

Additional Educational Needs Policy (Including Admissions Policy for ASD Class)



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís
Edmund Rice Schools Trust

Additional Educational Needs Policy

St David's College

School Address: Artane, Dublin 5

School roll number: 60471F

School Patron: The Edmund Rice Schools Trust

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

1. Introduction

St. David's College is a Catholic voluntary secondary school for boys and girls under the patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). The characteristic spirit of our school is based on the vision and values of the ERST charter. The five characteristics of an Edmund Rice school underpin the operation of St David's secondary school.

1. Nurturing Faith, Christian spirituality and gospel based values
2. Promoting partnership
3. Excellence in teaching and learning
4. Creating a caring school community
5. Inspiring transformational leadership

St. David's College core aims and vision is demonstrated in our mission statement below and we are committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for all our students whilst encouraging our students to strive for excellence in both curricular and co-curricular activities.

St. David's is a Catholic School, promoting Christian values, that provide opportunities for every student to achieve his or her full potential in academic, artistic, social and sporting spheres in an atmosphere that promotes responsibility, tolerance and respect for others.

2. Commitment to providing support to students

St David's College is a fully inclusive school, which welcomes all children with varying needs. Guided by most recent legislation, we welcome enrollment of children with special needs into the school. St David's College is committed to providing students with a high quality experience in education, aiming to develop each student's strengths to the best of their ability. We recognise that each student is different; our programme, where possible, is based on the needs of our students and therefore we try to adapt to their changing needs and challenges.

3. Rationale for creating a Policy on Additional Educational Needs

Our AEN policy aims to outline our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all our students. This commitment is underpinned by the ethos, aims, vision and culture of St David's College and guided by relevant legislation.

- The Education Act 2018
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Circular No 0014/2017 - New Allocation Model
- The Equality Act 2015
- The Equal Status Act 2015
- The Freedom of Information Acts 2014
- The Disability Act 2005

- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000

4. Aims and Objectives

- To uncover and develop the abilities and talents of the individual student.
- Provide a quality education for all students and provide them with a positive learning experience regardless of their ability, using up-to-date methodologies.
- Provide and promote a stable, welcoming, respectful and caring environment for all students within the school.
- Support students on a practical level by helping them to develop study and organisational skills.
- Enable students to perform to the best of their ability in all aspects of school life, including extra curricular activities, and where eligible, obtain assistance during their state exams.
- Provide physical access to students for whom this may be difficult.
- Provide training to enable all teachers to support students' varying needs

5. Categories of Additional Educational Needs

The various categories of special educational needs, are set by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and are as follows

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance
- Mild general learning disability
- Borderline general learning disability
- Moderate general learning disability
- Specific learning disability
- Autism/Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Pupils with special educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome
- Specific speech and language disorder
- Multiple disabilities

The Department of Education (DES) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) introduced the New Allocation Model in 2017. This outlines that the student with the greatest need gets the most intervention regardless of a diagnosis or the existence of professional reports.

The aim of this new model is to remove the need and cost of attaining professional reports. Based on this the following procedures are created in line with this.

6. Admission and Enrolment

Admission and enrolment procedures for AEN students are the same as any other student as outlined in our admissions policy. They must complete the enrolment form available in the school office and return it along with the documentation required and the deposit.

7. Identification of students who will require intervention

- Students are tested in sixth class before entry into the school using CAT 4 tests.
- Information from primary school - passports, telephone calls, meetings, visits in and out
- Information from parents - meetings, telephone calls, parent input form
- Information from Psychological Reports, carried out before being enrolled in secondary school and passed on by parents or by the previous school with the parent's permission.
- Referrals from subject teachers to AEN team
- Referrals from other school teams e.g. Pastoral Care & Year Heads
- Information from teachers - feedback from school work and interaction gathered in various ways, eg: Feedback form, email, conversations.
- Students identified with possible learning difficulties are tested further e.g. WIAT III, MALT, Dash Test, in consultation with parents.
- Students who require further assessment are referred to the appropriate agency, e.g. HSE, NEPS, NCSE.
- Where possible, the school also endeavours to identify students who may be exceptionally gifted and accommodate their needs and interests.

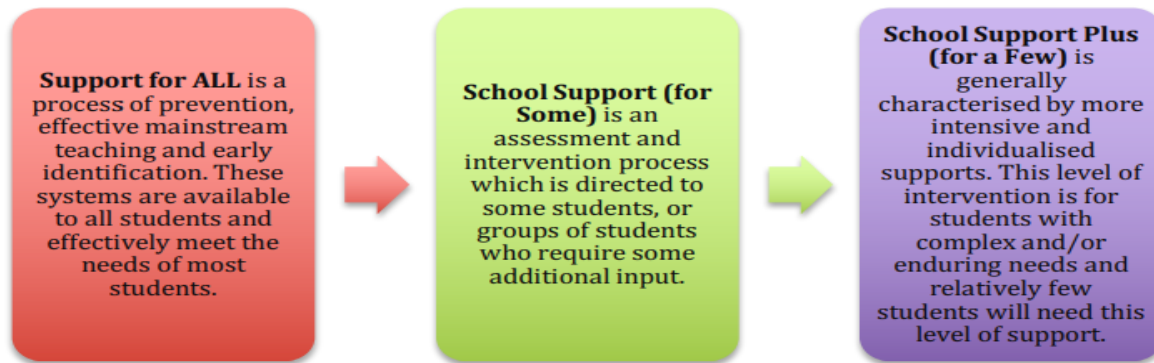
8. Access to Additional Support

The following groups of students have access to Additional Support in our school. We offer support to all our students at both Junior and Senior Cycle.

- Students who have had a psychological assessment which recommends Support.
- Students who have a Specific Learning Difficulty or a General Learning Difficulty.
- Students who have a Physical Disability.
- Students with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- Students who received Learning Support at Primary school and require further intervention.
- Students identified in the screening tests.
- Students identified by their teachers or parents as struggling with school.
- Students who did not attend an Irish primary school may have access to Language support.
- Students with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Students who may be gifted in one or more areas.

The level and nature of support should reflect the specific needs of students as set out in their support plans and be informed by careful monitoring and review of progress.

We endeavour to allocate special education teaching supports according to identified needs, ensuring those with the highest level of need have access to the greatest level of support as laid out in the new AEN model 2017.



9. The subject teacher and the subject department

Section 22(1) of the Education Act 1998 emphasises the teacher in the education and personal development of students in schools. The subject teacher is responsible for educating all students in his/her class, including any student with an additional educational need. The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in his/her classroom, including students with additional educational needs.

It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to ensure that each student is taught in a stimulating and supportive classroom environment where all students feel equal and valued. Subject teachers should ensure that they plan their lessons carefully to address the diverse needs within the classroom.

In line with the Continuum of Support Guidelines, the subject teacher may gather information through formal and informal means, with a view to informing interventions. The subject teacher also has a central role in identifying and responding to students with additional needs, including differentiating the curriculum as appropriate. These responses will be informed and assisted by collaboration with colleagues, parents/guardians and others such as the school's NEPS psychologist, and the local Special Educational Needs Organiser.

The subject teacher, where deemed necessary, will also make specific accommodations for students within the class as a result of concerns there may be about a student's progress, application, communication, behaviour or interaction with peers and the development of a programme of differentiated instruction for that student.

All subject teachers should implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of students with special educational needs. These may include methodologies such as:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Differentiation*
- Interventions to promote social and emotional competence
- Embedding of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching, learning and assessment

*Differentiation can be achieved by:

- Varying the level, structure, mode of instruction and pace of lessons to meet individual needs
- Adapting lessons for students' interests
- Matching tasks and processes to students' abilities and needs
- Adapting and utilising resources, including use of technology
- Aspiring towards suitably challenging learning outcomes and assessing accordingly

Every student should be taught a curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental level. In matching programmes to students' needs, management will look at the range of curriculum options available, including Junior Cycle, Junior Certificate Schools Programme, Junior Cycle Level 2 Learning Programmes and Leaving Certificate Applied Programme.

10. Organisation of Support

There is a mixed ability approach in place in the school. Mixed ability teaching strategies are being utilised. There are a number of ways support is offered to students as outlined below.

- Individual withdrawal
This type of support is limited and undertaken only with a small number of students. Students with Additional Educational Needs are withdrawn from mainstream classes to work with their assigned support teacher. The subject classes from which they are withdrawn are rotated so that pupils do not miss out to any substantial degree on the main curriculum, every effort is made to ensure they are not removed from exam subjects.
- Small group withdrawal
Students are withdrawn from mainstream classes in groups of two to four, excluding option classes.
- Cooperative teaching
Teachers will assist the class teacher with a varied number of students who may need individual help or assistance in the classroom setting.

- **SNA (Special Needs Assistant)**

The school currently has nine SNA's on staff including those allocated for the class for students with Autism. A student is only given access because of primary care needs as laid out in the appendix. An SNA is for a small minority of students whose access is slowly reduced as the student gains more independence as they move through the school system.

- The AEN team meets at the beginning of the school year and disseminates information with class teachers relating to students with Additional Educational Needs. Ongoing communication through email or informal/formal meetings are in operation throughout the school year.
- The AEN Team in conjunction with the subject teachers prepares a Student Support Plan for each identified student. These plans are prepared throughout the year, based on the time of identification of students and are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

11. Meeting the Special Educational needs of the students

- Plan, implement and review approaches to promote academic, social and emotional skills.
- Collaboration with students, teachers, parents/guardians and outside agencies if necessary, will take place to set specific time-bound targets.
- Every effort will be made to match interventions with identified needs.
- Staff are encouraged to apply for training through the NCSE or other accredited course providers as well as third level institutions in order to further assist the students and teachers.
- The school has incorporated active learning methodologies as part of the school self evaluation process (SSE) which encourages more participation from all student's in the class through varying methods.
- St David's College offers all available programmes to students including Level 1 and Level 2 Junior Cycles Programmes.

St David's College will continue to promote effective teaching approaches, including differentiation of content and activities to ensure that all students are engaged purposefully in meaningful learning activities.

12. AEN Team in St David's College

The overall responsibility for the provision of education to all students, including students with special educational needs, lies with the Board of Management and under current legislation the Principal of the school has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met.

St David's College AEN Stakeholders

- Principal
- Deputy Principal

- Additional Educational Needs Coordinator
- Behaviour for Learning Teacher (BFL)
- Mainstream Teachers
- Mainstream Teachers with Resource Hours
- Class Tutors
- Year Heads
- Guidance Counsellor
- Special Educational Needs Assistants (SNA's)
- Students

External Stakeholders

- Board of Management
- Parents
- External Agencies
- External Support Services
- The Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO)

The AEN core team comprises the AEN coordinator, two resource teachers and the Behaviour for Learning Teacher (BFL), with numerous mainstream teachers given hours to provide support for students.

As the number of qualified staff grows and develops, St David's College will establish a fully functional additional educational needs team, which will further provide a structure to enable teachers in specialist roles related to inclusion and AEN to collaborate with one another and with mainstream teachers in an efficient and effective manner for the benefit of the students in their target groups. It is important to note that at present, all members of staff support students with special educational needs.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board of Management, the Principal and the whole school community are committed to providing Additional Needs Education.
- The School Principal allocates AEN hours to teachers. They ensure the school is fully accessible to all students in consultation with the AEN Coordinator.
- In relation to any issue relating to AEN whether from a current or incoming student, the AEN Coordinator is the first contact for parents.
- The AEN team is responsible for all applications for resources for current or incoming students e.g. Assistive Technology, SNA, RACE, DARE etc.
- The AEN team is responsible for identifying students requiring support and the allocation and creation of the timetable for the individual students and/or class..

- The teachers with resource hours together with the AEN Team work together to ensure the implementation and monitoring of individual programmes.
- The BFL teacher is responsible for working students who are exhibiting behavioural or emotional disturbance difficulties.
- Developing an inclusive school policy where all students are given the opportunity to achieve their true potential depends on a whole school approach. Principal, Vice Principal and teachers are all involved in creating positive learning environments and in promoting self-esteem.
- The involvement of parents is vital and is encouraged and facilitated. Parents are contacted and consulted at regular intervals and consent is sought before any assessment takes place.
- A more detailed list of duties in relation to BFL and AEN coordinator duties will be in the Appendix at the end of this policy.

14. Monitoring and Review

- The AEN Coordinator monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of various programmes on an ongoing basis.
- Class and individual tests are used as indicators of success, improvements and difficulties.
- Class teachers and subject teachers monitor the student's progress and integration in mainstream classes.
- Consultation between subject teachers and AEN Team to monitor progress and develop strategies to cope with any possible problems.
- Using baseline information, the AEN team will review and record progress and plan for next steps in students' learning.
- The AEN team will attempt to develop support plans that are clear, useful and easy to interpret and share.
- Outcomes will be reviewed at individual, group, class and whole-school level.

15. Transition Programmes

The school recognizes transitions can be challenging for all students and may pose even greater challenges for children with additional educational needs. These transitions include the transition from primary to post primary school and the transition from second level onwards.

Primary to Post Primary

In managing the transition of students with special educational needs from primary to post-primary school, the school will liaise in a timely manner with the parents and the primary school. This may involve some of the following:

- Meeting between AEN coordinator and a representative of the primary school
- Open evening
- Peer mentoring with TY student
- Request transfer of students information from the primary school
- One to one meetings between designated staff member and parent (and student) where individual needs of the students are discussed
- Sharing of information with subject teachers at the start of the academic year
- Visits to the school prior to enrollment and AEN coordinator visits primary schools before Easter of the 6th class.

Post Primary to After school life

- Meeting with relevant parents to discuss options
- Filling out of HSE referral form for after school support
- Profiling meetings with HSE representatives to go through strengths and needs.
- Attend Open Days in PLC/colleges
- Arrange meetings with Parents re DARE scheme

16. Eligibility for Enrolment to St David's College Autism Class

Oversubscription

In the event that the ASD class is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's annual admission notice.

- The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school.
- An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school.

Criteria for Selection

1. Existing students within the school who have a diagnosis of ASD and for whom a recommendation has been made by a psychologist to enroll in a special class has been received.
2. A sibling of current St David's College Students
3. The applicant attends a local feeder primary school and who have a diagnosis of ASD and for whom a recommendation has been made by a psychologist to enroll in a special class has been received
(in no particular order)

- St David's BNS, Artane
 - Scoil Chiaráin, Donnycarney
 - St Fiachra's, Beaumont
 - St. Brigids GNS, Killester
 - St John of God, Artane
 - Our Lady of Consolation, Donnycarney
4. A sibling of a past pupil of St. David's College
 5. The applicant has a parent who previously attended the school (maximum of 25% of available places)
 6. Any remaining applicants

In the event that there are two or more students tied for a place or places in any of the selection criteria categories above (the number of applicants exceeds the number of remaining places), the following arrangements will apply:

Lottery

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places a lottery will be held to determine to whom the places will be allocated. In the event that twins are applying for places in such a lottery then they will be offered two places unless only one place remains.

16.1 Criteria for enrolment

- Each child in the Autism class must have a definite diagnosis of Autism meeting DSM IV/V or ICD 10 diagnostic criteria
- A recommendation that they may require the support of a special class for students with Autism.
- All applications must be accompanied by a professional assessment recommending the applicant as suitable to have access to a specialist ASD Special Class. This professional assessment report must accompany the application form at the time of application.
- Have completed 6th class in a primary school or equivalent.
- Have supplied an original birth certificate.
- Have proof of residency.

The Parents/Guardians and the applicant attend a meeting with the ASD specialised class teacher, the AEN Coordinator and must submit all reports from the applicant's present educational setting to the meeting.

Students must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour, the terms of this policy and the terms of all school policies.

All applications for enrolment in the Autism class will be considered within the context of the school's enrolment policy and the transition policy.

Fulfilling the enrolment criteria does not necessarily ensure enrolment in the special class if:

- Necessary resources pertaining to the enrolment are not available
- Sufficient classroom space is not available
- The Additional Education Needs Team decide the school is unable to adequately meet the needs of the child
- The applicant is deemed a risk, on health, safety, welfare or security grounds on themselves and/or others.
- Admission of the applicant will make impossible, or have a serious detrimental effect on, the education provision by St David's College as an educational establishment of its services to others.
- Taking these points into account and based on the advice of the SET Team for special classes, the Board of Management reserves the right of admission.

In accordance with the official DES guidelines each ASD special class is limited to six places.

16.2 Procedure for Student Entry into Autism Class

Every student must apply for admission to St David's College in the normal manner as outlined in the school's enrolment policy.

Current Students

A new application form will be completed by the parents/guardians of existing students who have a diagnosis of ASD and for whom a recommendation by a psychologist to enroll in a special class has been received.

Incoming First Year Students

The procedures outlined in the Admissions Policy will be fulfilled and a new special class form is completed by the parents/guardians of incoming first year students who have a diagnosis of ASD and for whom a recommendation by a psychologist to enroll in a special class has been received.

16.3 Offer and acceptance of places in Autism class

Application Form for enrolment in Autism class is filled in, this must not be before the student is beginning sixth class.

- Parents/Guardians will be informed of places available as per our annual admissions notice which will be posted on our website
- Failure to respond to an offer of a place in writing within 14 days of the offer being made will result in the place being forfeited.
- Places will be offered in order of criteria laid out above.
- Anyone applying will be placed on a waiting list and offered a place in order based on the 4 priority categories.
- If the number of students applying exceeds the number of places available a lottery system will be used to ascertain who receives a place.
- Once a place has been accepted it cannot be offered to another student.

St David's College reserves the right to review each student's progress during or after each year to determine whether this is indeed an appropriate school placement for the student.

All students enrolled in the special class will have a Student Support Plan to support student's progress in school. This plan will be reviewed twice annually during a meeting with the special class coordinator and AEN Co-ordinator.

As far as possible students will be encouraged to pursue the Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate or LCA if/when these programmes become available. However, it must be acknowledged that life skills and coping strategies will form a large part of the ASD student's curriculum.

The ASD special class admissions policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and may be amended following consultation with the school community. The Board of Management reserves the right to amend this policy at any time.

Appendix

Role of the AEN Team

- Informing teachers in relation to new students with AEN
- Student Profiles given to teacher's at the beginning of the school year
- Assessment of 1st years in September and May in English and Maths
- 2nd and 3rd year English and Maths testing in May
- Ongoing meetings with parents
- Meetings with outside bodies such as NEPS, Beechpark, Speech and Language therapists AENO, CAMHS etc.
- RACE applications for Junior Certificate students which takes on average 1.5hrs individually to complete
- Completion of testing with students identified as having additional learning needs
- Completion of forms for NEPS, CAMHS, HSE, Assistive technology, DARE, HEAR.
- Assistance with student Impact Statement for DARE programme
- RACE applications for Leaving Certificate students
- Completion of assessments required by various agencies in English, Maths and Ability
- Liaising with SEC and DES in relation to electronic versions of projects for students with motor skill difficulties
- Assisting teacher to complete programmes such as Vocabulary Enrichment Programme
- Completion of letters of reference for students with AEN
- Allocation and Preparation of SNA timetables
- Liaising with the Deputy Principal with reasonable accommodation centres for state exams.
- Meetings with incoming first year parents
- Meetings with 6th class teachers and principals in relation to new students
- Applications for Resource Hours
- Applications for access to Special Needs Assistants
- Assistant to guidance counsellor in relation to CAT 4 and DATS testing
- Liaising with Guidance Counsellor in relation to students experiencing difficulties
- Arranging assessment of students in school by outside agencies, such as NEPS, Beechpark.

ASD Class Specific Duties for AEN Coordinator and Class Coordinator

- Transition programme for incoming 1st year beginning in March of their 6th class
- School Transport Applications
- Numerous meeting with parents, teachers and students before enrolment in September
- Organising timetabling for ASD class
- Constant communication with parents of ASD class

- Organising July Provision for ASD class
- Assistance with after school placement

Role of the Behaviour for Learning Teacher (BFL)

- Work with students who are presenting with behavioural difficulties in order to improve their behaviour and enable them to learn more effectively.
- Liaise with the HSCL (Home School Liaison Officer), Guidance Counsellor, AEN Co ordinator , S.N.A's and Subject Teachers in order to draft Behaviour for Learning Plans.
- Liaise with the Care Team, Inclusion Team and Strategy Team, subject teachers, class teachers and Year Heads to identify students in need of behavioural modification programmes
- Have regular contact with parents of students attending classes with me (Behaviour for Learning classroom) with regard to behaviour, progress etc.
- Work directly with Students for specific periods of time. The students could have a number of one-to-one classes or small group settings for classes.
- Involved in the mentoring programme.
- Work through evidence based programmes with students such as Alert, Getting it together, Friends.

Role of the SNA

The duties of the SNA are assigned by the Principal in accordance with DES Circular 30/14.

The work of the SNA should be supervised by the Principal. Those duties involve **tasks of a non-teaching nature** such as:

- Provide input with regard to primary care needs for the preparation of PPPs
- Assist with care planning
- Provide assistance and information in relation to care needs for preparation of physiological and school reports and files. Also helping with the gathering of data and information relating to the care needs of AEN students
- Assist in analysis of attendance for AEN Students
- Assist transition process in relation to care needs for students from one school to another and from one teacher to another.
- Assisting children to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary, travelling as an escort on school buses may be required.
- Special assistance as necessary for students with particular difficulties e.g. helping physically challenged students with typing or writing.
- Assisting on out-of-school visits, trips to matches, walks and similar activities.
- Assisting the teachers in the supervision of students with special needs during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods.

- Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom (this may be to provide a timeout or a movement break)
- Administering approved medication where appropriate training has been provided.
- General assistance to the subject teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. Special Needs Assistants may not act either as substitute or temporary teacher.
- They may assist AEN students to display work, ensuring uniform and use of journal is maintained
- Participation with school development planning with special reference to AEN students
- Liaising with subject teacher/resource teachers/Principal
- Assist in compiling information for staff on the care needs of AEN students.
- Work with teachers to promote independence of students as they progress through the school