SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

Review 2021

Signed: _____

Conan Daye (Principal), Sue Earls (Co-ordinator)

Signed: _____ (Chairperson B.O.M.)

Due for Review: June 2023

Scoil na Coróine Mhuire SEN Policy

General Information

Dates and Review

This updated policy was edited by the SET teachers and Principal June 2021.

The implementation of this Policy will commence in September, 2021. It is intended that it will be reviewed in June, 2023.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 20th Sept. 2021
Parents can view this Policy on the school website.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance on the provision of effective support to pupils experiencing low achievement and/or learning difficulties and to fulfil our duties under the Education Act, 1998.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

In our school we are dedicated to helping each child to achieve his/her individual potential. The provision of a quality system of Special Education Needs (SEN) is integral to this commitment.

Aims

Through the implementation of this policy, we strive to:

1. Promote effective collaboration among staff in the implementation of a staged approach to SEN.
2. Facilitate pupils to participate in the curriculum to the best of their ability
3. Develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes to school and learning
4. Enable pupils become independent learners within their own ability
5. Involve parents in supporting their children's learning
6. Inform staff of the ever-changing methods of assessment, recording and implementation of interventions and the different strategies and approaches involved.

Support

Support within the classroom across the School

The term 'support' in this policy focuses on identifying actions which can be taken to make a positive difference to our pupils. These actions are identified using a problem-solving approach. Classroom support is the most common form of support and typically the **first response to emerging needs** for pupils who have needs which are different from and additional to those of other pupils in their class.

The class teacher will:

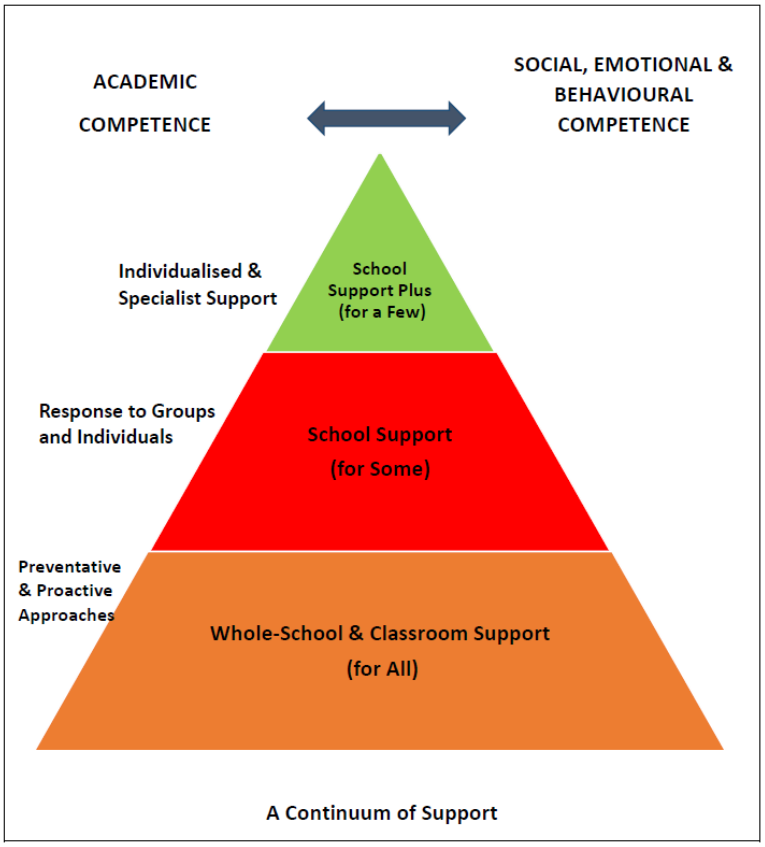
- Plan lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom
- Adapt teaching approaches & differentiate lessons to meet the needs of all pupils
- Adapt the environment to promote curricular access for all pupils
- Employ a variety appropriate teaching approaches and methodologies, including active learning, small-group tuition, individual teaching and scaffolded instructions.

Strategies to care for diverse learning needs within the classroom:

The following strategies are implemented in all classes to cater for the diverse learning needs of all pupils:

- Early intervention at infant level
- **Differentiation** across all curricular subjects and the provision of individualised support at classroom level
- Promotion of parental involvement through:
    - ✓ Their attendance at an induction meeting for parents at the start of each year
    - ✓ Information regarding homework requirements at each class level
    - ✓ Formal and informal parent/teacher meetings
    - ✓ Home support reinforcement activities
- Implementation of **Literacy** and Numeracy interventions such as Literacy Lift Off, Peer Reading, Guided Reading, Maths team teaching, Aistear etc.

Continuum of Support



Student Support Files

Our school opens a file for any pupil with emerging needs at any point on the Continuum of Support and stores these files in a locked cabinet.

- The Student Support File allows the school to track the student's pathway through the Continuum of Support – right from the start of the support process, and onwards, if necessary, through to the School Support (for Some) and School Support Plus (for a Few) levels.
- The Student Support File ensures continuity of support for a student, including transition from primary to post-primary school
- The Student Support File may encourage parental collaboration and parental engagement in the student's learning
- The Student Support File assists schools in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need
- The Student Support File keeps together all the information about the support of the student: information gathered, plans and interventions, consultations and reviews

LEVEL ONE: Classroom Support, 'Support for All'

Selection of pupils for Classroom Support Plans (CSP):

When a parent or teacher has concerns about an individual pupil

the teacher and parents discuss the nature of the problem and consider strategies which may be effective. The teacher may decide that differentiation within the classroom (as outlined above) may be sufficient to meet the pupil's needs

-Or-

a decision may be taken to initiate the classroom support process and draw up a CSP.

Step One: The class teacher gathers relevant information.

Step Two: Teachers use the **Classroom Support Checklist** (see appendix 1) as an initial assessment of the pupil's needs.

Step Three: The class teacher meets with the pupil's parents and a **Classroom Support Plan (CSP)** is drawn up which outlines the pupil's additional needs and the actions to be taken to meet these needs. The plan should also include home based actions, implemented by the pupil's parents/guardians, to support their child.

The classroom support plan will include a review date. This review will involve the class teacher, parents and the pupil (if appropriate) and will focus on:

- The pupil's response to learning/behaviour interventions
- Progress made by the pupil
- The effectiveness of the actions taken
- Suggested next steps

Possible Outcomes of CSP:

A. If the pupil has made some progress in meeting targets, a date can be set for further review to ensure progress is maintained. If the parents and teacher consider that the pupil's progress is less than expected, the reasons for this will need to be considered. Revised targets and adjustments to the strategies tried may be agreed and if needs be a new classroom support plan drawn up.

-or-

B. If the pupil has made satisfactory progress, then the parents and teacher may agree no further classroom support plans are necessary. Strategies which have been helpful may now become a routine part of the approaches used with the child in class. (This CSP is filed in the Support File Cabinet and can be re-opened at a later date if needs are identified again as the pupil moves through the school)

-or-

C. If the pupil is not making adequate progress, it **may** be decided that the School Support process is initiated.

LEVEL TWO: School Support for Some: IPLP

Selection of pupils for Supplementary Teaching:

- From Junior Infants upwards, all pupils are screened annually using standardised tests administered by the class teacher. (See Appendix 3: Screening Tools)
- Priority for SEN withdrawal is given to those pupils who perform at or below a Sten of 3, excluding pupils who have complex needs.

Whilst the **class teacher** retains **overall responsibility** for the pupils' learning, the SEN team will be involved at this stage. Together the SET and class teacher will decide on the model of support best suited to the needs of the child (withdrawal or in-class support) and draw up an Individual Pupil Learning Profile (IPLP) in consultation with the parents.

The level of provision of SEN to the school, individual learning needs and the overall school caseload will be taken into account when deciding how needs are met. One to one teaching is provided only where necessary.

Provision of the Supplementary Teaching

- The primary work of the SET is the provision of the supplementary teaching of the pupils identified at IPLP level.

Possible Outcomes of IPLP:

A: If the pupil has made satisfactory progress, the parents and teacher can agree no further support plans are necessary. Strategies which have been helpful may now become a routine part of the approaches used with the child in class. This pupil may return to CSP level and have progress monitored.

-or-

B: If the pupil has made progress in meeting some but not all targets, a date can be set for further review to ensure progress is maintained. If the pupil's progress is less than expected the reasons for this will need to be considered. Revised targets and adjustments to the strategies tried may be agreed.

-or-

C. If there is a complete lack of progress despite interventions on a number of levels, and if there is difficulty deciding what steps to take next, the school may undertake a number of assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses. The class teacher and SET may consult with the parents during the review stage of the IPLP and decide that assistance from or a referral to an outside agency may be required.

Referral to Out-of-School Agencies

- The Principal and/or class teacher class and SET meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.
- The SET coordinates the referral of pupils to outside agencies e.g. Educational Psychologist/ NEPS/ Assessment of Need/ HSE agency referrals
- The class teacher completes the necessary referral form in consultation with the appropriate school personnel including SEN.

- The external professional communicates with the pupil, parents, Principal, class teacher and SET (as appropriate) and the assessment is conducted.
- On receipt of the assessment report detailing the findings, the Learning Support teacher **may** contact the Educational Psychologist/outside agency to discuss recommendations and agree on an appropriate programme of work.
- Where concern arises regarding the manner or speed of the follow-through post assessment, such concern is pursued by the Principal with the out-of-school agency concerned.

- In the case of NEPS it should be noted that *National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has adopted a consultative model of service. Teachers may consult their NEPS psychologist should they need to at this stage in the process.* NEPS will provide a consult where they speak to the pupil, their parents and teachers and devise a plan going forward. This is reviewed and discussed with parents while the pupil remains at IPLP level.

- Only in the event of a failure to make reasonable progress, despite the school's best efforts in consultation with NEPS, will the NEPS psychologist become involved with an individual child for intensive intervention (an 'assessment' of their needs beyond what has been carried out in school and advice from consults). The pupil would then move on to Level Three (outlined below).

LEVEL THREE: School Support Plus (For a Few)

Pupils who have received a report and or diagnosis with a list of recommendations will have an Individual Education Profile (IEP) drawn up in consultation with the class teacher, SET, parents and pupil where appropriate. The IEP will contain SMART targets (see Appendix Five) set based on the recommendations of the report. This plan will be monitored and reviewed two to three times each year to ensure progress continues.

We also acknowledge that some pupils will enter the school system with a report and or diagnosis in place. The pupil will have a Support File opened upon entry and their needs and progress will be monitored at level three until a point where it is felt an IEP is no longer needed as their needs can be met within the classroom environment.

Roles and Responsibilities

The implementation of our Policy will be supported by the following:

Principal

- Co-ordinates Learning Support and Special Needs Services
- Supervises school screening and assessment
- Keeps the staff informed about referral procedures and external assessment agencies

The Class Teacher

- First-line responsibility for the education of all the pupils in their classes
- Draws up CSPs for those at level one on the continuum of support in their classroom and ensures these are signed and uploaded digitally in 'Documents/ Support Files' on Aladdin and hard copies are added to the Student Support Files in the locked cabinet.
- Provides differentiated strategies for group and individual needs
- Administers screening tests to his/her class
- Scores tests and interprets results in cooperation with other teachers in their class band.
- Completes referral forms for outside agencies.
- Consults with Principal and SEN Teachers on the selection of students for diagnostic/additional assessment
- Participates in collaborative planning
- Monitors the selection of pupils for additional assessment

- Meets with parents to provide feedback on screening and additional assessment
- Explains school policy and procedure to parents
- Obtains consent for diagnostic assessment
- Need to collaborate with Special Education Teachers and parents in the planning process

The SEN Teacher

- Oversees the development and implementation of SEN Policy
- Has a core role in policy development
- Liaises with the Principal, Class Teachers and parents
- Advises on the selection of screening instruments
- Conducts additional assessment
- Maintains and reviews the records of pupils attending SEN
- Advises on the scoring and interpretation of these instruments
- Consults with Class Teachers on the selection of students for diagnostic assessment and assists, as required, with the administration of these tests
- Draw up IEP and IPLP school support plans in consultation with parents and ensure these are signed and uploaded digitally in 'Documents/ Support Files' on Aladdin and hard copies are added to the Student Support Files in the locked cabinet.
- Writes up planning in 6 week blocks and uploads these documents to Sharepoint and shares them with the relevant class teachers.

The Board of Management

- Oversees the development, implementation and review of Learning Support Policy
- Provides adequate resources, accommodation and a secure facility for the storage of confidential records and documents

Parents

- Supports and participates in their Child's learning
- Involved and aware of any on-going concerns regarding his/her progress in school
- Liaises with teachers on home-school supports strategies
- Involved in the planning and review of Support Files -CSPs, IPLPs and IEPs
- Implementing home support section of Support Files
- Apply for and attend appointments for SLT, OT etc as deemed appropriate to the needs of the child.
- Cooperate with the outside agencies involved with their child as appropriate.

The Pupil

- The pupil is involved and aware of any on-going concerns regarding his/her progress in school
- Is consulted regarding personal strengths and interests
- Assists in the development, implementation and review of his/her own learning

Handover

In June time is set aside for class teachers and SETs to meet and discuss students' progress over the school year and identify needs for the following year. The SEN teachers also meet in June to examine the results of standardised tests – SIGMA T. and MICRA T scores. Classes are allocated to SEN teachers the following September.

Appendices

Appendix One: Classroom Support Checklist

From page 12/13 of the [NEPS Special Educational Needs A Continuum of Support Resource pack for teachers](#).

Classroom Support Checklist

NAME | DOB | CLASS | DATE

GENERAL INFORMATION	CHECKED (YES/NO)	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION
Parents consulted		
Information from previous school/preschool, or previous class teacher gathered		
Hearing		
Vision		
Motor Skills		
Medical Needs		
Basic Needs checklist completed		
Assessment of learning- screening, attainments tested, if appropriate		

GENERAL INFORMATION CONTD..	CHECKED (YES/NO)	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION
Observation of learning style/ approach to learning		
Observation of behaviour		
Interview with pupil		
Classroom work differentiated		
Learning environment adapted		
Yard/school environments adapted		
Informal consultation with outside professionals		
ACTION NEEDED		
ACTIONS AGREED WITH PARENTS AND RELEVANT STAFF		

Appendix Two: My Thoughts About School Checklist

Name: **Class:** **Date:**

The things I like best at school are:
The things I don't like about school are:
The things that I am good at are:
The things I find hard are:
I am happy in class when:
I am happy during break and lunch times when:
My friends are:
I need help with:
Teachers in school can help me by:
My teacher would describe me as:
My parents would describe me as:

The following can be asked if children have an emotional and behavioural difficulty in school:

Adults I get on best with in school are:
I get into trouble in school when:
The things I do that make my teacher feel unhappy are:
The things my teacher does that make me feel unhappy are:
I make my teacher happy when:
The things my teacher does that make me feel happy are:
The class rules are:
If someone breaks the rules:
Rewards I like best are:
The things that I need to change are:

From page 11 of the NEPS Special Educational Needs A Continuum of Support Resource pack for teachers.

Appendix Three: Screening Tools

Belfield Infant Assessment Profile BIAP- Junior Infants

Middle Infant Screening Test MIST- Senior Infants

MICRA-T

- **Level** 1 – First Class.
- **Level** 2 – Second & Third Class.
- **Level** 3 – Fourth Class.
- **Level** 4 – Fifth & Sixth Class.

SIGMA-T

- **Level** 1: Beginning of 1st Class – End of first term in 2nd Class.
- **Level** 2: Last term in 2nd Class – End of first term in 3rd Class.
- **Level** 3: Last term in 3rd Class – End of first term in 4th Class.
- **Level** 4: Last term in 4th Class – End of first term in 5th Class**. (2 parts, to be administered on separate occasions)**
- **Level** 5: Last term in 5th Class – End of 6th Class. **(2 parts, to be administered on separate occasions)**

Appendix Four: List of Recommended Psychologists

Martina Colleran
086 349 4694

Lynn Kavanagh *Parent in School
087 680 7064

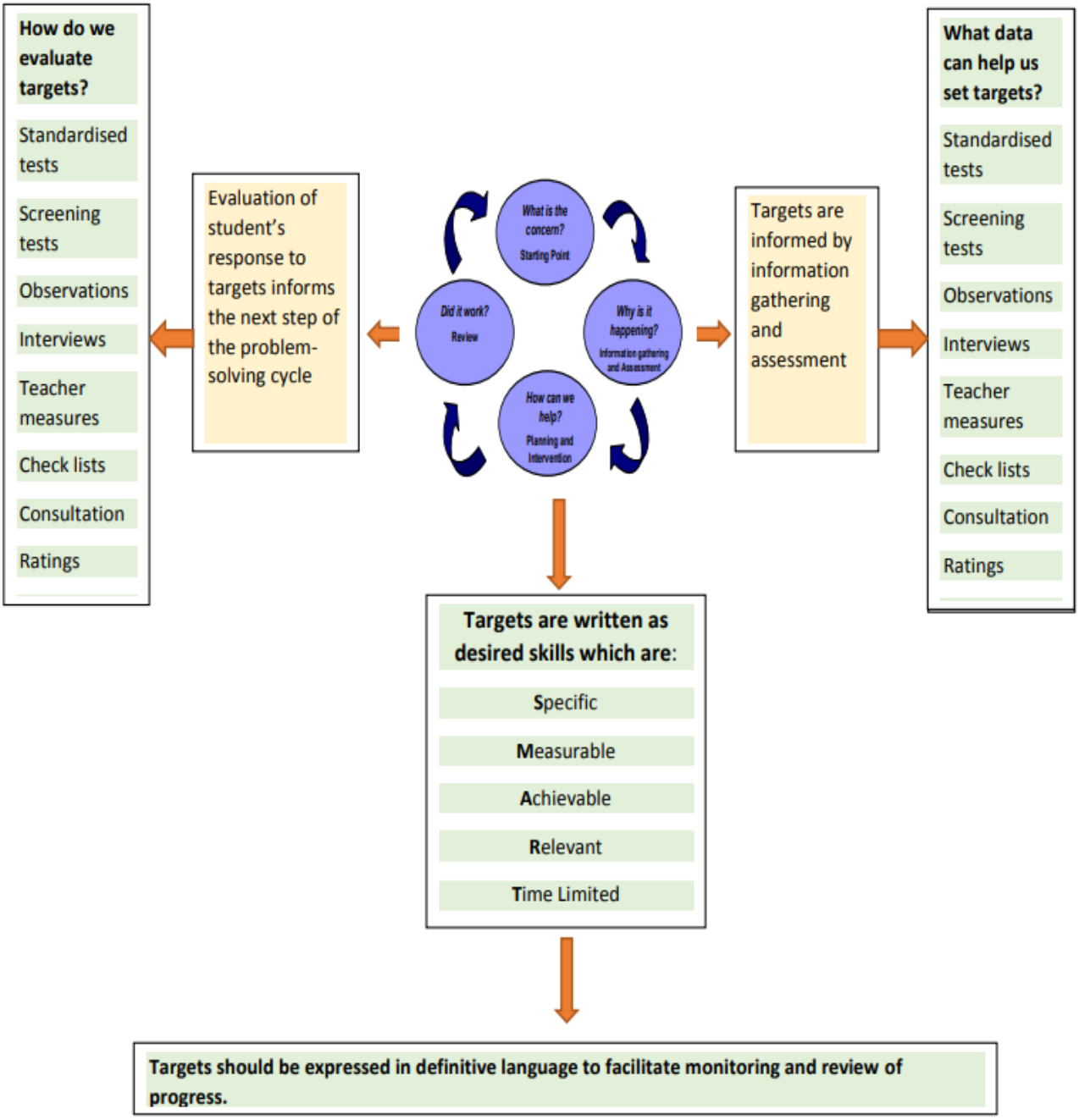
Michael Quane
086 059 8598

Joan Whelan
087 240 8848

Helen Finnegan
087 3415401

Agnes Behan
086-1732234

Appendix Five: SMART targets



Appendix Six: Standardised Assessment Procedures

STANDARDISED ASSESSMENT
AGREED PROCEDURES

Reviewed June 2021

MICRA-T

- **Level** 1 – First Class.
- **Level** 2 – Second & Third Class.
- **Level** 3 – Fourth Class.
- **Level** 4 – Fifth & Sixth Class.

SIGMA-T

- **Level** 1: Beginning of 1st Class – End of first term in 2nd Class.
- **Level** 2: Last term in 2nd Class – End of first term in 3rd Class.
- **Level** 3: Last term in 3rd Class – End of first term in 4th Class.
- **Level** 4: Last term in 4th Class – End of first term in 5th Class**. (2 parts, to be administered on separate occasions)**
- **Level** 5: Last term in 5th Class – End of 6th Class. **(2 parts, to be administered on separate occasions)**

In multigrade classrooms, tests may be administered concurrently with other levels of the tests, administering the test to the older age group first.

- Not to be carried out Monday/Friday or day after Bank Holiday
- Timetables to be organised week ahead of testing, teachers must liaise with SET teachers when deciding on times to ensure SET teacher or ANOther is present during testing
- Test to be completed in one setting so commence by 9.30am
- Wall Charts, Word walls etc. to be removed or covered (Number lines ok for 1st & 2nd)
- Children can be given blank sheets of paper for extra rough work but these must be included with the test when handed up
- Notice on the doors – no interruptions
- Grass cutting, strimming not to take place during testing
- The removal of a child for completion of the test in another room has to be passed by Conan
- Children may be exempted from testing *(Circular 0026/2019 – Pupils may be excluded from standardised testing if, in the view of the school principal, they have a learning or physical disability which would prevent them from attempting the test or, in the case of migrant students, where the level of English required in the test would make attempting the test inappropriate. Exemptions should be considered on a case-by-case basis and be warranted only in exceptional cases.*)
- All details to be inputted on Aladdin by last Friday in May
- **Absolutely** no mention or forewarning of the test in advance - to avoid creating undue anxiety/pressure
- SET to analyse Micra T and Sigma T results to inform planning in preparation for the following year
- Test Booklets and Teachers' Manuals distributed on the morning of the test
- All Manuals collected and returned to office by given date
- Teacher is responsible for ensuring all stencils are included in Teachers' Manuals before they are returned to office
- Correction – Test Booklets to be swapped with partner teacher/teacher within their class band for correction, teachers do not correct own class tests
- Corrections take place outside of teaching hours, Croke Park hours are used to facilitate correction
- All test booklets to be passed on to the following year teacher. At the end of that year the outer cover may be taken off the booklet and kept by Mr Daye, discarding the remaining pages
- Results, both class based and age based scores, inputted to Aladdin by last Friday in May
- Results sent to parents in end-of-year reports
- On occasion it may be necessary to discuss results with parents in person, this should be decided with SET and Conan
- Principal reports information from standardised tests to the Board of Management
- Results sent to Dept of Ed and Skills in June on POD in Esinet portal

CHECKLIST

- Teacher Manual
- All stencils in order
- Spare blank tests
- Signs for doors