

SMART Targets Checklist

For SEN Documentation in Irish Schools

Student: _____ Date: _____ Review Date: _____

Before You Write

- Baseline data has been collected for this student
- Priority learning needs have been identified (1-3 maximum)
- NEPS need area has been selected for each target
- Parent/guardian has been consulted

SMART Target Quality Check

S Specific

- Uses an observable action verb (e.g., identify, write, match, demonstrate)
- Names the exact skill or behaviour being targeted
- Avoids vague language ("understand", "know", "appreciate")
 - "Aoife will identify 8 out of 10 high-frequency words"
 - "Aoife will understand reading better"

M Measurable

- Includes clear success criteria (e.g., "4 out of 5 times", "with 80% accuracy")
- Defines how progress will be measured (observation, checklist, test)
- Baseline performance level is recorded
 - "...in 4 out of 5 observed transitions"
 - "...most of the time"

A Achievable

- Based on the student's current level of performance
- Builds on simpler foundational skills already acquired
- Required supports and resources have been identified
 - "Given a visual schedule and verbal prompt..."
 - No supports or conditions specified

R Relevant

- Linked to a NEPS need area (Literacy, Numeracy, Social & Emotional, etc.)
- Aligned with the student's priority learning needs
- Meaningful for the student's daily school life
 - Target addresses the priority need identified in the SSF
 - Target chosen because "everyone does it"

T Time-bound

- Specifies a target date (e.g., "By 15 March 2026")
- Fits within a 6-8 week review cycle
- Review date has been scheduled
 - "By [date], [student] will..."
 - "Eventually, [student] will..."

Conditions & Success Criteria

- Conditions of performance specified (e.g., "Given a visual prompt and verbal cue...")
- Success criteria are quantifiable (e.g., "4 out of 5 times", "within 2 minutes")
- Measurement method identified (observation checklist, test, work sample)

Collaboration Check

- Parent/guardian input has been recorded
- Child's voice has been captured (age-appropriate)
- Support team has agreed on the targets

Review Planning

- Review date set (within 6-8 weeks)
- Method of monitoring decided
- Data collection plan in place

Approved Action Verbs

Use these observable, measurable verbs in your targets:

[name](#) [write](#) [match](#) [differentiate](#) [recite](#) [identify](#) [find](#) [list](#) [classify](#) [order](#) [compare](#) [describe](#)
[construct](#) [demonstrate](#) [select](#) [sort](#)

Avoid: understand, know, appreciate, be aware of, grasp, enjoy, feel

Example SMART Target

Formula: By [date], given [conditions/supports], [student] will [action verb] [skill] [criteria], as measured by [measurement method].

"By 15 March 2026, given a visual schedule and verbal prompt, Aoife will independently transition between classroom activities within 2 minutes, in 4 out of 5 observed transitions, as measured by teacher observation checklist."

10 NEPS Need Areas

1. Literacy
2. Numeracy
3. Language & Communication
4. Social & Emotional
5. Sensory
6. Physical/Motor
7. Attention & Concentration
8. Executive Function
9. Behaviour
10. Self-Care/Independence



Note: This checklist is manual. To generate NCSE-compliant plans automatically (and redact student names for GDPR),

use the SENscribe Tool -> [SENscribe.ie](https://sensescribe.ie)