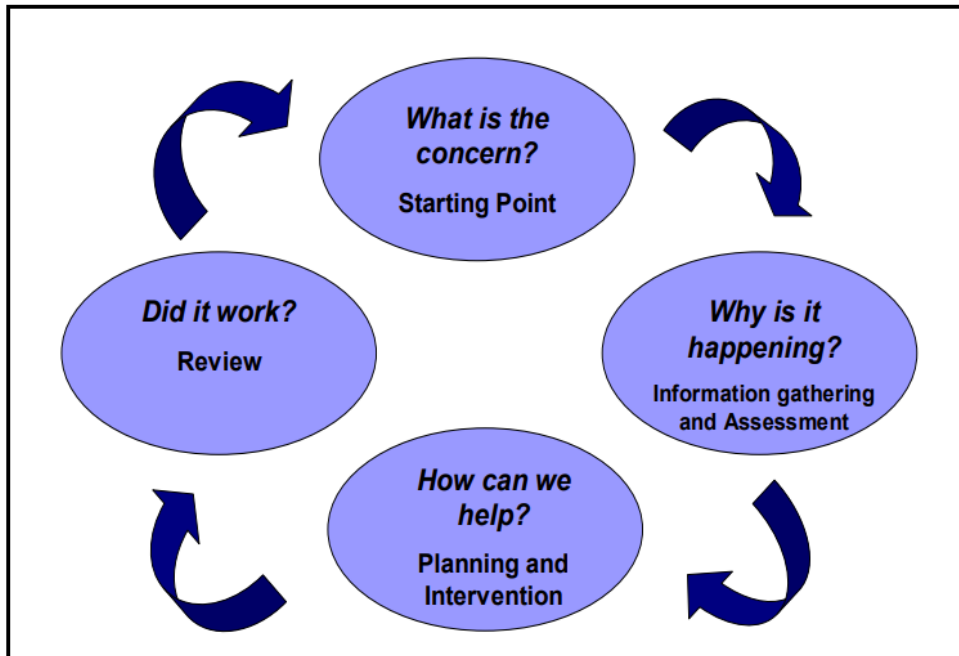


## The Continuum of Support Model.

The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables schools to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual students.



Using the Continuum of Support framework, schools can identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. The framework emphasises the importance of looking at a student's needs in context, and provides useful resources to support this (for example, Learning Environment Checklist, Teacher Checklist for Whole-Class Structures and Supports).

Many students will have their special educational needs identified prior to their transfer to post-primary school. It is important for schools to gather information on students' learning from primary schools and parents in order to plan provision and to ensure continuity and progression in the students' education.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a [suite of materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information from primary to post primary schools](#).

These include

- 6th Class Report Card
- My Profile sheet for children
- My Child's Profile sheet for parent(s)

- A Special Educational Needs Summary Form is included to support the sharing of information for children with identified learning needs

Since the 2014/15 school year, schools are required to use the Education Passport materials detailed above and to forward them to the relevant post-primary school, following confirmation of enrolment, ideally by the end of June ([Circular 45/2014](#)).

For more information on [Transition from Primary to Post-Primary](#).

For students with a high level of need, transition meetings may be arranged between primary and post-primary schools in advance of transfer. The Post-Primary Transfer Review Form provides a useful template for collating assessment data relating to students' academic, attainment and personal development needs in order to inform intervention planning following transition.

A post-primary school may use its own assessment practices to provide further screening and diagnostic information to support the planning process for students with special educational needs. The following resources may be used to inform assessment and identification of need:

[Post-primary circular on Assessment Instruments](#)

Drumcondra Online Testing System - [Maths](#) - [Reading](#)

The Continuum of Support provides a framework for schools to enable them to identify and respond to students' needs in a flexible way. This process is also supported through engagement with external professionals, as required. The following levels of support are suggested.

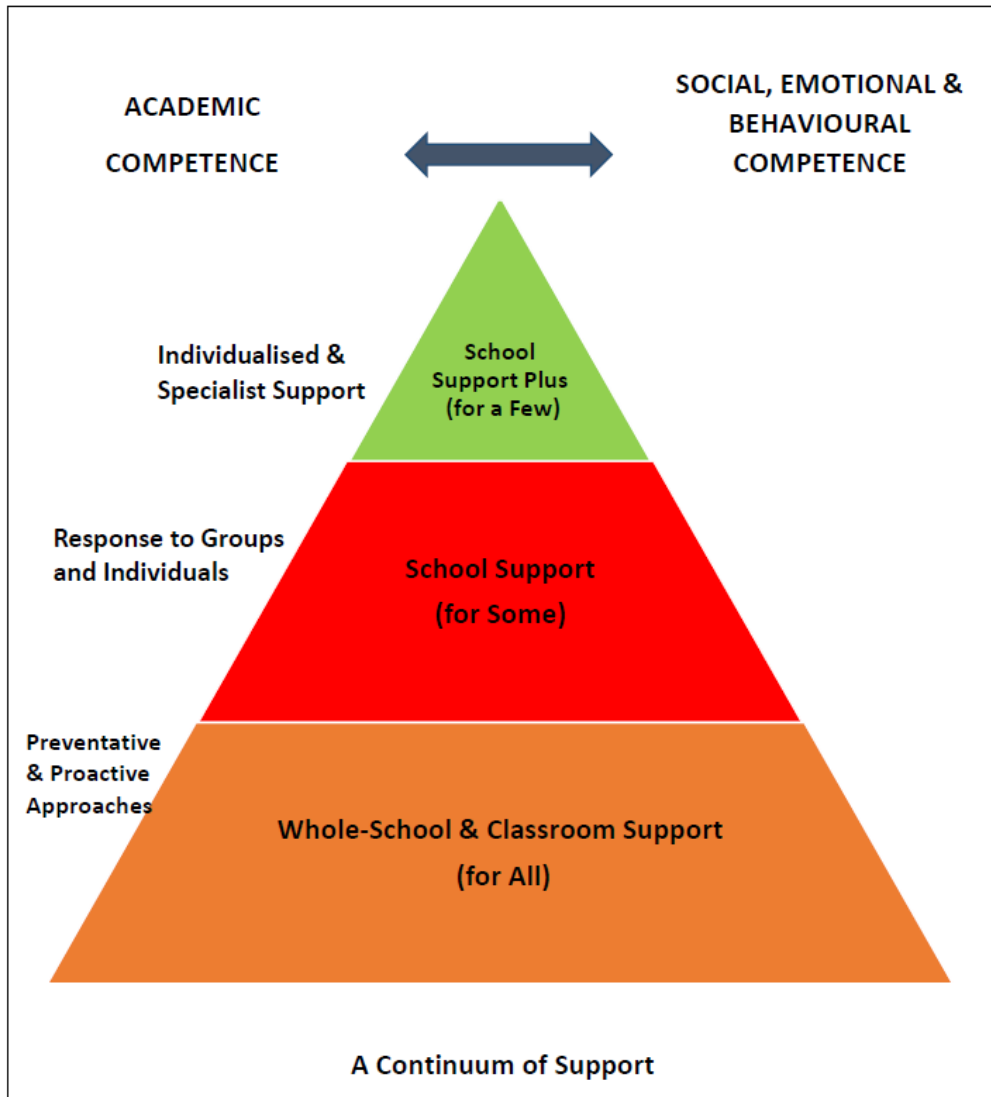


Table 1 ([download here](#)) outlines how a school can collect evidence about students' educational needs at each level of the Continuum of Support. This evidence can then be used to adapt teaching, to plan the next steps in students' learning and to gauge their responses to intervention. When data and information are carefully collected, shared and compared, schools can identify and respond to those students who have special educational needs.

## Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

<b>Whole-School and Classroom (Support for All)</b>	<p>The Post-Primary Continuum of Support contains a range of ideas and resources to assist in identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes. The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class.</p> <p>Identification of those needing additional support can be informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake screening</li> <li>• Collection of information from primary schools, including Student Passport</li> <li>• Teacher observation</li> <li>• Teacher assessment</li> <li>• Learning Environment Checklist</li> <li>• Student Support Team involvement</li> <li>• Standardised tests of literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Student consultation</li> <li>• Parental consultation</li> </ul> <p>Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole-school interventions (such as differentiated teaching, a mentoring programme or social skills group), School Support (for Some) is initiated.</p>
<b>School Support (for Some)</b>	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures /assessments</li> <li>• Parent/student interview</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>Support at this level can take many forms, for example: team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, peer mentoring, inclusion in social skills groups, behaviour reward and consequence systems.</p> <p>A Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>

**School Support  
Plus  
(for a Few)**

At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate. Data generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A Support Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.