

POLICY OF SCOIL MHUIRE CBS MARINO

Document Title: Additional Needs Assistant Policy
Effective Date: September 2024

Document No:16

First Edition

No. of pages:11

1. Purpose

Scoil Mhuire CBS supports the principles of inclusion, and strives to ensure equality of access to, and participation in, school life for each of our pupils. In Scoil Mhuire CBS we are committed to helping each pupil achieve their potential. Integral to this commitment is the provision of a quality system of support for pupils with additional care and educational needs. The support of an Additional Needs Assistant (ANA) is recognised by the Department of Education as a central element to the successful inclusion of such pupils.

This policy, developed by school staff in consultation with the Board of Management, seeks to:

- provide staff, pupils, and their families with clear guidelines and expectations with regard to the role and responsibility of ANAs in Scoil Mhuire CBS
- ensure that each ANA appreciates and understands the vital role they play in contributing positively to pupils' school experiences and the overall efficiency of the school
- to ensure best practice, consistency, and continuity for pupils and the school
- to ensure that a culture of fairness, equality, and equity is evident throughout the school

As well as consulting all relevant stakeholders, this policy was written with cognisance of and reference to relevant legislation and Departmental Circulars including: *The Education Welfare Act (2000)*; *The EPSEN Act (2004)*; and Circulars 0030/2014 and 0018/2023.

2. Scope

This policy seeks to ensure the effective deployment and utilisation of ANA support in Scoil Mhuire CBS, and therefore applies to all school staff as well as those pupils with additional care needs as outlined in Circular 0030/2014.

This policy, an element of our efforts to develop and maintain an inclusive school community, should be considered in the wider context of our work in Scoil Mhuire CBS and read alongside the school's AEN Policy.

3. Principles

The number of ANAs allocated to the school is determined by the National Council for Special Education and the Department of Education. ANAs are appointed to the staff by the Board of Management, and are deployed by the Principal in such a manner as to best meet the care needs of our pupils. Like members of the teaching staff, ANAs are a school-based resource, appointed to the school rather than to individual pupils.

ANAs are valued members of the Scoil Mhuire community, and carry out duties of a non-teaching nature that enhance the pupil's school experience. Working in cooperation with school management and teaching staff, ANAs help to create and maintain a calm and

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structured learning environment in which each pupil can be supported in reaching their potential.

The role of the ANA is one of significant importance that seeks to:

- provide additional adult support to pupils with additional and significant care needs,
- facilitate the attendance of such pupils at school, and also minimise disruption to class or teaching time for the pupil concerned and their peers,
- develop independent living skills and important social skills

The ANAs, like all staff members, adopt the highest possible professional standards, value diversity, foster inclusion, model positive social interactions and friendship skills, and remain constantly vigilant for the safety and wellbeing of Scoil Mhuire pupils.

4. Policy

STAFF ROLES

In Scoil Mhuire CBS it is the duty of the Principal to deploy ANAs effectively. Alongside the AEN coordinator, and in consultation with Class Teachers, the Principal will assign ANAs to pupils with significant and additional care needs. The level of access to ANA support will vary from pupil to pupil.

It is the duty of the Class Teacher to ensure that ANA support is available to those pupils with additional and significant care needs, and to identify and provide suitable seating arrangements for both the ANA and pupil in the classroom. Similarly it is the duty of the Class Teacher, in consultation with the ANA and the pupil's parent(s), to construct the pupil's Personal Pupil Plan (Appendix A). Where a pupil has access to ANA support on other than a full-time basis, it is the duty of the Class Teacher to ensure that subjects or activities that may present difficulties for the pupil in question are timetabled during periods whereby ANA support is available. In devising their timetable, Class Teachers will – where necessary for individual pupils – identify suitable times and activities for regulation breaks which can be facilitated by the ANA.

ANAs always work under the direction of the Principal, AEN coordinator, or Class Teacher and must familiarise themselves with all relevant school policies, in particular: the Child Safeguarding Statement; the Code of Behaviour; the Anti-Bullying Policy; the Administration of Medicines Policy; the AEN Policy; and this ANA Policy. Similarly, it is the duty of the ANA to familiarise themselves with the specific needs of the pupils in their care, and contribute to the development and review of Personal Pupil Plans and School Support Plans (where applicable and appropriate). All information gathered in the course of their duties is to be treated as confidential, and should only be shared with those who need to know.

GUIDELINES FOR ANAs

In Scoil Mhuire CBS, ANAs adhere to the following guidelines:

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Hours of work	<p>Full-time ANAs are contracted to work 32 hours per week, and part-time ANAs are expected to work the number of hours outlined by the NCSE.</p> <p>In addition, up to 12 additional days (72 hours) per year outside of instructional time must be worked. This is on a pro-rata basis for part-time ANAs. These days are at the discretion of the Board of Management in consultation with the Principal.</p>
Confidentiality	<p>Due discretion is expected in all matters of a confidential nature. Specifically, any information received about pupils or their families and observations made in class or around the school must be treated carefully and sensitively and must not be discussed or shared with anyone who does not need to know.</p>
Timetables	<p>ANAs will be given a timetable by the Principal or AEN coordinator at the start of the year.</p> <p>In line with their teaching colleagues, ANAs have a mid-morning break of 10 minutes and a lunch break of 20 minutes each day. These breaks generally precede or follow recreation breaks for pupils, and the times for ANA breaks will be decided in discussion and consultation with the Principal and relevant Class Teacher(s).</p> <p>As part of the ANA contract, ANAs are required to spend ten minutes each morning and evening preparing, tidying, or organising spaces for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Class Teachers will consult ANAs in the development of their respective class timetables, identifying times whereby the pupil will work independently with their peers and times where they will require additional adult support. Where applicable, suitable times for regulation breaks will also be identified.</p>
Planning, Record-Keeping, & Reporting	<p>ANAs will verbally report to the Class Teacher(s) regarding the completion and progress of tasks.</p> <p>ANAs will keep a record of significant observations in a notebook or diary during the course of their work. Where applicable and relevant, the date of any incident and the time, duration, intensity and frequency of the event should be recorded. This record will be used to help inform decisions on future learning and behaviour targets for the pupil.</p> <p>ANAs will assist the Class Teacher(s) with the construction of the Personal Pupil Plan, with a particular focus on the pupil's care needs.</p> <p>Where applicable and appropriate, ANAs will contribute to the development and review of the pupil's School Support Plan.</p> <p>ANAs will refer all matters related to classroom management, discipline, incidents of concern, and the curriculum to the Class Teacher.</p>

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Classroom Assistance	<p>The focus of assistance must be on enabling the pupil to reach their potential through fostering independence. ANAs must avoid doing something for the pupil that they can do for themselves. Similarly, in fostering the pupil's independence, the ANA can and should move away from the pupil at times.</p> <p>ANAs should avoid over-talking or providing a "running commentary" of what the pupil is to do next – this will enable the pupil to concentrate and think independently. Similarly, ANAs must encourage the pupil to focus on the Class Teacher at the point of instruction, redirecting if necessary, and avoid "re-teaching" so that the pupil does not become overly dependent on their support.</p> <p>ANAs should explain to the pupil how to approach tasks, but avoid giving the solution to a task or problem. Instead, ANAs can encourage and support the pupil in coming up with the answer by questioning and prompting.</p>
Physical Contact	<p>ANAs should try to have as little physical contact with the pupil as possible.</p> <p>Physical contact may be required to protect a pupil from harm to themselves or others</p> <p>Where necessary, ANAs may be required to help a pupil with changing for PE but should do so in a way that encourages independence.</p> <p>Actions of affection from a pupil towards an ANA should be handled sensitively but also appropriately, with an attempt to redirect the pupil towards high-fives, fist-bumps, or any other actions that are appropriate to their age and the school context.</p> <p>To carry out some activities, an ANA may need to guide the pupil's body. This should be done, where necessary, by gently touching the shoulder, back, arms, hands or lower leg only.</p>
Intimate Care Needs	<p>ANAs may be required to assist pupils with toileting and hygiene.</p> <p>Intimate care needs will be dealt with on a case by case basis and procedures will be agreed in consultation with the pupil's parents, the school Principal and AEN coordinator, and other professionals as required.</p> <p>The school's Child Safeguarding Statement must be followed at all times.</p>
Parental Contact	<p>ANAs are encouraged to build positive relationships based on trust with the parents of pupils with additional educational and care needs.</p> <p>If required at the end of the school day, ANAs will escort the pupil to the school gate where they may greet the parent. ANAs can speak with the pupil's family about how the day went or upcoming events,</p>

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	<p>but should not pass on information regarding pupil's educational progress.</p> <p>Parents with questions, requests, or concerns regarding school policy or practice should be referred directly to the Class Teacher or the Principal. This applies to direct face to face communication or indirect telephone communication. Parents should contact the relevant teacher(s) for information on the pupil's progress.</p> <p>It is not appropriate for parents to have the private phone number of or contact the ANA outside of school hours. Any minor or major incidents should be reported to the Class Teacher.</p>
Seating Arrangements	<p>An ANA should only sit with the pupil when and where deemed necessary by the Class Teacher. There should be some periods each day whereby the pupil doesn't have an ANA sitting with them.</p> <p>ANAs should avoid blocking the view of other pupils in the class.</p> <p>ANAs should also have their own chair and table in the classroom.</p>
Supervision	<p>ANAs provide supplementary supervision cover during recreation breaks.</p> <p>Where practical and appropriate, ANAs supervise pupils from a distance encouraging social interaction and inclusion.</p> <p>In some instances, closer proximity to a pupil on yard may be used to encourage positive behaviours and reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviours. If this approach is being taken it should be done following consultation with the Class Teacher and AEN coordinator.</p> <p>After break times the ANA should assist pupils to form a line at their designated spot and await the teacher's arrival.</p> <p>ANAs should never be tasked with the supervision of the whole-class. If the Class Teacher leaves the room at any stage, the classroom door must remain open and the neighbouring teacher should provide supplementary supervision of the class until the teacher returns.</p>
Regulation	<p>Regulation breaks, time-outs, or participation in sensory circuits may be necessary for some pupils with additional educational and care needs. While such activities are facilitated by the ANA, they should be designed in consultation with the Class Teacher or AEN coordinator.</p> <p>While the duration of regulation breaks may vary from pupil to pupil, a 10-15 minute period should generally be sufficient to allow the pupil time to engage in alerting, organising, and/or calming activities as appropriate. The length of these sessions should be determined by the Class Teacher.</p>

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Medication	<p>The school's Administration of Medicines Policy must be followed at all times.</p> <p>Prescribed medicines can be administered to pupils by ANAs – or the ANA can supervise the self-administration of medication by the pupil themselves – in those specific instances whereby approval has been granted by the Board of Management.</p>
Relevant Work	<p>ANAs work under the guidance of the Class Teacher and should not be left in sole charge of a pupil or class. They may, however, work on their own with pupils provided that the work in question has been allocated by the Class Teacher. Such work may include any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• assisting pupils to board and alight from school buses• assisting on out-of-school visits, walks, examinations and other similar activities and providing supervision and care on buses when pupils go on excursions, field trips and visits further away from the school grounds.• special assistance as necessary for pupils with particular difficulties, for example helping a pupil with additional care and educational needs with typing, writing, or other use of equipment• assisting the pupil to stay on task, follow classroom procedures and interact appropriately with members of the school community• assisting pupils in establishing and maintaining a consistent routine• assisting pupils to build self-esteem and to develop independence• assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting, and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the pupil• assistance with accessing the curriculum• assistance with the use of technology in the classroom and elsewhere which improves access to curricular content, allows the pupil to engage more easily with learning tasks, and present assignments• accompanying and supervising their assigned pupil to swimming lessons, and assisting the pupil as necessary and appropriate• promoting the importance of personal hygiene and reporting any difficulties to the Class Teacher• assisting the teaching staff in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation, transitions around the school, and dispersal from the classroom• assisting the teacher in making and using visual cues to support communication with the pupil with ANA access. These may include single cue cards or visual timetables• assisting the teacher in developing and revising behaviour and learning target charts for individual pupils, recording achievement, and delivering incentives gained• assisting the teacher in the organisation and management of learning materials for the pupil and the class in general

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another• participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and cooperation with any such changes in policy and practice arising from the school development process• engagement with parents of pupils with additional educational and care needs in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management• the encouragement of good attendance and punctuality• acting as a positive role model for the pupils in their care• other duties appropriate to the class level as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. ANAs may be re-assigned to other work appropriate to the grade when their designated pupils are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise.
Staff Meetings	<p>The ANA Team will attend monthly meetings with the Principal and AEN coordinator to discuss matters specific to the support of pupils with additional care and educational needs.</p> <p>ANAs may be required to attend meetings with the teaching staff when issues of relevance to their own particular work are scheduled for discussion.</p>
Absences	<p>As is the case with their teaching colleagues, ANAs are required to inform the Principal and Deputy Principal at the earliest opportunity if they are unable to attend school. ANAs should also inform the relevant Class Teacher(s).</p>

5. Appendices

APPENDIX A: PERSONAL PUPIL PLAN TEMPLATE



Personal Pupil Plan



Pupil Information			
Name:		Class:	
Teacher:		SET:	
ANA:		ANA allocation:	
Start date:		Review date:	

Pupil Overview	
Priority Concerns of the Pupil's Family:	
Priority Concerns of School Personnel:	
How ANA support will be deployed to assist the pupil:	

For _____, ANA support is vital in each of the areas identified below:

Primary Care Needs (as per Circular 0030/2014)	
<p>Assistance with feeding: where the pupil requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time</p>	
<p>Administration of medicine: where the pupil requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time</p>	
<p>Assistance with toileting and general hygiene: where the pupil cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so</p>	
<p>Assistance with mobility and orientation: on an ongoing basis including assisting the pupil to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport, or helping the pupil to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school.</p>	
<p>Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with additional needs where the school has made a robust case that existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision</p>	
<p>Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.</p>	
<p>Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: this may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a pupil may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.</p>	
<p>Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.</p>	
<p>Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs: and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation and dispersal times etc.</p>	

Secondary Care Needs (as per Circular 0030/2014)	
Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms, or assisting the pupil who is not physically able to perform such tasks to prepare and tidy their workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another. To assist with cleaning of materials.	
Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans for pupils with additional educational needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the pupil concerned and the review of such plans.	
Assist in maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for pupils including details of attendance and care needs. Assist in preparation of school files and materials relating to care and assistance required in class by pupils with additional needs.	
Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities, liaising with Class Teachers and other relevant personnel, attending meetings with Parents, SENO, NEPS Psychologists, or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of Class Teacher or Principal.	
Assistance with enabling a pupil to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of qualified personnel, including Class Teachers or support teachers.	
Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities such as walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.	

Additional Vital Care Needs	
Preventing the pupil from harming themselves or engaging in self-injurious behaviour.	
Preventing the pupil from harming other pupils in the school.	
Preventing the pupil from harming school staff.	
Preventing the pupil from damaging or destroying property.	
Close and careful supervision of the pupil who is considered a flight risk.	
Accompanying the pupil to and from sessions outside the classroom including: withdrawal learning support; sensory circuits; the sensory spaces; and/or PE.	
Accompanying the pupil to the toilet block for supervision purposes.	
Encouraging and supporting positive and constructive peer interactions & play.	
Encouraging and supporting the pupil to reflect on interactions or incidents with other people, helping them to think flexibly and consider the incident from another perspective.	
Supporting the pupil to develop the self-monitoring of feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.	
Intervening to remove or mitigate against known triggers for the pupil.	
Removing the pupil from whole-school activities when they become overwhelmed or emotionally distressed.	
Removing the pupil from the classroom when they become overwhelmed, emotionally distressed, or experience significant difficulty with self-regulation.	
Assisting the Class Teacher to raise the alarm should an urgent or dangerous situation arise.	
Assisting the Class Teacher to comfort other pupils who are distressed or injured by the actions of the pupil.	

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6. Approval & Review

Initial Approval

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal

14th May, 2024

Date

1st September, 2024

Effective Date

June 2026

Review Date

