



# Additional Educational Needs & Inclusion Policy

February 2023

North Dublin Muslim National School

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### **Introductory Statement**

This Additional Educational Needs (AEN) and Inclusion policy was created and agreed by the stakeholders of the North Dublin Muslim National School. In creating and implementing this policy, the following points are kept to the fore:

- All pupils have a right to an education which is appropriate for them as individuals.
- All pupils should feel that they are a valued part of our school community.
- The resources provided to support pupils with additional educational needs are used to facilitate the development of a truly inclusive school.

### **Rationale**

North Dublin Muslim National School is a co-educational mainstream primary school. The purpose of this policy is to provide practical guidance for all staff, parents and other interested parties on the procedures in place for the identification and meeting of the additional educational needs of individual pupils. In addition, the policy aims to set out clear guidelines regarding the provision of interventions for children with additional educational needs, including English as an Additional Language (EAL).

### **Guiding Principles**

- Supports provided to pupils with additional educational needs will be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and pupils) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in the classroom, including pupils with additional educational needs.
- Pupils with the greatest levels of need will have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these pupils will be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.

### **Relationship to School Ethos**

North Dublin Muslim National School aims to provide a holistic approach to education taking account of individual needs, abilities, interests and social, cultural and religious backgrounds. We strive to create a respectful, positive and caring, inclusive environment conducive to learning, enabling each child reach their full potential with confidence and enthusiasm. We promote an atmosphere where staff and pupils respect themselves and others and where each person takes responsibility for their actions.

### **Inclusion**

We are fully committed to the principle of inclusion and the good practice which makes it possible. Our policy as set out in this document, aims to enable all children to become fully integrated members of our school community. This will be achieved by careful consideration of the needs of each child and by either modifying activities or by providing support that will help the child to participate in them.

### **Aims**

Through the implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Ensure all children gain access to a broad and balanced curriculum and have opportunity of access to an appropriate education.
- Outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to pupils with additional educational needs.

- Set out procedures for the enrolment of children with additional needs in the school.
- Assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school.
- Establish communication structures for the involvement of all the partners in the education of pupils with additional educational needs.
- Develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes about school and learning among pupils with additional educational needs.
- Enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners.
- Monitor early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning opportunities for children with additional educational needs.

## **1. Principles for Inclusion**

### **Setting Suitable Learning Challenges**

North Dublin Muslim National School aims to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. In order to do this, the school uses the 'Continuum of Support Process' as outlined in Table 1 below to identify educational needs. Identification of educational needs is central to setting suitable learning challenges for our pupils with additional educational needs. Using the continuum of support framework, our school will identify pupils' educational needs to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties. It is important to look at pupils needs in context, and to use our human and educational resources to support this (for example, learning environment checklist, teacher checklist for whole-class structures and supports). Principles of Universal Design for Learning are applied to support all pupils.

**Table 1: Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process**

<b>Classroom Support</b>	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class.</p> <p>A classroom support plan is developed and/or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental consultation</li> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures/assessments</li> <li>• Basic needs checklist</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist</li> <li>• Literacy and numeracy tests</li> <li>• Screening tests of language skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>A classroom support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review and is signed by all parties</p>
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<p><b>School Support</b></p>	<p>The AEN teacher in consultation with the class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of the pupil under review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this level a support plan is devised and informed by:</li> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures/assessments</li> <li>• Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> <li>• Classroom Support File</li> </ul> <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small groups or individual tuition. A school support plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review and is signed by all parties (support teacher, class teacher, parents.)</p>
<p><b>School Support Plus</b></p>	<p>The AEN teacher in consultation with the class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of the pupil under review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This level of the continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</li> <li>• Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures</li> <li>• Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>• Functional assessment (psychological, educational, occupational, speech and language...)</li> <li>• Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability, social, emotional and behavioural functioning, adaptive functioning etc.</li> </ul> <p>Data generated from this process is used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation and is signed by all parties (support teacher, class teacher, parents.)</p>

A more detailed outline of each level of support can be found in appendix A.

## Meeting Children’s Diverse Learning Needs

We take into account the different backgrounds, experiences, interests and strengths that influence the way in which children learn when we plan our approaches to teaching and learning. In planning interventions, the ‘Planning Template’ outlining the six-point action plan below will be utilised:

<p>Action 1: Identification of pupils with additional educational needs</p>	<p>Review existing information on pupils’ needs, using school-based data and any information from parents and external professionals.</p> <p>Engage in additional screening and data gathering as required, using informal and formal assessment approaches (for example, teacher observations, information on social and emotional competence, standardised tests, diagnostic tests).</p> <p>Identify all pupils with additional educational needs in the school. Match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.</p>
<p>Action 2: Setting targets</p>	<p>Based on individual needs, set clear learning targets for each pupil at each level of the continuum of support.</p>
<p>Action 3: Planning teaching methods and approaches</p>	<p>Identify the level and type of intervention required to meet targets for each pupil on the continuum of support. Schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. They should also be mindful that the interventions and supports that they are using are evidence-informed.</p>
<p>Action 4: Organising early intervention and prevention programmes</p>	<p>Based on identified needs, choose evidence-informed early intervention/prevention programmes to address concerns. Identify time needed and staffing commitment required.</p>
<p>Action 5: Organising and deploying additional education teaching resources</p>	<p>Cross-reference the needs of pupils at school support and school support plus levels and consider common needs that can be met by grouping to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches.</p> <p>Agree which teacher(s) will cater for these groups/individuals and when and where the teaching will take place.</p> <p>Be mindful of the requirement that pupils with the greatest level of need should receive the greatest level of support from teachers with relevant expertise, where possible.</p>
<p>Action 6: Tracking, recording and reviewing progress</p>	<p>Establish a tracking and recording system, to ensure that the progress of all pupils in meeting their identified targets is monitored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At whole-school and classroom support level by all teachers</li> <li>• At the school support and school support plus levels by class teachers and support teachers.</li> </ul>

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

A minority of children will have particular learning and assessment requirements that will create barriers to learning. Our policy envisages a whole-school approach that takes into account the roles of the Board of Management, the principal, AEN Co-Ordinator, class teachers, AEN teachers, ANAs, parents and pupils. In attempting to achieve the above objectives the Board of Management, principal and staff will take all reasonable steps within the limits of the resources available to fulfil the requirements outlined in this policy document. Roles and responsibilities are as follows:

### **A. Board of Management**

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with additional educational needs
- oversee the development, implementation and review of the provision of Support in the school
- ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for AEN teachers
- provide a secure facility for storage or records in relation to pupils in receipt of Support
- budget for ongoing support for Professional Development in Support for staff.

### **B. Principal**

The role of the principal is to:

- Co-ordinate day-to-day provision within the North Dublin Muslim National School in liaison with the AEN co-ordinator, ensuring continuity of provision for all pupils
- Assign staff strategically to teaching roles, including AEN roles
- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policy on Additional Educational Needs in co-operation with the Board of Management, teachers, parents and children
- Develop and monitor the implementation of this policy on an ongoing basis
- Ensure that effective systems are implemented to identify pupils' needs and that progress is monitored methodically
- Monitor the selection of pupils for support teaching, ensuring that this service is focused on the pupils with most need
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify pupils with very low achievement and learning difficulties so that these pupils can be provided with the support they need
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedure to be followed in initiating referrals
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of pupils with additional educational needs
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, pupils and external professionals/agencies
- Ensure that all school staff (class teachers, AEN teachers and ANAs) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- Facilitate appropriate training and professional development for staff to allow them to fulfil their assigned duties.

### **C. AEN Co-Ordinator**

The role of the Additional Educational Needs Co-Ordinator is to:

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of this policy.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with additional educational needs.
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers and contribute to in-service training of staff.
- Liaise with and advise ANAs with regard to supporting children with additional needs.
- Liaise with parents of children with additional needs.
- Monitor and evaluate provision for pupils with additional educational needs.
- Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving supplementary teaching.
- Facilitate planning for class teachers with AEN teachers.
- Support the implementation of a tracking system at a whole-school level to monitor the progress of children who avail of additional support.
- Keep teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed for initial referrals
- Advise parents on procedures for availing of AEN services.
- Liaise with external agencies such as NEPS/AON to arrange assessments of children with additional educational needs.
- Liaise with teachers in the ASD classes in relation to procedures and support where necessary.
- Liaise with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) regarding all aspects of additional educational needs provision.
- Oversee the drafting of classroom support, school support and school support plus plans.

### **D. Mainstream Class Teacher**

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all pupils, and especially for those with complex needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all pupils are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. Mainstream class teachers have primary responsibility for the education of all pupils in their classes. Their roles include:

- Making parents aware of the concerns of the school about their child's progress
- Outlining the schools practice with regard to diagnostic testing and follow up procedures
- Where possible, attending meetings between AEN Teacher(s) and pupil's parents
- Consulting and co-operating on Student Support Files, opening classroom support plans where necessary.
- Maintaining a record of differentiated support in class (See appendix B)
- Being alert to the possibility that some children may have a specific learning difficulty or other additional educational need and bringing this to the attention of the principal or AEN Co-Ordinator.
- Outlining ANA duties where applicable.

Take responsibility for the progress of all pupils in their class, including those selected for support teaching. In supporting the development and implementation of this policy, the class teacher should:



- Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils and modify as necessary
- Plan lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom
- Use assistive technology and other digital technology as appropriate to best meet pupil needs.
- Implement agreed school practices on screening and selecting pupils for support teaching in English and Mathematics by co-operating and assisting with the administration and scoring of appropriate screening measures
- For each pupil who is in receipt of withdrawn English/Mathematics support, to collaborate with the AEN teacher in the development of a Student Support File by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve these targets
- For each pupil who is in receipt of withdrawn English/Mathematics support, to adjust the classroom programmes in line with the agreed learning targets and activities
- To provide the support teachers with a monthly outline of work to be covered in the mainstream class for English and mathematics.
  
- With regard to teaching pupils with low achievement, the following general approaches and methods are recommended:
  - Such children should be prioritised when accessing information from previous class teacher
  - Group teaching
  - Modify presentation and questioning techniques to maximise the involvement of pupils with low achievement in class activities
  - Placing emphasis on oral language development across the curriculum
  - Providing pupils with extra tutoring in the key basic skills in literacy and numeracy
  - Setting learning targets at an appropriate level
  - Providing learning activities and material which are suitably challenging but which also ensure success and progress
  - Carrying out error analyses of a pupil's work to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty
  - Setting up 'buddy systems' in class (high achievers collaboratively working with low achievers, e.g. peer tutoring / paired reading)
  - Applying assessments and tests which offer challenge and opportunities for success to children of all levels of achievement.

## **E. ASD Class Teacher**

The role of the ASD Class Teacher is to:

- Collaborate with the principal, class teachers and parents to support the progress and promote the integration of pupils, and to consider the level and format of integration.
- Oversee, guide and support the work of ANAs in the ASD class.
- Be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs.
- Maintain weekly/fortnightly planning for each individual or group of pupils
- Liaise with class teacher on individual pupil's needs and progress
- Conduct diagnostic assessment
- Maintain and review pupil assessment records

- Liaise with the principal, teachers, parents and outside agencies to support the progress of pupils in the ASD class.
- Contribute to the development of policy on Additional Educational Needs & Inclusion at a whole-school level

#### **F. Additional Educational Needs Teacher**

The role of the AEN Teacher is to:

- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies designed to enhance early learning and to prevent learning difficulties
- Maintain weekly planning for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of AEN teaching
- be familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning preferences and to meet a variety of needs
- Meet with parents to discuss pupil's progress
- Teach using a combination of team-teaching initiatives, co-operative teaching, early intervention and small group or individual support to best meet the needs of pupils with additional educational needs.
- Liaise with class teacher on individual pupil's needs and progress
- Maintain a list of pupils who are receiving support teaching and additional educational needs teaching
- Conduct diagnostic assessments
- Develop a Student Support File for each pupil who is selected for withdrawn learning support in consultation with the Class Teacher.
- Maintain and review pupil assessment records
- Liaise with principal, teachers, parents and outside agencies.
- Contribute to the development of policies on Additional Educational Needs, Mathematics and English at whole-school level
- Provide advice to the Class Teachers in such areas as individual pupils assessment and programme planning, as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and mathematics for pupils experiencing difficulties
- Contribute at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of learning resource books and materials to be made available to pupils with learning difficulties in their mainstream classrooms and in the support room
- Liaise with external agencies such as NEPS to arrange assessments and special provision for pupils with additional needs.
- Work with the principal and class teacher in the development of assessment tests to identify children in need of support.

#### **G. Parents**

North Dublin Muslim National School acknowledges the central role played by parents of all pupils and particularly of pupils with additional educational needs. Good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for pupils with complex needs. Parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and

strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress.

The Continuum of Support process and use of the Student Support File provide valuable opportunities to engage with parents and to build a collaborative approach to identifying and responding to the needs of pupils with complex needs. We value strong communication links between home and school and identify support for and participation in their child's learning as key parental responsibilities. Specifically, parents contribute through:

- Regular communication with the Class Teacher and AEN Teacher
- Endeavouring to create a home environment where the child can develop in a holistic way.
- Signing and returning consent forms, classroom support plans, school support plans, etc. to the school when required
- Fostering positive attitudes about school and learning in the child
- Participation in shared reading programmes (eg. Oxford Reading Tree books)
- Encouraging the child to visit library
- Developing the child's oral language and social mathematics
- Participating in activities organised by the school that are designed to increase the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Keeping the class teacher informed of any home factors which may be affecting their child's progress
- Keeping the school informed of any medical conditions which may be affecting their child's progress, and of any assessments or interventions being carried out by outside agencies (SLT, CAMHS, OT, etc.)
- Helping children to develop their organisational skills
- Helping children to look after school books and resources which are loaned to the child for use at home.

#### **H. Pupils (Pupil roles and responsibilities are dependent on their age and ability)**

The school considers pupil input into the development, implementation and review of their own learning as important. Our aim is to enable our pupils to:

- become more independent as learners who can self-assess and reflect on their own work
- become aware of different learning preferences
- become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses or needs
- enjoy success and evaluate their progress
- excel at and enjoy many curricular and extra-curricular activities which would not be practical in the mainstream class due to class size
- develop ownership of the skills and strategies taught during support teaching and apply these strategies and skills in their mainstream class situation

#### **I. Outside Agencies**

The school will endeavor to engage both proactively and responsively with professional outside agencies in order to fully meet the needs of the individual child.

### **3. Enrolment and Transfer of Pupils with Additional Educational Needs**

Application for all children, including children with a disability and/or other additional education needs, is governed at all times by the school's current admissions policy. However, the attention of parents of children with a disability and/or other additional education needs is also drawn to the following points:

- North Dublin Muslim National School is a mainstream school with one Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) class, and has higher pupil/teacher ratios compared to those that apply in special schools.
- Pupils with additional needs can be integrated into a mainstream class where deemed appropriate by the AEN co-ordinator and ASD class teacher, and may be supported by a Additional Needs Assistant
- A mainstream school does not have the same staffing ratios or level of ancillary services enjoyed by special schools, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy.
- Whilst the school has wheelchair access, it does not have additional facilities which may be required by pupils with a specific physical disability. The school is committed to providing any additional resources required by our pupils, subject to funding by the Department of Education.
- A child with additional needs integrated into a mainstream class will, by the nature of such integration, experience the normal day to day happenings, determined by the reality of school life, and the existing customs and practices. Every child in the school, including those with a disability and /or additional educational needs is bound by school policies both in existence and those developed by the Staff and Board of Management.
- A child with a disability and/or additional educational needs who is integrated into a mainstream class may not have the full range of provisions put into place from their peers in the event of staff absences or whole school events.
- From year to year the allocation of teachers to classes is focused on the needs of the whole school, and consequently the school cannot guarantee long term continuity or predictability in personnel.

Notwithstanding the above points, the school is committed to providing the best possible educational service to pupils with a disability or additional educational needs. In coming to a decision regarding the enrolment of a pupil with additional needs, the management group will consider the following-

(1) EPSEN Act 2004, Section 2 *"A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with –*

*a) The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or*

*b) The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated"*

(2) Education Act 1998: 15.-(2) d. *A board shall publish... the policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to.... the participation by students with disabilities or who have other special educational needs, and ensure that as regards that policy, principles of equality and the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice are respected ....*

Parents seeking to enroll a child with additional educational needs in the North Dublin Muslim National School are reminded that it is a requirement on their part to:

- Inform the school at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the educational need.
- Advise the school of any resources / special equipment that may be required.
- Supply the school with all available assessment reports.
- Maintain informal contact with the school on an on-going basis.
- Attend formal Student Support Plan (SSP) meetings where applicable.
- Contribute to target-setting and SSP monitoring.

### **Communication**

Prior to the child's enrolment, parents/guardians are requested to communicate the child's additional needs. The school acquaints itself with each child's needs through the following:

- Meeting between parents/principal/class teacher/AEN Team members, as appropriate. Parents are invited to bring their own interpreter, where necessary.
- Obtaining copies/details of reports, assessments etc. from SENO, and parents.
- Contact with the SENO, NEPS Psychologist or other psychologist/speech therapist/ occupational therapist, referral from other agencies etc.

### **Transition**

Efforts are made to ensure a smooth transition to school for both the pupil and the school through:

- Pupil/parent visits in advance, if possible.
- Making all school employees and pupils aware of the need for inclusion (EPSEN Act).
- Liaison with SENO to arrange for additional personnel, resources, training, if necessary.
- Health and safety issues arising from the child's mobility and care needs will be identified and where possible, strategies will be developed to address them. These may include access, toilets, supervision, administration of medicine, intimate care and access to courses for the ANA e.g. lifting techniques.

### **Transfer to post primary or to another primary school**

For pupils with additional educational needs, the transition from one primary school to another or from primary to post-primary school can be challenging. We aim to support these pupils in making this transition, by communicating relevant pupil details regarding strengths, needs, likely targets and helpful strategies with the appropriate personnel in the transfer school. This is done with prior parental consent and SENO advice may be sought where appropriate.

#### **4. Specialised Facilities and Resources**

North Dublin Muslim National School is a one-storey building with access ramps to the main building and level access to temporary classrooms. There is a classroom specially equipped for our ASD class including a sensory room and outside area. Where specialised equipment is to be used (i.e. in the case of a child with cerebral palsy) training will be given to staff as required.

The school seeks to acquire the best resources for use with pupils with additional educational needs, including books, physical resources and digital technology. These range from resources to teach literacy and numeracy to motor skill, social skill and speech & language development resources. These resources are stored either in centrally located areas or in the support rooms.

Resources for the provision of support include a variety of textbooks, library books and ancillary materials. A variety of testing materials are also in use which include standardised, diagnostic, reading attainment, phonological awareness and Maths attainment.

Resources assigned to the AEN team will be primarily used in the AEN rooms. These resources may be made available to Class Teachers following consultation with the AEN Co-Ordinator. AEN Teachers are allocated a budget each year which can be used to purchase additional resources and games.

#### **5. Early Intervention Strategies**

As a means of minimising the occurrence of learning difficulties as far as possible, the following strategies are implemented:

- The development and implementation of the school's English and Maths plans which outline agreed approaches to the teaching and learning for each class level.
- Promotion of parental understanding and involvement through their attendance at an induction meeting for the parents of incoming Junior Infants, the arrangement of formal and informal Parent-Teacher Meetings, regular school letters, the termly newsletter and through the monthly updates on the school website.
- The implementation of the Paired Reading Programme in selected classes, and other peer tutoring systems where appropriate.
- The implementation of the Shared Reading Programme in selected classes, where pupils and parents are encouraged to read together using the Oxford Reading Tree series of books.
- The use of appropriate digital technology to engage pupils and enhance learning.
- Daily in-class support for Maths and English for Junior Infants to Sixth Class, where possible.
- Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils by the Class Teacher.
- Development of phonological awareness and the explicit teaching of phonics at infant level
- Access to decodable texts for emergent readers
- Implementation of the Aistear programme in infant classes
- Implementation of the Ready, Set, Go maths programme in infant classes, and further use of methodologies in older classes.

## **6. Pupils with English as an Additional Language**

### **Enrolment of Pupils with English as an Additional Language**

- The school's admissions policy governs enrolment of all pupils.
- The school will offer all reasonably possible supports to parents in completing the enrolment process.

### **Education of Pupils with English as an Additional Language**

- Pupils with English as an additional language will only be placed in an age-appropriate class.
- Every effort will be made to help the pupils to settle socially in the class, and all school personnel will collaborate to help the child settle in their new environment.
- Decisions based on exemption from Irish will be determined by the latest guidelines from the Department of Education.
- The school recognises the positive impact of competency in an additional language has on learning, and encourages proficiency in home languages.

### **Provision of Language Support for Pupils with English as an Additional Language**

- Provision of EAL support is a key focus of the AEN team.
- The amount of language support time allocated to any child will depend on their current command of the language based on formal EAL testing in reading, writing, speaking and listening using the Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) and other observations.
- In general, older pupils will be offered more language support, as there will be a higher demand on them to obtain the language skills needed for their class level.
- Language support will be offered mainly in a small group setting.
- The Department of Education allows three years of language support for each child, and in general, the child's support will be phased out after this period.

## **7. Administration of the Additional Educational Needs Team**

### **Deployment of staff**

It is school policy to ensure the most effective deployment of staff in meeting the overall requirements of the school taking into account the experience and expertise of teachers and ANAs. Further details can be found in the school's Class Allocation policy and ANA policy.

### **Additional Educational Needs Team**

The Additional Educational Needs Team (AEN team) consists of the principal, AEN Co-Ordinator, ASD class teacher, AEN teachers and ANAs.

### **Planning Meetings**

Collaboration between all of those involved in pupil education is vital. AEN teachers meet monthly with the relevant individual mainstream teachers. Mainstream teachers are asked to prepare topics to be taught in both English and Mathematics for the coming month prior to attending this meeting. This information is then shared and discussed during the meeting. Teachers can also discuss the progress of pupils currently receiving additional support from the AEN team at this time. The dates for these meetings are arranged at the start of each school year and can be found in the school's information booklet. A template is available for recording content to be taught and the assignment of teaching duties. Each teacher is responsible for storing notes taken at these meetings.

### **AEN Team Meetings**

AEN teachers meet regularly throughout the year to discuss issues as they arise. This includes discussions around assessment, timetabling, continuing and discontinuing support teaching etc.

### **Additional Needs Assistants**

Additional Needs Assistants are allocated to the school by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). The ANA works under the direction and supervision of the class teacher in order to meet the specific care needs of identified pupils. The principal has the sole responsibility of allocating ANA support throughout the school. The allocation will be reviewed annually. Further details can be found in the school's ANA policy.

### **Record Keeping**

As well as short term planning documents and assessment folders, the following records are kept for pupils with additional educational needs:

- Student Support File (SSF)
- Copies of any assessment reports received from outside agencies
- Records of meetings
- Any other documentation pertinent to the child's learning.

All documents will be held maintained in compliance with the school's Data Protection policy.



### **Student Support Plan (SSP)**

The Student Support File will be in accordance with the pro-forma as advised in the 'Student Support File Guidelines (NEPS)' which was first published by the Department of Education in September 2014.

The file will address the pupils' full range of needs and will include:

- Details from the Class Teacher
- Assessment Results
- Other relevant information, e.g. reports from other agencies
- Learning strengths and attainments
- Priority Learning Needs
- Learning Targets
- Class based Learning Activities

Each file will be monitored through teacher observation; the keeping of planning and progress records and through the pupil's own feedback. New files are opened in September and a detailed review of the SSP takes place during February and June each year. The AEN Teacher and/or the Class Teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the child's progress in the light of the review.

### **Identification of Pupils Requiring Additional Support**

Children undertake a range of standardised tests as a matter of course. These include, but are not limited to:

- Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) – Senior Infants
- Non-Verbal Reading Test (NVRT) – 2<sup>nd</sup> Class & 4<sup>th</sup> Class
- New Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT) – 3<sup>rd</sup> Class & 5<sup>th</sup> Class
- MICRA-T & Sigma-T – 1<sup>st</sup> Class to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.
- Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) – Junior Infants to 1<sup>st</sup> Class, plus other children enrolled for less than three years.

Where difficulties are identified, further diagnostic testing and baseline testing may take place in order to develop an understanding of the pupil's strengths and areas for development. The results of these standardised tests and diagnostic tests, along with teacher observations and records, are used to determine if a pupil will receive learning support and to establish what targets will be set.

### **Timetabling**

Timetabling of in-class and withdrawn support is completed by the AEN Co-Ordinator and principal following consultation with teachers and in line with the current needs which have been identified. Priority is given to pupils with the most significant need. The timetable is a working document and will change as the needs of the school do.

### **Referral to out of School Agencies**

- The principal and AEN Co-Ordinator manage the referral of pupils to outside agencies, e.g. Educational Psychologist.
- The principal and AEN Co-Ordinator meet with the parents to discuss the need for the referral and to seek consent.

- The class teacher completes the necessary referral form in consultation with the appropriate school personnel.
- The external professional visits the school to meet with the pupil, parents, principal, Class Teacher and the AEN Co-Ordinator as appropriate, and the assessment is conducted.
- This is followed by a return visit at which findings are discussed with appropriate school personnel, recommendations are considered and an appropriate response is agreed.

**8. Conclusion**

**Success Criteria**

The school wide implementation of this policy will result in enhancement of pupils learning in the following ways:

- Improved standards of academic achievement with the pupil’s individual learning programme
- Enabling the discontinuation of the provision of additional education for pupils with identified needs based on positive assessment results
- Enhanced parental involvement in supporting their child’s learning needs
- Increased opportunities for effective communication between school personnel in relation to pupil’s progress
- Evidence of inclusion of pupils with additional educational needs in our school
- Feedback from teaching staff, ANAs, pupils, psychologists
- Inspectorate reports
- Children are enabled to monitor their own learning and become independent learners working towards the best of their ability.

**Implementation and review**

This policy will be implemented from February 2023 and will be reviewed in the 2025/2026 school year, or sooner if deemed necessary.

**Ratification and communication**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2023 and is available on the school website and the shared drive.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix A: Stages of Assessment and Provision**

Access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum is achieved for most children by differentiation of class work by the class teacher. When a class teacher or core support teacher identifies a child with complex needs, they provide interventions that are ADDITIONAL TO or DIFFERENT FROM those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. The first line of responsibility for the progress of all pupils in the class lies with the class teacher.

### **Stage 1: Observation and/or assessment (class teacher):**

- Observation: Methods in use- personal checklists, record sheet for each child, consultation with core support teacher, listening to reading, correction of homework.
- Recording observation-Checklists, Personal records, reading records, paired reading, class teacher observation.
- Share concerns with: - Last year's/ next year's teacher, similar level teacher, parents, core support teacher, AEN Co-Ordinator

Class teachers initially discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The indicators for this intervention could be;

- The child makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are directed at an identified area of weakness.
- The child shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and numeracy skills, which result in poor attainment.
- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which do not respond to behaviour management techniques used by the school.
- Has sensory or physical difficulties.
- Has communication and/ or relationship difficulties.

The class teacher completes a Stage One (Classroom Support plan) form and monitors the Record of Differentiated Support for an agreed time. The class teacher must inform the AEN Co-Ordinator of this decision. If this strategy does not work then the teacher will continue to the next stage, School Support. Parents will need to sign their consent to this plan.

Classroom Support Plans run for a period of six weeks and are then reviewed. In some cases, it may be deemed appropriate to continue the plan for an additional block of six weeks.

## **Stage 2: School Support**

In cases where the Record of Differentiated Support indicates that progress has not been made, or if the results of tests and teacher observation indicate this to be the case, intervention in the form of a support teacher will be accessed. Again, class teachers will discuss their concerns with the child's parents. The action taken will be as follows:

- The class teacher and support teacher will differentiate the curriculum in specific areas with achievable goals to be implemented by the class teacher and AEN teacher.
- These programmes will be reviewed and updated regularly and at least twice a year
- While every effort will be made to allow the AEN group/individual to remain included in class, there may be a need to work part of the programme in an AEN room with the AEN teacher or class teacher. This withdrawal will be time limited and for specific purposes only.
- Where progress is such that the child is no longer giving cause for concern, the child will revert to the usual differentiated curriculum available to all children.

## **Stage 3: School Support Plus**

A School Support Plus plan may be opened for a child who presents with complex needs or a number of additional needs that cannot be met through a School Support Plan.

The support or class teacher may perform diagnostic tests on these children usually at the beginning of the school year where relevant. The class teacher with the support teacher and AEN Co-Ordinator, in consultation with the child's parents, may consider the following actions:

- A psychological assessment will be arranged (see Education for Persons with Disability Act 2004)
- Other outside agencies may need to be contacted, who will advise on a range of provision including School Support Plus targets and strategies.
- The triggers for extra intervention could be that, despite receiving an individualized programme the child:
  - Continues to work at Primary Curriculum levels substantially below that of children of a similar age.
  - Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's learning, or that of other children, despite an appropriate behaviour management programme and School Support Plus plan.
  - Has sensory and/or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular visits from an advisory service.

### **School Support Plus Plan (SSP)**

Based on psychologist's report, tests, records of differentiation and support plan the class teacher with the core support teacher, ANA (if assigned), parents and representatives of outside agencies (if necessary) formulate a School Support Plus Plan.

These plans, which employ a small – steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded targets, we ensure that the child experiences success.

This plan includes:

- the nature and degree of the child’s abilities and skills
- the degree of the child’s complex needs
- the present level of performance
- services to be provided, if applicable
- services for transition to second level school where appropriate
- the targets, which the child hope to meet prior to the agreed review date.

The strategies set out in the SSP will, as far as possible, be implemented in the mainstream classroom setting. The management of the SSP strategies will be the responsibility of the class teacher, AEN teacher and the AEN Co-Ordinator.

#### **Drafting of School Support Plus Plan**

In September a parent input form is sent home prior to the SSP meeting with parents. The parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss targets based on the report and/or input form. The class teacher, ANA (if allocated) will also attend the meeting. Again, outside agencies may play a part in formulating the final copy. The targets will be recorded on the SSP. Where targets aren’t met it may be decided that the child continues to receive additional supports. Once targets have been successfully met new targets may be set by parents and teachers. Where progress is satisfactory, and where the child is consistently achieving targets over the stated time, a decision may be made to revert to School Support/Classroom Support. Reviews will happen in February and June, with parent/staff meetings taking place where required.

**Appendix B:** Record of Differentiated Support in class

Register of Pupils with Complex Needs who are in receipt of interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework

Classroom Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of AEN	Nature of Supports Literacy, numeracy, social, emotional, behavioural, life-skills	Focus of Support In-class, withdrawal in small groups or individual, school yard
School Support				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of AEN	Nature of Supports	Focus of Support
School Support Plus				
Pupil Name	Class	Description of AEN	Nature of Supports	Focus of Support