

Helpful tips for parents concerned about their child's progress in school

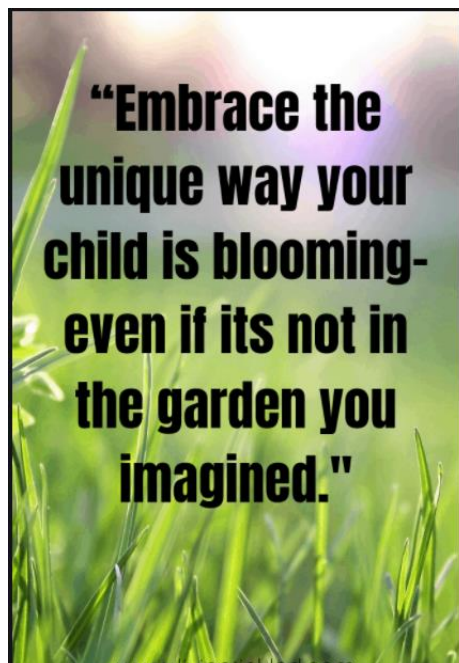
Podcast for Cork Children's Clinic 2021

1. What is your concern?
 - a. Is it academic or emotional?
 - b. Why is this a concern now, what has changed?
 - c. What do you want to know that you don't already know?
 - d. Does your child share your concerns?
 2. Collaboration with schools
 - a. A clear, courteous and collaborative working relationships is vital, you will be working together to support your child for many years
 - b. Follow the school policy for arranging teacher meetings
 - c. Plan for the meeting, set out an agenda, bring a notebook
 - d. Take notes and double check that you have understood all the 'jargon'
 3. How can I find out what a school is supposed to do?
 - a. The Dept of Education issues guidelines to schools in the form of 'circular's, these are numbered by number/year e.g., 14/17, these are the instructions that the schools have to follow, see links below
 - b. Schools are operated by Boards of Management and must follow their own policies. Do you know the relevant policies in your child's school?
 4. I think my child is entitled to hours?
 - a. The allocation of additional support hours to students based on their needs was changed significantly in 2017. Since that date the allocation of extra support is on the basis of 'identified need' and not necessarily a diagnosis. Thus, children are currently not automatically granted support based on a diagnosis but rather on the availability of resources in the school in any given year. This was designed to be a more equitable approach, eliminating the need for parents to fund expensive private assessments. In practice schools are grossly underfunded and thus allocation of support or 'hours' can be difficult.
 5. Who does what?
 - a. NCSE – National Council Special Education. This service is responsible for funding related to special education, including special classes, SNA's, assistive technology and school transport amongst other things.
 - b. SENO's- Special Educational Needs Officer, works for NCSE and is assigned to a geographical area to process applications, liaise between schools and the Dept.
 - c. VTS- Visiting Teacher Service, now part of the NCSE, these are specialist teachers for Hearing impaired and visually impaired
 - d. SLT- Speech and Language therapist (look for CORU registered)
 - e. OT- Occupational therapist (look for CORU registered)
 - f. Psychologist- currently not a protected title so look for Chartered membership of either BPS or PSI
- Information is aimed primarily at parents of students in mainstream settings. Advice is accurate to November 2021



www.claraobyrne.ie

- g. SET- Special Education Teacher or SET hours special education teaching hours. The terms learning support and resource are no longer used
 - h. SENCO- Special educational needs co-ordinator- the teacher assigned to manage the allocation of SET hours in a school
 - i. GLD- General Learning Difficulties, commonly refers to mild, moderate or severe intellectual disability
 - j. SLD- Specific Learning Difficulty, commonly refers to dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia etc.
 - k. IEP- an individual education plan which outlines the details about the additional support a child will receive, also called SSP student support plan, or SSF student support file
 - l. DARE and RACE- when your child reaches post primary, they will have to complete state exams and may apply to 3rd level. The SENCO will advise you about applying for reasonable accommodations for exams and the disability access route to 3rd level.
6. What is the most important thing I can do now?
- a. Get a notebook. Put your child's name on it. This is where you write your concerns, your observations, your notes to yourself to check something out. This is where you put the name of the person you are speaking to on the phone, this is where you plan for your meetings and take notes during meetings
 - b. Know that most professionals you encounter are trying their best in an underfunded system, don't shoot the messenger
 - c. Know that you are trying your best



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Useful websites

www.ncse.ie

<https://inclusionireland.ie/education/>

[https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-](https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-education/?referrer=http://www.education.ie/en/circulars-and-forms/active-circulars/)

[education/?referrer=http://www.education.ie/en/circulars-and-forms/active-circulars/](https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-education/?referrer=http://www.education.ie/en/circulars-and-forms/active-circulars/)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/97aa18-national-educational-psychological-service-neps-resources-and-public/>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/disability/disability-assessment/>

<https://www.psychologicalsociety.ie/footer/PSI-Chartered-Psychologist-Online-Directory>

<https://coru.ie/check-the-register/>

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