Coláiste Pobail Bhun Clóidí

Bunclody Community College

Whole School Inclusion Policy

wwetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board

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1. Introduction

Bunclody Community College is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary college, established in 1949 and one of 310 post-primary colleges under the patronage of **Wexford Waterford Education and Training Board (WWETB)**. As a state-run ETB school, we are guided by the **ETBI Patrons' Framework on Ethos**, which is underpinned by the core values of **Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community, and Respect**. These values shape our commitment to inclusive education and inform every aspect of school life-from leadership and teaching, to student support and community engagement.

ETB schools are multi-denominational, welcoming students of all religions and beliefs and treating them equally. In line with the **Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018**, our school provides equal opportunities for enrolment and participation. We strive to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated, and every student is supported to reach their full potential. Our school does not privilege any group over another, while acknowledging and facilitating the beliefs and identities of all students, staff, and families.

As part of the ETB sector, we benefit from a shared ethos and practical guidance that supports a whole-school approach to inclusion. With support from our **Inclusion Coordinator**, **Ethos Coordinator**, **Director of Schools**, and **ETBI**, we continuously reflect on and develop our practices to ensure they are consistent with national guidelines and responsive to the diverse needs of our school community.

Our school promotes a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs, and values held by students, parents, and staff. We aim to prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive, and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values and belonging.

1.1 What Inclusion Means to Us

The term "inclusion" in education policy has evolved over time. According to the **National Council for Special Education (NCSE, 2024)**, inclusion can be viewed as part of a dynamic process of change to restructure school systems to increase their capacity to respond to and accommodate the diversity of needs of all learners. Inclusion in education is also seen as making an important contribution to the creation of an inclusive society.

At Bunclody Community College inclusion means that every student is welcomed, valued, and supported to participate fully in school life. It is about creating an environment where diversity is respected and where all students-regardless of ability, background, language, or identity-can learn, grow, and thrive together. Inclusion involves removing barriers to learning and participation,

promoting equity, and ensuring that all members of the school community feel a sense of belonging. It is a whole-school commitment to fairness, respect, and opportunity for all.

1.2 A Note on Terminology

An inclusive education system embraces and celebrates all forms of diversity-including neurodiversity. This means recognising that young people experience the world in different ways and valuing those differences.

This policy reflects our aim to respond to diversity with respect and sensitivity. This includes honouring the preferences of young people and their families around the language used to describe strengths, needs, and supports.

While we promote a neuro-affirmative approach, the terminology used here reflects current educational practice and aligns with legislation such as the *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act* (EPSEN) 2004 and Department of Education and Youth guidance, including the *Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools*, and the NCSE's *Relate*. We acknowledge that language evolves, and this policy will be updated in time to reflect that.

The term Special Educational Need as defined in EPSEN (2004) states:

> "Special educational needs" means, in relation to a person, a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition and cognate words shall be construed accordingly" (Government of Ireland 2004, Section 1).

The term 'Additional Educational Need' or AEN is used interchangeably to capture the broad spectrum of needs our students present with, and who may require additional supports in school.

2. School Mission and Vision Statements

2.1 Our Mission

"We endeavour to provide a quality education to all our students in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. We aim to prepare students for life and responsible citizenship and motivate them towards the achievement of their full potential".

Nurturing the Individual

At Bunclody Community College we are acutely aware of the challenges faced by first year students as they transfer from Primary to Post Primary education. We believe that it is our responsibility to ensure that this transition is as smooth as possible. We are also of the view that happy, contented students are more likely to succeed in their education. Research, and our own experience has also taught us that students do better in subjects that are of interest to them. With

this in mind we have put a comprehensive pastoral care/support system in place for all students in our care.

Our year long taster programme in first year allows students to explore all subjects on offer on our Junior Cycle curriculum. Having uncovered their interests and talents we then provide a bespoke curriculum aimed at meeting the needs and aspirations of all students. The close knit student body that exists in our school is unique and allows each individual to flourish. All lessons are delivered in a classroom environment that is based on openness and mutual respect. We are renowned for the ethos of care which permeates our school as well as our student's academic achievement. The broad range of extra-curricular activities on offer also promote the development of the 'whole' person. They also ensure that our students have an enjoyable and memorable second level school experience.

2.2 Our Vision

At Bunclody Community College, our vision is to provide a caring, inclusive, and dynamic educational environment where every student is empowered to reach their full potential. We are committed to fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and resilience, where students are encouraged to develop not only their academic abilities but also their personal and social skills.

Central to our vision is the development of self-awareness and an awareness of others. We believe that understanding oneself and appreciating the perspectives of others are essential qualities for personal growth and for building strong, respectful relationships. By nurturing empathy, reflection, and social responsibility, we help students balance academic achievement with emotional intelligence and personal integrity.

We believe that true learning happens through meaningful engagement with others, and we actively promote collaboration, kindness, and mutual respect within our school community. By working together, students, staff, families, and the wider community, we create a positive atmosphere where everyone feels valued, supported, and inspired to contribute.

Our goal is to prepare students to thrive in an ever-changing world, nurturing in them the confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills necessary for lifelong learning. We aspire to develop graduates who are not only academically successful but also compassionate, self-aware, and socially responsible citizens, ready to play an active role in their communities and in society at large.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students at Bunclody Community College, recognising and valuing the diversity of their backgrounds, abilities, and learning profiles. It includes students with social,

emotional, or academic needs; those with Special Educational Needs; students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN); learners who benefit from English as an Additional Language (EAL) support; students from culturally, linguistically, or socio-economically diverse backgrounds; and those identified as exceptionally able.

The policy also supports the whole school community, including the Board of Management, the Principal, teaching staff, Special Needs Assistants, ancillary staff, students/young people and parents/guardians, in fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all. The appendices provided in this policy are procedures and templates that support the implementation of the policy and may be updated by the school principal in response to emerging needs, and/or DEY and NCSE requirements, prior to full policy review.

4. Rationale – Creating an Inclusive School Environment

This policy is written in the context of a revised model for allocating special education teaching resources introduced by the Department of Education and Youth in 2024. Effective provision for students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) or Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Bunclody Community College is part of an inclusive whole-school framework. This framework emphasises high-quality, accessible teaching and learning for all students and meaningful collaboration between the college, parents/guardians, and students.

This policy sets out how our special education teaching resources, alongside other available supports, are strategically deployed within a whole-school framework to support the meaningful inclusion of all students in both their learning and in the life of our school community.

This policy is a living document. It will evolve in response to developments in practice, changes in legislation and national policy, and the resources available to Bunclody Community College at any given time.

5. Legislative Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation:

Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989

Education Act, 1998

Equal Status Act (ESA), 2000

Education (Welfare) Act (EWA), 2000

Equality Act, 2004

Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN), 2004

Disability Act, 2005

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006

The Irish Sign Language Act, 2017

Education (Admission to Schools) Act (EASA), 2018

Data Protection Act (DPA), 2018

The Education (Provision in respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022

6. Supporting Publications

- Guidance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools, 2025
- Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027 – Updated October 2025
- Circular 0039/2025 – Forward Planning for Special Education Provision for the 2026/2027 School Year and Beyond
- Whole-School Guidance in Post-Primary Schools (Circular 0001/2025)
- NCSE Relate (2025)
- Neart (Jigsaw & NEPS mental health/support programme) (2025)
- Wellbeing Information for School Staff – Post Primary (Updated July 2025)
- NEPS Managing Reluctant Attendance and School Avoidance Behaviour: A Good Practice Guide for Post Primary Schools
- Catalogue of Wellbeing Resources for Post-Primary Schools (Updated April 2025)
- Parent and Student Guides to SEN Supports in Post-Primary Schools (2025)
- Indicators of Effective Practice for Post-Primary Schools (2024)
- Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes (2024)
- Circular 0064/2024 – Revised Model for Allocating Special Education Teaching Resources
- Circular 23/2025- Review of Enrolment in a Special Class
- Circular 55/2022- Exemptions from the Study of Irish –Revising Circular 0053/2019
- Circular 58/2019- Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools

- Circular 0081/2024 - Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations Guidelines for Schools in Supporting Students
- Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024)
- Bí Cineálta: Resources for Schools and Parents (2024)
- Toolkit: Deployment of SNA Supports (NCSE) (2024)
- Reflections on inclusion in the Irish education system (DE Inspectorate 2024)
- National Strategic Framework for Lifelong Guidance (2024–2030)
- Information Note for Principals, Guidance Counsellors and Guidance Teams (2023)
- ETBI Patrons' Framework on Ethos (2022)
- Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools – Supporting Children and Young People (2022)
- Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools (2022)
- National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making (2021)
- NEPS Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools: A Guide to Establishing or Reviewing a Team (2021)
- Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (DES, 2017)
- Guidelines for Wellbeing in Junior Cycle (DES, 2017)
- Inclusive Education Framework (NCSE 2011)
- Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers (NEPS, 2007)

Note: These publications do not represent an exhaustive list and collectively support a **holistic, rights-based approach** to inclusion. Together, they form a robust foundation for a whole-school inclusion policy that is **responsive, equitable, and aligned with national priorities**.

7. Other Relevant Policies

Our whole-school approach to inclusion underpins the policies listed in Table 1, which can be viewed on Bunclody Community College.

Table 1. Summary of school-based policies supporting inclusive education in our school

Policies				
Admissions Policy	Administration of Medicine Policy	AI/Acceptable Usage Policy	Bi- Cinealtas Policy	Assessment Policy
Behaviours of Concern Policy	Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy	Code of Positive Behaviour	Critical Incident Policy	Data Protection Policy
Health and Safety Policy	Homework Policy	Internet Acceptable Use Policy	Intimate Care Policy	One to One Teaching Policy
Pastoral Care Policy	Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Policy	School Trips Policy	Social Media Policy	SPHE/Wellbeing Policy
Student Support Policy and Procedures	Substance Misuse Policy	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy	Wellbeing Policy and Procedures	Whole School Guidance Plan and Programme
JCSP Policy	Sports Policy	Attendance Policy	Substance Misuse Policy	Exclusion and Suspension

8. Principles of Special Education Support

Special Education Teacher (SET) resources in Bunclody Community College are strategically deployed within an inclusive, evidence-based framework grounded in the Continuum of Support, problem-solving approach, student and parent participation, and accountability, as illustrated in Figure 1.

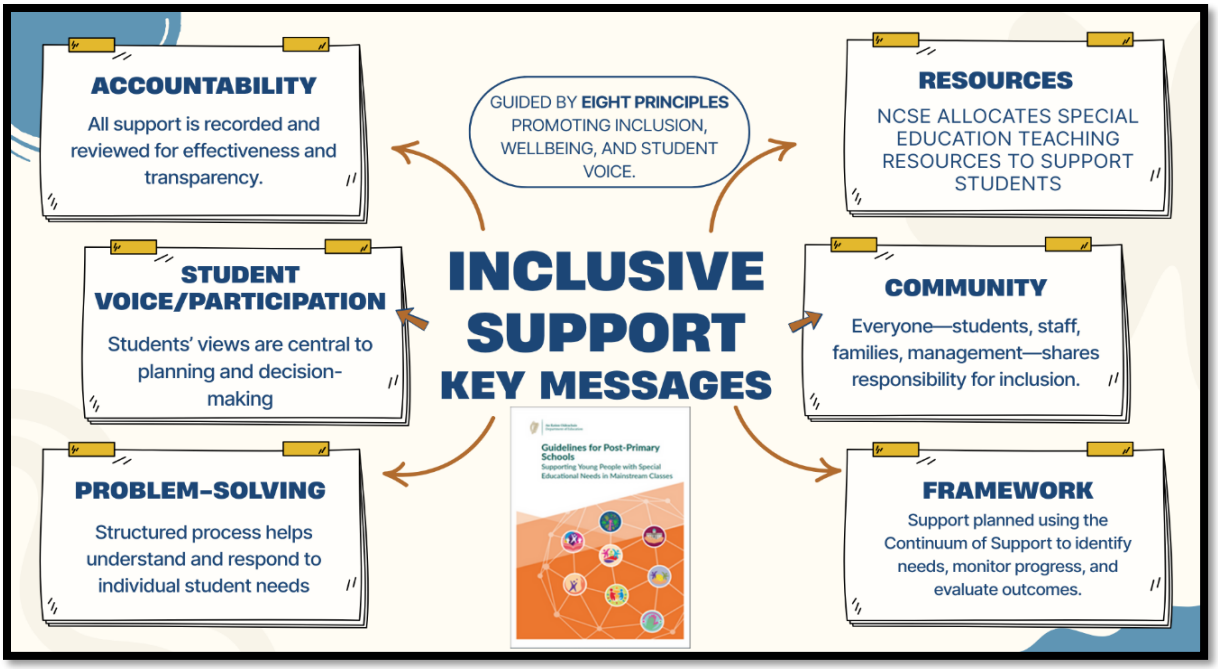


Figure 1. Inclusive Support Key Messages

Inclusive support in our school is underpinned by eight guiding principles articulated in the *Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Young People with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes* (DE 2024) (Figure 2).

These eight principles provide the basis for our school to guide the implementation and ongoing development of our systems, structures, practices, and policies to support the inclusion of all young people.



Figure 2. Principles Underpinning the Special Education Model (DE 2024, p.7)

Inclusive education is enacted and visible in our school via the descriptors outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptors of Inclusive Provision in Our School

Area	**Description**
Inclusive Education System	We welcome and value all students. Diversity-including neurodiversity-is respected. Barriers to learning and participation are identified and removed to enable every student's engagement.
Inclusive School Culture	Inclusion is a shared responsibility. All students should feel they belong, are respected, and are active members of the school community. This is reflected in policies, relationships, and everyday practices.
Collaboration	Staff, students, families, and professionals work together to support learning and wellbeing. The principal leads this process, supported by the

Area	Description
	special education team. Collaboration includes planning, reviewing, and improving inclusive practices.
Wellbeing	Wellbeing is central to education. It is supported through positive relationships, inclusive teaching, and a caring school environment. Every student should have at least one trusted adult in the school who understands their strengths and needs.
Engagement and Participation	Students are involved in decisions about their learning and support. Their participation is enabled and respected. They help set learning goals and monitor their own progress.
Student-Centred and Needs-Based	Support is tailored to each student's needs, which may change over time. The Continuum of Support ensures that help is provided in a responsive way and at the right level-from classroom strategies to more intensive individual support.
Evidence-Informed Practice	Support is based on what works and evidence of what works. Teachers use a range of assessments and observations to understand students' strengths and needs. Supports, approaches and strategies are informed by students' profiles of strengths, needs and interests. Progress is monitored and reviewed, and plans are adjusted as needed.
Governance and Accountability	Special education resources are used only for their intended purpose. The Board of Management and principal ensure that support is properly planned, delivered, monitored, reviewed and recorded.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Overview of Roles in Supporting Inclusive Practice

Table 3 outlines how key individuals and teams contribute to a whole-school approach to inclusive education. It highlights the shared responsibility across the school community-leaders, teachers, support staff, students, and families-in creating an environment where all students are valued, supported, and enabled to thrive in line with their potential and aligned to the SET Guidelines.

Table 3. Roles and responsibilities in inclusive education in our school

Role	Key Responsibilities
Board of Management	- Holds ultimate responsibility for inclusive education in line with legislation (e.g., Education Act 1998). - Ensures SEN resources are used solely for students with SEN, including in team teaching/co-teaching. - Oversees development, implementation, and review of inclusion related policies. - Ensures equitable access, publishes Whole School Inclusion Policy, reviews curriculum, and makes reasonable accommodations. - Promotes awareness of inclusion among staff and students. - Manages grants, staffing, and resources; receives annual confirmation from principal on SEN resource use. - Supports School Self-Evaluation (SSE) using frameworks like *Looking at Our School* and *SSE Guidelines*.
Principal	- Leads development of an inclusive school culture and ensures implementation/review of inclusive policies. - Oversees deployment of SEN resources, prioritising students with greatest needs. - Establishes and manages the special education core teaching team, delegating planning and resource allocation. This may include a designated SENCO role. - Leads whole-school assessment and screening; ensures effective transition from feeder schools. - Facilitates Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) and encourages postgraduate study for SETs. - Ensures systems and facilities are in place for sharing information, collaboration with parents, students, and professionals. - Maintains and updates School Provision Plan and oversees the maintenance Student Support Files. -Oversees timetabling across the continuum of support.
Subject Teacher	- Creates inclusive classrooms for all students, incorporating information provided by the SET team. - Adopts Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiation in teaching, materials, and assessment. - Collaborates with special education team for planning and supports (e.g., team teaching).

Role	Key Responsibilities
	- Monitors student progress, identifies needs, and reviews support plans. - Engages in ongoing professional development for inclusive education. - Shares relevant information with SEN team and parents/students and contributes to support files/plans. -Foster and develop positive relationships with students.
Core Special Education Teaching Team (Mainstream SET and Special Class)	- Established by the principal to ensure high-quality, needs-based SEN support across mainstream and special class provision. - Leadership roles such as SENCOs and Special Class Coordinators can be agreed with school leaders and shared among staff with relevant experience and professional development, ensuring responsibilities are distributed to prevent overload. -Collaboration with school leaders on whole school approaches to inclusion. - Dedicated to providing additional teaching supports for students with SEN, including those accessing support in special classes. -Oversees whole school procedures for the selection and placement of students at different levels of the CoS. - Ensures students with greatest needs receive support from most qualified teachers. - Leads planning, coordination, delivery, and review of SEN supports -Leads assessment/screening testing and information gathering. - Maintains Student Support Files and School Provision Plan. - Collaborates with subject teachers and delivers targeted small-group interventions. -Collaborates with outside agencies. - Supports transitions and ensures continuity of support.
Special Education Teacher (SET)	- Delivers additional teaching supports in mainstream and small-group/individual settings. - Collaborates with subject teachers for inclusive classroom practices. -Collaboration with students and families. - Plans and implements evidence-informed interventions tailored to individual needs. - Maintains Student Support Files and contributes to School Provision Plan. - Supports curriculum access (e.g., Level 1/2 Learning Programmes, LCA). - Participates in transition planning for students.

Role	Key Responsibilities
	- Engages in professional development. - Works as part of the core SEN team for planning and review. -Collaborates with outside agencies.
Behaviour for Learning (BfL) Teacher	- Works with identified students individually or in small groups on BfL programmes. - Addresses social, emotional, behavioural, and academic needs. - Promotes positive behaviour school-wide and supports staff with challenging behaviour. - Collaborates regularly with SEN Coordinator and Care Team.
Special Needs Assistant (SNA)* ***The role of the SNA will be added to Appendix 6 when new circular issues**	- Performs non-teaching tasks as assigned by Principal (per Circular 30/14). - Supervised by Principal, Deputy Principal, or SET coordinator. - Supports students' care needs and inclusion in school life.
Student/Young Person*	- Central to support delivery; empowered to take responsibility for learning and behaviour. - Participates in and benefits from education; contributes to positive school atmosphere. - Can voice opinions via Student Council (or other forum/group) - Develops self-awareness and help-seeking skills through Wellbeing, SPHE, RE, CSPE. - Encouraged to approach any staff member with concerns.
Parent/Guardian	- Plays a pivotal role in child's development and attitude to school. - Supports school policies and inclusion plan. - Communicates with SET team and attends meetings. - Participates in development/review of relevant policies. - Engages in school life and Parents' Association activities.
Inclusion Lead	- Leads Inclusion Team and coordinates support for students with additional needs. - Develops and maintains the school provision map. - Embeds inclusive practices in teaching, learning, and assessment.

Role	Key Responsibilities
	- Collaborates with Wexford Waterford ETB Inclusion Coordinator. - Monitors and evaluates impact of interventions.
Inclusion Team	- Led by Inclusion Lead; may include SETs, SNAs, Guidance Counsellors, DEIS Coordinators, Year Heads, Subject teachers, student, parent, SCP, HSCL, school leader. - Plans and delivers targeted supports. - Engages in collaborative planning and review. - Promotes inclusive classroom practices. - Ensures effective use of resources. - Fosters student-centred culture and self-advocacy.
Student Support Team (SST)	- Multidisciplinary team coordinating support for students with diverse needs. - Meets regularly to discuss welfare, learning, and behaviour. - Uses structured referral process for early identification/intervention. - Develops tailored support plans, liaises with external agencies, and monitors progress. - Fosters an inclusive environment for all students.
Programme Coordinator	- Reviews access to differentiated and inclusive curricula (inclusive system/culture). - Collaborating with staff, students, and families (whole school responsibility). - Monitoring student progress and profiling with student voice (problem-solving, engagement). - Maintaining records and accountability (governance). - Using evidence-informed approaches to adjust teaching and programme content (evidence-informed practice).
Guidance Counsellor	- The Guidance Counsellor is a core member of the Student Support Team (and SEN/AEN team where relevant). - Works closely with the SENCo to support students across all levels of the Continuum of Support. - Collaborates on student testing and assessments. - Supports RACE and DARE application processes. - Works with the SENCo on language exemption cases. - Manages referrals for 1:1 counselling. - Assists with referrals to external agencies and services.

9.2 A Note on the Role of the Student/Young Person

In line with the *School Self-Evaluation Guidelines* (DE Inspectorate 2022) and the Lundy model of participation outlined therein, our school values students as active partners in their learning and school life. We provide safe, meaningful opportunities for students to express their views, have them heard, and see them influence decisions. Support is student-centred, empowering learners to take responsibility for their behaviour and progress, and to contribute to a positive, respectful school culture. Through the Student Council, wellbeing programmes, and inclusive classroom practices, students develop self-awareness, help-seeking skills, and a sense of belonging, all of which are key to sustaining a whole-school approach to inclusion.

9.3 Collaboration for Inclusive Practice

As outlined in Table 3 above, our school adopts a whole-school, collaborative approach to inclusive education in line with the principles of the Special Education Teaching Model. Inclusive practice is a shared responsibility across staff, students, and families. By fostering strong collaboration within and between teams, we ensure that the NEPS Continuum of Support is implemented effectively enabling early identification, coordinated planning, and responsive interventions. Regular communication, joint decision-making, and shared professional learning underpin an integrated, unified, student-centred approach, illustrated in Figure 3, that adapts to the evolving needs of all learners.

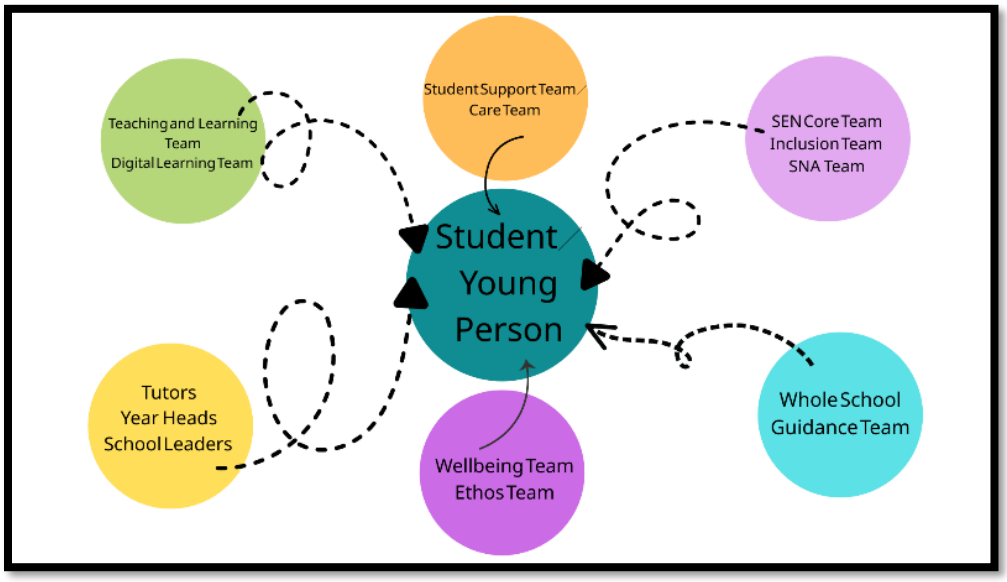


Figure 3. Student-centred approach to inclusive provision in our school

10. Planning and Organising Support

10.1 Key Concepts:

Our school applies the Continuum of Support (CoS) framework (Figure 4), which is a multi-tiered system of support that applies a flexible approach that helps identify students' strengths and needs, guide planning, and monitor the effectiveness of strategies and supports.

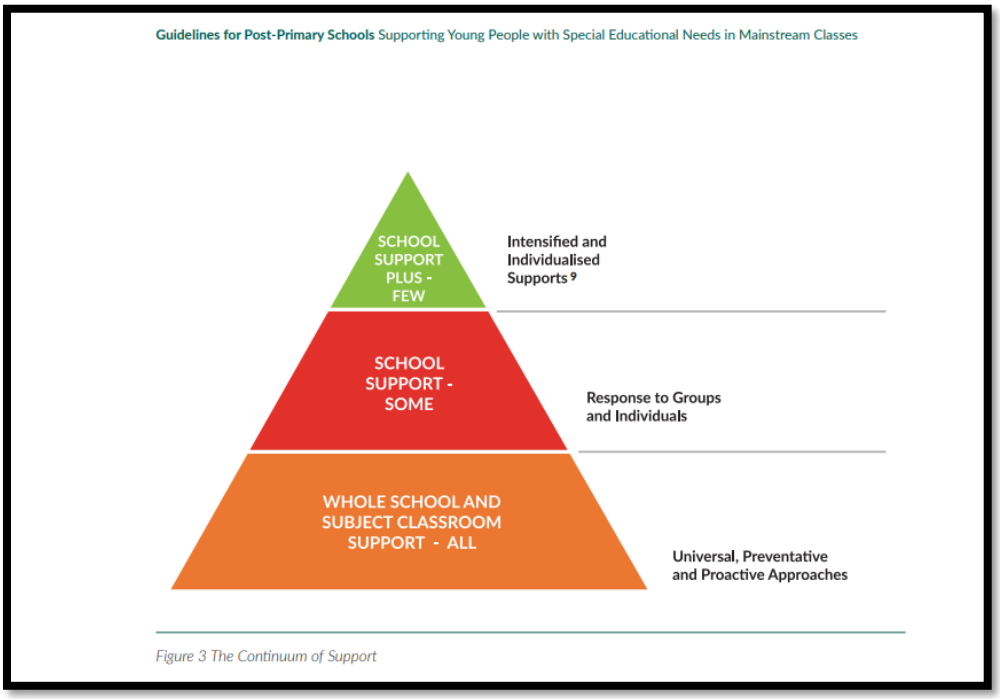


Figure 4. NEPS Continuum of Support Model (NEPS 2010)



Developed in line with evidence-informed effective practice and Department of Education and Youth policy, the CoS recognises that needs vary in intensity and duration, and ensures that support is proportionate, timely, and responsive. It supports assessment, planning, and review, and helps prioritise resources for those with the greatest need. In our school we use this framework to guide a consistent, student-centred approach to supporting a wide range of needs, including academic, literacy, numeracy, communication, social interaction, emotional regulation, executive functioning and sensory and physical development. Table 4 summarises key practices informing curricular access and timetabling approaches to optimise inclusive provision in our school.

Table 4. Curricular access and timetabling considerations in our school

Area	Key Practices
Curriculum	- We promote access to a broad, balanced, and appropriate curriculum for all students. - Programmes offered include JCL1LP, JCL2LP, JCSP, Junior Cycle, TY, LCVP, LCA and Leaving Cert Established tailored to individual needs. - Curriculum planning is guided by relevant teaching guidelines to support inclusive, effective learning.
Timetabling	- Timetables are student-centred and needs-based, prioritising those with the greatest needs. - A dedicated core SET team ensures stability and high-quality support. - SEN teachers focus on additional supports, including team teaching and joint planning. - Withdrawal for targeted interventions is evidence-informed and regularly reviewed. - Timetables remain flexible to support continuity of provision, especially into Senior Cycle. - Irish exemptions are not used as a condition for accessing special education supports.

11. Types of Support

Table 5 outlines the main types of support that can be delivered in our school. SET allocations interact with other additional allocations in our school to enhance an overall coherent approach to inclusive provision. For this reason, Table 5 also includes details on special class provision. Although a distinct resource allocation model is employed to determine this provision, it offers intensive support specifically designed to meet the needs of students enrolled in the class. Additionally, special class provision provides opportunities for students from the mainstream to access learning and sensory spaces as required. This in called reverse inclusion/integration (DEY Inspectorate, 2025). In this case, careful planning between subject teachers and special class teachers, reflected in Student Support Plans, supports students' learning, sensory regulation, and non-academic skill development.

Table 5. Models of support in our school

Type of Support	What is it?	Purpose
One-to-One (Individual)	Direct teaching or support provided to a single student by a SET, usually outside the mainstream classroom or in the special class.	For students with significant or complex needs requiring highly individualised instruction.
Small Group Support	Teaching or support delivered to a small group (typically 2–6) with similar learning needs outside of the main classroom or in the special class.	Targets specific skills (e.g., literacy, numeracy, social skills) while encouraging peer interaction.
In-Class Support	The SET or Special Class teacher works within the mainstream classroom, supporting students during regular lessons or inclusion of students from the special class in regular lessons.	Helps students access the curriculum with tailored support like differentiation or scaffolding.
Team Teaching / Co-Teaching*	The SET and class/subject teacher jointly plan and deliver lessons to the whole class.	Promotes inclusive practice by using two teachers' expertise; may involve parallel or station teaching.
Special Class Provision	Special class teachers, SETs, subject teachers and SNAs support students in our special class who will engage with learning for some or all their school day in a small group environment.	For students with significant or complex needs requiring highly individualised instruction and who are enrolled in the special class, or who have a need which can be met by flexible and planned reverse inclusion.
SNA Support	SNAs work closely with subject teachers, SETs and special class teachers to support primary and secondary care needs of students in	Students with primary and secondary care needs receive additional support either in regular classes, individual or small-group support or in the special

Type of Support	What is it?	Purpose
	regular lessons, individual and small-group support or in the special class.	class. SNA allocations are connected to specific students in the school.

*****There are six recognised models of co-teaching. These include: One Teach, One Assist; One Teach, One Observe; Station Teaching; Parallel Teaching; Alternative Teaching; and Team Teaching. In the Irish post-primary context, the terms *co-teaching* and *team teaching* are often used interchangeably, though interpretations and implementation may vary between schools. **Regardless of the model, the focus is on collaborative, inclusive teaching that supports all learners.**

11.1 Deployment of SET Allocations: Key Points from the SET Guidelines

- The deployment of SET hours should be flexible and responsive to students' needs, as identified through the Continuum of Support framework.
- Supports should be regularly reviewed and adjusted based on student progress.
- The goal is to maximise inclusion, participation, and achievement for all students with special educational needs.

12. Identifying and Responding to Needs

Figure 5 outlines the key actions and processes our school follows to effectively and efficiently deploy special education teaching support across the Continuum of Support.



Figure 5. Key actions in special education teaching support and provision

The three levels of the Continuum of Support are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6. Three levels of the Continuum of Support (NEPS 2010)

Level of Support	What is it?
Support for All (Whole School & Subject Classroom Support)	Universal, preventative, and proactive strategies for all students. Led by subject teachers who identify and respond to early concerns. Focuses on inclusive teaching, wellbeing, and collaboration.
Support for Some	Targeted support for small groups or individuals with emerging needs. Delivered by Special Education Teachers (SETs). Focuses on specific skill development and early intervention.
Support for Few	Intensive, individualised support for students with significant and enduring needs. Requires input from SETs and other specialist staff. Involves close collaboration and regular review.

Note: Support for ALL level forms the foundation of the Continuum of Support, supporting all students to get what they need to thrive before more targeted strategies and approaches are considered. Provision in our school at the Support for All level of the Continuum can be viewed in our school's Provision Map **(Appendix 1).**

Appendix 2 provides a detailed overview of how support is deployed at each level of the Continuum of Support in our school. It outlines the roles, responsibilities, and processes involved in identifying needs, planning interventions, and reviewing progress. It also explains how we use the problem-solving process and SMART target setting to ensure that support is timely, evidence-informed, and student-centred. This structured approach ensures consistency and collaboration across all levels of support.

13. Student Support File and Student Support Plan

Students who receive additional support at the *Support for Some* or *Support for Few* levels of the Continuum of Support will have an individualised Student Support Plan (SSP). Each SSP is stored within the student's **Student Support File**, an electronic record that serves as a log of actions and a repository for relevant documents, including assessments, reports, and evidence of progress.

When a concern is raised about a student (who is not already on the SEN register) and supplementary measures are introduced at the *Support for All* level, a Student Support File is also opened. However, not all students who have a file opened at this stage will require a full SSP, provided their needs can be met within *Support for All*. Table 7 summarises the information typically contained in these records.

The SSP outlines the student's strengths and needs, the agreed priority learning targets, the resources and strategies to be employed, and the arrangements for monitoring and review. It is developed collaboratively with input from teachers, parents, and the student.

Table 7. Student Support File and Student Support Plan Overview

	What is it?	**Who is it for?**
Student Support File (SSF)	A comprehensive record that tracks a student's journey through the Continuum of Support. A File is opened when a concern is raised about a particular student who has not been in receipt of additional support previously. It can include key information about the student's strengths, interests, needs,	All students receiving additional support at any level

	What is it?	Who is it for?
	and supports. The SSF documents interventions, accommodations, reviews, and communication with parents and professionals. It also contains the Student Passport, attendance, professional reports, and consultation records.	of the Continuum of Support.
Student Support Plan (SSP)	An individualised plan developed for students at the Support for Some and Support for Few levels. It outlines the profile of students' strengths, needs and priority learning needs, sets SMART targets, and details evidence-informed strategies and approaches and resources and personnel to support the student in achieving the targets set. It also outlines timelines for review and monitoring arrangements. The plan is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective.	Students at Support for Some* and Support for Few

*In some cases, if students are accessing group support, a group plan (including targets for the group) may be developed around a specific strategy, programme or intervention, informed by the student's individual profile of identified needs for students at the Support for Some level. If a group plan is developed it needs to be referenced in the individual student support plan.

13.1 Reflective Practice to Support Inclusive Education

At our school, reflective practice is central to how we plan and deliver support across the Continuum of Support. Using tools such as the *Statements of Effective Practice* (Wellbeing and SSE Guidelines) and the *Indicators of Effective Practice* (SET Guidelines) and through our engagement in the Realising Inclusive Special Education (RISE) Provision Mapping (RISE) process, we regularly assess our current approaches, identify strengths and gaps, and plan improvements. These frameworks help us take a proactive, evidence-informed approach to inclusion, ensuring that supports are timely, targeted, and aligned with student needs.

14 Supporting Transitions

Supporting transitions is essential to ensuring continuity of learning and wellbeing for students with special educational needs/additional educational needs as they move between educational settings and within the school. In our school we strive to support this in several ways, outlined in Table 8.

Table 8. Key actions supporting transition

Focus Area	Key Actions
Early Planning	Begin transition planning early through collaboration with feeder schools and NCSE SENOs.
Information Sharing	Share Student Support Files, Education Passports, and relevant records to inform planning.
Student & Family Engagement	Involve students, parents/guardians, and external professionals to ensure person-centred planning.
Coordination	SETs, special class coordinators, guidance counsellors and school leaders coordinate supports and liaise with primary schools and school-leaver services as required.
Continuity of Support	Maintain consistent supports across key transitions, including Junior to Senior Cycle.
Phased Transitions	Use gradual, flexible and carefully planned approaches for students with complex needs, involving multidisciplinary input.
Monitoring & Review	Regularly review transition plans to ensure they remain effective and responsive to student needs.

15. Psychometric and Standardised Assessments

At Bunclody Community College, psychometric and standardised assessments are used to support students' educational, emotional, and vocational development. These assessments include ability, attainment, and diagnostic tests, administered by appropriately qualified staff in line with Circular 0058/2019. Testing is available across all year groups and is guided by informed consent by parents and informed assent by students, clear communication, and constructive feedback. Data are shared responsibly and stored securely, with staff receiving ongoing training and supervision. These practices help ensure that assessments are used effectively to inform teaching, support planning, and guide students in their future choices.

Further details on the specific tests used and their administration can be found in Appendix 3.

16. English as an Additional Language (EAL) Provision & Inclusive Support for International Students

Bunclody Community College is dedicated to supporting students who use English as an Additional Language (EAL), ensuring they can fully engage with school life and learning. EAL provision is embedded within our inclusive, whole-school approach, promoting diversity, equity, and student participation. Support is tailored to each student's language proficiency and educational background, with collaboration between EAL teachers, mainstream staff, students, and families at the heart of our approach.

Assessment and support strategies are designed to be holistic and responsive, using recognised frameworks such as the NCCA EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Students receive targeted instruction, curriculum-linked language support, and access to bilingual resources. EAL provision is regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with best practice and evolving student needs.

Bunclody Community College chose to include EAL provision in our Whole School Inclusion Policy because students learning English may also present with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) that require coordinated and inclusive support. Although the deployment of EAL teaching hours is recorded separately by the principal and distinct from the SET (Special Education Teaching) allocation, there is significant overlap in the processes used to identify needs and plan interventions. As with provision for all students with identified needs and diagnosed disabilities, collaboration between the EAL and SET teams (including special class coordinators and teachers) is essential to foster an integrated approach that meets the needs of all learners effectively.

Further details on roles, assessment tools, and support strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

17. Irish Exemptions

Some students may be eligible for an exemption from studying Irish under specific criteria set out by the Department of Education and Youth, as outlined in Circular 0055/2022. These criteria include factors such as a student's age and educational background, or the presence of certain special or additional educational needs supported by gathered evidence. In our school we follow a clear and robust application process that involves consultation with parents/guardians and relevant staff. All decisions are made in line with the circular and are fully documented. Further details on the exemption process can be found in **Appendix 5.**

18. School Improvement Planning

For DEIS Schools

At Bunclody Community College we integrate the *School Self-Evaluation* (SSE) process (Figure 6) and the *Looking at Our School* (LAOS) framework with the provision mapping (RISE) process and toolkit to drive inclusive school improvement. Provision mapping (RISE) enables us to systematically review and enhance the supports available to all students, with a particular focus on those at risk of educational disadvantage and students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Through this process, we identify gaps, set evidence-based targets, and ensure that interventions are mapped directly onto our DEIS plan. The provision mapping (RISE) toolkit helps us track the impact of supports and refine our approaches, ensuring that our planning is inclusive, data-driven, and responsive to the needs of our school community.

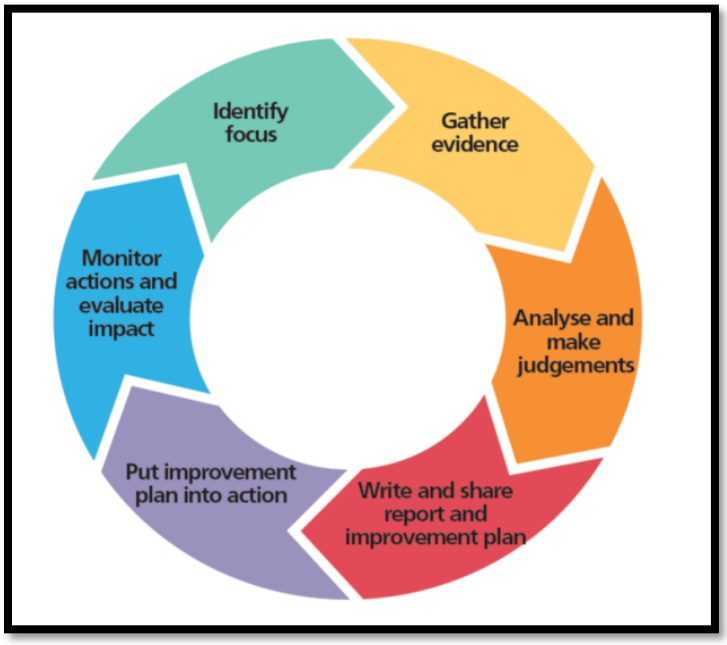


Figure 6. School Self-Evaluation Process (DE Inspectorate 2022)

In our school we are currently in Year 3 of the third cycle of School Self Evaluation planning (2023-2026).

Targets from Provision Mapping (RISE) Process

Bunclody Community College – the alignment with DEIS.

See Appendix 7.

19. Conclusion

This Whole School Inclusion Policy reflects our commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and equitable learning environment for every member of our school community. We recognise that inclusion is an ongoing journey, and as such, this policy is a living document. It will evolve in response to new research, legislative changes, and the emerging needs of our students, staff, and families. We are dedicated to regularly reviewing and updating our practices to ensure they remain effective, relevant, and aligned with our core values. Through collaboration, reflection, and continuous improvement, we strive to ensure that every student feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Signed: _____ Date: 11/09/2026

(Chairperson of the board of management)

Ms. Barbara Anne Murphy

Signed: _____ Date: 11.09.2026

Dr. James Trimble (Principal)

Appendix 1: Provision Map

Provision Map A/Y 24/25 **Bunclody Community College**

Area of Need[1]	Whole-School Support for All	School Support for Some	School Support for Few
Social and Emotional Learning	Well-being committee Well-being week Cycle against suicide initiative After school fitness classes for staff and students Range of speakers organised throughout the year PE offered to all classes Meitheal group to offer peer support Primary Transition Programme Student Passports School Induction Anti-bullying policy Well-being programme Meditation time Class tutoring and journal monitoring Switch to continual assessment model for 6th years to reduce exam stress SPHE Curriculum Pastoral Care Teacher observations Student referral forms Student Support Team Guidance Counselling Record systems Mental Health Awareness Week Activities Positive Quotes/students work/ photographs/poster displays. Critical Incident Response Team Weekly assembly meetings	Pastoral Care team Guidance referral system SEN/ AEN department referral Lunchtime clubs/ Special Interest Clubs – Social games group Internal guidance teacher counselling Diagnostic informal assessment Student Support Plans (SSPs) or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) Explicit Social Skills Training Retracking Programme Restorative practice Why Try Friends for Life Small group withdrawal Mindfulness Yoga EAL interviews Teacher and SNA observations Reports from NEPS or CAMHS Autism class is opened at lunchtimes for reverse inclusion/ drop-in Nurture Group Art Club Trad Band	Individualised Student Support Plans JC L2LPs/ L1LPs Input from NEPS / NCSE/ CAMHS Individual guidance counselling Student Support Plans (SSPs) or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) Reduced subject load Behaviour for Learning (BfL) teacher Incident Response Team Student Support Team Nurture Group

	Parental engagement Student voice Cooperative group work Disability Awareness Week School of Sanctuary Rainbow Badge Green Schools Financial Wellbeing	Maths Club Chess Club	
Social and Communication Skills	SPHE curriculum Teacher modelling Wide range of after school sports offered (soccer, camogie etc.) Range of non-competitive school sports offered (badminton, table tennis) Well-being committee Public speaking – debating Emphasis of oral communication in new JC curriculum School play Field trips including foreign trip Friends for Life Programme Social Outings Cooperative group work Differentiated questioning Scaffolding/ recasting/ imitation and expansion Gaisce award (TY, 5th, 6th) Student awards (5th and 6th) Meitheal Group School Choir Sports teams Student Council initiatives Music Generation Whole staff CPD No Hands strategy Active student responding in class- response boards Performance opportunities	SEN department referral Lunch clubs/ Special Interest Clubs – Social games group Board games in autism class Interactive White Board for social games Explicit teaching of oral communication skills with JC students in SEN/ AEN classes LCA curriculum for 5th and 6th Music Generation workshops Art Therapy Social Skills Groups Social Stories Peer/ buddy mentoring Role play Speech, language and communication interventions Student Support Plans (SSPs) or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)	Strengths based & solution oriented approach to target setting Individualised school support plans JC L2LPs/ L1LPs Input from NEPS / NCSE/ Speech and Language Therapist Individual in-school counselling Student Support Plans Behaviour Support Plans Student interviews Points system on VSWare

Self-management and/ or organisational skills	Colour coded timetables Subject Zip Folders Class tutor system Regular outside speakers to help with organisational skills Computer lab open at lunchtime Meitheal group for support to other year groups 2-day induction 3-week transition timetable Incoming 1st year primary school visits Visual Supports/ Visual Schedules Classroom routines Graphic organisers, mind maps Journals - timetable, school codes of behaviour, Lockers- designated areas. Homework given at the beginning of class Homework, learning intentions and keywords written on white board. MS Teams/ online calendars with key deadlines Handouts Homework policy Co- Teaching Learning to learn strategies- explicit teaching of metacognitive skills- NBSS resources and SESS Resource on metacognition in the classroom	SEN department referral Highlighted group of 1st years who need extra support in organisation – staff survey leading to peer/tutor support LCA curriculum for 5th and 6th Colour coded timetables, books, checklists and study plans. Social stories Movement breaks Timers Self-monitoring checklists Alert programme SNA locker support Locker quiet zone Student Support Plans Assistive technology Check and Connect	JC L2LPs/ L1LPs Self-monitoring checklists Student Support Plans Personal Pupil Plans for those with SNA access. SNA supports to encourage independence. SNA monitor students organisation skills Explicit teaching of organisational skills in autism class. Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS) Assessment
Study Skills	Homework club Study skills classes offered to exam years Pre-mock in preparation for Mocks and State exams	Study skills focus in SEN/ AEN classes prior to school exams Colour coded study plans	Individual study skills development Student Support Plans

	Switch to continual assessment model for 6th years to reduce exam stress Study skills seminars Afterschool study Mind mapping & Graphic organisers Highlighting and summarising strategies Learning to learn strategies- explicit teaching of metacognitive skills- NBSS resources NCSE Study Skills Tips Google Classroom or MS Teams/ online calendars with key deadlines	Subject revision checklist development Differentiated handouts Visual representing (NBSS resources) Summarising techniques (NBSS resources) Checklist creations Skim and scan (NBSS resources) Comprehension strategies (NBSS resources) Explicit teaching of time management and scheduling strategies Student Support Plans Technology/Apps EAL – Saturday morning classes Use of Magenta Principles study approaches	Explicit teaching of study skills Technology/ Apps
Life Skills	Computer lab open at lunchtime LCA LCVP curriculum option for 5th and 6th year students Organisation of School trips/events Work experience C.V. creation Wellbeing programme Gaisce awards SPHE Curriculum Home Economics	SEN department referral LCA curriculum for 5th and 6th year Mindfulness Transition Support Plans Typing skills Self-care skills Conflict resolution skills Social Stories Student Support Plans	Student Support Plans Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Occupational Therapist JC L2LPs/ L1LPs SNA support for some students with complex needs Tailored/ supported work experience CAMHS and NEPS support/ intervention Transition Support Plans

Behaviour	Merit system / Reward slip/Positive Behaviour Strategy Student support team Staff monitoring lunch/break times Code of Behaviour- Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support Use of Journals and incident sheets Concern sheets Detention Awards Merit systems, Rewards, Praise for positive behaviour Parent/guardian communication Home visits HSCL Co- Teaching	SEN department referral Report sheets Seating plans encouraged throughout school Class behaviour plans Check and Connect (One Good Adult) Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) SNA support and monitoring (PPPs, SNA record sheets) Nurture Group	Individualised school support plans Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Education Welfare Officer Year head liaison, go to person for students needing time out of class. Timetable modification Behaviour target setting and review CAMHS instructed initiatives NCSE (NBSS) tailored behavioural and academic programmes Behaviour for Learning (BfL) teacher Regular check in - check out throughout the day Behaviour Support Plans Individualised support for self-regulation Sensory room Nurture Group
Language	Multi-sensory approach to subject teaching Key word displays in classrooms Vocabulary Enrichment Programme	SEN department referral Diagnostic language assessment EAL Liaison teacher	SSPs NEPS 'Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers'

	Teaching the language of subject/s, Word banks Class discussions and debating Orally presenting work Role play Mock interview and oral preparations scaffolding information in classes and using visuals to support where and when possible. Think/Pair/Share. Wait time JC CBA Co-teaching ICT Visual Supports	Withdrawal from third language / Irish (if exempt) class for extra support with English Keys words journal Mind maps, graphic organisers oral descriptive and expressive skills development Sight word building EAL support/ after school classes (encourage use of first language) Vocabulary Enrichment Programme NEPS Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers'	MS Accessibility Tools
Literacy	Literacy screening & assessment Literacy committee Textbook reading age review Book in a bag Library committee / membership / classes have access to it Multi-sensory approach to subject teaching Sharing of learning intentions / keywords Public speaking – debating offered Integration of technology into subject teaching Notes/ content available on OneNote/Teams Standardised Intake tests Primary school liaison Follow up CAT5 test Literacy plan Assessment for Learning (AFL)	SEN/ AEN department referral Diagnostic Literacy Assessment NEPS Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers' Interactive White Board Small group withdrawal Individual classes timetabled In-class teacher support/ co-teaching RACE accommodations for state exams Classroom content notes provided LCA curriculum for 5th and 6th	Student Support Plans Individual classes timetabled RACE accommodations for State Exams SNIP/ Precision Teaching NEPS 'Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers' Teams/OneNote & accessibility tools TTRS typing programme

	Assessment as Learning Vocabulary Enrichment Programme, Writing frames Keywords journal banks Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Key exam terms in journal Library access to books for students reading ages Dictionaries Use of ICT Readability tests of teacher generated handouts to ensure accessibility for struggling readers (Flesch Kincaid or SMOG)		
Numeracy	Staff training in highlighting Numeracy across the curriculum Multi-sensory approach to subject teaching Sharing of learning intentions Integration of technology into subject teaching Notes/ content available on MS Teams Intake screening Puzzle of the week Maths week Explicit teaching of maths vocabulary Key word banking Numeracy links identified in all subject areas AFL Assessment as Learning Use of ICT Numeracy display board in corridor/ 'Numeracy corridor' Maths Week Science Week	SEN department referral Small group withdrawal Individual classes timetabled In-class teacher support Interactive White Board Modified Notes handed out LCA curriculum for 5th and 6th Pre-teaching class topics Social maths/ functional maths SSPs Access to real life situations/ social maths Paired maths	Student Support Plans Individual classes timetabled Tailored maths initiatives Organisational skills Sequential development Scaffolding Pre-teaching class topics Social maths/ functional maths

	Chess Club Young Scientists		
Physical and/ or Sensory	Annual accessibility audit of sensory and physical environment Sensory audit checklist for schools Primary school liaison prior to enrolment Building is fully accessible with lifts and ramps Corridors are wide Adequate natural light in building Green space around building Building is clean and safe Range of modern PE equipment Teachers made aware of students' difficulties, Seating plans Quiet time Use of music, Multi-sensory teaching approaches encouraged Sensory room Classroom accommodations- seating arrangements, enlarged font, multi-sensory approaches	Additional toilet and changing facilities with space for wheelchairs Computer typing skills program used for those with laptops Base classrooms allocated for students with movement needs Sensory room Sensory breaks Movement breaks Stress balls Fidgets Weighted blanket Lift Access Yoga Enlarged font/ coloured paper Student Support Plans Art Club	SSPs SNA allocated to student with mobility needs Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Occupational Therapist / HSE Student with visual impairment situated in base class with access to computer and digital magnifier Teachers using auditory system for students with hearing impairment Additional teacher in PE classes for students with mobility impairment Height adjustable desks

			Sensory and/ or movement breaks Between class transition support- permission to leave class early Student Support Plans
Exceptional Ability (including dual/ multiple exceptionality)	Schoolwide Approach to provision for exceptionally able students- School Policy Early identification- schoolwide identification process involving checklists for parents/ teachers/ students (NCCA Exceptionally Able Guidelines) & IQ tests & Teacher observation Teacher awareness of distinct needs of exceptional/ gifted students Support for academic needs include: Differentiation- extension/compacting, enrichment, acceleration Metacognition- thinking skills development, (see SESS resource on metacognition for ideas and strategies)	Identification/Assessment SSP/ individualised learning programme Liaison with Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland www.dcu.ie/ctyi. Student enrolment in CTYI academic programmes- summer residential programmes, Saturday courses (DCU, UCC, UL, AIT, WIT, Letterkenny IT, GMIT) and correspondence courses.	Individualised planning Access to advanced materials Faster pace of instruction Opportunities to reason and think critically Encouragement of free expression of ideas and disagreements Direct teaching of essential study skills and research strategies
Medical	Identified staff to all to administer general first aid and monitor for signs of illness.	Identified staff administer medication as directed by GP. Administering of inhalers as directed by GP.	SNA support

[1] Area of need will include students who are identified as having additional needs at school level (i.e. without a psychological report) and those who have an identified disability with an accompanying professional report, such as ASD, ADHD, Dyspraxia etc.

Appendix 2: Continuum of Support Toolkit for Teachers

Subject Classroom Support

Support for ALL

This level of support is the **foundation of the Continuum of Support** and applies to **all students** in mainstream classrooms. It focuses on **inclusive, high-quality teaching and learning** practices that benefit every learner, including those with special educational needs (SEN).

Key Features:

- **Responsibility of the Subject Teacher**: Subject teachers are central to this level of support. They are responsible for creating inclusive learning environments and adapting teaching strategies to meet diverse needs.
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**: Teaching is guided by UDL principles, which promote flexible approaches to instruction, assessment, and engagement to support all learners.
- **Differentiation**: Teachers differentiate content, process, product, and learning environment to ensure accessibility and challenge for all students.
- **Collaborative Practice**: Subject teachers work closely with the special education team, year heads, and student support teams to identify and respond to emerging needs.
- **Monitoring and Review**: Teachers observe and monitor student progress, using formative assessment and feedback to inform teaching and identify students who may need additional support.
- **Early Intervention**: If concerns arise, teachers initiate the **Problem-Solving Process**, gathering information and consulting with colleagues to determine appropriate next steps.
- **Documentation**: Notes and observations may be recorded to support future planning and referral to School Support–Some if needed.

This level is about **proactive, inclusive teaching** that ensures all students are supported from the outset.

School Support – Some

This level of support is for students whose needs are **more persistent or complex** than can be addressed through Subject Classroom Support–All. It involves **targeted, additional teaching and learning support**, typically delivered by **special education teachers**.

Key Features:

- **Activated when classroom-level supports are insufficient** and the student is not making expected progress.
- **Collaborative approach** involving:
    - Subject teachers
    - Special education teaching team
    - Parents/guardians
    - The student
    - Possibly the Student Support Team

Process:

1. **Clarify Concerns**:
    - Use the **problem-solving process** to identify and understand the student's strengths and needs.
    - Gather information from assessments, observations, and consultations.
2. **Information Gathering**:

    - Includes formal/informal assessments, teacher observations, student and parent input, and screening tools.
    - May involve **individualised assessments** by special education teachers.
3. **Plan Interventions**:
    - Based on identified **priority learning needs**.
    - Interventions may include:
        - **Team teaching**
        - **Small group instruction**
        - **Individualised support**
    - Interventions are **evidence-informed** and tailored to the student's strengths and interests.
4. **Develop a Student Support Plan**:
    - Includes **SMART targets** aligned to the student's needs.
    - One special education teacher takes the lead in coordinating the plan.
5. **Monitor and Review**:
    - Regularly assess the student's **response to intervention**.
    - Adjust targets or strategies as needed.
    - Decide whether to:
        - Continue at this level,
        - Step down to Subject Classroom Support–All, or
        - Escalate to **School Support Few** if needs are not met.

School Support – Few

This level of support is for **young people with the greatest level of need**, including those with **significant and enduring special educational needs**, or those who **have not responded** to interventions at the School Support–Some level.

Key Features:

- **Highly individualised and intensive support** tailored to the student's strengths, interests, and needs.
- Focus on **quality educational and skills-based interventions** to promote:
    - Independence
    - Engagement
    - Social-emotional development
    - Personal care
    - Success in learning and school life

Process:

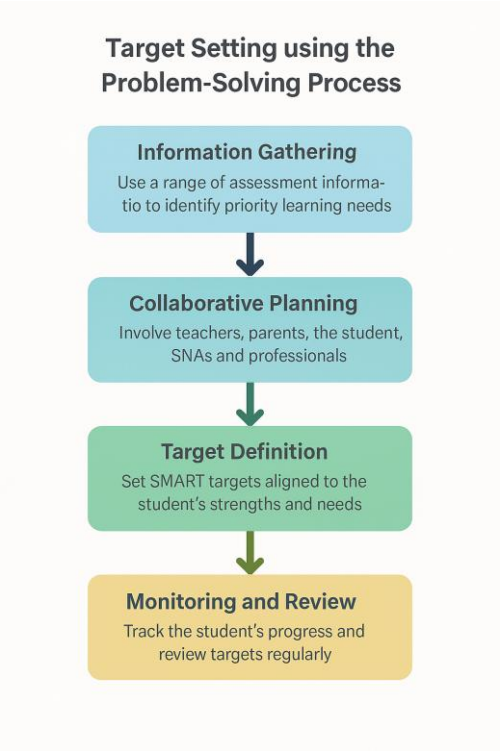
1. **Identification of Needs**:
    - Holistic and collaborative assessment across multiple domains:
        - Literacy and numeracy
        - Social and emotional regulation
        - Executive functioning
        - Communication and language
        - Motor coordination and sensory needs
        - Independence and self-care

- Involves subject teachers, special education teachers, parents/guardians, and the student.
- May include input from **external professionals** (e.g. NEPS, SLTs, OTs, CAMHS).

2. **Student Support Plan**:
   - Developed collaboratively and led by a member of the special education teaching team.
   - Includes **SMART targets** and clearly defined roles for all involved.
   - Records evidence-informed interventions and response to intervention.
   - May include support from SNAs and external agencies.
3. **Flexible Delivery**:
   - Support may be provided through:
     - In-class team teaching
     - Small group or individual support
     - Adapted environments and curriculum
   - Curriculum adaptations are considered to maximise participation.
4. **Monitoring and Review**:
   - Regular review of progress and response to intervention.
   - Targets are adjusted or new ones set based on collaborative evaluation.
   - All updates are recorded in the **Student Support File**.

16 Target Setting Using the Problem-Solving Process

This section outlines how schools can set **effective learning targets** for students with special educational needs using a **structured, collaborative approach**.



Key Principles:

- Targets must be **aligned to the student's priority learning needs**, identified through the **problem-solving process**.
- Targets should be **SMART**:
    - **Specific**
    - **Measurable**
    - **Achievable**
    - **Realistic**
    - **Time-bound**

Steps in the Process:

1. **Information Gathering**:
    - Use a mix of **formal and informal assessments**, including:
        - Screening tests
        - Observations
        - Curriculum-based assessments
        - Interviews
        - Teacher measures
        - Checklists
        - Ratings
        - Standardised tests
        - Consultation with parents, students, and professionals
2. **Collaborative Planning**:
    - Involves:
        - Subject teachers
        - Special education teachers
        - Parents/guardians
        - The student
        - SNAs and external professionals (where appropriate)
3. **Target Definition**:
    - A target is a **clear statement of a skill** the student is expected to develop through intervention.
    - Targets are based on the student's **strengths, interests, and developmental stage**.
4. **Monitoring and Review**:
    - Progress is tracked through the student's **response to intervention**.
    - Targets are **reviewed regularly** and adjusted as needed.
    - All updates are recorded in the **Student Support Plan** and **Student Support File**.

Appendix 3: Psychometric and Standardised Testing

Overarching Principles and Definitions

In (School), the Guidance Counsellors and SEN Coordinators/Teachers collaborate closely and adhere to the guidelines set out in Circular 0058/2019, Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools.

The circular details the types of tests administered in schools, and the most appropriately qualified staff to administer these tests.

Types of Assessment Instruments

Standardised ability tests are designed to be curriculum-independent and measure more enduring and long-term traits than the attainment of learning. They measure potential and what a student is capable of knowing rather than what is known.

Standardised attainment tests (sometimes referred to as achievement tests) measure what a student knows and can be used to assess, for example, students' knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and to determine progress in these areas. On foot of information garnered from various assessment practices including ability and achievement tests, further information may be gathered through the administration of diagnostic tests to provide a more detailed view of a student's learning strengths and needs.

A diagnostic test is designed to provide specific information about a student's strengths and needs in some aspect of learning, for example, word identification skills or understanding of number concepts. In addition, guidance counsellors may use the outcomes of ability and interest tests to guide and to support students' decision-making regarding subject choice and senior- cycle programme options and to support their career development, including planning for higher education, further education and training, apprenticeships, or work.

Testing across the Continuum of Support

Insert a table here of what tests you use and when, per year group.

Access to testing is available to students at all levels of the continuum. Though our referrals system, we endeavour to identify emerging and presenting needs of our students and though additional testing, identify how we can support them further. Informed consent is sought before administering any tests, and the purpose of the test is clearly explained to students and parents/guardians.

Feedback

We ensure that appropriate, accurate and constructive feedback is provided in a timely fashion to students and parents by appropriately qualified personnel, for example, guidance counsellors or suitably qualified special education teachers. Students are provided with the

opportunity to explore their assessment results in the context of the educational options available to them in the school and to inform their future educational and vocational development, career choices and decision making. Students and parents are also made aware of the limitations of the results of standardised tests during this discussion and the importance of other factors including the students' interests, talents and experiences, and information available from other sources.

Sharing of Data

The results of standardised tests are shared with other relevant members of school staff in order to plan effectively to meet the educational, emotional, and behavioural and wellbeing needs of the students. It may also be necessary at times to share relevant information with external parties, such as NEPS, CAMHS and the Inspectorate for example, in accordance with the school's policies on standardised testing and data protection. We are mindful of the limitations of standardised tests when sharing results and the potential for students to acquire a label based on these results. When sharing results, we present them in a way that is clearly understood by the receiving party.

Storage & Retention

We are aware of and comply with our obligations relating to access to stored data under the Freedom of Information Act 1997, the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2013, associated regulations, and the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003, and GDPR (2018).

Training & CPD for Staff

The administration of ability tests in our school is restricted to appropriately qualified personnel who have been specifically trained in specialised psychometric testing, including the selection and administration of such assessment instruments, interpretation of assessment results, scoring and feedback. Typically, in the case of psychometric instruments of general ability (and individually administered achievement tests), our qualified guidance counsellors or teachers of special education with appropriate qualifications administer these specific tests. We continue to engage in on-going training and continuing professional development, where available.

Some assessments, such as standardised group achievement tests, can be administered by subject teachers, under the supervision of a suitably qualified person (Circular 0058/2019). We check in advance with the test publisher on the specific qualifications required for each instrument used. In the case where a test is being administer by a teacher who is not yet suitably qualified, we offer peer-to-peer supervision at school level and at cross-college level through our WWETB Guidance Counsellors Community of Practice. We are cognisant that the results of these tests may have implications for applications for Irish Exemptions, RACE and DARE, and so ensure that robust supervision processes are in place.

In addition, SENCOs/SETs, and Guidance Counsellors are encouraged by our Senior Leadership team to engage in WWETB's Communities of Practice (each have their own

group), attend all relevant CPD pertaining to testing, keep up to date with circulars and registers which list appropriate testing instruments and seek membership of any professional associations.

Appendix 4: EAL Provision

EAL Provision
(School) is committed to supporting students who use English as an Additional Language (EAL) in achieving their full potential. EAL provision is embedded within our inclusive whole-school framework and reflects the values of diversity, equity, and student voice.

Key Principles
- Inclusivity: Affirming linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity within the school community.
- Access to Curriculum: Ensuring EAL students can access the full curriculum alongside their peers.
- Individualised Support: Providing tailored learning experiences based on each student's language proficiency and educational background.
- Collaboration: Promoting strong partnerships between EAL support teachers, mainstream teachers, parents, and students.
- Achievement and Empowerment: Supporting language development while recognising and celebrating the talents EAL students bring to (School).

Roles and Responsibilities
- EAL Coordinator: Identifies EAL students, assesses proficiency, develops strategies, supports staff, and monitors progress.
- EAL Support Teachers: Deliver targeted language programmes, assess needs, and track progress.
- Mainstream Teachers: Adapt teaching strategies and collaborate to ensure curriculum access.
- School Leaders: Integrate EAL provision into strategic planning and policy review.
- Student Voice: EAL students are encouraged to participate in school life and provide feedback on their learning experiences.
- Parents: Actively engaged through communication, workshops, and collaborative planning.

Assessment	***Support Strategies***	***Resources***
- Initial and Ongoing Assessment: Using tools such as the NCCA EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit and the Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework. - Holistic Approach: Building a comprehensive learner profile, avoiding reliance on formal standardised tests.	- Targeted EAL classes - Small group and individualised instruction - Curriculum-linked language support - Use of bilingual	- Guidance and toolkits from NCCA, Oide, and PDST - Relevant circulars available via Circulars.gov.ie

	dictionaries in state examinations	

EAL provision is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains responsive to student needs and aligned with best practice.

Appendix 5: Irish Exemptions

Irish Exemptions
WWETB Procedure for Applications for exemption from the study of Irish (CL 0055/2022)

1. Parent/Guardian or student who has reached 18 years completes application form; May use letter 1a. with 2b. for students newly arrived from abroad and once application is received proceed to step 4. The important piece here is that they are made aware of the consequences for future study.
2. Application is acknowledged enclosing:
a. Letter of acknowledgement
b. Information on implications
c. Copy of CL 55/2022

3. Assessment meeting(s) is held with parents/guardians/student, where required. It may be possible to engage in this communication by phone/email/letter or a combination of all. Data gathered to support application and a decision is made using checklist for assessment of application;

4. Outcome of application is communicated in writing by:

a. Letter granting exemption
b. Certificate of Exemption

OR

c. Letter refusing Exemption
d. Appeal Form

Appendix 6: Role of the SNA

TBC when new circular is published.

Appendix 7: Targets from Provision Mapping (RISE) Process

Data Analysis and Integration with DEIS

Comparison of the areas that are working well and the areas for improvement from the staff, student, and parent surveys:

Key Strengths and Demonstrated Impact

Teaching, Learning and Attainment

Teaching and learning are a secure, high-impact strength. Triangulated evidence from attainment data, survey feedback and internal evaluation confirms:

- Sustained improvement in literacy outcomes, particularly reading comprehension.
- Strong participation and progression in Higher Level Mathematics.
- Positive Senior Cycle attainment and post-school progression.

Classroom practice is consistently described by students, parents and staff as engaging, relational and inclusive. Evaluated outcomes show that these practices translate into measurable gains rather than isolated good practice. Importantly, leadership has demonstrated the capacity not only to implement initiatives, but to review them critically and adjust where impact varies between cohorts.

Inclusion, Wellbeing and Student Belonging

Inclusion and wellbeing represent one of the school's most embedded strengths. All stakeholder groups describe a calm, respectful and supportive environment grounded in consistency and restorative practice. SEN, wellbeing and student support systems are trusted, accessible and normalised. Retention data and progression outcomes reinforce this qualitative evidence, indicating that students are supported to remain engaged through key pressure points and to transition successfully beyond school.

Leadership, Systems and Improvement Capacity

Leadership processes reflect strong evaluative discipline. DEIS and SSE cycles are well embedded, targets are monitored honestly and actions are refined based on impact rather than compliance. Whole-school systems for teaching, learning, wellbeing, assessment and partnerships are coherent and aligned with national frameworks. A notable strength is the school's willingness to acknowledge where outcomes have not yet improved despite strong implementation, particularly in attendance, demonstrating a mature and learner-focused improvement culture.

2. Priority Improvement Areas and Strategic Rationale

The DEIS Plan 2026–2029 deliberately narrows focus to a small number of priorities where evidence indicates the greatest potential to strengthen student experience and outcomes. These priorities are framed as consolidation and refinement rather than deficit.

Literacy and Numeracy: Protecting Gains and Addressing Variability

While literacy and numeracy outcomes are strong overall, evidence points to emerging risks in writing accuracy, sustained reading engagement and confidence across cohorts. The strategic focus is to embed effective practice consistently, ensuring that established gains are protected and that variability does not undermine progression at Senior Cycle.

Attendance and Punctuality: A Persistent Challenge

Attendance remains the most significant unresolved DEIS issue. Outcomes have deteriorated despite strong systems, indicating that existing approaches are insufficiently targeted. The rationale for continued prioritisation is clear: attendance underpins all other achievement and wellbeing outcomes. The plan therefore redesigns, rather than expands, attendance responses, with sharper cohort-specific expectations and enforceable practices.

Academic Confidence, Workload and Transitions

Evidence highlights pressure points at key transition stages, particularly Third Year and the lead-in to Senior Cycle. While retention rates are strong, student confidence, study skills and motivation show uneven impact. The plan prioritises structured, explicit support at these stages to ensure that retention is matched by preparedness, resilience and attainment.

Visibility of Student Voice and SEN Supports

Stakeholder feedback indicates that while consultation occurs, learners and families are not always confident that feedback leads to visible change, particularly in relation to SEN provision. Strengthening transparency and consistency is therefore a priority, both to improve experience and to build trust in systems already in place.

3. Influence of Stakeholder Voice on Decision-Making

Stakeholder voice was central to both the evaluation of the previous DEIS cycle and the refinement of priorities for 2026–2029.

- **Students** consistently affirmed positive relationships, safety and inclusion, while also describing increased fatigue, workload pressure and difficulty sustaining concentration as academic demands intensify. Many expressed uncertainty about whether their feedback results in action.

- **Parents** strongly endorsed the school's ethos but highlighted concerns regarding workload, assessment pressure, transitions and the need for clearer, more proactive communication, particularly for students with additional needs.
- **Staff** identified strong inclusive practice and high implementation fidelity, alongside concerns about uneven engagement with supports, increasing emotional complexity for students, and the need to make systems for attendance, SEN and student voice more transparent.

There was strong alignment across all groups on both strengths and pressure points. These convergent insights directly shaped the plan: attendance approaches are being redesigned, student voice is moving from consultation to feedback-to-action, and literacy, numeracy and transitions are being refined to respond more sensitively to lived student experience.

4. Monitoring, Accountability and Next Steps

The Board can be assured that improvement actions for 2026–2029 are focused, realistic and measurable. Monitoring will occur through:

- Clear, phased DEIS targets over the three-year cycle.
- Cohort-level tracking of key indicators (attendance, attainment, confidence and engagement).
- Regular student, parent and staff feedback used explicitly as evaluative evidence.
- Formal review points embedded within SSE, DEIS reporting and leadership review cycles, including reporting to the Board.

Where impact is uneven, actions will be adjusted promptly. Where strategies are effective, they will be embedded and sustained. Practices that do not demonstrate impact will be redesigned or discontinued. Evidence will continue to be used as a learning tool rather than a judgement mechanism.

Forward Assurance

This DEIS Plan positions the school strongly for the next phase of improvement. It consolidates proven strengths, addresses persistent challenges with clarity and honesty, and aligns stakeholder experience with measurable outcomes. For governance and oversight, it provides a disciplined, inspection-ready framework that prioritises learner impact, system coherence and continuous improvement through to 2029.