

The Quay School



The Quay School

St. Colmcille's N.S.

Additional Educational Needs Policy



Equality

Equity



Last Updated: February 2024

ST
ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

Next Update: February 2025

AEN Policy

Mission Phrase: St Colmcille's NS is a Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a structured, caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

We will strive to provide an appropriate education for every child in our school.

"Ní neart go cur le chéile"

1. Context

St. Colmcille's National School is a co-educational, vertical primary school located in Westport Quay. The school enrolls children from Junior Infants to Sixth class. There is strong parental support for teaching and learning in the school, a factor which has a positive effect on pupil attainment levels and on pupils' attitudes to learning. The school currently has an administrative principal, 8 mainstream class teachers and 3 Special Education Teachers (SETs) and 1 EAL teacher. The school has 3.5 special needs assistants (SNAs).

The allocation of both AETs and SNAs is subject to review.

The purpose of this policy document is to provide information to school personnel and parents on how we organise provision for teaching and support of children with special educational needs. The term special educational needs is broad and includes children who have difficulty acquiring literacy and/or numeracy skills, children with difficulties with fine or gross motor skills, children who have English as an additional language (if that impacts on their progress) and children who have diagnosed disabilities.

In this document, AEN can be taken to be special educational needs in this broad sense.

Our Additional Educational Needs (AEN) team encompass what were previously termed Learning Support Teachers, Resource Teachers and teachers for children with English as an Additional Language (EAL teachers). In this document we will use the term Additional Education Teachers (AETs) for all of the AEN teachers.

The policy is based on Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (Department of Education & Skills).

This policy on Special Education Needs (SEN) was originally formulated by the school staff in 2019 taking cognisance of directives contained in the:

- Education (Admission to Schools) Act, 2018
- Recent DES Circulars, especially 02/2005 and more recently Circular 0013/2017
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007; Amendment, 2012, 2015
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004
- Equal Status Act, 2002
- Learning-Support Guidelines, 2000
- Education Act, 1998; Amendments (Welfare) 2000,
- Learning-Support Guidelines, 2000

2. Aims of AEN Support

Our school is committed to helping our pupils to achieve their full potential. The provision of a quality system of AEN support teaching is integral to this commitment. Through the implementation of our AEN policy we aim to:

- To fulfil our obligations under current legislations and Department of Education circulars which dictate such educational provision in Irish schools as outlined above.
- To support the inclusion of children with AEN in our school.
- To develop positive attitudes about school and learning in our children.
- To ensure that the Staged Approach/Continuum of Support is implemented (see below).
- To optimise the teaching and learning process in order to enable children with learning difficulties to achieve adequate levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy before leaving primary school (Guidelines for Schools, p15).
- To enable children to participate in the full curriculum.
- To support appropriate differentiation in the classroom.
- To support children's development both socially and emotionally.
- To involve parents in supporting their children.
- To promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of whole-school policies on learning support for our pupils.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

- To promote early intervention programmes designed to enhance learning and prevent/reduce difficulties in learning.
- To inform teachers of any new in-career development programmes or services which may benefit and enhance AEN teaching in the school.

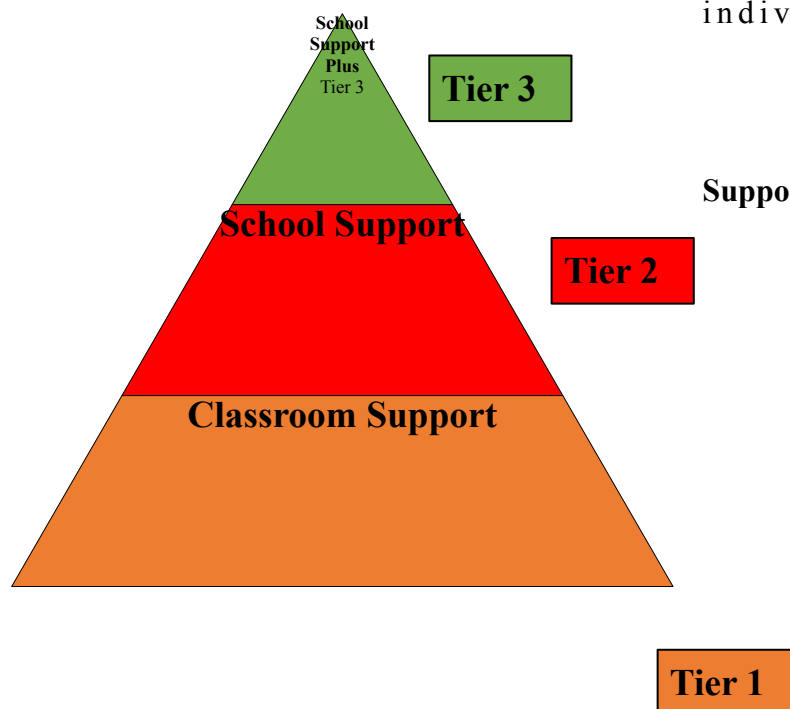
St.Columbkille's National School

3. Principles of AEN Support

The provision of AEN support in our school is based on the following principles:

1. Quality of teaching.
2. Effective whole-school policies.
3. Direction of resources towards children in greatest need.
4. Implementation of a staged approach to support provision at Class Support/School Support/School Support Plus levels.
5. Provision of the model(s) of intervention appropriate for the child, including the withdrawal model, in-class support model, individual or group work, etc.

**Continuum of
Approach**



Support – Staged

The Quay School

Stage 1. Classroom Support

If a class teacher or parent has concerns about the academic, physical, social or emotional development of a child, the class teacher will then construct a simple, individual plan of support to be implemented in the normal class setting. **This plan will form the 1st instructional page of the child's Continuum of Support** and will be based on screening measures administered by the teacher. The plan will be reviewed after each instructional term (using the Review Page from the Continuum of Support document). If the plan is working well for the child it may be decided to continue with it. If insufficient progress is made and the child is still having difficulty, then Stage 2 (School Support) is implemented.

Stage 2. School Support

If further intervention is deemed necessary (after further diagnostic testing by the AET) and the child is to receive supplementary teaching at School Support Level then a letter of consent will be sent to the parents by the AET in question. (Template of letter kept in AEN folder in principal's office).

The class teacher and AET then draw up a plan of appropriate learning outcomes for the child. **This plan will form the 2nd instructional page of the child's Continuum of Support** and will be implemented in conjunction with the child's Classroom Support Plan (1st Page). The child's parents/guardians will be informed of this plan, invited to contribute and asked to sign it. This plan will be reviewed at the end of each instructional term and if significant concerns remain after a number of reviews, it may be necessary to involve outside agencies such as NEPS or the HSE. (Stage 3)

Stage 3. School Support Plus

The school may formally request a consultation from other professionals outside the school in respect of children who fail to make sufficient progress after supplementary teaching or the implementation of a behavioural programme, as appropriate. Such professional advice is sought from psychologists, speech therapists, audiologists, occupational therapists etc. This is carried out in consultation with and with the permission of the child's parents/guardians.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

Following the consultation, the class teacher, AET, parents and outside professional (if available) will draw up a Learning Programme for the child. **This plan will form the 3rd instructional page of the child's Continuum of Support.**

In case of children identified at an early age as having significant special educational needs, intervention at Stage 3 will be necessary on their entry to school.

Support in the classroom will be an essential component of any learning programme devised for such children and primary responsibility for the child will remain with the class teacher in consultation with the designated AET.

Note: The 'Log of Actions' in the Continuum of Support will be added to as appropriate (after a decision has been made or a meeting held). These additions will be made by the Class Teacher or the AET.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of supporting learning is a collaborative responsibility shared by all the school community: The Board of Management, Principal Teacher, Parents, Class Teachers, AETs, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), Children and external bodies and agencies.

Board of Management

Through implementing this policy, the BoM fulfils its statutory duty in providing an appropriate education for children with additional educational needs, in which each child is supported and encouraged to meet their own potential.

The Board of Management will:

- Be informed of the reviewed AEN policy and any updates to it.
- Ratify the AEN policy.
- Ensure that satisfactory classroom accommodation and teaching resources are available.
- Provide secure facilities for the storage of records relating to children in receipt of AEN support.

Principal Teacher

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

The principal teacher will have overall responsibility for the school's provision for children with SEN. Part of this work involves ensuring that the teachers and parents of pupils who are selected for diagnostic assessment and supplementary teaching are enabled to fulfil their roles. The principal keeps a record of referrals made to NEPS and other outside services.

At the beginning of each school year, the principal meets with the NEPS psychologist to formulate a plan for the year, including assessments of pupils and professional supports for teachers.

The principal appoints the Deputy Principal as AEN co-ordinator and liaises with them in:

- Monitoring the protocols around the selection of pupils for supplementary teaching in line with current DES Guidelines: [Guidelines for Primary Schools Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools](#)
- St. Colmcille's identifies pupils with the greatest need and prioritises them for additional support, appropriate to their best interests.
- Informing teachers of any new in-career development programmes or services which may benefit and enhance AEN teaching in the school.
- Encouraging staff to avail of specific programmes and post-graduate programmes in SEN.
- Striving towards excellence in terms of teaching and learning, commensurate with the availability of both human and educational resources.

AEN Co-ordinator

The AEN coordinator, in partnership with the principal, has responsibility for overseeing the coordination of the caseload, the management of the AEN team and liaising with external agencies. He/she has responsibility for maintaining and updating the Continuum of Support list of pupils accessing support at Tiers 1, 2 and 3. The AEN coordinator, in partnership with the principal, will also be involved in:

- Keeping teachers informed about the external assessment services that are available and the procedures to be followed in initiating referrals.
- Informing teachers of any new in-career development programmes or services which may benefit and enhance AEN teaching in the school.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

Class Teacher

The class teacher has overall responsibility for the management of Special Educational Needs provision for all pupils in his/her class (Education Act, 1998; DES Circular 0013.2017). The class teacher can expect support in this responsibility from members of the AEN team and the AEN coordinator. The class teacher has sole responsibility for opening and updating the Student Support File for his/her pupils receiving Tier 1 support. He/she will collaborate in opening and updating Student Support Files for pupils receiving support at Tier 2 and Tier 3.

The class teacher will:

- Provide effective teaching and learning opportunities
- Support the identification of learning difficulties
- Provide Classroom Support/Stage 1
- Log actions in the Support Plan
- Communicate with parents/guardians
- Draw up Classroom Support Plans (Stage 1 Continuum of Support) *“Interventions with children at stages 2 and 3 should include a classroom support plan to ensure that the children’s needs are met for the whole school day”* (Guidelines 2017 p7)
- Collaborate with the support teacher in the development of a Support Plan for each child who is in receipt of supplementary teaching at School Support/School Support Plus Level on the Continuum, by identifying appropriate learning targets and by organising classroom activities to achieve those targets. A key role of successful support is a high level of consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and the support teacher.

Central to this consultation is the development, implementation and review of support plans. This consultation will be achieved through formal timetabling at least once per instructional term, and through informal consultation as the need arises.

AEN Teachers

The central roles of the AEN teachers will be to

- a) support the class teacher in optimising teaching and learning opportunities and

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

b) provide specialised teaching to those children with identified special educational needs. AEN Teachers responsibilities will consist of both teaching and non-teaching duties.

c) the provision of support for small groups of students, or use of *In-Class support teaching* for a number of students, as opposed to primarily 1 to 1 teaching, also means that qualifying students will often be able to receive more support than they otherwise would do. *Circular 0017/2017*

Where *In-Class teaching* is used then there will be shared reflection on the practice to ensure pupil progress.

These will include:

- Providing supplementary teaching commensurate with the child's particular and individual needs.
- Researching the child's learning difficulty/AEN, to become familiar with their needs and their preferred learning methods.
- Being familiar with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of needs (Guidelines 2017 p.13). At St Colmcille's NS we use tiered instruction e.g. Team Teaching, Small Group Teaching, Station Teaching and Individualised Teaching (not exhaustive). Collaborative practice methodologies such as **Lesson Study** (in conjunction with PDST/OIDE) have and are being explored in areas such as Mathematics. We have found this a useful tool for instruction and increasing collaboration amongst staff and building teacher capacity.
- Developing a Support Plan for each child who is selected for supplementary teaching, in consultation with Class Teachers and parents.
- Maintaining a Short-Term Plan and Progress Record, or equivalent, for each individual or group of children withdrawn for support teaching. Maintaining a Short-Term and Progress Record (together with the class teacher) for in-class support.

Administering a range of formal and informal assessments and maintaining records of the outcomes of those assessments. This will involve:

- Conducting an initial Diagnostic Assessment of each child who has been

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

identified as having low achievement and/or a learning difficulty, based on results of an appropriate screening measure and record the findings of the assessment in the child's Support Plan.

- Monitoring the ongoing progress of each child in receipt of supplementary teaching in relation to the attainment of agreed learning targets and short-term objectives that arise from them and recording the observations in the Short-Term Plan and Progress Record, or equivalent.

- Reviewing the progress of each child at the end of an instructional term and recording it on the child's Support Plan.

- Providing supplementary teaching in English and/or Mathematics to children who experience low achievement and/or learning difficulties at School Support/School Support Plus (as per selection criteria). Supplementary teaching will also be provided for children whose social skills, gross/fine motor skills and English language skills need further development (EAL).
- Logging actions in the Support Plan.
- Delivering early intervention programmes.
- Assisting the implementation of whole-school procedures for the selection of children for supplementary teaching.
- Contributing to the development of AEN policy.
- Providing advice to the class teacher (if requested).
- Meeting with parents of children who are in receipt of support teaching where a concern is ongoing.
- Liaising with external agencies such as speech and language therapists etc., and implementing suitable recommendations, wherever possible.
- Implementing school policies on preventing learning difficulties, screening children for learning difficulties, interpreting the outcomes of diagnostic assessments and providing supplementary teaching, where it is deemed necessary.

AEN Team

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

Meetings of the AEN team will be held every two months. Planning progress and reviews will be discussed.

Roles are assigned – person to liaise with outside agencies such as SLT, OT, NEPS, CAMHS, Psychologist. Principal and AEN Co-ordinator will liaise with all outside agencies.

St.Columbkille's National School

Role of SNA

The role of an SNA will be to carry out duties based on the care needs of the child. The tasks associated with these duties can be of a primary or secondary nature (Circular 0030/2014).

The **primary care support tasks** may include:

- Administration of medicine.
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene.
- Assistance with mobility and orientation.
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds, and at recreation, assembly and dispersal times.
- Assisting children while at play as appropriate.
- Provision of non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions.
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a child from a classroom when essential.
- Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for children with physical disabilities or sensory needs and those with significant and identified social and emotional difficulties.

The **secondary care support tasks** may include:

- Preparation and tidying of workspaces and classrooms or assisting a child who is not physically able to perform such tasks; to prepare and tidy a workspace, to present materials, to display work, or to transition from one lesson activity to another.
- Assistance with the development of Personal Pupil Plans (PPP) for children with Special Educational Needs, with a particular focus on developing a care plan to meet the care needs of the child concerned and the review of such plans.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

- Assistance with maintaining a journal and care monitoring system for children including details of attendance and care needs.
- Planning for activities and classes where there may be additional care requirements associated with particular activities.
- Attending meetings with parents, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENO); National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS); or school staff meetings with the agreement and guidance of class teacher/principal.
- Assistance with enabling a child to access therapy or psycho-educational programmes such as anger management or social skills classes, under the direction of appropriate personnel.
- Assistance to attend or participate in out of school activities: walks, or visits, where such assistance cannot be provided by teaching staff.

Role of Parents/Guardians

We recognise that parents, as the primary educators of their child, play a central role in the education and well-being of their child, and we aim to foster a proactive partnership with all parents in St. Colmcille's. The central role of parents/guardians of children with AEN is the same as all parents/guardians, i.e. to support the work of the school and to optimise teaching and learning opportunities for their child at home.

Role of Children

The role of the child with AEN will be that of active participant in their own learning; the extent and nature of this will depend on their strengths and needs.

Role of External Bodies and Agencies

Our school liaises with external professionals such as NEPS Psychologists, Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Support Service, the Health Service Executive (HSE), Children Disability Network Teams (CDNTs), Tusla, Visiting Teachers for children with vision impairment, Visiting Teachers for

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

children with hearing loss, and the Inspectorate. We acknowledge that the needs of many children span both health and education services. We therefore liaise with and contribute to health-led assessment and delivery of interventions and facilitate meetings between parents and various support services. We also endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing support plans at each level of the Continuum of Support.

5. Prevention, Early Intervention and Assessment

Prevention Strategies

- Differentiation of the curriculum by the mainstream class teacher to cater for individual strengths and needs.
- Development and implementation of agreed approaches to the teaching of English and Mathematics to ensure progression and continuity from class to class, including the *Aistear* programme in the infant classes, *Literacy Lift-Off* using the PM Readers from junior infants to second class, guided reading in third and fourth classes, etc.
- Careful development of phonological awareness, rhyming skills and oral language skills, before formal reading of words and books.
- The use of concrete materials as much as possible and as appropriate.
- Ongoing structured observation and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of children in the infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.
- Class-based early intervention by the class teacher focusing on the provision of additional individualised support, as and when required.
- Provision of additional support in language development/early literacy/early mathematical skills to children who need it.
- Support for children experiencing social/emotional difficulties and problems with concentration.
- Provision of Assistive Technology as appropriate.
- Promotion of parental involvement through their attendance at induction meetings for parents/guardians of incoming Junior Infants and the arrangement of formal and informal parent/teacher meetings.

Early Intervention Strategies

Early intervention programmes may be provided by the class Teacher and/or the Support Teacher, in accordance with the Staged Approach (NEPS Continuum).

Collaboration and consultation between the class teachers and the support teachers should identify children who may be in need of early intervention.

Teacher observation and professional opinion will be given due consideration in the selection of children for early intervention programmes at Classroom Support/School Support level.

Early intervention programmes will include -

- Implementation of an English language programme for Junior Infant and Senior Infant children who have English as an additional language, with emphasis on basic vocabulary. Intensive language programme for such children in more senior classes with emphasis on basic vocabulary and the language of maths. This acknowledges the literacy skills already acquired in mother tongue.
- Active learning programme for all Junior Infant children with specific emphasis on oral language development, underpinned by the principles of the *Aistear* programme and the new Language Curriculum.
- Early intervention literacy and language support programme (*Literacy Lift-Off using PM Readers*) in Junior Infant to Second Class – (Organised blocks of 6 to 8 weeks)
- Withdrawal of children to a support teaching room, in-class support, team teaching, group work and individual support will be provided, as appropriate and if it is in a child's best interest.

Screening and assessments

Screening and assessment form a core part of the staged approach to AEN provision which underpins the Continuum of Support model. On an annual basis, we provide a regular schedule of assessment and screening at all class levels to ensure that pupils' additional needs are identified as they arise. The following table outlines commercial tests in use in our school, it is understood that teacher observation and teacher designed assessments and

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

checklists also play an important role in identifying pupils who may require additional support.

Class Level	Standardised Testing Schedule	Timing	Additional screening/ diagnostic assessments in use
Junior Infants	Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)	May	Class teachers term assessments
Senior Infants	Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)	April	- Class teachers term assessments - Single Word Reading Test (SWRT) – pre/post tests for bench marking with the Literacy Lift-Off (LLO) programme

First Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 1 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 1	May	• Class teachers term assessments • Dyslexia Early Screening Test (DEST) – if required • Single Word Spelling Test (SWST) • Single Word Reading Test (SWRT) – pre/post tests for bench marking with the Literacy Lift-Off (LLO) programme
Second Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 2 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 2 • Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)	May October	• Single Word Reading Test (SWRT) – pre/post tests for bench marking with the Literacy Lift-Off (LLO) programme

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

Third Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 3 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 3	May	• Single Word Reading Test (SWRT) – pre/post tests for bench marking for the Guided Reading programme
Fourth Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 4 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 4 • Non-Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)	May October	• Single Word Reading Test (SWRT) – pre/post tests for bench marking for the Guided Reading programme
Fifth Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 5 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 5	May	
Sixth Class	• Drumcondra Primary Reading Test – Revised Level 6 • Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test – Revised Level 6	May	

Other tests in use, as needed, include:

- WIAT 3

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

- Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA)
- EAL Assessment Test (PSAK)
 - Working Memory Observational Checklist
 - Jackson Phonics
 - Sound Linkage Checklists
 - Dyslexia Early Screening Test (DEST)
- York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)

6. Permissions

Each September parents of all pupils in the school are asked, via Aladdin Connect Permissions, to indicate permission for their child to take part in standardised screening and diagnostic testing at school. In the event that a parent denies permission the Principal will call them to discuss what the concerns might be.

In the case of pupils who have been prioritised for support by members of the AEN team, further parental permission is required before planning for intervention can begin. The permissions protocol in this instance is as follows:

- Parents receive a phone call/email and an invitation to a meeting with class teacher and AEN Co-ordinator to discuss their child's needs. At this meeting it will be explained that their child has an identified need for support and permission is sought for testing and support plan development.
- Parents are invited to contact the school if they would like to discuss the issue further.
- Parents of children with identified complex needs prior to school enrolment, will receive a call/email from the class teacher and an invitation for the parents to meet with the class teacher and AEN Co-ordinator to get the parent's input in terms of setting targets for their child. before support teaching begins.
- Where a parent consistently denies permission for their child to avail of additional support, this is logged in the pupil's Student Support File, log of actions.

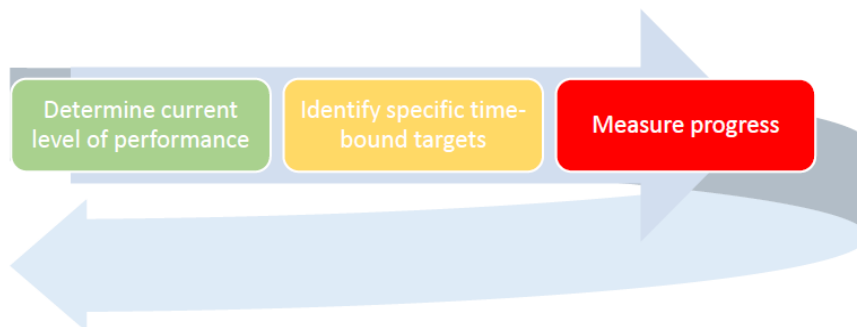
7. Identifying and selecting children for additional teaching support

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

“The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables schools to gather and analyse data” (2017 Guidelines: p.6).

“Identification of educational needs is central to the new model. 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. The framework emphasises the importance of looking at a pupil’s needs in context, and provides useful resources to support this (for example, Learning Environment Checklist, Teacher Checklist for Whole-class Structures and Supports). Of course, the principle that **pupils with the greatest level of need have access to the greatest levels of support** is of primary importance. This approach is also supported by information and engagement with external professionals, as required” (2017 Guidelines: p7).



Guidelines for Primary Schools - Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (2017)

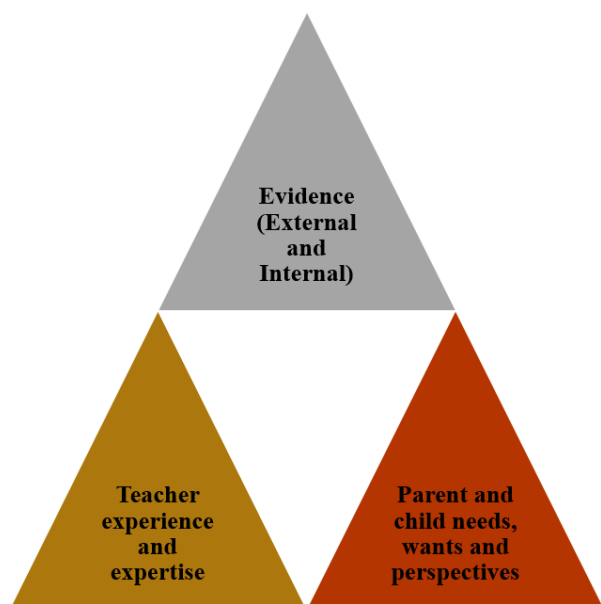
Evidence Based Practice model for decision making

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

The Quay
 St. Columbkille's

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the integration of:

- **Teacher experience and expertise**
 - The knowledge, judgment, and critical reasoning acquired through teacher training and professional experiences.
- **Evidence (external and internal)**
 - The best available information gathered from the scientific literature (external evidence) and from data and observations collected on the individual child (internal evidence) which can include, assessment progress/scores, in-support progress, reaching individual education targets (outlined in IEP), informal observations made by AETs and class teachers, etc.
- **Parent and child needs, wants and perspectives**
 - The unique set of personal and cultural circumstances, values, priorities, and expectations identified by your child and their parents/guardians.



When all three components of Evidence Based Practice are considered together, teachers can make informed, evidence-based decisions and provide high-quality services reflecting the interests, values, needs, and choices of individuals selecting, continuing and discontinuing AEN support. All three components of this model is referenced during selection criteria for Tier 1 and 2 support as well as continuation and discontinuation of support.

Selection criteria

The following criteria will be used by our school to select children for supplementary teaching in line with the new model of Special Education Teaching (Circular 13/2107).

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

1. Children previously in receipt of "Resource hours" who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
2. Children scoring at or below the 10th percentile on standardised assessments in Literacy and Maths.
3. Children scoring at or below the 12th percentile on standardised assessments in Literacy and Maths (to allow for a margin of error).
4. Children diagnosed as having Low Incidence Learning Disabilities since 2017.
5. Children diagnosed as having High Incidence Learning Disabilities.
6. Children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and whose language needs further support.
7. Early intervention in literacy and/or numeracy - Infant class children who continue to experience difficulties in early literacy skills, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it. In Term 2, a decision may be made in consultation with parents, class teacher and AEN co-ordinator to provide additional support for these identified children (a period of 6-12 weeks).
8. Children scoring at or below STEN 4 (30th percentile) on standardised assessments in literacy and/or numeracy and who continue to experience difficulty, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.
9. Children experiencing serious difficulties with oral language, social development, emotional development or application to learning, despite interventions made by the class teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it.
10. Transition to Post-Primary School. This is also supported by the School Completion Programme and the Home, School, Community Liaison (HSCL) teacher.
11. Exceptionally Able/Gifted Children. Interventions will be made in the first instance by the class teacher at Classroom Support (Stage 1) level of the NEPS Continuum of Support. The class teacher will have opened a Support Plan and recorded the interventions in it. Interventions incorporating technology such as Lego WeDo 2.0, Scratch etc. will support and

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

facilitate the child's learning. Support from Centre for Talented Youth Ireland (CTYI) is accessed as appropriate.

8. Continuing and Discontinuing Supplementary Teaching.

- At the end of each instructional block/term the progress of each child who is in receipt of AEN teaching will be evaluated following consultation with the child's class teacher and the child's parents/guardians.
- A decision will be made regarding their continued level of support and revised targets will be set in their Support Plan.
- The school may decide to discontinue supplementary teaching with some children (Tier 2) when satisfactory progress has been made and targets have been met.
- The school may also decide to discontinue supplementary teaching with some children (decision made based on consultation between each element of the EBP triangle, see above) who are now performing above the percentile laid down in the selection criteria for receiving support; however, if both the class teacher and AEN teacher feel such a child needs scaffolding to maintain this standard then continued supplementary teaching may be offered if places are available in the appropriate group in consultation with the parents.

9. Monitoring Progress

- **The Support Review Record** on the Continuum of Support will be completed by the support teacher in collaboration with the class teacher. This will be carried out at the end of each instructional period. The completed review will be saved in Aladdin (our school Administration System).
- **Self Reflection** (by the child) – as part of the Continuum of Support Review Record or SALF (Self Assessment Learning Folders kept by the children)
- **Weekly Tests** if applicable (e.g. Spellings/Tables).
- **Termly Assessments** if applicable (teacher designed or from publishers).
- **Standardised Tests at end of year** (1st – 6th) English and Maths.
- **Senior Infant end of year test** –Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST).

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

- **Junior Infant end of year test – Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)** – alternative assessment of this nature is currently being researched for use with this class group, February 2024.
- **Ongoing observation** and assessment of the language, literacy and numeracy skills of the children in the Infant classes to facilitate early identification of possible learning difficulties.

10. Record Keeping

- Class Teachers will keep a record of teacher designed tests, end of term tests and checklists in an Assessment Folder for their class.
- A file for each child in the class is kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office. This file contains a sample of the child's work from September, January and June of each year, parent-teacher meeting notes, if not saved on Aladdin, standardised test booklets and any relevant correspondence relating to the child.
- Diagnostic Assessments and other checklists administered by the support teacher will be put in the child's file.
- Continuum of Support documents for children with AEN are also kept in the child's file in the classroom/Aladdin (a copy of relevant pages for the AEN teacher).
- Personal Pupil Plans for children with SNA access will also be kept in the child's file.
- Paper records of psychological reports that are active/inactive at any given time are kept in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- Results of Completed Standardised Tests will be uploaded to Aladdin where possible and a copy of each will be filed in the Assessment folders in a locked cabinet in the principal's office.
- End of year school report will be issued to parents/guardians in June. These reports are saved in Aladdin.

11. Liaising with Parents/Communicating Information

- Class teacher meets with parents/guardians initially to discuss concerns and outline supports available in the school – consent sought.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) POLICY
ST. COLMCILLE'S NS, THE QUAY, WESTPORT

ST

- AET and class teacher meet with parents to agree a School Support Plan for the child. Consent is sought and relevant document is signed. Review meetings are held at the end of each instructional term.
- AET liaises with parents of children in receipt of supplementary teaching to demonstrate methodologies that could be useful at home to further the child's learning.
- Parent Teacher Meetings are held in November for Junior Infants to 6th Class.
- An information meeting is held for the parents of incoming Junior Infants in June. At this meeting a copy of the Continuum of Support will be on display and explained to parents.
- An end-of-year report goes home in June each year through Aladdin. Opportunities to discuss this report are made available to parents two weeks before the end of term.

12. Timetabling

- Supplementary teaching that children receive is in addition to their regular class programme in English and Maths, in so far as is practicable.
- Co-teaching, where two teachers work together to plan, organise, instruct and make assessments on the same group of students, sharing the same classroom can operate during English and Maths times in class. If deemed more beneficial to the group being taught by the support teacher, they can be withdrawn to a quiet space.
- In so far as is practicable children should not miss out on the same curricular area each time they receive supplementary teaching.
- The AEN Team will review the timetable at the end of each instructional term/block.

13. Attendance

- An attendance record of children is kept by the class teacher on Aladdin as per morning roll call.

14. Monitoring and Reviewing the AEN Policy

- The principal and deputy principal will monitor and review this policy. This review will be initiated by the AEN Co-ordinator.

15. AEN Policy Success Criteria

A whole school approach to the implementation of our AEN policy will:

- Ensure that children with AEN gain access to a broad, balanced curriculum and have opportunity of access to an appropriate education.
- Develop positive self-esteem and positive attitudes to school and learning among our pupils.
- Improve standards of academic performance and achievement.
- Enhance parental involvement in supporting their child's learning.
- Increase collaboration between school personnel.

The achievement of these success criteria will be assessed through: feedback from teachers, children and parents/guardians; childrens' achievements and ongoing analysis of childrens' academic performance and attainment of personal targets.

Guidance Documents

- Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (Department of Education & Skills)
- "Managing the Transition to the New Model of Special Education" (Dr. Mairéad De Búrca / INTO 2017)
- *Circular 30/2014 Special Needs Assistants*
- *Circular 13/2017 Special Educational Needs – New Model*
- <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Special-Education/a-new-model-for-allocating-special-education-teachers-to-mainstream-schools.pdf>

Useful websites:

- Department of Education & Skills: www.education.ie
- National Council for Special Education: www.ncse.ie
- National Council for Curriculum Assessment: www.ncca.ie
- Health Service Executive: www.hse.ie

List of additional documents used in AEN planning:

- Permission to allow access to reports
- Basic Needs Checklist
- Learning Environment Checklist
- Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support (Overview Page)
- Student Support File for St Colmcille's NS (Continuum of Support document)
- Permission for child to attend Support Teaching/Parents' Consent Form
- Permission for teacher to administer screening/diagnostic tests
- AEN Record
- Personal Support Plan

Ratification and Review

This plan was formally ratified by the Board of management on 6th March 2024

Signed: 

Chairperson of the Board of Management

This policy shall be reviewed on: February 2025