A learner needs to pass all subjects on the curriculum level and not on an IEP in Grade 9 in order to be promoted into the FET academic stream. Learners on an IEP receive work, assignments, tests and exams on a lower grade level, as decided by the teachers in conjunction with the parents, until such a time that that prove capable of managing the grade appropriate curriculum again. Alternate reports are received for IEP subjects.

Pre Vocational Pupils

The PreVocational stream offers learners who are going to be enrolled in the Vocational stream opportunities to focus their effort and attention on core subject areas with reduced pressure in additional subjects. Learners who are not coping with the curriculum requirements across multiple subjects within Grade 7-9 despite high levels of support and intervention, are considered for the PreVocational stream, as well as learners who are observed to experience persistent and excessive stress and anxiety which impacts their ability to perform academically. The PreVocational pathway allows alternate and practical assessments instead of formal tests and exams; however the grade appropriate curriculum is maintained in English and Maths as far as possible in order to open opportunities to enter into accredited Vocational courses.

Intern Educational Psychologists

Cedarwood School is a recognized Internship site for Educational Psychologists. Students who have completed the theory component of their Masters in Educational Psychology are required to complete a year's practical application of the learnt theory within an internship site. Intern Educational Psychologists are supervised by experienced Psychologists in the same stream, whilst supporting children and parents in therapy and assessments. They support the SBST by conducting psychoeducational assessments, concession applications, group social intervention, individual and play therapy as well as staff development.

Staff development and training

Staff development occurs within school on a weekly basis on topics which concern the learners and staff of Cedarwood. Topics are agreed upon on a termly basis and training is conducted for all staff across the school, unless a topic is relevant to only the Prep or College. Staff are also encouraged to engage in external training in support of staff development and professional growth.

(Also see Staff Development policy)

RECORD OF CHANGES

Date	Page no., heading, brief description of change	Entered by
22 Aug and 1 Sept	None	D van Wyk