

St Vincent's Secondary School

Glasnevin

Dublin 11



St Vincent's Secondary School

Learning Support Policy



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís
Edmund Rice Schools Trust

St. Vincent's Secondary School

Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Policy

2023/24

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St. Vincent's is an all boys secondary school in Glasnevin. We are part of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust. We promote an inclusive environment where all students can work to reach their full potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Vincent's School aims to provide a quality Catholic education for all, in the tradition of Edmund Rice, which promotes leadership, fosters community and respects diversity.

RATIONALE

This document outlines the school's provision of additional support for students with AEN

- It outlines the philosophy that underpins this provision.
- The document is written in the context of the current legislative framework underpinning Special Education in Ireland:
 - The Education Act (1998)
 - The Equal Status Act (2000)
 - The Education Welfare Act (2000)
 - The Data Protection Act (2003)
 - The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
 - The Education for Persons with Disabilities Act (2004)

- The Equality Act (2004)
- The Freedom of Information Act (2014)
- The document is written in the context of:
 - DES Circulars
 - Guidelines published by NCSE
 - Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process 2006
 - The Guidelines on the Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools (NEPS)

AIMS OF AEN DEPARTMENT

The main aim of Resource Teaching At St. Vincent's is to provide a positive learning environment, which will foster academic, social and emotional development of students with AEN and to enable each to realise their full potential.

Resource provision provision aims to:

- Provide students with consistent opportunities to experience success.
- Provide supplementary teaching and additional support in literacy and numeracy.
- Provide collaboration among teachers in the implementation of a school wide support for pupils.
- Ensure that students with AEN are educated in an inclusive environment.
- Ensure all members of staff are aware of the specific needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area.
- Ensure AEN is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of a whole school setting.
- Ensure students with AEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Encourage and foster partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at home.

DEFINITION OF AEN

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) defines "Special Educational needs" as

"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"

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEAM (SET)

The Special Educational team consists of:

- M. Quinn (Principal)
- F. Humber (Coordinator)
- J. Lyons (Coordinator)
- C. Sweeney
- E. McLoughlin (BFL)

IDENTIFICATION OF AEN

The following criteria can be used to identify students who may benefit from extra supports:

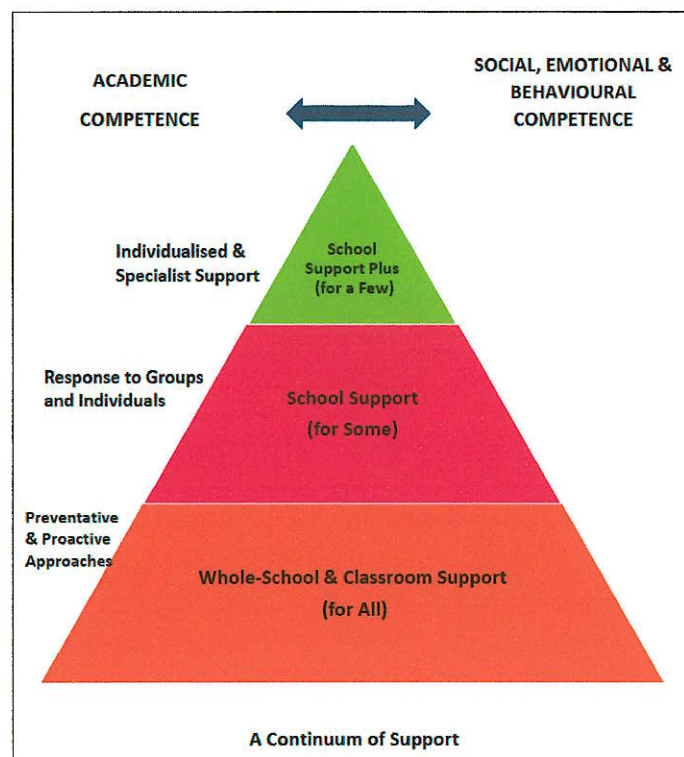
- School links with primary schools. Primary school passport documentation. Liaising with primary school class teachers, SET teachers & SNA's.
- School meetings and discussions with parents'/guardians' of incoming students.
- Testing: CAT 4 tests, PPADE, Maths (PT Maths), English (NGRT). Analysis of term exams, mock exams, state exams.

- Referrals from teachers to the SET • Educational (psychologists), clinical (OT, S&L, CAMS, physiotherapist etc) and medical (GP, consultant etc) reports presented to school.
- Meeting with NEPS and other external agencies.
- Induction days for incoming 1st years.

AEN Provision:

Effective teaching and learning is critically important for all students, and especially for those with special educational needs. Meaningful inclusion implies that all students are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. The NEPS continuum of support is used as a framework to provide support to all students with AEN..

NEPS Continuum of Support for Post Primary Schools



The following is a brief outline of the schools AEN provision:

- SET teachers will help and offer advice to subject teachers on a needs basis

- The school has a mixed ability class system. The results of the standardised assessments are made available to the subject teachers. This allows the staff to differentiate the classwork to meet the needs of the students.
- Students who are exempt from the study of certain subjects are, where possible, removed from class, and receive resource in small groups during that time. Parents are informed of this.
- Some special needs students may receive help on a 1/1 basis. Each individual case is judged on its own merits based on the results of various testing, psychologists' reports or outside agencies.
- Small targeted groups are identified in consultation with the English and Maths departments (in areas of literacy and numeracy). Appropriate support and interventions are put in place.
- Applications are made to the State Examinations Commission for reasonable accommodation in Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations. These applications are made in consultation with parents, subject teachers and students.

COLLABORATION

Parents

Parents, through their unique knowledge of their own child, have much to contribute to their child's learning programme. Parents are encouraged to actively communicate with the school if they observe any learning or related difficulties in their child at home. The AEN department advocates a partnership of collaboration and cooperation with parents of students with AEN.

Students

The involvement of pupils in the development, implementation and review of their own learning programmes is an important principle that underpins effective AEN provision. Students are encouraged to contribute to their own

learning targets and to develop ownership of the skills and strategies that are taught.

Subject teacher

The subject teacher has been explicitly recognised as having the primary responsibility for the progress & care of all students in their classroom in the DES Circular 0014/2017 and the Post Primary Guidelines.

The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress of all pupils in his/her class. It is particularly important that all class teachers create a classroom environment that accommodates and takes account of learning difficulties. The class teacher also plays an important role in the early identification of pupils with AEN. The class teacher is alert to the possibility of general and specific learning difficulties and brings their concerns to the attention of the AEN department via email, SEN@stvincentsd11.ie. A key element of successful AEN provision is a high level of consultation and cooperation between the class teacher and the SET teaching team.

Where a student has access to an SNA, the subject teacher should plan to most effectively engage the SNA in consultation with the AEN department. All teachers should also support/encourage independence within the students. This is particularly important for Senior Cycle students. Subject teachers must have due regard to the rights of students with additional educational needs. All subject teachers should implement teaching approaches and methodologies that facilitate the meaningful inclusion of students with additional educational needs. Each subject department will include in its plan how it caters for the different students taking their subject. These methodologies include:

- Co-operative teaching and learning within mainstream classrooms
- Collaborative problem-solving activities
- Varied group work
- Differentiation

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

Early intervention and prevention

Early-intervention programmes, which are evidence-based and are responsive to the school's context will be used. Focused interventions to develop literacy, social, emotional, life-skills and well-being are particularly important for Junior Cycle students with additional educational needs.

Resource hours

The role of the subject teacher, who has Resource hours in the AEN department, is to support and contribute to the individual learning needs of AEN students. Teachers with Resource hours on their timetable will attend an initial meeting with the AEN department. At this meeting the learning needs of the student are outlined. The teacher is expected to formulate programmes of their own which provide curricular support to the AEN student. The SET works in close collaboration and consultation with those specialist teachers in the creation of relevant and resourced programmes of study and follow up meetings are held at key stages during the year.

Role of Principal

The principal will assume overall responsibility for the school's AEN Programme.

- The Principal will be responsible for establishing, implementing and monitoring whole school policies, programmes and procedures which support the learning of all students in the school. The Principal will liaise with the BOM, teachers, relevant staff and parents to ensure the success of this.

Role of SNA

As laid out in circulars 0030/2014, the role of the Special Needs Assistant is as follows:

Role of the SNA in support of the student: Responsibility for the care and well being of the student in a manner that values, respects and supports the student as well as promotes independence.

Role of the SNA in collaboration with the teacher: The role of the SNA is pivotal and important in the school. We recognize the enormous contribution our SNA's make to the school.

- The SNAs meet with the AEN Coordinator and Principal regularly, to evaluate students with access to SNA support and to amend timetables to meet the needs of students as appropriate.

IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

If it is deemed appropriate the Principal/SET Team initiates a process of formal and informal assessment to be conducted by the AEN department.

Informal Assessment	Formal Assessment:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observations from mainstream teachers.• Consultation with parents.• Student Journal.• Meeting with pupil.• Meeting Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observations from mainstream teachers.• Consultation with parents.• Student Journal.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with pupil. • Meeting Parent • CAT 4 • NGRT / PTM • PPADE (2023) • Review of entrance tests. • Review of in house exams and reports. • Behavioural record if appropriate. • Consultation with Guidance Counsellors. • Review of previous professional assessments • Review data supplied by primary school (Primary Passport and yellow form)
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Following this screening/profiling stage decisions are made as to appropriate support warranted.

- Needs for monitoring/support in mainstream settings.
- Purposeful Withdrawal.
- SNA support.
- Support is given within the resources of the school.

All information / data gathered are recorded in the student's profile on Google Drive.

PROGRAM PLANNING- *Plan. Do, Review*

The objectives of the assessments conducted by the AEN department are to identify the pupil's learning, behavioural, emotional and social needs. As a result of the information generated by this assessment process, the SET may consider it necessary to have a Student Support Plan (SSP) created in consultation with NEPS psychologist (where appropriate), Principal, class teachers, resource teachers, parents and pupil to best enable the student to progress in school.

Student Support Plan

SSPs include:

- Targets
- Assessment criteria
- Possible Resources and Techniques
- Ideas for support teacher/SNA
- Outcomes

A SSP sets out the short-term goals needed to meet the priority learning needs of the pupil engagement from relevant stakeholders.

SSPs include:	SBP include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LBC'S
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MWAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible Resources and Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student profile

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas for support teacher/SNA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student, parent & teacher voice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets and Possible resources

REVIEW / EVALUATION

The progress of each pupil should be monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the term. These evaluations help to form the basis of future planning.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION (RACE)

All applications for reasonable accommodations are considered in light of a published Framework of Principles as set out by the Expert Advisory Group on examinations. Every effort is made to support potential RACE candidates with similar support during in-school assessments and class where appropriate.

This work will be completed by the RACE Coordinator.

SET Team

Members of the SET team meet each week with senior management to review school AEN provision.

The SET team will:

- Coordinate the provision of special education in the school.
- Delegate the performance of specific responsibilities to other staff members including the SET team
- Coordinate data gathering, to facilitate the implementation of standardised tests, to collate the information and identify needs.

- Allocate resources (organise suitable support for AEN students with a variety of needs)
- Plan, implement and review student support plans
- Facilitate continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with additional educational needs, • To consult in the identification of literacy and numeracy target groups
- Test relevant students. Plan, and prepare applications for reasonable accommodations in the state exams (This has been delegated to a member of the SET)
- To facilitate the new JC L2LP

AEN register

At the beginning of each academic year, all teachers are provided with relevant information on students with AEN .This register includes:

- Name of pupil
 - Category of difficulty
 - Support being provided
 - Potential areas of difficulty
 - Suitable teaching strategies/methodologies
 - Potential provision at State Exams
 - New staff are briefed by resource department
- and class profiles of students up to Junior Cert are available on Google Drive to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

Class Profiles: The SET has established an online shared drive providing access to additional educational information on all students. Information includes: reading and maths ages, general ability, identified AEN (if any). The purpose is to provide all teachers with information that may help in providing a more successful teaching and learning experience for all.

RECORD KEEPING

- A minutes folder is kept recording all meetings by the SET on Google Drive
- SSP are available for all staff to view on Google Drive

ENROLMENT PROCESS

Enrolment policy: The school's Admission and Enrolment Policy is a substantial document and may be viewed on the school's website www.stvincentsd11.ie

Steps in moving to St. Vincent's Secondary School:

As part of students' transition, St Vincen'ts runs an induction programme for all first year students. SET liaises with the induction programme from an AEN perspective.

ENGAGEMENT WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Where appropriate the school will seek support and guidance from external bodies and agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO), the NCSE Support Service, the Inspectorate and health professionals.

PROVISION FOR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

St Vincent's recognises the importance of trained personnel and the need for whole staff development in AEN. All staff are made aware of opportunities available within the AEN field. Whole staff in AEN is organised through a combination of external support agencies and the in-house Special Education Team (SET).

CPD Log

A list of CPD (professional and personal time undertaken by the SET (ongoing)

Staff Name	Details of CPD	Date / Duration

Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools

In St. Vincent's we recognise the importance of our DEIS targets in all areas of our teaching and learning.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1taP_EwCFIUW6erP36PuV45pZpO-DiD-C9ZXy9sl_-Ek/edit

Wellbeing and AEN

One of the aims of the Wellbeing programme at St. Vincent's is to promote inclusion, the needs of the students are considered when wellbeing initiatives are taking place and aims to involve all students.

Students with AEN part take in the Wellbeing core subjects (CSPE , SPHE and PE) as part of their junior cycle education. The wellbeing coordinator and AEN department liaise to ensure each individual student's AEN is being considered throughout the wellbeing programme.

JCSP and AEN

The Junior Certificate Schools Programme is offered to all junior students at St. Vincent's. This acts as an additional incentive and support for students with AEN.

'Guidance and Additional Educational Needs'

- The GC plays an active role in the Transition of students with additional needs from Primary to Post-Primary and will make every attempt to find out as much information about a student to aid their support.
- The GC liaises with the SET team with regards to psychometric testing.
- Through the First Year Wellbeing Programme, the GC attains information regarding the students' individual Learning Styles and this information is shared with class teachers - CPD has been provided on this initiative through SUPERGENERATION.
- DARE initiatives are promoted within the school and while much of the information is transmitted in group settings (Senior Cycle Guidance Programme), given the confidential nature of information involved in the DARE application process, much of this work is done on a one-to-one basis with both students and parents. There is a lot of collaboration between the GC, SET team, students, parents and outside agencies during this process.
- Access to guidance is for all students within the school with accurate and upto date information regarding progression and appropriate pathways beyond school eg NLN

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