

POLICY

**SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT
TEAM**

DRAFT

SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM (SBST)

In accordance with White Paper 6 all schools must have a SBST, which aims to support educators with assisting learners

The SBST is a problem solving team with a common goal: to provide the most effective service to learners in presenting those with the opportunities to achieve their potential at school, at home and in the community. The SBST encourages the establishment of a forum for educators (as well as parents and other community leaders) to have regular support meetings to consult and advise each other on the needs of the learners. The SBST, together with the class teacher, thus share the ownership and responsibility of effectively addressing learner' educational needs, by means of intervention strategies and possible referrals.

Structure of the SBST

- Members of the SBST make themselves available voluntarily - the number of members will be determined by the needs of the school.
- All members in the SBST enjoy equal status.
- Every second year a co-ordinator will be appointed to manage the SBST file, deal with Individual Support Plan (ISP) files and co-ordinate meetings.
- To ensure continuity members will serve on the SBST for a minimum period of 1 year.
- Management of the SBST will consist of: the Co-Ordinator, Principal, Deputy Principal, Learning Support Educator (LSE), and the Phase Head of Department/s AND any other representative staff member.

PURPOSE OF THE SBST

The main purpose of the SBST is to help the educators in the school to identify the barriers to learning, to remove them or if they cannot be removed to compensate for them in one way or another.

Other core duties:

- To ensure that the school's educational programs prevent barriers to learning and development.
- To identify learning and developmental barriers experienced by learners.
- Analyses the learning and developmental barriers.
- To assist class educators to develop Individual Support Plans (ISP) for learners.

- To monitor the implementation of the ISP.
- To refer the learners to the District Based Support Team (DBST) for specialized assessment or evaluation if they do not progress according to their ISP.
- To ensure that learners from Special Schools are successfully integrated into the mainstream.
- To assist with the adaptation of the learner program and assessment (scaffolding).
- Ensure that community support networks and the multifunctional support and development-teams (DBST) of the Education District Office are being utilized effectively.

2. COMPOSITION OF THE SBST:

1. School manager : _____
2. Deputy School Manager : _____
3. Co-ordinator : _____
4. HOD Foundation phase : _____
5. HOD Inter-Sen phase : _____
6. Representative Gr R : _____
7. Secretary for the SBST : _____
8. : _____

3. FUNCTION/DUTIES OF SBST MEMBERS:

3.1 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Overall responsible for establishment, development, management, support and monitoring of the SBST
- Actively involved in the SBST
- Motivates and encourages members
- Attend all meetings as far as possible
- Report to SGB regularly on the functioning of SBST
- Making required resources available

3.2 THE ROLE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR

- Contact person between educators, learners, parents/guardians, community, DBST @ Metro North District (MNED), Multifunctional team (MFT) and SBST.
- Arrange meetings (Agenda's, action-plan, minutes and SBST file)
- Keeping all involved up to date with new policies and training opportunities
- Ensure that:
 - Referral process of learners are functional
 - ISP's are developed and an update data base of all ISP's is formulated and revised.
 - Reports on implementation of ISP's and possible changes to ISP's provided to those involved
 - Ensure that procedures with regard to learners are followed correctly
 - Ensure that learners' rights are protected
 - Facilitate SBST development
 - Liaising regularly with school manager and DBST (multifunctional approach)
 - Developing, responding and maintaining community resource networks

3.3 ROLE OF TEAM MEMBER

- Assist with identification, assessment, evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of learners who experience barriers to learning and development
- Assist with referral of learner where indicated
- Assist with drafting of ISP, monitoring and adaptation when necessary
- Monitor and evaluate learner's progress
- Provide class educator as far as possible with information and resources in supporting the learner
- Assist the class educator with supporting the learner as far as is desired and practical.
- Provide help and guidance to fellow team members and regularly motivate and support them.

3.4 THE ROLE OF THE CLASS EDUCATOR

- The class educator is primarily responsible for teaching, development, supporting and guiding of learners in her/his class
- Identify and describe learners' needs and barriers timeously
- Contact LSE and phase-co-ordinator(HOD) about possible referral of learner to SBST
- Complete referral form should he/she wish to refer learner to SBST
- Conduct a meeting with the parent/guardian to get permission to present the learner at the SBST
- Submit completed form (SNA 1) to SBST co-ordinator
- Present the learner at the next scheduled SBST meeting with all relevant and necessary evidence of intervention.

- Keep record and follow up on recommendations made by the SBST
- Develop the learners ISP with the SBST, and give feedback to the parent
- Keep notes on intervention and maintain a learner profile regarding the progress
- Provide a report to SBST on implementation of ISP
- Liaise with learner's parents or guardians and SBST co-ordinator regularly and follow up on progress of learner
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NB: SBST meetings should take place at least twice a month or as soon as a need arises.

Members are informed of meetings in advance.

Dates of SBST Meetings must be plotted on the year plan of the school.

Information discussed during SBST meetings (regarding learners) must be confidential.

Confidentiality:

In the case of sexual offences, should it come to light that instances of sexual abuse or molestation have not previously been reported, the SBST has a duty to report in terms of Section 54 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Act 32 of 2007):

*“(1)(a) A person who has knowledge that a sexual offence has been committed against a child must report such knowledge immediately to a police official.
 (b) A person who fails to report such knowledge as contemplated in paragraph (a), is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years or to both a fine and such imprisonment.*

(2)(a) A person who has knowledge, reasonable belief or suspicion that a sexual offence has been committed against a person who is mentally disabled must report such knowledge, reasonable belief or suspicion immediately to a police official.”

Confidential information may not be recorded in the minutes of the meeting or included in the support plan.

LEARNER SUPPORT INFORMATION

Referral of a learner to the SBST:

POLICY ON SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT (SIAS)

THE PROSESS AND FORMS: Page 38 in the SIAS document explain the Process for Individual Learners. Please study the pathway most suitable for the learner you refer.

REFERAL PROCEDURE

Completion of SIAS Learner Profiles Compulsory Gr. R-7

STAGE 1: REGULAR TEACHER ENCOUNTERS THE PROBLEM.

Teacher encounters a problem.

- Attempts to handle it within the classroom. Do class intervention and filling in the educator class
- intervention form attached to the referral form.
- Makes special effort to address the barriers . Observes the learner in the classroom and outside the classroom and record observations.
- Gathers information regarding personal and scholastic history, reviews class work books, portfolios, profiles, etc.
- Invite the parent(s) to inform them about the problem the learner is experiencing and request support from the parent's side.
- Fill in the SNA 1 form and refer the case to the SBST.

SNA 1:

This form reflects on the:

Strengths and needs of the learner:

- Communication
- Learning
- Behaviour and social competence
- Health, wellness and personal care
- Classroom
- School environment
- Family, home and community situation

What do I need to complete the referral form correctly?

- Class register : full name of learner, Date of birth, CEMIS number

- Schedule/Progress report/ or any scholastic history records
- Record of intervention (copies) **
- Names of colleagues whom you had discussed the learners' progress with and dates of Discussion
- Parent's consent

**** TEACHER INTERVENTIONS/SUPPORT:**

Curriculum Intervention:

1. Differentiated curriculum content (adapted program)
2. Modified assessment (adapted assessment)
3. Teaching methods

Other interventions:

1. Learning environment
2. Physical environment was modified/adapted
3. Log of Parent/Legal Caregiver/Learner consultation(s)

NB: the above mentioned should be forwarded to the SBST

STAGE 2: SBST COORDINATOR REVIEWS THE REFERRAL

- Reviews the referral. SNA 1
- Invites the referring teacher to the SBST/MFT meeting.
- Place the learners name on the Agenda for the next meeting.

STAGE 3: SBST MEETING WITH THE REFERRING TEACHER

WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE SBST.

The SBST review the teachers:

- Identification of the barrier experienced
- Interventions provided (by the teacher)

COMPLETE SNA 2: ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION BY SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT TEAM (SBST)

What happens in the SBST meeting?

1.

Presentation of the learner who experience barriers to learning and other relevant "problems".

The referring educator gives a statement about learners who need support/intervention.

Team members familiarize themselves with the referral/problem.

2.

The SBST then have a Joint group discussion and problem solving session with the educator.

Identify barriers to learning and development.

Question the referring teacher.

Discuss reasons for referral viz. current stresses/associated events/contributing factors.

Establish previous steps taken to deal with the problem by the educator and others.
Learner's medical history. Illnesses, operations.

3.

Brainstorm possible solutions, intervention strategies, etc.

Determine the outcomes, materials to be used and give recommendations.

Selection of strategies and suggest help for the learner by the educator. Establish an action plan and identify responsible people.

Set plan of action and time frame.

Allocation of tasks and identification of the responsible person for plan of action.

4.

The SBST complete the SNA 2 Form.

Close the meeting.

What is expected from the educator now?

- Educator carries out suggestions and action plan made by the SBST.
- Have evidence of this (copies of work in portfolio).
- Observe whether there has been an improvement.
- If any external help (social, learning, medical, speech therapy, psychological) has been received by the learner, and you have reports thereof, place copies into learner's profile.
- If no progress is been made by learner after all this, we move on to the next step or revise the action plan.

What should be on record after a parent interview regarding the learner who needs support?

- The problem area presented
- Parent's response
- Recommendations
- Parent's signature

STAGE 4: FOLLOW UP AND FEEDBACK SESSIONS.

- Referring teacher gives feedback on progress at weekly meetings.
- Review, reflection and change of plan if necessary.
- More recommendations.
- Possible further referral to the School Psychologist or Social Worker or truancy officer, nurse, school doctor, etc. **Complete Form DBE 120**

STAGE 5: RECORD KEEPING

- Prepare a summary of referrals.
- Keep register of all referrals (data base).

- Keep register and all recommendations/solutions. (Copy of the SNA 2)
- Keep minutes of regular meetings, monthly summaries.
- Sent records (minutes attached) of meetings to the District (Psychologist/Social Worker/ Learning support advisor responsible for your school) monthly for monitoring purposes.

Form DBE 120

Form DBE 120

Request for support from the District-Based Support Team (DBST), by the SBST

Needs to be completed by the SBST only when requesting support from the DBST

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLAN (ISP)

(COMPLETED BY CLASS TEACHER AND SBST)

After formal assessment of a learner an Individual support plan can be compiled to assist the learner with an adapted program/strategy of intervention.

It is advised that:

The learner is assessed by die Learning support educator to determine a Level of functioning.

The learner is assessed by the school psychologist or a therapist who recommend an ISP.

The Completion and compilation of an ISP is an joint effort.

Relevant participants:

- The educator
- The Learning support educator
- The members of the SBST
- The psychologist or therapist if needed

During the drafting of a support plan the focus should be on the learner's strong points as well as the barriers to learning.

The support plan must clearly outline the chosen course of action, those responsible for the execution thereof and deadlines.

The efficacy of the support plan must be evaluated and adjustments should be made where needed.

The ISP must be revised frequently to determine the best strategy for intervention.

The ISP must make provision for academic support.

The ISP is an on-going record of the planned intervention for the learner and must follow the learner to the next grade/school (page 8 SIAS).

SUB-COMMITTEES OF SBST

MATHEMATICS/NUMERACY

Members:

Responsibilities:

Referrals:

- Support inclusive education and the inclusion of learners with barriers.
- Attend Numeracy referrals received from the SBSt as a sub-committee and report/give feedback to the SBST.
- Have regular meetings to discuss and solve Numeracy/Math problems.
- Look at the Numeracy needs of the school across the grades.
- Recommend or suggest intervention strategies for learners struggling with Numeracy/Maths.
- Have contact or be a link with the Learning Support Advisor at the district office for support.
- Design Independent/Group Support plan (ISP).
- Recommend referral to the LSE at the school or the School psychologist at the district office.

School Intervention programme:

- Support the 5 Numeracy Mathematics Learning Outcomes.
- Recommend extra classes for Numeracy intervention.
- Recommend start of Maths Clubs, Maths quiz, games and Maths competitions at the school.
- Suggest a Maths programme for the whole school.
- Support Intermediate phase and Senior phase educators in teaching Maths.
- Initiate and Support Maths projects at the school.
- Train/workshop educators in Maths/Numeracy strategies.
- Encourage learners to join the Library and make use of it.
- Organise and support Maths week together with the activities to be done.
- Give input into the School Improvement Plan and LIT/NUM. Strategic plan.

Classroom:

- Support educators into developing suitable Numeracy material for the classroom walls and the Maths corner.
- Make sure that every classroom have the Numeracy/Maths corner and support w.r.t this.

Parent Involvement:

- Motivate and encourage parents to support learners with Maths.

- Motivate parents to help check the homework of the learners.

LANGUAGES/LITERACY

Members:

Responsibilities:

Referrals:

- Support inclusive education and the inclusion of learners with barriers.
- Attend Literacy/language referrals received from the SBST.
- Have regular meetings to discuss and solve Literacy problems.
- Look at the Literacy needs of the school across the grades.
- Attend Literacy referrals as a sub-committee then report/give feedback to the SBST.
- Recommend or suggest intervention strategies for learners struggling with Literacy.
- Have contact or be a link with the LSA at the district office for support.
- Design Independent/Group Development Plan (ISP)
- Recommend referral to the LSE at the school or the school psychologist at the district office.

Reading period:

- Establish ½hour/20 min Reading or Literacy period.
- Come up with the programme of the week for the Reading period.
- Research and plan activities to be done during the Reading period.
- Take turns into monitoring the well-functioning of the Reading/Literacy period.

School Intervention Programme

- Support the 6 Literacy or Language Learning Outcomes.
- Recommend extra classes for Literacy intervention.
- Recommend start of Reading Clubs, Reading quiz, games and Reading competitions at the school.
- Suggest a Literacy programme for the whole school.
- Support Reading projects done at the school.
- Train/workshop educators in reading strategies.
- Encourage learners to join the Library and make use of it.
- Organise Reading week together with the activities to be done.
- Give input into the school's School Improvement Plan and Lit/ Num strategy plan.

Classrooms

- Support educators into developing suitable Literacy material for the classroom walls and the Reading corner.
- Make sure that every classroom have the Reading/Literacy corner and give support with regard to this.

Parents

- Arrange or organize things like: Reading mummies to support during Reading period.
- Motivate and encourage parents to support learners with Reading.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL

Members:

Responsibilities

Referrals:

- Support inclusive education and the inclusion of learners with social barriers.
- Attend to social & health problems referred to you by the SBST: Sickness, abuse, absenteeism, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, trauma, cleanliness, etc.
- Have regular meetings to discuss and solve social problems affecting the learners' academic progress.
- Ability to identify signs indicating that a learner is being abused at home or at school.
- Recommend or suggest intervention strategies for learners struggling with discipline problems which are linked to social problems.
- Consult parents for support.
- Recommend referral to the School Social Worker.
- HIV/AIDS related issues – refer to the AIDS co-ordinators at the district.
- Health Matters – refer to the Local clinic/school doctor or a school nurse.
- Nutrition matters – refer to the Nutrition co-ordinators at the district.
- Absenteeism – refer to Truancy officers at the district.

Duties

- Have full understanding of all policies relevant to you, namely – Abuse No More Policy, Teenage pregnancy policy, Drug abuse policy, Nutrition and Feeding Scheme Policy, HIV/AIDS policy, etc.
- Monitor the learner if the educator suspects a problem.
- Keep record on the observation sheet.
- Fill in the SBST intervention form.
- Provide the necessary support to learners; try to maintain an open door policy in order for learners to feel comfortable to speak to you when he/she is ready to talk about the problem.
- Apply the principle of **CONFIDENTIALITY** especially when it comes to RAPE cases, protect the children's rights.

- In the case of sexual offences, should it come to light that instances of sexual abuse or molestation have not previously been reported, the SBST has a duty to report in terms of Section 54 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (Act 32 of 2007):
 - “(1)(a) A person who has knowledge that a sexual offence has been committed against a child must report such knowledge immediately to a police official.*
 - (b) A person who fails to report such knowledge as contemplated in paragraph (a), is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years or to both a fine and such imprisonment.*
 - (2)(a) A person who has knowledge, reasonable belief or suspicion that a sexual offence has been committed against a person who is mentally disabled must report such knowledge, reasonable belief or suspicion immediately to a police official.”*
- Confidential information may not be recorded in the minutes of the meeting or included in the support plan.
- Maintain relationship with other organisations: Social Services and other NGO’s working within the community.
- Initiate or organize sessions with the police, nurses, activists, successful learners previously at your school for motivation, HIV/AIDS activists, etc.

Parents

- The learner and parents/guardians should be aware of the information that is disclosed to other educators at all times.
- Motivate and encourage parents to support learners to be open if they have problems at school, friends, or at home.
- Arrange parent evenings/gatherings to talk about the problems experienced by learners.

Administration

- Have the Health & Social file to keep your records.
- Keep an Abuse register.
- Keep minutes of every meeting.
- Keep attendance register and cases attended to.
- Keep records of interventions done by the committee.
- Give feedback to the SBST.

DISCIPLINE

Members:

Responsibilities:

Referrals:

- Support inclusive education and the inclusion of learners with barriers.
- Attend to Behaviour/Discipline referrals received from the SBST.
- Have regular meetings to discuss and solve behaviour problems.
- Look at the behaviour/discipline needs of the school across the grades.
- Recommend or suggest intervention strategies for learners struggling with discipline problems.
- Design Independent/Group and Development Plan (ISP).
- Recommend referral to the School Social Worker or the School Psychologist at the district office.

Duties:

- Generally responsible for maintaining the school's conducive learning environment
- Support School's Code of Conduct and see to it that it is adhere to.
- Recommend Discipline Intervention.
- Work hand in hand with the School Psychologist and School Social Worker.
- Implement recommendations from the School Psychologist and School Social Worker.
- Train/workshop educators, parents and learners w/r/t/ discipline and behavioural measures.
- Monitor diverging programmes.
- Support the school in formulating school rules and class rules, managing problems like LATECOMING or any other behaviour related problems.
- Responsible to monitor programmes like: detention programme and detention register.
- Take lead in implementing support structures like: prefect system, learner mentoring programmes, scholar patrol, etc.
- Responsible for ground duties responsibilities.
- Give input into the School Improvement Plan.

Parents

- Motivate and encourage parents to support learner's w.r.t. discipline.
- Liaise with parents in tackling learner's misbehaviour.
- Motivate parents to help check the homework of the learners.
- Motivate parents into monitoring that learners wear school uniform.

Administration

- Have behaviour/discipline file to keep your records, evidence.
- Keep minutes of every meeting.
- Keep attendance register and cases attended to.
- Keep records of interventions done by the committee.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Most of us assume we can recognize the symptoms of a child who is being abused or neglected. In fact, if asked to give an “laundry list” of symptoms, many educators could do it fairly easily. But when faced with a classroom full of children, we often talk ourselves out of recognizing abuse.

Children may demonstrate a symptom or two associated with abuse and neglect and not be victims of maltreatment. What we look for is a cluster of symptoms or those symptoms that specially indicate a certain type of abuse. Or sometimes we may notice one symptom and not see others until we really consider.

There are several types of maltreatment.

- Physical neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse and exploitation
- Emotional or psychological abuse

WHAT IS NEGLECT?

Experts agree that neglect falls into several categories. Neglect might be:

1. **Emotional neglect:** When parents fail in significant ways to meet the child’s needs for attention and affection.
2. **Educational neglect:** When parents do not attend to the schooling and educational needs of their children.
3. **Developmental neglect:** Involves parents who do not encourage the child’s healthy progression through the appropriate developmental stages.
4. **Medical neglect:** Parents’ failure to attend to a child’s medical or even dental needs.
5. **Parental neglect:** Failure of the mother to care for herself or to expose her body to injurious substances such as drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or medication when she knows that she is pregnant.
6. **Environmental neglect:** Parents failing to provide as safe environment for their children by not protecting them from unsanitary or hazardous living conditions.
7. **Physical neglect:** Refers to the failure of the child’s caretaker to meet that child’s basic physical needs.

TEACHERS CHECKLIST FOR RECOGNIZING NEGLECT

Does the child:

1. Come to school in soiled clothing, significantly too small or too large for them and often in need of repair?
2. Inadequately dressed for the weather?
3. Always seem to be hungry, hoarding, or stealing food but coming to school with little of their own?
4. Appear listless and tired, due to little energy or no routine or structure about bedtimes?
5. Often report caring for younger sibling when the child caretaker may be only 5,6,7 or 8 years old?
6. Demonstrate poor hygiene, smell of urine or feces, or have very bad breaths or dirty or decaying teeth?
7. Seem emaciated or have distended stomachs indicative of malnutrition?
8. Have unattended medical or dental problems such as infected sores or badly decayed or abscessed teeth?
9. Have lice?
10. Exhibit stealing, vandalism, or other delinquent behaviours?
11. Have frequent school absences or tardiness?
12. Have poor peer relationships, perhaps because of hygienic problems or a depressed, negative attitude?
13. Appear withdrawn?
14. Crave attention even electing negative responses to accomplish it?
15. Demonstrate destructive or pugnacious behaviour, showing no apparent guilt over his/her acts?
16. Have difficulty processing multi-statement commands?
17. Exhibit low self-esteem?
18. Have a diagnosis of conduct disorder or act oppositional defiant?
19. Have difficulty coping or problem solving?
20. Exhibit learning disabilities?
21. Have lower overall intelligence (often due to lack of stimulation) with no apparent organic cause?
22. Have difficulty with language comprehension and expression?
23. Have a variety of academic problems?

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse can be defined as non-accidental injury to a child. The key thing to look for in physical abuse is an explanation that does not fit the injury.

There are several types of symptoms that can be seen in young school age children.

TEACHER'S CHECKLIST FOR RECOGNIZING PHYSICAL ABUSE

Does the child have:

1. Extensive bruises, especially in areas of the body that are not normally vulnerable? The bruises may be of different colours indicating various stages of healing.
2. Frequent bruises around the head or face, the abdomen or midway between the wrist and elbow? Although bruises to the knees, legs and elbows frequently occur in normal falls the above areas are less likely to occur that way and should be investigated.
3. Bruises in specific shapes such as handprints or hanger marks?
4. Marks that indicate hard blows from an object such as an electrical cord or other whipping like object that makes a burn around the body?
5. Bruises on multiple parts of the body indicating blows from different directions?
6. Unexplained abdominal bleeding (could be caused by internal bleeding) which might be observed as discoloration under the skin or blood-filled lumps?
7. Extreme sensitivity to pain or complaints of soreness and stiffness or awkward movements as if caused by pain?
8. Bald spots from severe hair pulling?
9. Adult size human bite marks?
10. Burns, especially from object such as cigarettes, iron and other objects?
11. Injuries for which the explanation given is inadequate?

Behaviourally, does the child:

1. Demonstrate an aggressive, pugnacious, or defiant attitude?
2. Cower or demonstrate fear of adults?
3. act out aggressive or disruptive behaviour?
4. Demonstrate destructiveness to self or others?
5. Come to school too early or not want to leave school - with a clear indication that he/she fears going home?
6. Display a fearless attitude, often taking extreme risks?
7. Have a reputation of being accident prone?
8. Cheat, steal, or lie (may be related to too high expectations at home)?
9. Exhibit low achievement, perhaps having difficulty converting aggressive energy into learning?
10. Have an inability to form good peer relationships?

11. Wear clothing that covers the body and that may be inappropriate in warmer months (be aware that this may be cultural as well)?
12. Demonstrates regression, or exhibit less mature behaviour?
13. Dislike or shrink from physical contact (may not tolerate physical praise such as a pat on the back)?

Remember that all these symptoms do not always mean physical abuse. Look for clusters, cultural explanations, and organic causes as well.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional or psychological abuse underlies all types of abuse and neglect. Severe emotional abuse refers to belittling, rejecting, isolating, terrorizing or ignoring a child.

TEACHER'S CHECKLIST FOR RECOGNIZING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

1. Inappropriate affect such as turning negatives into jokes and laughing when in pain.
2. Extremes in behaviour – manically happy or very depressed.
3. Withdrawal – or no verbal or physical communication with other.
4. Self-destruction.
5. General destructive behaviour.
6. Learning disabilities.
7. Compulsive attention to detail.
8. Cruelty to other.
9. Rocking, thumb sucking, head banging.
10. Enuresis (wetting one's pants) or soiling after an age when such behaviour is inappropriate.
11. Substance abuse.
12. Eating disorders.
13. Physical manifestation such as asthma, ulcers, or severe allergies.
14. Delinquent behaviour.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse can be defined as sexual involvement imposed upon by an adult who has greater power, knowledge and resources.

CHECKLIST FOR RECOGNIZING SEXUAL ABUSE

Does the child:

1. Have frequent urinary tract infections?
2. Have difficulty in walking or sitting?
3. Complain of or exhibit genital/anal, itching, rashes, pain, swelling, or burning?
4. Complain of genital/anal, bruising or bleeding?
5. Have frequent yeast infections?

6. Complain of pain in urination?
7. Complain of excessive bathing in the genital area?
8. Frequently vomit without organic cause?
9. Have excessive sore throats (may be indicative of gonorrhoea)?
10. Excessively masturbate?
11. Complain of other symptoms of venereal disease such as vaginal or penile pain or discharge, genital or oral sores, and genital warts?
12. Become pregnant at a young age?
13. Have frequent psychosomatic illnesses?
14. The above symptoms might not be observable in the classroom, but may come from reports by the abused child or peers.

Behaviourally, children may exhibit:

1. Exceptional secrecy?
2. More sexual knowledge than is appropriate for the child's age (especially in younger children)?
3. In-depth sexual play with peers (in younger children, different from the normal "play in doctor" form of exploration)?
4. Compliance or withdrawal?
5. Over aggression?
6. An inordinate fear of males (or females)?
7. Extreme seductive behaviour?
8. A drop in school performance or sudden non-participation in school activities?
9. Sleep problems or nightmares?
10. Crying without provocation?
11. A sudden onset of enuresis (wetting pants or bed) or soiling?
12. Sudden phobic behaviour?
13. Suicide attempts or ideas of wanting to kill self?
14. Desire to run away from home excessively?
15. Extreme cruelty to animals (especially those that would normally be pets)?
16. Setting fires and enjoying watching them burn?
17. An eating disorder?
18. Self-mutilation (cutting, scratching to draw blood)?

BEHAVIOUR AS A CUE TO ABUSE

When learners "rub us the wrong way" by their language or behaviour, two things can happen. First, the message often gets lost in our response to the symptoms. When our buttons are pushed the natural tendency is to focus our attention on what the child did and what should be done about it' rather than on why he did it.

How many time have we, as educators, dealt with a child who exhibits out- of control behaviour by consequences that may go as far as suspension or expulsion? Yet, it is often the child who needs to be in school rather than in an abusive home, but also needs to be understood. This is not to say that we

should not interrupt the behaviour but there are many ways of responding rather than reacting, and some more functional than others. Troubling behaviour by a learner can make the teacher involved feel psychologically attacked and then inadequate.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO ALL EDUCATORS :

BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

We are challenged by our constitution by requiring that we give effect to the fundamental right to basic education for ALL South Africans.

Every school should strive to establish a learning environment that makes the curriculum accessible to every learner and provides every learner with the opportunity to realize his or her potential. In October 1996, the Ministry of Education appointed the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of Special needs and support services in education and training in South Africa.

The central findings of the investigations included:

- 1.1. Specialized education and support have predominantly been provided for a small percentage of learners with disabilities within “special” schools and classes.
- 1.2. Specialized education and support were provided on a racial basis, with best human, physical and material resources reserved for whites.
- 1.3. Most learners with disability have either fallen outside of the system or been “mainstreamed by default”.
- 1.4. The curriculum and education system as a whole have generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs and failures.

The two bodies recommended that the education and training system should promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive Centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process (Education White Paper 6).

The Ministry appreciates that a broad range of learning needs exist and where these are not met, learners may fail to learn effectively or be excluded from the learning system.

2. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1. According to White Paper 6 – Inclusive education and training:

- 2.1.1. Are about acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.

- 2.1.2. Are accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience.
- 2.1.3. Are about enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- 2.1.4. Acknowledge and respect differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status.
- 2.1.5. A broader than formal schooling and acknowledge that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal modes and structures.
- 2.1.6. Are about changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- 2.1.7. Are about maximizing the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning.
- 2.1.8. Are about empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.
- 2.1.9. It is clear that some learners may require more intensive and specialized forms of support to be able to develop to their full potential. An inclusive education and training system is organized so that it can provide various levels and kinds of support to learners and educators.
- 2.1.10. Believing in and supporting a policy of inclusive education are not enough to ensure that such a system will work in practice. Accordingly we will evaluate carefully what resources we already have within the system and how these existing resources and capacities can be strengthened and transformed so that they can contribute to the building of an inclusive system. We will also decide on where the immediate priorities lie and put in place mechanisms to address these first.
- 2.1.11. Establish an inclusive education and training system will require changes to mainstream education so that learners experiencing barriers to learning and development can be identified by providing for a broad range of learning needs in an equitable manner by striving to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education.

3. A FULL- SERVICE/INCLUSIVE SHOOOL

- 3.1. A full-service/inclusive school is an ordinary public school that provides quality education to all learners by providing for a broad range of learning needs in an equitable manner by striving to achieve access equity, quality and social justice in education. In full service school, priorities will include orientation to and training in new roles focusing on multi-level classroom instruction, co-operative learning, problem solving and the development of learners' strengths and competencies rather than focusing on their shortcomings only.
- 3.2. **According to "Guidelines for Full-service/Inclusive School's 2010: Department Basic Education:**

- 3.2.1. Full-service/Inclusive schools, colleges, further and higher education institution are first and foremost mainstream education institution that provide quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner;
- 3.2.2. They should strive to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education.
- 3.2.3. They promote a sense of belonging so that all learners, staff and families experience a sense of worth in the learning community;
- 3.2.4. They have the capacity to respond to diversity by providing appropriate education for individual needs of learners, irrespective of disability or differences in learning style or pace, or social difficulties experienced; and
- 3.2.5. They establish methods to assist curriculum and institutional transformation to ensure both an awareness of diversity and the additional support is available to those learners and educators who need it.

3.3. What should a full-service/inclusive school look like?

- 3.3.1. A full-service/inclusive school should be equipped and supported to provide for a broad range of learning needs.
- 3.3.2. A full-service/inclusive school aims at inclusion in the way it is organised with regards to structure, policies, practices, pedagogy and culture.
- 3.3.3. A full-service/inclusive school understands that barriers to learning are not only intrinsic to learners, but can also be cultural and systemic.
- 3.3.4. A full-service/inclusive school should have additional support programs and structures for teaching and learning.
- 3.3.5. A full-service/inclusive school is prepared to explore and address challenges of everyday school life through capacity building among educators and on-going institutional development aiming at transforming the whole school.
- 3.3.6. However, functioning full-service/inclusive institutions should be aware that practices which exclude learners need to be addressed, removed or reduced so that learning and development can happen.
- 3.3.7. A full-service/inclusive school makes efforts to ensure that all children of school-going age in the locality attend school and realise their full potential by ensuring that the school is accessible.
- 3.3.8. It is a school with good leadership that sees itself as a beacon of the transformation process in education by developing cultures, policies and practices that celebrate diversity respect difference and value innovation and problem-solving.
- 3.3.9. It is a place where both learners and educators feel safe and supported.

4. LEARNING SUPPORT RESOURCE CLASS

- A Resource class is a class at a public ordinary school that is utilized to accommodate learners with moderate to high education support needs for a specific period of time

(full time in cases where high support is needed full-time and the learners is on a waiting list for placement in a special school).

- Learners with low to mild support needs should as far as practically possible be accommodated in mainstream classes and receive education in all learning areas in their irrespective mainstream classes with their peers, with an ISP in which the accommodation to the learning program and assessment is stipulated (Straddling).
- Learners experiencing barriers to learning may be withdrawn from mainstream classes individually or in groups for specialized education support and intervention for specific periods in the RC. The learner returns to the mainstream class after this session.
- Learners identified for admission to special schools and WHO are on a waiting list will be given support for specific periods of time in the RC or within the classroom. An Individual Support plan would stipulate the intervention program for such a learner.

5. DIFFERENTIATION

According to the policy on Guidelines for responding to Learner Diversity in the classroom through curriculum and assessment policy statements, it is important that all educators understand Diversity in the classroom as well as Curriculum differentiation. In order to provide for all learners irrespective of their barrier to learning. All Educators have to differentiate the content of their teaching material to:

- Provide access to all for learning
- Provide success experiences to all learners
- Motivate learners and build self esteem
- Promote effective learning for all learners

6. IDENTIFYING LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND NEEDS.

Identification of learning difficulties is one of continued importance to us as mainstream teachers.

Different learning needs arise from a range of factors including:

- 6.1. Physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments
- 6.2. Psyche-social disturbances
- 6.3. Differences in intellectual ability
- 6.4. Socio-economic deprivation
- 6.5. Negative attitudes to and stereotyping of difference
- 6.6. An inflexible curriculum
- 6.7. Inappropriate languages or language of learning and teaching
- 6.8. Inappropriate communication
- 6.9. Inaccessible and unsafe built environments
- 6.10. Inappropriate and inadequate support services
- 6.11. Inadequate policies and legislation

- 6.12. The non-recognition and non-involvement of parents
- 6.13. Inadequately and inappropriately trained education managers and educators

It is only by focusing on the nature of these barriers and what causes them and how they manifest themselves that we can begin to address problems of learning breakdown and ongoing exclusions.

7. THE KEY BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

7.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The relationship between education provision and socio-economics conditions in any society must be recognized. Effective learning is fundamentally influenced by the availability of educational resources to meet the needs of any society.

7.2. LACK OF ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

One of the most significant barriers to learning remains the inability of learners to access the educational provision that does exist and their inability to access others services which contribute to the learning process. This results from inadequate or non-existent services and facilities for example early intervention facilities, etc.

7.3. POVERTY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Closely linked to the lack of access to basic services is the effect which sustained poverty has on learners, the learning process and the education system. The result of poverty often caused by unemployment and other economic inequalities is the inability of families to meet basic needs of learners such as nutrition and shelter.

These learners are subject to increased emotional stress which adversity affects learning and development. Under-nourishment leads to a lack of concentration and a range of other symptoms which affect the ability of the learner to engage effectively in the learning process.

Poverty-stricken communities are also poorly resourced and frequently characterized by limited educational facilities, large classes with high pupil/teacher ratios, inadequately trained staff and inadequate teaching and learning materials.

8. FACTORS WHICH PLACE LEARNERS AT RISK

Effective learning is directly related to and dependent on the social and emotional well-being of the learner. Particular conditions may arise within the social, economic and potential environment in which the learner lives. A child who is physically, emotionally or sexually abused is not only emotionally and physically damaged but may also lead to the learner being forced to miss school. Substance abuse may affect the learner or may affect the learner's family causing family breakdown and increased stress. When the safety of educators and learners cannot be guaranteed learning may be disrupted.

8.1. ATTITUDE

Negative and harmful attitudes remain a critical barrier to learning and development. Discriminatory attitudes resulting from prejudice against learners on the basis of race, class, gender, culture, disability, religion ability, sexual preference and other characteristics manifest themselves as barriers to learning.

Sometimes negative attitudes and labelling results from fear and a lack of awareness about the particular needs of learners or the potential barriers which they may face. Barriers resulting from fear and lack of awareness may arise from the feelings of parents and educators themselves. For example, learners with high ability are often regarded as a threat and therefore face denial of their significant abilities. Very often educators fear the inclusion of a child with a disability in their class and respond negatively to their attendance. Negative attitudes towards disability are picked up by the other children who further alienate the disabled learner.

8.2. INFLEXIBLE CURRICULUM

One of the most serious barriers to learning and development can be found in curriculum itself and relates primarily to the inflexible nature of the curriculum which prevents it from meeting diverse needs among learners. The nature of the curriculum involves a number of components which include the style and tempo of teaching and learning, what is taught, the way the classroom is managed and organized as well as materials and equipment which are used in the learning and teaching process. Sometimes educators often through inadequate training use teaching styles which may not meet the need of some learners. An educator may teach at a pace which only accommodates learners who learn very quickly. Assessment processes are often inflexible and designed to only assess particular kinds of knowledge and aspects of learning. A full account on how to achieve these outcomes are given in the policy doc: GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO LEARNER DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENTS.

Page 15 : 4.3. Differentiated teaching methods

Page 16: 4.3. Bullet on Scaffolding

Page 18 : Lesson organisations

Page 21 : 5. Differentiating assessment

8.3. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

A further area of barriers arising from the curriculum is those which result from the medium of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning for many learners takes place through a language which is not their first language.

Circular: 0017/2016 : MANAGEMENT OF ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LEARNERS WHO EXPERIENCE BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT: GRADES R – 12 AND FOR LEARNERS WHO REQUEST IMMIGRANT STATUS FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES: GRADES 4 – 12

In this circular educators will find a thorough explanation on how to apply for assessment accommodation (previously known as Alternative assessment) to accommodate the needs of learners whom cannot speak the language of instruction (Lolt).

7.4 INACCESSIBLE AND UNSAFE ENVIRONMENT

In many contexts the vast majority of Centre's of learning are physically inaccessible to a large number of learners, educators and communities. The dream of inclusive education is to accommodate ALL learners with special needs in mainstream classes. This will only be possible once we have enough resources to realize that ideal at this stage we do not have enough resources in South Africa to include all learners in mainstream schools. For this reason Education White Paper 6 stipulates what needs to be done to include as many learners practically possible, in mainstream classes. Firstly, we need to strengthen our district/circuit support teams and develop an instrument that will properly assess the support needs of learners. Secondly, we must strengthen our special schools and transform them into resource center's. Then we must try and accommodate only learners with high level support needs in special schools/resource center's.

Then we must establish full-service schools that can accommodate "normal" learners as well as learners with low to moderate support needs. The ideal is that all mainstream schools will eventually become full service schools. Then we need to establish and develop institutional based support teams (SBST) at all schools.

NB: It should be noted that we are in the process of developing inclusive education and that some of the things may change as we develop best practices.

7.5. INAPPROPRIATE AND INADEQUATE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Particular enabling mechanisms and presses are needed to support diversity: where no provision exist for such services, barriers cannot be overcome and needs cannot be met. Basic services which may support learners and the system to overcome and remove barriers or prevent them from arising are often lacking or limited in poorer communities. One of the key contributing factors to inappropriate and inadequate support provision is the nature of human resource development of both educators and personnel.

7.6. LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The active involvement of parents and the broader community in the teaching and learning process is central to effective learning and development.

7.7. LACK OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The development of educators, service providers and other human resources is often fragmented and unsustainable. The absence of on-going-in-service-training of

educators often leads to insecurity, uncertainty, low self-esteem and lac of innovative practices in the classroom. This may result in resistance and harmful attitudes towards learners who experience learning breakdown or towards particular enabling mechanisms.

8. OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

It should be the aim of every school to prevent the development of learning or developmental barriers or, if this is not possible, to remove the barrier(s) as soon as possible and, if this cannot be achieved to compensate for these learners.

In many instances the educator will be able to prevent or remove the learning barrier or develop an interventions strategy him-or herself, while at other times the educator may need the advice and help of colleagues and others. Occasionally the learning or developmental barrier may be of such serious nature that it requires the help of specialists.

Each educational institution must have an **School based Support Team (SBST)** which must support educators in respect of aid to learners who experience barriers to learning and development or who are at risk of developing such barriers.

