

Assessment Policy

Ballinteer
Community
School





Characteristic Spirit and Ethos:

Ballinteer Community School is a co-educational multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of the Carmelite Order (Le Cheile School's Trust), and the Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB. Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for lifelong learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened on 1st September 1974 as a greenfield site. The values of Dublin & Dun Laoghaire ETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of the Carmelite Order and Brigidine Congregation are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of Ballinteer Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his/ her full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio- economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with Section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, Ballinteer Community School provides all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Ballinteer Community School provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student. In Ballinteer Community School we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young



Supporting Students with Additional Educational Needs Policy

Rationale:

Assessment is today's means of modifying tomorrow's instruction – Carol Ann Tomlinson

- Assessment is an integral part of the teaching process. It is an essential first step, in so far as the teacher's assessment of the state of knowledge and preparedness of the student will guide the teacher's methodology. On-going assessment will continue to inform the teacher of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and will be an ongoing guide to methodology and practice. Reporting of the assessment is a guide to the student and his/her parents as to progress or lack of progress. Reporting of satisfactory progress can be a source of encouragement and a spur to greater efforts.
- Reporting of unsatisfactory progress can also act as a prompt to take necessary remedial action in an appropriate way.
- In addition to being conscious of the intrinsic nature of assessment to the teaching process we also note that *Article 22 (2(b))* of the *Education Act 1998* requires of the Principal and the teachers that they "regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents".

In planning for effective assessment and reporting, teachers in Ballinteer Community School will use the Looking at Our Schools 2022 document to support their classroom practice.

Purpose:

The purpose of this assessment policy is to ensure fair, consistent, and effective assessment practices within our DEIS community school. It outlines the principles, procedures, and responsibilities related to student assessment.

Principles:

1. **Equity and Inclusion:** Assessment practices will be inclusive, recognizing the diverse needs and backgrounds of our students.
2. **Formative and Summative Assessment:** Both formative (ongoing) and summative (end-of-term) assessments will be used to inform teaching and learning.
3. **Transparency:** Students, parents, and teachers will have a clear understanding of assessment criteria, expectations, and feedback processes.
4. **Feedback:** Constructive and formative feedback will be provided to students to support their growth and development. Teachers will do so in the classroom in both oral and written formats as well as following any examination. Feedback will also be provided via the school's formal reporting system.

Assessment for Learning: Assessment will guide instructional decisions and help students progress.



Supporting Students with Additional Educational Needs Policy

Assessment Procedures:

1. **Formative Assessment:**
 - Regular classroom assessments (quizzes, classwork, projects) will provide ongoing feedback.
 - Teachers will use a variety of assessment methods (oral, written, practical) to gauge student understanding.
 - Formative assessment results will inform instructional adjustments.
2. **Summative Assessment:**
 - End-of-term assessments (exams, assignments) will evaluate student achievement.
 - Assessment schedules will be communicated in advance.
 - Results will contribute to overall grades.
3. **Assessment Criteria and Rubrics:**
 - Clear criteria and rubrics will be provided for each assessment task.
 - Rubrics will outline performance levels and expectations.
4. **Feedback:**
 - Timely oral and written feedback will be given to students.
 - Feedback will highlight strengths and areas for improvement.
 - Teachers will encourage self-assessment and reflection.
5. **Assessment Records:**
 - Teachers will maintain accurate records of student assessments.
 - Records will include formative and summative assessments.
 - Data will inform individualized support plans.
6. **Additional Educational Needs (AEN):**
 - Accommodations and supports will be provided for students with AEN during assessments, such as SNA access, assistive technology etc.
 - Student Support File (SSF) will guide assessment adaptations.
7. **Reporting:**
 - This will be done via (but is not limited to) engagement with parents/guardians via phone calls, in-person meetings, VS Ware, the school journal, continuous assessment reports, CBA feedback, Junior Cycle Profiles of Achievement. Some students will be engaged in the JCSP programme and will receive subject statements recording their achievements at the end of third year.
 - Positive feedback will also be reported on (and affirmed) using the school's positive referral postcards, notes in journals, sports awards and annual prize-giving.
 - The AEN Department will carry-out their own assessments and feedback such as CAT 4 tests, English language proficiency tests and learning support assessments.

Junior Cycle Grade Descriptors:

Junior Cycle Grade Classification	
Percentage	Grade Descriptor
>90 to 100	Distinction
>75 and <90	Higher Merit
>55 and <75	Merit
>40 and <55	Achieved
>20 and <40	Partially Achieved
> 0 and <20	Not Graded

Leaving Certificate Grade Descriptors:

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Higher Level Grade	Ordinary Level Grade
H1 (90-100)	O1 (90-100)
H2 (80 < 90)	O2 (80 < 90)
H3 (70 < 80)	O3 (70 < 80)
H4 (60 < 70)	O4 (60 < 70)
H5 (50 < 60)	O5 (50 < 60)
H6 (40 < 50)	O6 (40 < 50)
H7 (30 < 40)	O7 (30 < 40)
H8 (0 < 30)	O8 (0 < 30)

LCVP Grade Descriptors:

LCVP <i>Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme</i>		
LCVP Grade	% Score	LCVP Points
Distinction	85 - 100	66
Merit	65 - 79	46
Pass	50 - 64	28

Responsibilities:

- Teachers:**
 - Design and administer assessments.
 - Provide timely feedback – both oral and written
 - Collaborate on assessment practices.
- Students:**
 - Engage in assessments honestly and to the best of their abilities.
 - Seek clarification when needed.
 - Reflect on feedback.
- Parents/Guardians:**
 - Support students in their learning journey.
 - Attend parent-teacher meetings.
 - Encourage a positive attitude toward assessment.
- School Leadership:**
 - Monitor assessment practices.
 - Provide professional development for teachers.
 - Ensure alignment with DEIS principles and School Improvement Plan.

Policy:

- It is the policy of the school to encourage and support ongoing assessment as part of the teaching process. The school will provide a clear calendar of reporting students' progress to parents/guardians via VSWare.

Ongoing Assessment:



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- Teachers in Ballinteer Community School are expected to keep an account of the progress of students in the variety of tasks which may occur in the teaching/learning process. This variety will take account of the range of skills appropriate to the subject and level in question.
- Among others these skills might include oral expression, listening comprehension, textual analysis, research ability, manual dexterity, imaginative composition (written and materials based) numerical ability, computation skills and graphic comprehension. This list is not exhaustive, but it describes the range of skills which teachers develop and assess through homework, class work, assignments and projects. Teachers are also encouraged to use the journal, parent- teacher meetings, the merit system and other means to report to students and parents on this on-going assessment process.



Supporting Students with Additional Educational Needs Policy

1. Ballinteer Community School Characteristic Spirit and Ethos:

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Supporting Students with Additional Educational Needs Policy

2. Rationale of this document

Our AEN policy aims to outline our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. This commitment is underpinned by the ethos, characteristic spirit and mission statement of the school and is guided by relevant legislation. This policy is a reflection of our current practice in Ballinteer Community School in relation to facilitating and promoting a whole school approach to additional educational needs.

3. Aims & Objectives of the Additional Educational Needs Policy

“Every student should be taught a curriculum that is appropriate to his/her developmental Level”

(Guidelines for Post- Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools, 2017)

This policy applies to all students attending Ballinteer Community School including those with special educational needs and/or additional needs.

We aim:

- *“To ensure that students have a positive sense of themselves as learners and a strong sense of their own efficacy and capacity to improve.”* (NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines, 2017)
- To promote inclusivity through equality of access and participation in the school.
- To promote the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of students by developing self-esteem, personal responsibility and the ability to live and work with others.
- To provide a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students in the school.
- To ensure that all students leave school with the life skills that they will need to participate in society, and to live fulfilled lives.
- To enable all students to belong to an educational community without prejudice and within which an individual difference is celebrated.
- To encourage and foster partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at home and at school.
- To develop the necessary structures and staff expertise in supporting students with additional educational needs.

4. Inclusive Education

The school provides for students with a wide range of abilities and/or additional needs, and places for students with or without a special educational need are allocated in line with the whole school admissions policy.

4.1 Definition of Additional Educational Needs

The Additional Educational Needs policy at Ballinteer Community School complies with the following definition:

“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...” Education for persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

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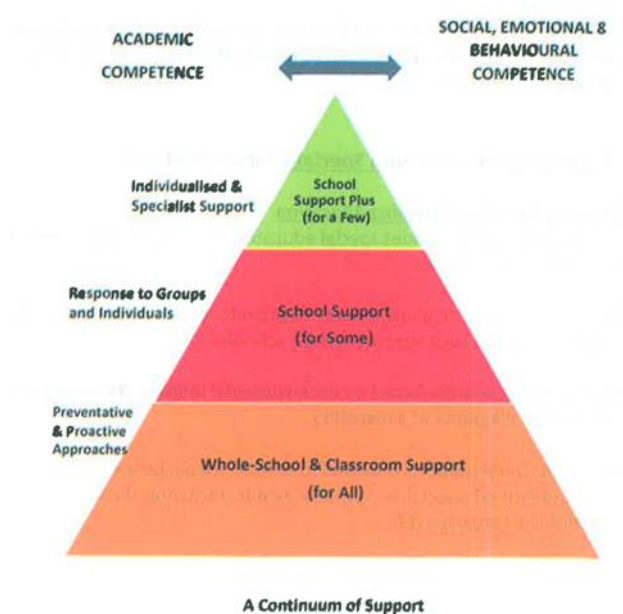
5. Legal Context

The terms of this policy have been further informed by the substantial body of legislation relating to the education of students with AEN.

- The Education Act, 1998
- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- The Equal status Act, 2000
- The Equality Act, 2004
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN Act), 2004
- The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
- The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
- The European Union General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- The Framework for Junior Cycle 2015
- NCCA Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines 2017
- Circular 0055/2022
- Circular 0014/2017
- Circular 0015/2017
- Circular 0053/2019

6. Support structures for students with AEN

The continuum of support encompasses a graduated solution orientated framework of assessment and intervention in schools, comprised of three distinct school-based processes which are summarised below:



Ballinteer Community School guided, by National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), is committed to developing best practice in relation to meeting the needs of all children with special educational needs and to supporting school communities.

The Continuum of Support model of assessment and intervention is underpinned by a recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum, from mild to severe and from transient to long term. Therefore, our response to the needs of students is also offered along a continuum, from



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whole-school and preventative approaches to individualised and specialist approaches.

7. The Continuum of Support Framework

- Support for ALL is a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching and early identification. These systems are available to all students and effectively meet the needs of most students.
- School Support (for Some) is an assessment and intervention process which is directed to some students, or groups of students who require some additional input.
- School Support Plus (for a Few) is generally characterised by more intensive and individualised supports. This level of intervention is for students with complex and/or enduring needs and relatively few students will need this level of support.

8. Levels of Support for Students with AEN at Ballinteer Community School

The NEPS Continuum of support model recognizes that AEN occurs along a continuum from mild to severe. Students require different levels of support depending on their needs ('Support for Few', 'Support for Some' and 'Support for All'). Students with the greatest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support. The continuum of support makes sure that interventions move from the classroom subject teachers to more individualized support. Supports in Ballinteer Community School include:

Team teaching: in these classes Co-teaching is an inclusive practice which takes place using a variety of models to support the needs of the students.

- One Teach, One Observe
- One Teach, One Assist
- Parallel Teaching
- Small group support
- One-to-one support
- Room 107 'Home Room'. A room designated as a nurture space within the school.
- EAL teacher timetabled against Irish to support EAL learners' language development.
- EAL hours provided for students who meet the CFER criteria.
- AS class The Zen Den.
- SNA
- Irish Exemption is not just for EAL students.
- Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Exams (RACE).
- Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) for those students who have access to an SNA.
- Working with the school's NEPS Psychologist to identify appropriate supports for students.
- Consulting with school management regarding specific and whole school professional development.
- Engaging with the relevant outside agencies e.g., National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in relation to all matters of Special Education provision

Different Programmes Available at Ballinteer Community School:

- Friends for Life – The Friends programmes were created to assist young people at appropriate developmental levels to learn important skills and techniques to cope with and overcome anxiety.
- Check and Connect - This is an evidence based structured adult mentoring programme that aims to promote student engagement at school and with learning.
- Vocabulary Enrichment Program – This focuses on enhancing the understanding and expression of vocabulary and word meanings.



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- SRA Reading laboratory – Is a structured system for teaching and developing essential reading skills available for readers of all ages and skill level.
- SRA Mathematics laboratory – Is a supplementary Maths programme that enriches Maths classes. It provides opportunities to learners for experimentation and exploration in Maths.
- JCSP – is a social inclusion programme that is aimed at students who are identified as being at risk of being socially or academically isolated or at risk of early school leaving.
- Student Support Team – Student focused mechanism to co-ordinate the supports available in school and with external agencies to enable students to access a full education.
- Trinity Access Programme.
- Mentor programme – 5th Year Mentors are assigned to Buddy each class group, organise well-being activities, run their induction day and develop and run an anti-bullying programme. Training is provided by Trinity Access Programme and Firoige.
- Student Council - The Student Council is a representative structure for students, through which they can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents for the benefit of the school and the students.
- LCVP – The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme is a Leaving Certificate programme that focuses on enterprise and preparation for working life. LCVP students take two additional courses, called link modules, in the area of Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education.
- School Completion Programme – School Completion Programme aims to retain young people to completion of a level of educational attainment which enables them to transition into further education, training or employment.
- Crosscare – Counselling service.

9. Identification of students with AEN at Ballinteer Community School

A combination of some or all of the following data will be used to identify those with additional academic, physical, social and emotional difficulties which are a barrier to learning.

- Referral: Pupils with diagnosed learning difficulties should be referred to the AEN department by their parents/guardians; the school expects that all assessments and areas of need will be disclosed by the parents or guardians at the time of application in line with the school's Admission Policy. Ballinteer Community School is an inclusive school and does not discriminate against pupils on the grounds of ability so there is no disadvantage to disclosing additional learning needs.
- The following formal and informal practices are utilised in the referral and assessment of need process in Ballinteer Community School:
 - Collection of information from primary schools, including NCCA Student Passport.
 - Intake screening (CAT 4) and Standardised tests of Literacy/numeracy (NGRT/WIAT-TIII & WRAT)
 - Teacher referral & teacher observations & reports
 - SNA behavioural observation checklists
 - Parental referral & Parental consultation (Pre-transition meetings)
 - Student self-referral
 - Consultation with outside agencies (NEPS, SAIT teams, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
 - Psychoeducational & medical reports



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RACE – Reasonable Accommodations in Certified Examinations

RACE applications will be made by the AEN department on behalf of candidates in third year who are identified as being eligible for such accommodations. Standardised assessments recognised by the State Exams Commission along with reading and writing samples are used to determine need and eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations. An application to reactivate accommodations is submitted for the Leaving Certificate in sixth year. Further information and eligibility criteria are available from: www.examinations.ie

10. AS Class Admissions Policy & Recommendations from the Psychologist

The AS special class was established in Ballinteer Community School in the academic year 2013/14 to provide a calm and ordered teaching and learning environment for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who are attending mainstream subject classes in the school. Such students should have a primary diagnosis of ASD and a recommendation for a place in the ASD Special Class. When applying please specify on the school's application form that you wish to apply for a place in the school's ASD class.

11. Exemption from the Study of Irish

Certain students with AEN may be exempted from the study of Irish. Details are available in the DES Circular 0055/2022. Students are designated to learning support classes, where available, at this time.

12. Guidelines for the Identification and Prioritisation of Students for Additional Support

In line with Circular 0014/2017 students are prioritised for support on the following criteria:

- Students performing below the 10th percentile in standardised tests in numeracy or literacy.
- Students who previously received supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher in Primary School and who continue to experience significant difficulties.
- Students who are identified as having significant needs on the basis of school based assessment of attainment including ongoing monitoring of academic performance in House
- Examinations and behavioural, social and emotional functioning.
- Students who present with mild, or short-term, educational needs, including those with speech and language difficulties, organisational, co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Students who present with additional needs which are set out in professional reports, for example those with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, etc.) and General Learning Difficulties (Mild, Borderline, Moderate, Severe).
- Students with significant and complex Additional Educational Needs, for example significant behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs (e.g., Autistic Spectrum Disorders)
- Students who have additional literacy or language learning Needs, including those who need English Additional Language Support (EAL).
- Students are identified using the CAT tests
- Exceptionally Able - Students are directed towards DCU gifted & talented programme.
- Places are available through the Trinity Access Programme for the Trinity College Walton club for gifted and talented youth.
- Grinds in English & Maths are offered through Trinity to selected students in English & Maths.
- NCCA Post Primary Screening test is used to place students on the CFER framework level.



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- An EAL teacher is timetabled alongside Irish Class in each year group to meet the needs of EAL students as resources are available. Further EAL Support is provided for those students that meet the CFER criterium.

13. Data Protection

Files, in both physical and digital forms, are protected with the following Procedures:

- Files are stored physically.
- Student Support Plans and files are shared with teachers who work with the individual student. When sharing a file with subject teachers it will be protected by a code. All other physical files and professional reports are kept by the AEN Coordinator with each member of the team having direct access.
- The AEN department follows best professional practice of keeping personal records such as psychological and medical reports under triple lock; in a locked cabinet, within a locked room in a locked school. AEN Coordinator retains all files in their office which is accessed by SET's or Guidance department and a sign out system for file access is in place.

14. Level of support for students with AEN in Ballinteer Community School

Transitions programme for students with Anxiety /ASD put in place on an individual basis for incoming 1st year students.

AS Class – 6 students, 1.5 teachers & 2 SNAs.

Learning support – Small group support with an aim to be delivered 5:1 ratio maximum.

Programmes (Resources in the mainstream setting including AS classes and interventions throughout the school)

Decisions made on the level of support offered to students is based on the following :

1. Information and Recommendations from a psychological report
2. Information from parents
3. Communication with primary school, school passport and any other relevant information from SET teachers
4. Teacher observation
5. Communication with primary school
6. Referrals from teachers, Guidance Counsellor, Student Support Team, Home School Liaison officer.
7. Testing Formal and Informal Entrance Tests CAT 4 Level E, NGRT Reading Tests, WRAT Spelling Test. Resource Teacher may administer further testing for screening. WRAT 4/ WIAT III T.
8. Outside agencies.
9. Students may refer themselves.

When a student has been identified as requiring additional support, a student support file (SSF) is then created to support the student. Student progress will be removed, monitored, recorded and reviewed.

What can parents do?

Parents and guardians of AEN students can share professional reports in agreement that AEN team personnel may share details of the students' reports with their subject teachers and special needs assistants. This is done in order to maximise the educational benefit and support in place for each student.

Parents are invited to contribute to the Student Support File.



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15. Responsibilities of:

15.1 Senior Leadership

Senior leadership will adhere to the legislative requirements as laid out in various acts relating to students with additional educational needs and with guidance from the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Section 18 of the EPSEN Act (2004) indicates that the principal of a school may delegate the performance of any of the functions conferred on him or her by the Act to other members of staff in the school, as the principal considers appropriate. The NCSE Guidelines for Post Primary School, Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream School (2017), outlined that the school Principal has the overall responsibility for AEN procedures and practices in school. The SET Allocation Model states the school Principal's leadership role is central, and includes the following:

- Promotes inclusion. Aims to ensure that the Ballinteer Community School community recognises and supports all students with AEN within the school.
- Delegates and assigns responsibilities concerning AEN practices and procedures to the AEN Coordinator(s), to implement and monitor the school's Additional Educational Needs policy on an ongoing basis. In Ballinteer Community School the AEN Coordinators are Ms Zoe Higgins and Ms Katherine Coleman.
- Collaborates with all staff and leadership to support students with AEN, with the aim to ensure that their needs are met in line with the Continuum of Support guidelines and Whole School Policy for students with AEN.
- Ensures that there is an Additional Educational Needs core team in the school to support students with AEN. The AEN core team in Ballinteer Community School is:
 - Ms Niamh Byrne
 - Ms Aisling Cross
 - Ms Deirdre Curtis
 - Ms Eileen Ward
- Facilitates the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to education of students with additional educational needs and aims to ensure that all school staff (subject teachers, additional educational needs teachers and special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.
- Supports the allocation of time within the school timetable for the AEN team to plan and consult with the relevant stakeholders.

15.2 AEN Co-ordinator(s)

Along with being a member of the AEN team, the AEN Coordinator is a full-time SET teacher with additional 12 hours for administration with responsibilities which are:

- To assume responsibility for the AEN department as delegated by the principal.
- To collaborate with all staff and leadership teams to support students with AEN, with the aim to ensure that their needs are met in line with the Continuum of Support guidelines and Whole School Policy for students with AEN.
- To undertake the duty of ensuring that administration and correspondence relating to students with additional educational needs is in accordance with current legislative requirements.
- To ensure that the AEN department works collaboratively in order to achieve a significant impact in supporting students with AEN within the school community.



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- To plan the AEN timetable with the AEN team, taking into consideration timetabling constraints, exemptions from certain subjects and consistency of provision for students previously receiving support.
- To monitor, review and revise AEN timetables, for all students with AEN who are in receipt of support and for those who may receive limited support, as far as resources allow.
- To be involved in the induction, and day to day organisation of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) assigned to the school.
- To oversee the induction of new members of the AEN team and provide support during the academic year.
- To liaise with outside agencies such as the Department of Education, N.E.P.S, the Visiting Teachers Service and the designated SENO for the school, as required, to provide support for students with AEN within the school.
- To take overall responsibility for the collation of information required for reasonable accommodations applications for state examinations, to make sure applications are submitted in a timely manner and appeals dealt with, on behalf of the school.
- To support the co-ordination of examination arrangements for all students with AEN who are in receipt of reasonable accommodations during a number of in-house examinations as staffing resources allow.
- To collate information and provide support for students who are on the AEN register when processing applications for DARE.
- To work collaboratively with the Career Guidance department to support CAT-IV assessment for incoming 1st years & to work with colleagues to establish ongoing testing for all students within the school throughout their 6 years, as advised by the Department of Education.
- To oversee the testing and compile essential documentation and complete administration required for Irish exemptions.

15.3 AEN Team

The post primary guidelines on inclusion (DES, 2007) lays out the role of the AEN support team 'to work collaboratively to develop, implement and review policies and procedures to meet the needs of students with AEN'.

The AEN department aims:

- To fulfil the central aim of the school – to provide an education based on the characteristics of a community education.
- To collaborate with all staff and leadership teams to support students with AEN to aim to ensure that their needs are met in line with the Continuum of Support guidelines and Whole School Policy for students with AEN.
- To provide teaching support for students with AEN and to take specific responsibility for a year group to ensure that the staged approach to identification and provision for students with AEN takes place. This support should also take cognisance of each teacher's chosen subject areas.
- To support the creation & management of additional support timetables with the AEN coordinator for students with AEN each term. To review support with the AEN coordinator and students & implement changes as necessary to ensure that structured student support plans are in place for students with AEN as applicable.
- To monitor and update pertinent information concerning students with AEN under their care ensuring that it is available on the school management system (VSWare) and communicated to staff.



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- To engage in regular timetabled AEN team meetings, to be involved in screening/diagnostic testing, CAT testing, subject choices for students with AEN and reasonable accommodations for both junior and Senior Cycle students.
- To be available to staff for structured timetabled team meetings/case conferences to discuss specific students with AEN.
- To coordinate with outside agencies as required and to advise and collaborate with SNAs around the care needs of relevant students.
- To regularly communicate with parents/guardians regarding concerns about their child, advise parents/guardians on procedures for availing of additional educational needs services and update them regarding their progress. Communication with parents may take the form of phone call, email or in person meetings.

15.4 Special Needs Assistants (SNA)

Special Needs Assistants have a caring and supportive role that is non-teaching in nature and works under the guidance and supervision of the AEN Coordinator and/or subject teacher. The role and responsibilities of the SNA are outlined in DE Circular (0030/2014). The SNA should:

- Collaborate with all staff and leadership to support students with AEN to ensure that their needs are met in line with the Continuum of Support guidelines and Whole School Policy for students with AEN.
- Liaise with AEN coordinator responsible for AEN concerning duties, timetabling and support for students with AEN.
- Support the needs of students in effectively accessing the curriculum in relation to primary care needs.
- Contribute to the quality of care and welfare of the students.
- Support learning and teaching in the classroom in relation to primary care needs.
- Attend, where possible, training courses/workshops.
- Liaise with AEN team regularly.
- Attend student support plan meetings and/or meetings with relevant professionals, when necessary.
- Maintain an observation record/record of support provided to their AEN students.
- Assist and escort students on school trips.
- Carry out, other appropriate duties as may be determined by the needs of the students and the school.
- Facilitate sensory breaks and maintain record of such.
- Be reassigned to other appropriate work when SNAs are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise.
- Recognise their role in the health and safety of the student and in their social, emotional, and educational development, without developing a culture of dependency.
- Be available as required, according to the Croke Park Agreement for 72 hours outside the academic school year in AEN related tasks.
- Treat all matters relating to school business and their work, as strictly confidential.



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15.5 Role of Subject Teachers

- It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure that each student is taught in a stimulating and supportive classroom environment where all pupils feel equal and valued.
- The teacher will have access to all information that is likely to be relevant to teaching or supervising a student with additional educational needs.
- The class teacher has a central role in identifying and responding to pupils with additional educational needs.
- The classroom teacher will also make specific accommodations for a student within the class as a result of concerns about a student's progress, application, communication, behaviour and interaction with peers.
- The teacher will familiarise themselves with the relevant Student Support File of students with AEN who are in their classroom.

15.6 Role of the Home School Community Liaison Officer (HSCLO)

The role of the Home School Community Liaison Officer is to support all parents in the school in the education of their children. The Home School Community Liaison Officer (HSCLO) works very closely with School Completion (SCP) and the Educational Welfare Service (EWS). Poor attendance is a red flag where the Home School Community Liaison Officer will meet with Parents/Guardians along with Year Head to ascertain the educational barriers for the student attending school. An Educational Referral is made by the HSCLO along with SCP to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) once a student has missed 20 days. Early intervention is key to supporting Parents/Guardians and the young person. The EWO has the power to accelerate additional supports once they have been identified as needs to support the young person in attending school and removing the barriers to education.

The Home School Community Liaison Officer signposts additional supports, services in the local community along with providing assistance in filling out referral/consent forms for services such as the Youth Service, Garda Diversion, Jigsaw, HSE, Lucena Clinic, Crosscare & NEPS. The HSCLO provides support and assistance in filling out applications such as Enrolment Forms, Home Tuition, Summer Programme Applications, RACE Applications, DARE and HEAR applications.

15.7 School Completion Programme

The School Completion Programme operates in Ballinteer Community School. Its aim is to work with the most at risk students through three areas, attendance, participation and retention.

With regard to inclusion the remit of the School Completion Programme is to provide direct support to minorities such as students from the Traveller community, those with disabilities, those who are homeless, those in emergency accommodation, in direct provision and Ukrainian students.

15.8 Role of Guidance Counsellor

The Guidance Counsellor works alongside the AEN Department to deliver support in line with the NEPS Continuum of Support. A continuum of support model is applied to the Ballinteer Community School Guidance programme. In applying the continuum, our whole school guidance programme aims to meet the needs of students along a varied range, from a whole school approach to group and individualised approaches.

The continuum model can be applied as follows:

A) Guidance For All – provided to all students to support personal and social, educational, and



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career development, and students making transitions (Incoming First Years, Junior Cycle to Transition Year, Junior cycle to Senior cycle and from Senior Cycle into apprenticeships, FET, HE and employment). The Guidance Counsellor as the specialist has a key role to play in coordinating the planning and delivery of the whole school guidance programme and in the provision of guidance to students. A whole school approach is employed in delivering the learning and teaching activities of the School Guidance Programme which includes, Career Education Programmes, SPHE and Wellbeing in Junior Cycle, Guidance Modules and work experience/placement provided as part of senior cycle programmes (TY, LCVP).

B) Guidance For Some – provided to specific groups of students to support personal and social, educational and career development and transition making. Such groups of students will typically include, for example, students in senior cycle, especially 6th year, who will one-to-one guidance counselling to support educational and career decision making, and students who are making transitions. Transition points include, Primary School into First year of Post-Primary Education, Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle, and school to higher/further education and training, apprenticeships and employment. Some students may require additional and more intensive support in making transitions. Group/one-to-one guidance counselling will require the expertise of specialist school staff, such as the guidance counsellor working in collaboration with the Student Support Team, SPHE head, AEN Coordinator, Year Heads, Class Tutors and the school Chaplain.

C) Guidance for a Few - Students may require support in meeting their developmental needs and when they experience personal crises. Some students may also require more intensive support as they make transitions (including transitions for Early School Leavers (ESL) and to education centres such as Youthreach) and important decisions during their time in post-primary schools. This support will require the expertise of specialised school staff with the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to respond to the needs of these students and will involve the Guidance Counsellor, and other school staff who have been trained in meeting the needs of vulnerable students and those who may have additional needs. In the event that the student requires more intensive support, referral to external agencies and supports should be employed. In the event of a protracted referral the Guidance Counsellor/Chaplain/ staff member may need to provide continued support to the student.

5.9 Role of the Chaplain

The Chaplain supports all students in the school community and works closely with other members' of the student support team in the school, the Guidance Counsellor, AEN, Home school liaison officer, school completion and management in identifying how best students can be supported. The chaplain provides pastoral support to students with educational and behavioural difficulties and is a listening ear and friendly support. The chaplain also works with Year Heads to support students. It is the goal of the student support team with the Chaplain to support all students, with sensitivity, and with respect for whatever resources might be deployed to support them.

16. Communication with parents of students with AEN

The designated resource teacher with responsibility for the year group will be the link person for the parents and guardians regarding AEN matters. Correspondence will take the form of over the phone meetings, meetings in person and email communication as is appropriate. Communication with parents is achieved in the following ways -



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- Parental information evening for incoming First Year students
- AS class open day for incoming First Year students
- Termly reports
- Whole school open evening
- JCSP Co-ordinator
- Parent-Teacher Meetings
- Letters to the parents
- Student Journal
- Telephone Calls
- Email
- Meetings involving external agencies
- Meetings with the AEN Coordinator and Principal/Guidance Counsellor/Year Head/SET Teacher where relevant.
- Resource teachers will aim to check in with parents and guardians once per term regarding a student's SSF. Contact may take the form of phone call, in-person meeting or email as deemed most appropriate by the resource teacher.

17. Provision for Staff Development

- OIDE
- NCCA
- L2/LP
- JCT
- TENI
- NEPS

18. Strategies for Review and Evaluation

The views of the partners should be considered, and adjustments should be made to the policy and plan to ensure that the provision and support for students with AEN in Ballinteer Community School meets with international criteria for best practice.

19. Appeals

Parents/ students who are concerned and who wish to discuss or make suggestions about any aspect of educational provision should approach the relevant teacher, tutor, year head or member of the AEN team. If necessary, an issue can be dealt with by the Deputy Principal, Principal or Board of Management.

20. Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on: 30th May 2024