

## POLICY OF SCOIL MUIRE CBS MARINO

**Document Title:**

**AEN Policy**

**Effective Date:**

**January 2023**

**Document No.:9**

**Revision No: 3**

**No. of pages:9**

### **Introduction**

Scoil Mhuire CBS, Marino is an Edmund Rice primary school catering for pupils from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. It is a mainstream school catering for boys with a wide range of abilities. The purpose of this AEN Policy is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents, and other interested parties on the provision of effective support – physical, academic, social, emotional, or behavioural – to pupils experiencing difficulties, as well as to fulfil our obligations under the *Education Act* (1998). Scoil Mhuire is due to open an Autism Class in the academic year 2023 – 2024.

### **Aims of Learning Support**

The principal aim of Learning Support is to optimise the teaching and learning process so as to enable pupils with additional educational needs (AEN) to reach their full potential across all areas of the curriculum in so far as is possible.

Through the implementation of this policy we strive to:

- Establish a positive ethos and learning environment where all pupils feel welcome and experience a sense of community and belonging
- Promote pupil participation and active engagement in their learning and the life of the school
- Facilitate pupils to participate in the full curriculum relative to their ability
- Enable pupils to monitor their own learning and become independent learners relative to their ability
- Empower pupils to contribute meaningfully to the development of their learning targets
- Involve families in meaningfully supporting children's learning
- Promote collaboration among teachers

### **Guiding Principles**

The school recognises that effective learning programmes are based on the following principles:

- Pupils with the greatest level of need receive the greatest level of support
- Programmes and interventions are based on identified needs and informed by regular review
- Effective and meaningful collaboration between Class Teacher (CT) and Support Teacher (SET)
- Early intervention: targeted and intensive support early in a pupil's school career
- Pupil voice as part of their own learning

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### Roles and Responsibilities

Effective Learning Support requires a high level of collaboration and consultation involving the Board of Management, Class Teachers and AEN team, families and relevant outside agencies or individual professionals. The roles and responsibilities of each of these are detailed below.

#### Board of Management

- Oversee the development, implementation, and review of the provision of support for pupils with AEN in the school
- Ensure adequate classroom accommodation and teaching resources are provided for the AEN team
- Provide a secure facility for storage of records in relation to pupils
- Offer sustained support to staff with regard to professional learning in the area of supporting pupils with AEN

#### Principal

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policy on additional support in co-operation with the Board of Management, staff, families and pupils
- Work with staff in the development of the school's AEN Policy
- Monitor the implementation of the AEN Policy on an ongoing basis
- Monitor the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching, ensuring that this is focused on the pupils with the greatest levels of need
- Oversee the implementation of a whole-school assessment and screening programme to identify areas of need so that pupils can be provided with targeted support
- Oversee the completion of applications for assistive technology grants if deemed essential in professional reports provided to the school
- In line with Circular 54/2022, the Principal will process applications for Gaeilge exemptions
- Keep teachers informed about the external services that are available to families
- Support teachers in increasing their knowledge and skills in supporting pupils with AEN

#### Class Teacher

The Class Teacher (CT) has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in their class, including those selected for additional support. In supporting the development and implementation of the AEN Policy, the CT should:

- Implement teaching programmes which optimise the learning of all pupils, differentiating content, support, resources, tasks, and assessment where appropriate
- Construct, monitor, and review CSPs for pupils in their class
- Oversee, monitor, and review the implementation of the SSP and SSP+ for pupils in their class
- Implement the school policies on screening and selecting pupils for supplementary teaching in English and Maths by co-operating and assisting with the administration and scoring of appropriate whole-class assessments

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- For each pupil who is in receipt of additional support, to collaborate with the SET in the development of the SSP or SSP+ by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to complement and help achieve these targets
- To differentiate, as appropriate, classroom content or behavioural supports for pupils with AEN
- To collaborate with the SET in the planning, development, and implementation of in-class support

### **Special Education Teacher (SET)**

The role of the SET is to:

- Facilitate the administration of whole-class assessments at the beginning of each academic year
- Follow the selection criteria (outlined in this Policy) in identifying pupils at Stages 2 and 3 on the Continuum of Support
- Administer additional individual assessments as appropriate
- Construct – in consultation with the CT, the pupil, and their family – the SSP or SSP+
- Maintain a profile of each pupil: incorporating their support plans, assessment data, and work samples as appropriate
- Provide support teaching in English and Maths to pupils in the school who experience low achievement, in accordance with the school's selection criteria
- Support and facilitate co-teaching in English and Maths in consultation with the CT
- Provide advice to the CT in such areas as individual pupils' assessment and programme planning, as well as approaches to language development, reading, writing and mathematics for pupils experiencing difficulties
- Contribute at school level to decision making regarding the purchase of resources and materials to enhance teaching and learning for pupils with AEN
- Where appropriate, liaise with external agencies and professionals – such as CAMHS, psychologists, SLTs, OTs – to arrange assessments and/or discuss special provisions and accommodations for pupils with AEN
- Maintain a whole-school list of pupils who are in receipt of additional support
- Contribute to the development and review of the school's AEN Policy

### **Additional Needs Assistant (ANA)**

The role of the ANA is to:

- Provide support to pupils who have been granted access to ANA support under the direction of the CT
- Assist and collaborate with CT and SET to develop a Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) using agreed school templates
- Carry out tasks and activities as organised by the CT or SET to support the implementation of the pupil's PPP and assist with their personal care and medical needs throughout the day
- Help promote the pupil's independent living skills and encourage them to interact independently with their peers
- Help promote the pupil's independent learning skills including self-regulation and readiness to learn

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### **Families**

Family support plays a vital role in the educational attainment of all pupils. As primary educators of the child, parents contribute to their child's educational development through:

- Creating a home environment that values, and fosters a value for, education
- Reading to and with their child
- Availing of opportunities for incidental maths that arise in the home: asking the time; what time it will be in half an hour; weighing ingredients; measuring liquids; calculating the cost of goods etc.
- Ensuring that homework (from both the CT and SET) is completed to the best of the child's ability, and signing the Homework Journal accordingly
- Regular communication with the CT and SET
- Provide a full copy of relevant reports and assessments to the school
- Contribute to the development of PPPs and Support Plans where appropriate

### **Minimising the Need for Additional Individualised Support**

As a means of maximising pupil success and attainment in so far as is possible, the following strategies are being implemented:

- The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches to language development and literacy: phonological awareness, PM Readers (2nd Class), and Guided Reading (2nd – 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
- The development and implementation of agreed whole school approaches in the teaching of aspects of Maths: CPA (concrete-pictorial-abstract) approach, mathematical language and the language of operations, RUDE problem-solving strategy
- Promotion of parental understanding and involvement through their attendance at an Induction Meeting for the parents of incoming 2<sup>nd</sup> class and an annual Information Evening for the parents of pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class, the arrangement of formal and informal Parent-Teacher Meetings, and ongoing collaboration with the Parents' Association
- Provision of in-class support in the core areas of English and Maths
- Ongoing observation and assessment of pupils by the Class Teacher

### **Support through Co-Teaching**

Co-teaching in the core subjects of English and Mathematics will take place in each class at each class level during the year. The frequency, intensity and duration of this support is dependent on, and will be determined by, the particular needs of individual classes.

Co-teaching is seen as an integral part of our Guided Reading and PM reading programmes. SET teachers will schedule a minimum of three co-teaching sessions a week with each class during Guided Reading blocks and throughout the academic year in 2<sup>nd</sup> Class in order to support the implementation of the PM readers.

The following models of co-teaching can be used:

- Station teaching
- Parallel teaching
- Alternative teaching
- Teaming/ Team teaching
- One teaching, one assisting

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### The Continuum of Support

This framework uses a staged approach to ensure that pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support. Using the Continuum of Support framework, schools can identify pupils' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, sensory, language and communication difficulties.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Classroom Support	School Support	School Support Plus
<p>Classroom Support Plans (CSP) are the most common form of additional support and typically the first response to emerging needs. Where the skills and/or behaviour of a pupil at Stage 1 on the Continuum of Support are identified as falling below the typical range for their peer group, a CSP will be drawn up.</p> <p>The CSP will record the pupil's strengths and areas for improvement, as well as observations from the CT and the pupil's family. This Support Plan – which will be in place for an agreed time-span – will be constructed by the CT, and signed by the pupil's family.</p>	<p>Following information-gathering and assessment, pupils identified as being at Stage 2 or Stage 3 on the Continuum of Support will require a SSP or SSP+ respectively. This will be constructed by the CT and SET.</p> <p>The plan will address the pupil's full range of needs and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biographical information</li> <li>• Observations from the Class Teacher</li> <li>• Observations from the pupil's family (and the pupil if appropriate)</li> <li>• Assessment Data</li> <li>• Nature of AEN</li> <li>• Areas of strength</li> <li>• Priority Learning Needs</li> <li>• Learning Targets</li> <li>• Learning Activities</li> <li>• Home Support Activities</li> <li>• Resources to be utilised</li> </ul> <p>Each plan will be monitored through: teacher observation; the keeping of planning and progress records; and through the pupil's own feedback.</p> <p>For pupils on Stages 2 or 3 on the Continuum of Support, detailed reviews will take place bi-annually: in February and again in June. These reviews will incorporate discussions with a pupil's family and the pupil themselves where appropriate. Following this review, practice can cease, continue, or be amended accordingly.</p>	

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### Selecting Pupils for Additional Support

- At the beginning of each academic year, a range of assessments (incorporating literacy, numeracy, and wellbeing) are administered at the whole-class level. These results are compiled, alongside pre-existing data from standardised assessments, to create a comprehensive overview of each class.
- Based on a combination of this assessment data, teacher observation, parental insight, and pupil voice, pupils may be identified for additional screening and assessment.
- Pupils in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Class will complete standardised assessments in Spelling (DPST) and non-verbal reasoning (NVRT)
- At the end of each academic year, standardised assessments in literacy (DPRT) and numeracy (DPMT) are administered to all pupils.
- Priority for additional support will be given to those pupils who perform at or below the 12<sup>th</sup> Percentile in standardised assessments.
- Pupils who perform between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Percentile, and those pupils who perform at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> Percentile will, in the first instance, be supported by differentiated instruction and tasks in the classroom context. This may be at the discretion of the CT and / or through in-class support.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language (determined on a needs basis, with priority given to those new to English or at the early acquisition stage)
- In the instance of pupils presenting with non-academic needs – needs that may be physical, social, behavioural, or emotional – teacher observation, pupil voice, and parental insight will inform the nature, frequency, and duration of support.

### Provision of Additional Support

- The primary work of the Support Teachers is the provision of supplementary teaching to the pupils identified above
- For the purposes of co-teaching, the school year will be divided into 6 instructional blocks of approximately 6 weeks each. At the end of each 6 week block, in line with best practice, the CT and SET will review and plan for future learning accordingly. (This is particularly appropriate for pupils at the CSP stage on the Continuum of Support whereby interventions or additional support may have been deemed appropriate for a particular concept or topic. Reviews can incorporate assessments, pupil conferencing, teacher observation, and consultation between the CT and SET)
- A blend of one-one and small-group teaching may be provided as appropriate.
- A blend of approaches including withdrawal in the individual and small-group context and/or in-class support will operate in response to the needs of the individual pupil.
- The CT and SET, in consultation with the pupil and their family, will devise the support plan (CSP, SSP, or SSP+)
- SET team will maintain the following documentation:
  - Assessment details and data
  - Pupil's Support Plan (whether CSP, SSP, or SSP+)
  - Work samples (where appropriate / applicable)
- Records kept in Scoil Mhuire will adhere to our procedures on data protection and record keeping

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- Where provided to the school, **one** copy of a pupil's report will be kept on the premises. These reports are stored in a locked filing cabinet in a designated SET room. While CTs will be given the opportunity to read relevant reports, **no copies can be made and the report must not leave the school premises.**
- Where applicable, the SET will hand over their assessment folder to next year's incoming SET in order to ensure all relevant documentation has been passed on.

### Timetabling

- In the construction of their timetable, the SET will liaise with CTs in an effort to ensure that pupils in receipt of withdrawal support do not miss either the same curricular area each day, or those subjects that are taught weekly (for example Visual Arts and PE).
- In the construction of their timetable, the SET will strive to ensure that pupils in receipt of additional support in either English or Mathematics do not miss those subjects when taught in the whole-class setting
- In the construction of their timetable, the SET will include both withdrawal and in-class support.
- It is acknowledged that the support timetable will change throughout the year: some pupils may be identified for additional support, while others may attain a standard whereby their level of support may be reduced.
- Each timetable devised by the SET should be dated, and a record should be kept of all iterations used throughout the year
- SET timetables should only include pupils' initials and, insofar as possible, should be stored discretely by CTs
- CT has the ultimate responsibility for the pupil's educational provision across each area of the Primary School Curriculum.

### Provision of Resources for Pupils with AEN

- Resources for the provision of additional support include: a range of assessment materials; a small reference library providing teachers with additional information on a variety of AENs; a selection of developmentally-appropriate textbooks; and graded library books. Supplementary physical resources and concrete materials used with pupils attending withdrawal sessions include both digital and manipulative resources.
- **Sensory Spaces:** There are two designated Sensory Spaces available for use by pupils under the supervision of an ANA or teacher. One is The Quiet Space that pupils from mainstream classes can use. At this time, it is not necessary that sessions in this space be timetabled but it is suggested that pupils stay for approximately 10 minutes. The second sensory space provides pupils with access to a variety of active resources. Sessions in this space should encompass **alerting, organising and calming activities.** While sessions may be facilitated by an ANA or SET, it is the professional observations of the CT (potentially in consultation with an ANA or SET) that will inform the selection of pupils who use the sensory spaces, and who has responsibility for the content of the sessions.

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- **Sensory Circuits:** A sensory circuit runs four days a week for 15 minutes each morning. Pupils engage in a number of alerting, organising and calming activities in order for them to return to class regulated and ready to learn. Pupils are selected by the CT in consultation with the AEN team
- Where additional resources or support materials are recommended by the SET team to enhance the provision of teaching and learning for pupils with AEN, funding may be made available through the Board of Management or Parents' Association.

### Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching

- A guiding principle underpinning the provision of supplementary teaching in Scoil Mhuire is that **pupils with the greatest level of need will receive the greatest level of support**. Consequently, the detailed bi-annual reviews inform the decision-making process of whether to continue (be it in an intensified, amended, or reduced rate) or remove the provision of support.
- The decision-making process involves consultation and discussion between the CT, the SET, and the pupil's family.
- The criteria on which the decision will be made include:
  1. A consideration as to whether the pupil has achieved some/all of the learning targets set
  2. A consideration as to whether the pupil will be able to access the curriculum independently in the classroom learning context

### Direction to out of School Agencies

- Scoil Mhuire has access to a NEPS Psychologist, who offers support and guidance to the AEN team in identifying the educational needs of pupils in receipt of additional support. One member of the AEN team acts as the point of contact for NEPS, and liaises with them (as necessary) throughout the year.
- Only in cases whereby a pupil fails to make reasonable progress, in spite of the school's best efforts in consultation with NEPS, will the psychologist become involved with an individual child for intensive intervention.
- Prior to this intervention from the NEPS Psychologist, the CT and SET will meet with the pupil's family to seek consent. Such meetings may also be attended by the Principal.
- Members of the AEN team may, if appropriate, direct families to external bodies or agencies such as: GPs; Public Health Centres; CAMHS; Occupational Therapy; Play Therapy; Speech and Language Therapy; or private assessors.
- Referral forms sent to the school by external agencies will be completed by the CT in consultation with the appropriate school personnel.
- The school building will be made available for assessments.
- Where a pupil receives an assessment, we request that a copy of the full report be provided to the school.



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### Effective Communication

The operation of an effective communication system between all the parties involved in meeting the learning needs of pupils is essential. As such:

- Where a pupil is in receipt of additional withdrawal support, families will be consulted
- Families will be consulted during the construction of support plans (SSP, SSP+)
- The CT, SET and ANA (where applicable) will liaise as frequently as is necessary regarding an individual pupil's learning
- To facilitate the sharing of information, families can email the SET directly (rather than emailing through the office as is the case for contacting CTs)

### Provision for Gifted Children and those of Exceptional Ability

Provision of education for pupils with exceptional ability is the responsibility of the CT. All pupils should have access to the highest-quality education appropriate to their needs. This includes pupils of exceptional intellectual ability. As such:

- Scoil Mhuire is committed to providing an appropriate and challenging curriculum for pupils of exceptional ability
- Scoil Mhuire is committed to differentiating curricular content so as to enhance educational provision for gifted pupils
- Where appropriate, Scoil Mhuire staff will alert families to external agencies or organisations that provide programmes for pupils of exceptional ability

### Implementation and Review

The implementation of this Policy will commence in January 2023. It will be reviewed annually. Immediate next steps include amendments, revisions and additions both necessitated by and informed by the opening of our Autism Class, scheduled to take place in the academic year 2023 – 2024.

### Communication

A hard copy of this policy will be available in the school office.

### Approval & Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in January 2023.

#### Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

#### Review Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
January 2024