



ADDITIONAL EDUCATION NEEDS (AEN) POLICY




St Anne's Secondary School

MAY 2022

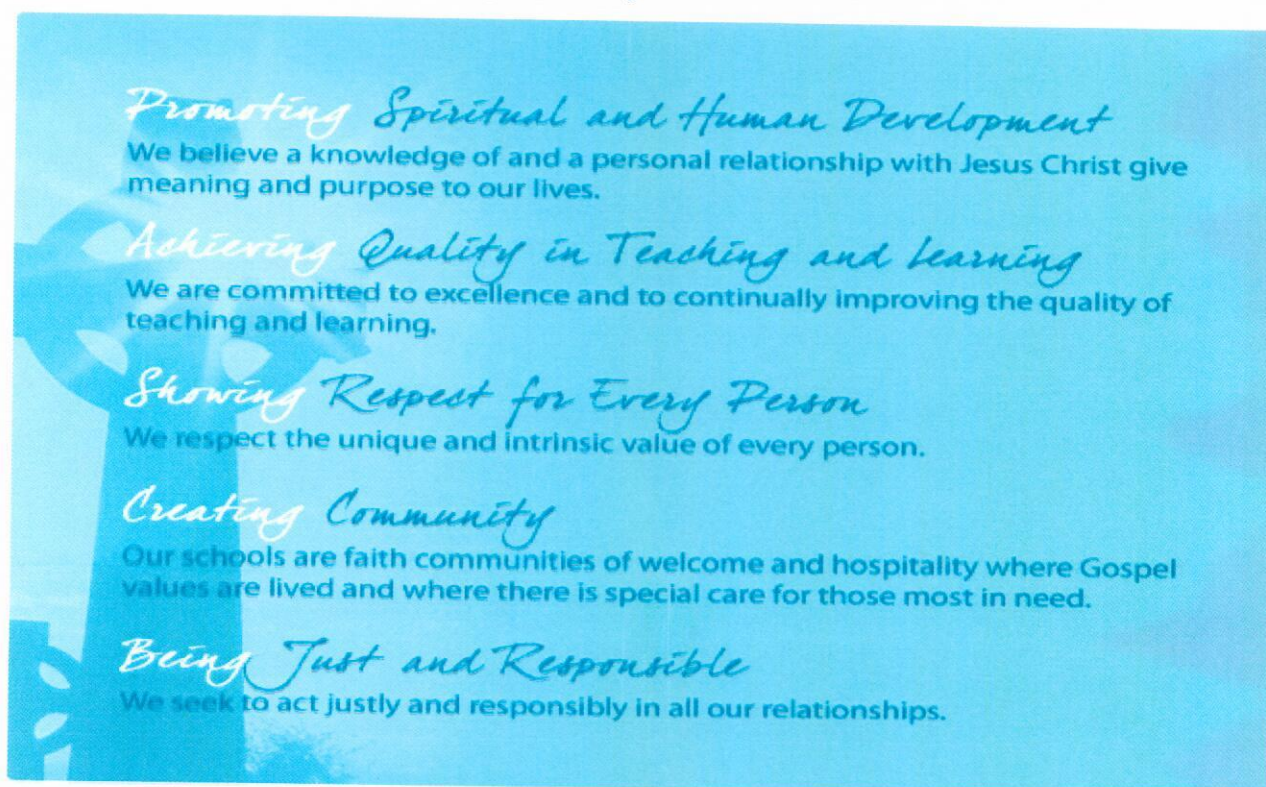
SECTION 1:

Introduction, Vision, and Ethos of St. Anne's Secondary School

Introduction

St. Anne's is a Catholic Voluntary secondary school for girls, established by the Sisters of Mercy over 100 years ago and now under the trusteeship of . We have a highly qualified, dedicated and caring staff whose expertise enables students to excel. Our learning environment is happy and creative which contributes to the students' enjoyment of learning. In St. Anne's we strive to provide education of the highest quality in a positive learning environment, where each student is enabled to maximise their talents both academically and personally.

St. Anne's upholds the five core CEIST values

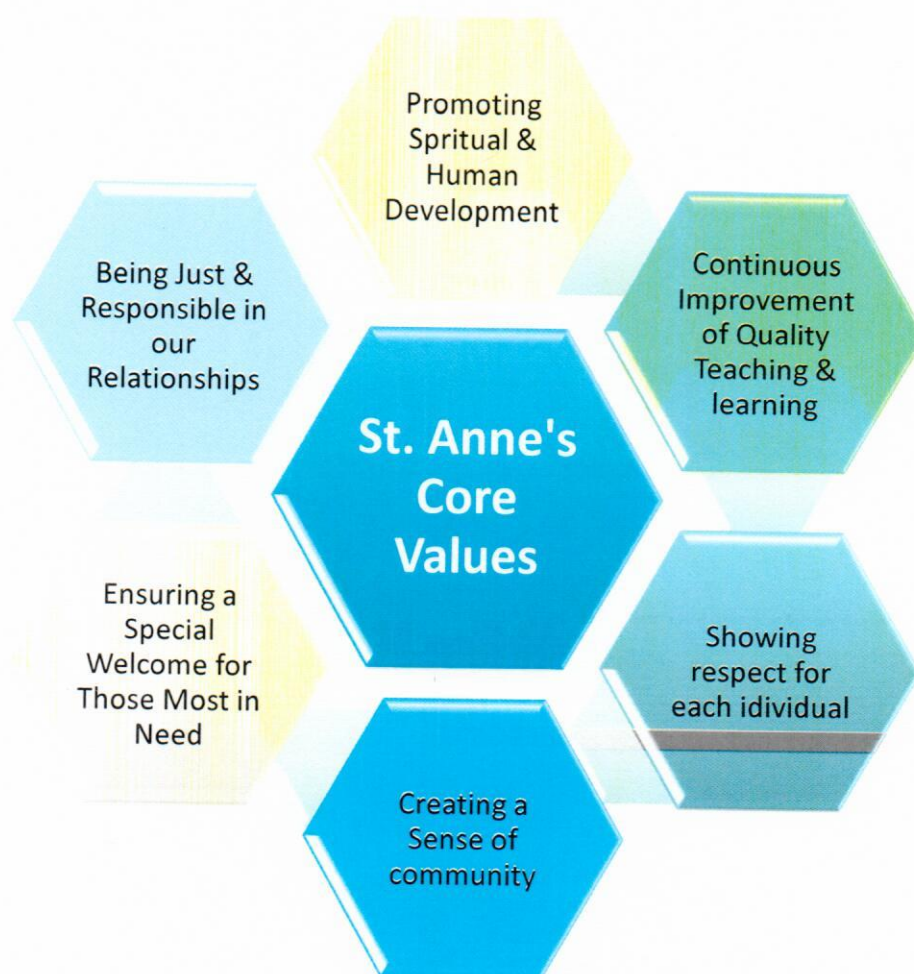


Vision

The management and teaching staff of St. Anne's Secondary school, in co-operation with parents, are committed to the provision of a broadly-based education and to achieving a balance between the academic, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual and physical components of that education.

Ethos

St. Anne's core values are rooted in a commitment to celebrating the uniqueness of each person. We promote a community focused on highly effective teaching and learning in which our students can flourish through personal success and shared responsibility.



St. Anne's Secondary School seeks to;

- provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all our students
- support and welcome diversity
- take proactive steps to guard against unfair treatment as a consequence of disability or additional need.
- encourage the development of the full person through developing knowledge, skills and understanding and through inculcating values:
- develop critical thinking faculties and to promote informed decision-making skills in students.
- bring students to an awareness of their identity in a multi-denominational, multi-cultural context
- enable effective transitions to the next stages of a person's education life and/or into the work force.
- encourage and actively facilitate the participation of parents in the education of their children
- respond to the educational needs of the local community.

We recognise that all our students are entitled to an education appropriate to their needs, including those who may be gifted and talented and we endeavour to facilitate all our students reaching their full potential by providing a level of challenge equal to each student's ability through differentiation, additional materials and, when appropriate, an accelerated rate of learning.

Additional policies and supports that are also relevant to the area of special educational needs and advocate inclusion include our:

- Admissions Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whole School Guidance Policy

Note: St. Anne's recognises that all students learn differently and at any given time may require additional support. Therefore, we have chosen to recognise Special Educational Needs (SEN) as Additional Educational Needs (AEN). We hope this change in terminology supports an even greater inclusivity and diversity in our school.

SECTION 2:

Inclusion in St. Anne's & Categories of AEN

Inclusion in St. Anne's Secondary School

The guidelines on inclusion for students with Additional Educational Needs for post primary schools state *'that all students, irrespective of special educational needs, are welcomed and enabled to enrol in our school'* ([Guidelines for Schools on Special Educational Needs in Post Primary Schools, NCSE 2017](#))

Additional Educational Needs (AEN) are defined in the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 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..."* As per our school admission policy, St. Anne's Secondary School welcomes students with additional educational needs (AEN) and endeavours to *"provide that the education of people with such needs shall wherever possible take place in an inclusive environment"* ([Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004](#)). The application process for a student with additional educational needs will be the same as that of any other applicant.

Categories of Additional Educational Needs

Pupils with Additional Education Needs include:

- Students who, for whatever reason, are not reaching their full learning potential
- Students with specific learning disabilities
- Students with emotional and/or behavioural issues
- Students with physical or sensory disabilities
- Gifted students

The various categories of additional educational needs, the definitions of these categories, and the criteria for the allocation of additional resources and the procedures for application are set by the Department of Education and Skills ([DES](#)) and the National Council for Special Education ([NCSE](#)) and are detailed in the following page.

Categories of Additional Educational Needs

Physical Disability

Visual Impairment

Hearing
Impairment

Autism/Autism
Spectrum disorder

Severe emotional
disturbance and/or
behaviour
difficulties

Mild general
learning difficulties

Moderate general
learning difficulties

Specific learning
difficulties

Severe general
learning difficulties

Emotional
Disturbance and/or
Behaviour
difficulties

Severe or profound
general learning
difficulties

Specific Special
Educational Needs
associated with an
Attention Deficit
Hyperactivity Syndrome

Specific speech
and language
disorder

Specific
learning
difficulties
associated with
reading and
writing

SECTION 3:

Rationale, Aims & Objectives of our AEN Policy

‘Effective provision for pupils with special educational needs is situated within an inclusive whole-school framework which emphasises effective teaching and learning for all and good collaboration and engagement between school, parents/guardians, and pupils.’

[Supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools, DES, 2017](#)

Rationale

This policy is a reflection of our current practice in St. Anne’s Secondary School in relation to facilitating and promoting a whole-school approach to special educational needs.

Our commitment to provide an inclusive and supportive learning environment where all our students are encouraged to achieve their potential is underpinned by the ethos, aims, vision and culture of St. Anne’s Secondary school and our patrons and guided by relevant legislation as detailed below.

- [The Education Act \(1996\)](#)
- [The Special Education Act \(2004\)](#)
- [The Education \(Welfare\) Act \(2009\)](#)
- [The Equality Act \(2004\)](#)
- [The Data Protection Act \(1988, 1998 and 2002\)](#)
- [The Freedom of Information Act \(1997 and 2003\)](#)
- [The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act \(2004\)](#)
- [The Children Act \(2005\)](#)
- [The Children’s Care Act \(2005\)](#)
- [The Education \(Admission to Schools\) Act 2012](#)

Aims and Objectives

St. Anne’s aspires to:

- enable each student to develop social and personal skills, thus enhancing self-esteem
- encourage students with additional needs to participate in the full range of school activities
- offer an education which develops a variety of skills i.e., practical, artistic, musical and sporting
- enable all students access to the curriculum and encourage students to reach their full potential
- encourage staff to avail of professional development from the [NCSE](#), [NEPS](#), and other supporting bodies
- ensure a clear and fair identification processes and careful planning of interventions

SECTION 4:

AEN Model of Identification, Organisation and Provision

Identification

Identification of Additional Needs

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

- School links with primary schools
- Primary school education passport documentation
- Liaising with primary school class teachers, AEN teachers & SNA's.
- Link via the School Completion Programme of primary schools and Homework Club
- Discussions with parents/guardians of incoming students
- Testing: CAT 4 tests, WRAT 4 tests, and diagnostic tests such as Woodcock and Johnson
- Analysis of class participations, subject performance, term exams, mock exams, and state exams
- Referrals from teachers to AEN team
- Support form Educational Psychologist, Clinical Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service, Physiotherapist and Medical General Practitioner/Medical Consultant reports presented to school
- Meeting with NEPS and other external agencies
- Induction days for incoming 1st years

Organisation

Organisation

In line with the *2004 Act* and *2006 Act*, St Anne's endeavours to ensure that those *with the greatest levels of need* [will] *have access to the greatest level of support*' (*Supporting pupils with additional educational needs: A Manual for Schools*)

The *2006 Act* continuum of support is used as a framework to provide support to all students with AEN. The support provided is based on the nature and extent of their individual need and is reviewed termly. The continuum of support encompasses a graduated solution-oriented framework of assessment and intervention, comprised of three distinct school-based processes which are summarised on the following page.

Organisation of Support for Students with Additional Educational Needs

CLASSROOM SUPPORT **(for all)**

- is a process of prevention, effective mainstream teaching and early identification. These systems are available to all students and effectively meet the needs of most students

SCHOOL SUPPORT **(for some)**

- is an assessment and intervention process directed to some students or groups of students, who require some additional input

SCHOOL SUPPORT PLUS **(for a few)**

- is generally characterised by more intensive and individualised support. This level of intervention is for students with complex and/or enduring needs and relatively few students will need this level of support

Support for All (Classroom support) Level 1

St. Anne's engages with programmes in Numeracy, Literacy and Social/Emotional domains to promote early intervention and seek to provide a response to such intervention if necessary.

Support for Some (School Support) Level 2

Based on needs, some students will follow more intensive programmes. These students might receive support within the context of a mainstream subject lessons through team-teaching, through group or individual support or, through a combination of these modes of intervention. Where needed, the level and type of supports reflects the specific targets of individual students as set out in their record/planning forms. Following a period of intervention, some students may no longer require additional teaching supports, some may require the same level, while others may require more intensive supports. Accordingly, the groupings timetabled for support may change over time. Resources are allocated based on need – students with the highest level of need have access to the greatest resources.

Support for a Few (School support Plus) Level 3

In some situations, students' whose needs are enduring and/or complex or students who experience significant difficulty in making progress, despite carefully planned and reviewed interventions at all other levels, will require a more individualised and ongoing support. The support will generally require more specialised intensive and individualised support and may involve external professional and support services. Where needs are known and documented, at the time of transfer/enrolment, students' will receive bespoke and focused support from the moment they attend our school. With the aid of the parents/guardians, the student, external agencies where applicable and the AEN team, Student Support Files (SSF) are drawn up and reviewed on an ongoing basis. SSFs are utilised to inform all Subject and AEN teachers about how to best support each student. Students receiving school support plus or level 3 support will experience, ongoing solution focused support with carefully planned interventions and continuous reviews with their parents/guardians, teachers and themselves. At all times the wellbeing and individual, targeted success of each student underpins all teaching approaches.

Provision

Provision of AEN Support

Effective teaching and learning are critically important for all students, and especially for those with additional educational needs. Meaningful inclusion requires that all students are taught in stimulating and supportive classroom environments where they are respected and valued. The following is a brief outline of the school's AEN provision.

Mixed ability classes

St. Anne's school has a mixed ability class system at Junior Cycle. 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. Each individual case is judged on its own merits and is based on the results of various testing, psychologists' reports or outside agencies.

Co-teaching

Co-teaching is timetabled where a number of students in the class may need additional support. This removes the necessity for withdrawal thus ensuring the student can continue to access the full menu of subjects while receiving additional support.

Targeted support for small groups

Small, targeted groups are identified in consultation with the English and Maths departments (in areas of literacy and numeracy). Appropriate, evidence-based supports and interventions are put in place.

Teacher Collaboration

Where needs arise in other subject areas, AEN teachers will help and offer advice to subject teachers. Student Support Files (SSFs) are written in collaboration with the student, the parents/guardians, the Additional Education Team (AEN), and the appropriate subject teachers.

Reasonable Accommodations for Exams

Application is made to the State Examinations Commission for Reasonable Accommodation () in Junior and Leaving Cert examinations. These applications are made in consultation with parents, subject teachers and students. Similar accommodations are facilitated during house exams where possible and practicable.

Homework Club

Homework club is provided each evening for 1st year students. During homework club, teachers are available to support students with their subject specific homework and to ensure the students remain on top of their learning goals.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities such as Games club, Coding club, Photography club and sporting clubs are provided during lunch and after school to enhance the students' social and emotional wellbeing while in the school.

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, numeracy, social, emotional, life-skills and well-being are particularly important for junior cycle students with additional educational needs. The school uses the following programmes for students receiving school support (level 2) and school support plus (level 3):

- NEPS 'Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers' including:
 - SNIP
 - Toe by Toe
 - Precision teaching
 - Comprehension teaching
 - Guided reading
- NEPS 'Friends' programme
- The St. Anne's Transition and Transfer Programme
- NEPS 'Maths Support-A Good practice guide for teachers'

Student Support Team

St. Anne's Student Support Team with the AEN Co-ordinator serve an important preventative and early intervention function, particularly in addressing the needs of students with social, emotional, behavioural and well-being needs. This team provides a forum to share concerns and to work towards solutions. It plays an important coordinating role and facilitates monitoring and review of students' progress.

Target Setting

- Student centered, achievable target-setting is central to effective teaching and learning for students with additional educational needs. Targets are linked to assessment; strengths-based; effective interventions and developed collaboratively. Best practice indicates that targets should be few in number; they should be informed by priority learning needs and directly linked to suitable interventions.
- Targets are based on the evidence collected through both formal and informal assessment approaches. Where possible targets will be measurable and observable and will reflect the specific additional educational need of individual students.
- Targets will be achievable, within a specified time frame, and they will also challenge and build on existing knowledge addressing students' holistic needs. The AEN department will liaise and collaborate with subject teachers in relation to the monitoring of specified targets. A review of attainment, attendance, social inclusion and well-being for students with additional educational needs will take place monthly.
- At all times, the input of the student and their parents/guardians form the basis of the of the targets and goals set for each student

Allocation of resources

In line with DES guidelines additional teaching supports are deployed according to identified needs. Support is given in a variety of ways to effectively meet students' needs.

Examples include:

- Co-teaching

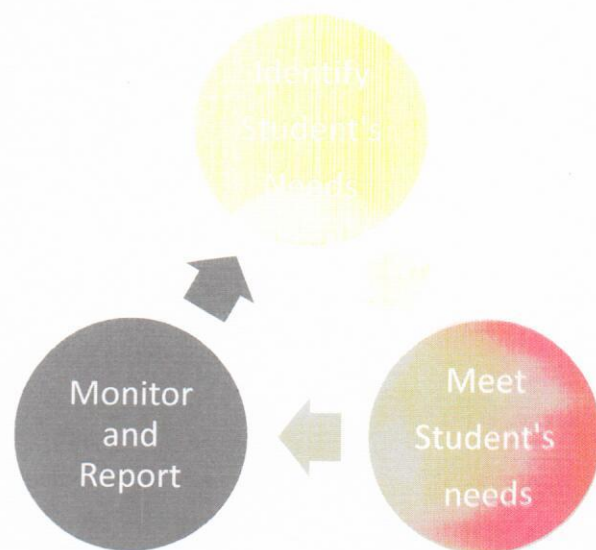
- Peer support
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual support

Co-teaching is an important teaching mechanism within the school and is used to support students with additional educational needs. It provides resource and learning support that promotes inclusion and the enjoyment of learning for everyone.

Planning and Reviewing AEN provision – A 3 step approach

In line with Department of Education guidelines, the core AEN team, under the direction of the Additional Education Co-ordinator supports subject teachers in the three-step process to support students with additional educational needs:

- **Identification** of students with additional educational needs. Record keeping/planning and setting targets.
- **Meeting** students' needs through planning teaching methods and approaches. Organising early-intervention and prevention programmes. Organising and deploying special education teaching resources.
- **Monitoring and reporting** progress of student's academic, social and emotional progress through ongoing student feedback, parental feedback, teacher feedback and, testing.



Timetabling practice/Rationale for the allocation of resources

School management and the Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator will seek to deploy resources appropriately by:

- Using resources to promote early intervention and learning in an inclusive school environment
- Allocating resources to students with the highest level of need, because students with the highest level of need should receive the highest level of supports.
- Providing additional supports which are tailored to meet the unique needs of students, addressing social, emotional and vocational/life skills, as well as literacy and numeracy needs.
- Allocating support classes to teachers who are expert in the subject or in providing additional educational support
- Seeking to ensure that students with the greatest needs are supported by teachers who have the relevant expertise, and who can provide continuity of support.
- Providing flexibility for specialist teachers so that groupings timetabled for support may change over time

- Supporting a core team of teachers for additional educational needs. Members of this team have the necessary experience and ongoing access to professional development to support the diverse needs of students with additional educational needs.

A School-wide approach to provision for students with special educational needs

St. Anne's adopts a school-wide approach to planning and implementation of early intervention and prevention programmes. The school-wide approach will involve collaboration across the school community to improve student learning, behaviour and well-being. The school-wide approach will address the full continuum of needs ranging from milder and transient needs to more severe and enduring needs.

SECTION 5:

THE ROLE OF THE AEN TEAM AND PROVISION OF SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT SUPPORT

Role of the school principal

The principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that the additional educational needs of students are met. The principal will take general responsibility for establishing and promoting school-wide policies and procedures which support the learning of all students including those with additional educational needs. The principal will oversee a school-wide approach to assessment to identify needs. He/she will guide and support the AEN team/ co-ordinator in their duties. The Deputy Principal assumes the role of the principal in the Principal's absence.

The role of the Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator (AENCO)

In St. Anne's, the AENCO is responsible for the planning and provision of additional educational needs support within the school. The provision and allocation of teacher support is reviewed by school management on a regular basis.

The overall allocation is accounted for both from a teacher and student perspective in line with appendix C of the [SfE Circular 0070/2017](#). Whole School Approach Inclusion "Effective inclusive schools are problem-solving organisations with a common mission that emphasises learning for all students". St. Anne's endeavours to ensure our students with additional educational needs are full members of an inclusive school community.

This is achieved by:

1. Having an additional educational needs (AEN) team, consisting of suitably qualified and/or interested staff members led by an AEN co-ordinator
2. Working with and listening to the opinion of the students and parents/guardians concerned.

3. Making application to the DES through the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) for support where deemed necessary.
4. Access to assigned class tutor to discuss progress, to make recommendations on behalf of the students and to liaise with parents and other staff.
5. Enhancing positive educational experiences through access to Special Needs Assistance (SNA) support (where access to SNA support has been sanctioned by the NSRF or by the school).
6. Giving every student an opportunity to learn effectively so that they can achieve their full potential academically and socially.
7. Providing our students with a wide variety of subjects.
8. Where resources permit, forming small class groupings so that each student is provided with individual attention.
9. Differentiating the curriculum to accommodate the diverse needs within each group
10. Providing students with a taster programme in all option subjects to assist with correct choice of subjects to be carried forward.
11. Providing extra individual assistance in literacy and/or numeracy to those for whom additional educational support hours have been allocated. Support may also be assigned to other subjects as necessary.
12. Teaching all levels of subjects to Junior and Senior cycle.
13. Offering Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and providing wonderful opportunities for students to flourish
14. Facilitating extra-curricular activities to promote development and encourage social inclusion.

The AEN co-ordinator will:

- Form an additional educational needs team (AEN team) to co-ordinate the provision of additional education in the school.
- Delegate the performance of specific responsibilities to other staff members including data gathering, facilitating the implementation of standardised tests, collating the information and identifying needs.
- Allocate resources (organise suitable support for our students with AEN and with a variety of needs)
- Plan, implement and review Student Support Files and plans
- Record, plan and implement group AEN sessions
- Facilitate continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with additional educational needs ensuring also that all school staff understand their roles and responsibilities in this
- Work with and support non-qualified AEN teachers in the provision of support for students with AEN and to consult with teachers in the identification of literacy and numeracy target groups
- Test relevant students to plan, and prepare applications for reasonable accommodations in the state exams
- Facilitate the JC level 2 learning programmes when applicable
- Oversee the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA) when applicable

The AEN team/co-ordinator will work closely with the Principal, Deputy Principal, subject teachers, parents/guardians, the guidance counsellor, the student support team and other support structures within the school.

Members of the AEN team will provide support to subject teachers to meet students' needs within their classroom and subject areas.

Special Needs Assistant (SNA) Support

A key aspiration for pupils with additional educational needs is that they will, on completion of their school-based education, be able to graduate as young independent adults in so far as this is possible. There is, therefore, a need to balance the support provided in schools with each pupil's right to acquire personal independence skills. As such, SNAs are deployed in a manner which best meets the care support requirements of our students enrolled in our school.

Access to SNA support

- St. Anne's recognises that the care needs of pupils are not constant but change as children grow and develop. In many instances, access to SNA care support will be allocated to a pupil to ameliorate a particular difficulty that a pupil may have at a certain point in time, such as care support to assist with toileting issues, or a particular behaviour. The long term goal is always for the student to navigate their school life and their world without the continued assistance of an SNA.

Independence through SNA support

- In accordance with [Circular 0030/2020](#) and circular 0030/2020, St. Anne's provides SNA support to help students to develop their independent living skills. Where care needs diminish, and the goal of independence is achieved, in consultation with the parents/guardians and students, the level of SNA support required by the student may be reduced. In some situations, a pupil's care needs may remain constant, or increase, due to the nature of their condition. All pupils with access to SNA support therefore have their need for this support reviewed on a regular basis, with school and parental feedback being a crucial part of the review process.

Personalised Pupil Planning

- Personalised Pupil Planning (PPP) in addition to Student Support Files is created with the SNAs the students and the parents/guardians to enable students to flourish in St. Anne's. It is a key feature of provision for all students with additional educational needs in receipt of SNA support and focuses on the holistic development of each student. A team approach to the development, implementation and review of the PPPs is adopted. The voice of the pupil, the parents/guardian and the teachers informs the PPP on an ongoing basis.

SECTION 6:

COMMUNICATION

The student voice

Students' motivation to learn increases when they are given opportunities to give meaningful contributions to how and what they learn.

St. Anne's ensures that students in receipt of AEN support are actively encouraged to express their learning needs and to assess their own progress. This approach aligns with the rights-based approach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to involve children and young people in decisions that affect them, and to the principles of the Lundy Model of Participation. Our students are also given opportunities, where feasible, to co-create aspects of their support to meet their learning needs. This can sometimes result in re-assessing the content and style of delivery of aspects of the students' support programme in order to meet their needs in an authentic way.

Parental Engagement

The school recognises that good parental engagement is a critical factor in enhancing outcomes for students with additional educational needs. Parents/guardians will be consulted in relation to:

- The child's needs and strengths
- The support and strategies being developed to support their children
- The reviewing of student progress
- The levels taken in State exams and school exams

Parents/guardians will also be consulted when the additional education needs policy is being developed and/or reviewed.

Student Engagement

The school will regularly review its approach to student engagement and participation so that all students, including those with additional educational needs, have opportunities to share their views on issues that affect them in school.

Engagement with External Bodies and Agencies

Where appropriate, St. Anne's 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 National Council for Special Education (NCSE) the Inspectorate and allied health professionals. This will be particularly relevant in the case of those students presenting with complex needs. The school will facilitate meetings between parents and these support services where appropriate. The school will endeavour to incorporate relevant recommendations from health professionals in developing students support plans and pupil personal plans at each level of the continuum of support.

In School Collaboration

St. Anne's upholds the concept that effective provision for students with additional educational needs is situated within an inclusive whole-school framework. This framework emphasises collaboration between all teachers of students with AEN. Thus, St. Anne's endeavours to ensure the following practices are adhered to;

- Student Support Files (SSF) are created in collaboration with subject teachers
- Relevant information on student's academic, social and emotional needs are accessible to subject teachers.
- Subject teachers aim to provide an inclusive education to all students especially those with AEN.
- The AEN team works closely with subject teachers to ensure continuity of teaching and learning for students with AEN.
- A robust referral system is in place in the school for students at risk of compromised educational, social or emotional experiences.

SECTION 7:

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL TO ST. ANNE'S

St. Anne's recognises that all transitions can be challenging for all students and may pose even greater challenges for children with additional educational needs. These transitions include the transition from primary to secondary school, transition from Junior Cycle to TY and 5th year, transition from one school to another, and the transition from second level onwards.

Transition from primary school to St. Anne's

In managing the transition of students with additional educational needs from primary to secondary school, the school will liaise in a timely manner with the parents and the relevant primary schools. This may involve some of the following:

- Meeting between designated staff members and a representative of the primary school
- Open evening
- Facilitating the St. Anne's Transition Programme facilitated by the 5th years with the support of the staff mentoring team.
- Requesting transfer of NCCA pupil passport from primary schools
- Holding one to one meetings between designated staff members, parents/guardians and students where the individual needs of the students are discussed
- Sharing of information with subject teachers at the start of the academic year (staff meetings)
- Induction mornings for incoming students.
- One to one meetings between all students and AEN team during the first term.

Transition from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle and from senior cycle onwards

The AEN team works closely with the Guidance Counsellor and senior cycle teachers to ensure students continue to be supported in a holistic and academic way. While emphasis is placed on the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) in which students learn to become more independent over time, St. Anne's recognises that there may be times when students will need extra supports for a short period at times of transition. The AEN team provides extra supports for students if needs arise during these times to ensure ease of transition and continued sense security for each student.

Data Gathering

All data that is gathered or generated by St. Anne's Secondary School will be stored in a secure location. Confidentiality will be upheld at all times and all records will be stored in line with the requirements of GDPR and the Data protection Act 2018.

Policy Review

This policy is scheduled for review in May 2024. However, a request for an earlier review may be made in writing to the Board of Management.

Signed: Colette Grey

Date: 12/5/2022

Colette Grey

Chairperson, BOM

Signed: John Cullinane

Date: 12/5/2022

John Cullinane

Secretary, BOM