

## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANNING: A CASE STUDY

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May Kelly has been teaching for twenty years. She knows she's a good teacher, loved by the children and respected by parents and staff. She is only half way through her teaching career but still she has seen a lot of change. If anyone had told her ten years ago that it would become the norm to have several pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes, she wouldn't have believed it. She never would have anticipated how well she has adapted and risen to the challenge of including children with special educational needs in her classroom. Didn't she enjoy it so much that she took the resource job when it came up? She loves her job except for one thing - the impending instrument of Extreme Pain, the dreaded Individual Education Plan (IEP). Oh why could they not just let her get on with what she does best . teaching?

In calmer moments May knows that the IEP is only formalising the planning she's doing already, so on one such calm period, focusing on her mantra of *Just know where they're at and where they need to go* she begins the IEP process for Cassie.

In order to find out where Cassie *is at*, May gathers information from every available source. The class teacher provides test results and informal assessments, the psychologist provides an updated psychological report , Cassie's parents and Cassie provide information about likes/dislikes, strengths and ambitions. While gathering and collating this information, it becomes obvious where Cassie *needs to go*. May draws up a draft IEP. A meeting is held for all concerned. May presents the collated information to the meeting and priority learning needs for Cassie are discussed.

**Name:** Cassie Murphy

**DOB:** 1.09.1993      **C.A:** 14 yrs.

**Parents:** John and Mary Murphy

**SNA:** Margaret Moran (12.5 hrs.)

**IEP Coordinator:** May Kelly

**Psychologist:** Eamonn Kelly, NEPS

**Date of IEP Planning Meeting:** 05.09.07

**Date of Review:** May 08

**Present:** Joe Cullen, Principal; Kay Breen, Special Education Needs Co-ordinator; Claire Sullivan, Class Teacher; John and Mary Murphy, Parents; Eamonn Kelly, Psychologist; Margaret Moran, SNA; May Kelly, Resource Teacher. Cassie joined the last half hour of the meeting and agreed to the targets set.

**Nature of Special Educational Need (SEN):** Cassie has Down syndrome and a moderate general learning disability.

**Impact of SEN on Educational Development:** The curriculum needs to be adapted for Cassie as the gap between her academic performance and that of her class peers is widening considerably with age. Cassie needs specific teaching in social and life skills.

**Special Education Provision:** Cassie is in a mainstream class and has access to 3 hours of resource teaching and 12.5 hours Special Needs Assistant support. \*(Cassie can be in Primary or Post-primary)

## Present Level of Educational Performance

### A) Formal Assessment

Date	Name of Test	Administered by	Outcome
14. 03.07	WISC	Tom Allen, Clinical Psychologist	Functioning in the moderate range of general learning disability
02.06.07 C.A: 11.09	Schonell Reading	Tara Ryan	R.A: 8.01
09.06.07 C.A: 11.09	Neale analysis of Reading ability	Tara Ryan	R.A: 7.10 Comprehension: 6.09
16.06.07 C.A: 11.09	Schonell Spelling	Tara Ryan	S.A: 6.04

### B) Informal Assessment: Information Gathered from Cassie, Parents, Class teacher, Resource Teacher, SNA

<p><b>Literacy:</b> Cassie is reading at functional level. She can read most three letter words, using sound of initial consonants to assist her. She uses context and visual cues. She can read 57/100 Dolch List words and all of the Survival Kit words. She can read books with a reading age of 7/8 years. She can write simple sentences, using three letter words and can spell 43/100 Dolch list words. She can write her name and address, names of family members and local place names. She is beginning to write these on the computer. Her comprehension of what she reads is not equal to her reading ability.</p>
<p><b>Numeracy:</b> Cassie recognises and can write number 1-100. She can add and subtract single numbers, sometimes using a number line. She can complete any addition or subtraction sum on a calculator, but estimation skills are poor. Concept of time is poor. She is unable to relate <del>clock</del> to actual routines. She can recognise all euro coins and notes, but has difficulty with the functional use of money. She would see a " 5 note as valuable as a " 100 note.</p>
<p><b>Communication:</b> Cassie's speech is clear. She needs to be encouraged to speak in full sentences. Vocabulary is functional. She can make herself understood at all times. Her receptive skills are good and she understands everything said. Instruction needs to be short and simple, as memory of what has been said can be limited. At times, due to glue ear, her hearing ability is reduced.</p>
<p><b>Social Skills:</b> Cassie is very sociable and loves being the centre of attention. She can initiate and hold social conversations. She behaves appropriately with girls and women but is fascinated with boys/young men and can act inappropriately when in their company . hugging, preening, hiking her skirt up, and using inappropriate language. She knows that this behaviour is not acceptable, and will hide it from staff and parents, but she seems unable to desist.</p>
<p><b>Life skills:</b> Cassie is very independent. She can dress herself, make tea, clean the class/house, put on the telly, video. She needs to be reminded to wash her hands, and change underwear every day. She crosses the road only at the traffic lights and is very road-safety conscious. He parents report that she wishes to be allowed into town by herself on a Saturday and after school. While encouraging this independence, they are concerned about her inappropriate behaviour.</p>

## Summary of Abilities and Learning Needs

Abilities, Skills, Talents and Interests	Learning Needs
Very sociable and friendly Loves company and music Hardworking if interested Eager to please, loves praise and reinforcement by adults Caring and kind Independent Swimming . can swim a length of the pool, front crawl Loves Westlife, karaoke, pop music and disco dancing Loves clothes, shopping, make up Interested in boys and dating	<b>Social Skills:</b> Appropriate behaviour when interacting with males <b>Life skills:</b> Personal Hygiene, Personal Safety <b>Literacy:</b> Comprehension skills. Writing using Microsoft Word. Knowing to read and spell all Dolch list words <b>Numeracy:</b> Functional use of money and clock. <b>Communication:</b> Use of full sentences. Improved vocabulary.

All at the meeting agree that the following are priority areas of learning for Cassie.

Priority Learning Needs
Social Skills: Acting appropriately with males; Staying safe Life skills: Personal hygiene skills, cleaning hands, care of nails, washing body every day, changing underwear Numeracy: Functional use of money; Reading time and relating to the day

May, in collaboration with those concerned, has drawn up the following targets and strategies for Cassie, using her priority learning needs.

Targets	Strategies and Resources	Curricular Areas	Personnel Involved	Start/ Review Dates Progress
<b>Social Skills</b> Cassie will stay in her own personal space at all times when in male company	Stay Safe Programme. Role play. Class project on safety.	SPHE, Life skills, Drama Language and Communication	May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan John and Mary Murphy	
Cassie will use appropriate language at all times when in male company	Drama Class. Role play. Vocabulary development	SPHE, Life skills, Drama Language and Communication	May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan	
Cassie will demonstrate an ability to say no to role-played inappropriate suggestions	Drama. Role play. Stay Safe Programme, Vocabulary development	SPHE, Life skills, Drama Language and Communication	May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan	

Targets	Strategies and Resources	Curricular Areas	Personnel Involved	Start/ Review Dates Progress
<p><b>Life Skills</b> Cassie will wash her hands and nails, using a nail brush when necessary, after each visit to the bathroom</p> <p>Cassie will shower/wash her body each morning and put on fresh underwear</p>	<p>Visual Cues in bathroom. Demonstration by teacher and SNA. Observation and reminding by SNA. Self completion checklist. Reward system</p> <p>Demonstration and checking by mother each morning. Video . Personal Care. Class discussion. Shopping for shower products</p>	<p>Lifeskills, SPHE, Language and Communication</p> <p>Lifeskills, SPHE, Language and Communication</p>	<p>May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan</p> <p>May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan Mary Murphy</p>	
<p><b>Numeracy</b> Cassie will plan, shop and review twice a week</p> <p>Cassie will plan and review her day using the clock/watch.</p>	<p>Saving in a bank each week. Making lists of items (shower smellies). Pricing. Comparing prices. Making calculations. Withdrawal of money, shopping, reviewing receipt. Price lists from different shops, catalogues.</p> <p>Drawing up a timeline of the day (ICT Skills). Using clock for each section. Using key times . school begins, break, lunch, home, Coronation Street. Use of RTE Guide. Bus timetable.</p>	<p>Life skills, Language and Communication, Maths, SPHE</p> <p>Life skills, Language and Communication, Maths, SPHE</p>	<p>May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan Mary Murphy</p> <p>May Kelly, Mgt. Moran Claire Sullivan</p>	

The meeting goes well and all are happy with the IEP. Mary and John Murphy, May Kelly and Cassie sign the IEP and a review date of May 19<sup>th</sup> is agreed. May is delighted that her first formal IEP is now up and running. She sees that the IEP, rather than being a paper exercise, is a very useful exercise. She tells all who will listen that the process:

- makes us focus on the priority needs of the pupil;
- helps us to focus on the pupil's strengths;
- makes our teaching more effective and focussed;
- leads to learning of appropriate skills and competencies;
- gives us a structure through which to collaborate with relevant professionals;
- improves parental confidence in the education of their child;
- gives a voice to those who know the pupil best;
- gives a voice to the pupil.

May wonders what all the fuss is about.