

Athboy Community School

Additional Educational Needs Policy

Ratified June 2024

Additional Educational Needs Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 School Mission Statement and Core Values

ACS prides itself on creating a safe, caring, creative and culturally diverse environment and on offering an innovative curriculum which challenges students to achieve their full potential.

We promote an open culture in which relationships between staff and students are prioritised.

We commend and reward positive behaviour and encourage student participation in all aspects of school life so they can flourish academically, physically, emotionally, spiritually and psychologically.

“Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí”.

Our Core Values are; Care, Inclusion, Safety, Creativity and Respect.

1.2. Aims and Objectives of Additional Educational Needs Policy

Athboy Community School aims to:

- Give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children who have a disability or who have other Additional Educational Needs (AEN), as they relate to education and in so far as the school can cater for them.
- Provide in line with the new model of allocation, a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students in the school
- Ensure that students with AEN are educated in an inclusive environment.
- Ensure equality between all students
- Ensure that students with AEN are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their learning potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected.
- Assess sensitively students with AEN on entry into the school both formally with all of the other students (unless there is a need to be assessed separately) and informally by means prior to commencement of LS programmes (i.e., Irish Exempt students or EAL students).
- Allocate an AEN Link teacher for each year group to students with AEN with whom they can liaise and who has specific responsibility for ensuring that they have adequate AEN support.
- Arrange for regular meetings between this AEN Link Teacher, the AENCO and the year head of this year group
- Share with all members of staff the needs of students with AEN and to actively support staff in the differentiated teaching of students with AEN
- Affirm the primary responsibility of the subject teacher and support them in meeting the needs of the student

- Create an environment of collegiality where teachers can seek advice and practical help
- Ensure that AEN is not viewed as separate from the general curriculum, but in the context of the whole school and community.
- Ensure that students with AEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Set high expectations for students with AEN and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging them to achieve to their full potential.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with AEN.
- Develop staff expertise in dealing with particular AEN by means of in-service from experts such as Speech and Language Therapists
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at home.
- Provide for the involvement of parents in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to their children, in so far as is practical.
- Co-operate and work closely with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and other agencies with regard to the education of students with AEN.
- Co-ordinate the advice, guidance and support of other agencies in supporting students with AEN.
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, constantly updated and renewed.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with AEN.
- Support the introduction of a Universal Design for Learning approach to provide equity in the classroom for all students

1.3 Scope of Educational Policy Pertaining to Additional Needs

This policy applies to all students attending Athboy Community School. **The Education Act (1998)** puts all schools on an equal footing in the law; it specifies the roles and legal requirements of inspectors, principals, boards of management, teachers and the various bodies working in education. It provides a framework for planning; offering guidelines for school policies requiring implementation in areas such as Special Needs provision. The pillars underpinning our national policy as first outlined in the White Paper, “Charting our Educational Future” (1995), are pluralism, equality, partnership, quality and accountability. There is a statutory obligation on school leaders to work within the parameters of the national policy enshrined therein.

1.4 Provision for students with Additional Educational Needs

Section 9 (a) of the Act states that “A recognised school shall provide education to students which is appropriate to their abilities and needs and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, it shall use its available resources to (a) ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for”.

1.5 The Education for Persons with Special Educational Need Act (2004)

The EPSEN Act details how schools would put a three staged plan in place to provide for an Inclusive Education with an accompanying Individual Education Plan for students with Special Needs. Clear distinctions are made between High and Low Incidence Needs with different allocations and different assessment requirements and “Special Education Teams” in schools are to include Resource and Special Educational Needs teachers. However, there is currently

no date for the implementation of the assessment of need and individual education plans. This policy is also in keeping with Circular 14/2017 (New Model of Allocation) and the corresponding Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017).

It also adheres to the policy document Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools. In particular, to the importance of wellbeing to learning, “The quality framework sees students’ well-being as intrinsic to this holistic view of learning, both as an outcome of learning and as an enabler of learning. It recognises the crucial role of schools in promoting and nurturing students’ well-being through their practices in the key areas of school environment, curriculum, policies, and partnerships.” The importance of students’ well-being is therefore paramount in our approach to students with AEN. It also draws on the importance of quality teaching.

1.6 New Model of Allocation (Circular 14/2017)

The new model of allocating support and resources to students with special needs will impact us in so far as it impacts parents who may have been used to their children being entitled to specific resource hours. The way in which we will be supporting learners by means of in-class support is seen as best practice for all schools.

2. Identifying Students with AEN

2.1 Categories of AEN

Athboy Community School recognises these needs in the following categories of students:

- Those who have already been identified as having AEN prior to transfer as per DES guidelines.
- Those who are identified after enrolment as requiring additional educational support while in the school.
- Students, who for a variety of reasons may require temporary special educational support, (e.g. long term illness etc...).
- Students, who because of learning, social or behavioural problems may be considered vulnerable
- Provisions are in place for students whose first language is not English and who have been assessed and diagnosed with AEN according to DES Guidelines.
- Students who are exceptional able in one or more areas of the curriculum

2.2 Admissions Policy

Athboy Community School affirms the right of all students to a full education in as inclusive a setting as possible in line with the school mission statement outlined above.

Students with AEN follow the school’s Admissions Policy. However, to ensure that the school can provide for individual needs the procedures are as follows:

- All applications for entry to Athboy Community School are processed without prejudice to the AEN needs of the student. In accordance with Section 62 (7) (e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account, “A student’s academic ability, skills or aptitudes; (other than in relation to ascertain whether or not the student has the category of special needs concerned).

- In the event that a report from professional(s) who have assessed the student, indicate that the student should not attend mainstream school, this will be discussed with parents and relevant professionals prior to enrolment.
- The AEN coordinator meets with parents/guardians of students with AEN after students have formally enrolled in the school in the November prior to enrolment in the following September.
- As per the school's Admissions Policy, it is expected of all parents that they will facilitate the provision for special educational needs where the school authorities deem this is necessary
- Where deemed necessary the AEN Coordinator meets with the Primary School Principal/Resource Teachers to facilitate the transition from primary to secondary school.
- All supporting documentation including medical and educational reports must accompany enrolment forms.
- Details of professionals who have assessed the student must be provided in the application form and parents are asked to give the school permission to contact these professionals to provide maximum support for the student
- Details of outside agencies with whom the student/family has worked are also requested in the application form and parents are asked to give the school permission to contact these professionals to provide maximum support for the student
- Other parties (e.g. HSE (CAMHS), NEPs, and SENO) may be consulted about the application.

2.3 On Enrolment

The student, the parents/guardians must accept and commit to, the expectations of a second level school. To assist in the transition from primary to post-primary school, parents/guardians and 6th class students must attend all of the events pertaining to incoming 1st Year. These include:

- A formal Information Evening in December
- A digital Cognitive Abilities Test in January
- A Welcome Evening for parents which coincides with a Meet your Class session for students in May prior to enrolment
- Students with AEN are also invited to visit the school with primary school staff or their parents from February to June if requested, in order to make the transition easier in the following August/September.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Role of the Board of Management

- To ensure that all students with AEN are identified and assessed.
- To ensure that the school has an AEN Policy in place, to monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation.
- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in the school to ensure in as far as is practical that students with AEN leave school with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society.

- To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with AEN.
- To ensure that an AEN Coordinator (AP1) is appointed from among the teaching staff, as well as and an An Cuan Coordinator (APII), where feasible.
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents and other relevant agencies/personnel and to ensure that parents are informed of their child's AEN and how these needs are being met.
- To ensure that parents are consulted with regard to and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education.
- To ensure that the AEN Policy forms part of the School Plan.
- To develop a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.
- To ensure that an awareness of AEN is inculcated in students in the school.

3.2 The Role of the Principal

- On behalf of the Board of Management of Athboy Community School, the Principal has responsibility for all aspects of the day-to-day management of policy and provision for students with AEN. The Principal may delegate certain functions to appropriate teachers and appoint a AEN Coordinator and an An Cuan Coordinator from amongst the staff and work closely with both.
- On drafting and/or reviewing such plans, the Principal shall ensure that cognisance is taken, at the appropriate time, of the needs of the student to continue his education or training on becoming an adult.
- To inform the Board of Management of issues which are relevant to AEN.
- In consultation with the AEN Coordinator and other relevant personnel, to liaise with the Department of Education and Science regarding needs and provision. This also includes applications for reasonable accommodations and exemption from Irish in relation to state examinations as well as assessments.
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including effective timetabling for Additional Educational needs and the allocation of resource hours and funds.
- To establish an Additional Needs Support Team within the school with a specific remit to ensure identification of and support for students with AEN.
- To promote a whole school approach to AEN, making all staff aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development in this area.
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents of students with AEN.
- To ensure that an effective transition programme is in place for consultation with feeder primary schools with regard to the enrolment of new students with AEN.
- To ensure that teaching and learning methodologies promoted in the school are based on the principles of differentiation and inclusion

3.3 The Role of the Deputy Principal

To make initial contact all with new students to the school outside of the 1st year cohort and to set up an interview with the relevant year head.

To ensure that students with AEN have appropriate digital resources to allow them to participate fully in classes as needed

Where the student has AEN, the Deputy Principal will ensure that the AEN Coordinator

receives all information. He will ensure that the parent(s)/guardian(s) provide all information relating to provision of reports pertaining to their child's AEN.

3.4 The Role of the Additional Educational Needs Coordinator

The AEN Coordinator is responsible for the operation and implementation of the AEN policy and coordination of provision for students with learning difficulties. The AEN Coordinator should seek to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching to meet all students' needs. The key responsibilities of the AEN Coordinator include:

- To liaise with the principal/deputy principal in relation to the allocation of the school's resource hours to cater for students with additional educational needs
- To identify students with AEN by means of assessment/standardised/in-class tests testing.
- To share relevant information with teaching staff and SNAs to allow them to best support the students.
- To foster inclusion and equality of opportunity for all students by sharing with teachers good practice in catering for students with individual needs.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's AEN policy. Liaising with and advising fellow teachers and SNAs
- Meeting with the core team of AEN Link Teachers weekly
- Coordinating the AEN Link teachers in the provision for students with AEN in their year groups.
- Supporting the wider team of AEN teachers.
- Maintaining records on all students on the AEN register with the support of the AEN Link Team
- Assigning timetabled teachers to Learning Support withdrawal groups of students
- Liaising with parents of students with AEN where required.
- Liaising with external agencies eg. NEPs, NCSE, Tusla as required.
- Contributing to the Continuous Professional Development of staff in the area of AEN.
- To apply for SNAs and Assistive Technology to the SENO
- Coordinating SNA provision.
- To oversee the appropriate use of psychometric testing results in determining suitable options for incoming 1st years, 3rd Year and TY students in conjunction with Guidance To participate in the transition programme of new students with AEN.
- To liaise with primary schools and the incoming 1st Year Year Head in the exchange of information regarding new students
- To be a member of the Care Team and attend weekly meetings to support students with AEN
- To organise special centres for students with RACE in semester exams and in state exams
- To ensure RACE applications are completed with support of the AEN Link teachers in a timely fashion
- To support the work of the SNA Team in completing reports on students and in their work June in preparation for the new academic year

3.5 The Role of the An Cuan Coordinator

- To liaise with the principal in relation to the application process as a member of the Admissions Team for An Cuan
- To lead the transition process for students coming into An Cuan
- To liaise with parents, teachers, Special Education Teachers, SNAs and external organisations linked to the student in the transition process
- To gather documentation and apply for transport as needed
- To oversee the application for bus escorts as needed
- To liaise with the principal in timetabling for students enrolled in An Cuan in relation to levels of learning being undertaken, eg, Level 1 or Level 2 Learning Programmes
- To maintain records in relation to Priority Learning Units being taught to students of An Cuan by mainstream teachers
- To ensure that the curriculum is best suited to each student in relation to the appropriate level and to decide with evidence and in consultation with parents and management, what level or combination of levels students should be doing, eg, Level 3 with one or more add on Level 2 courses in the event that some Level 3 subjects are not appropriate for the student
- To prepare students for immersion in mainstream where appropriate
- To liaise with mainstream teachers where students enrolled in An Cuan attend mainstream classes
- To organise timetables for SNAs working in An Cuan ensuring that students are supported where the need is the greatest
- To liaise with the Deputy Principal in organising substitution cover for absent SNAs where needed
- To liaise with the AENCO and the relevant AEN Link teachers as needed
- To refer students to the Care Team as needed
- To provide Continuous Professional Development for staff in the area of ASD as needed

3.6 The Role of the Guidance Counsellor

- The guidance counsellor is a member of the AEN Support Team and works with other members of the team in facilitating the provision of education for students with special educational needs and their inclusion in the school. The guidance counsellor has an important role in assisting all students, including those with AEN at the different stages of schooling.
- It is acknowledged that students with AEN may require greater support at formal transfer points in their school career and the Guidance Counsellor will be particularly aware of these students. When appropriate the guidance counsellor is available to staff who may want to seek advice/relevant information regarding students with AEN and how they can best be supported in school.

3.7 The Role of the Subject Teacher

At Athboy Community School the academic progress of students throughout the school rests in the first instance with the subject teacher. In order to ensure that as a school we meet the needs of all our students, subject teachers are encouraged to:

- Be aware of the school's policy and procedures (as outlined in this document) for dealing with students with AEN.
- Be familiar with the AEN Register and in particular the learning difficulties of students in their class groups
- Ensure that in-class support teaching sessions (team teaching) are planned and targeted at supporting students with AEN
- To assess the ability of AEN students in their subject early on in the academic year and to ensure the appropriate materials/content is used
- To be aware of the learning styles of all of their students and to give over a session early in the academic year so that students can reaffirm the way in which they best learn in that subject
- To tap into areas of interest for students with AEN to spark interest or create real life examples which relate to their lives and thus create real possibilities for success
- Seek advice from the AEN Department regarding students with Additional Educational Needs.
- Take responsibility for their own continuous professional development particularly with regard to common difficulties e.g. Dyslexia & Specific Language difficulties.
- Where a student has an SNA the subject teacher should plan how to most effectively engage the ISA in consultation with the resource teacher or the AEN Coordinator.
- Support/encourage independent learning in the student. This is particularly important for Senior Cycle students.
- To assist in identifying and referring students who have learning difficulties.
- Fill in referral forms for students about whom they have a concern. The obligation is on the subject teacher to refer students with AEN.
- To ensure the progress of all the students in his/her class.
- To facilitate access to the curriculum for students with learning difficulties.
- To be aware of the AEN students and what information is available on these students and to implement, where possible, the recommendations made in the psychological report.
- To exchange information with the AEN teacher on the student's progress.
- To co-operate with the provision of accommodation in House and State examinations.
- To advise on options.
- To partake in a whole school approach to Learning Support.
- To be aware of CAT 4/Literacy tests/Numeracy tests results but not to use them as a definitive measure of a student's ability and in so doing to limit a student's possible achievement except in the case of the top cohort of students.
- To contribute to Student Support Plans for students with AEN as appropriate, eg, where team teaching has been in place or when rolling out a programme such as the Vocabulary Enrichment Programme.

3.8 The Role of the AEN Link Teacher

- Meeting(s) with SENCO and SETs during induction week to plan for staff AEN session
- Gather all information on new students including 1st years ie, CAT4 results, reports etc ...
- Get Educational Passports for new 1st Years from SENCO/YH
- Read reports provided on students
- Update AEN Register and identify students in need of support eg. literacy, numeracy, organisation, sensory, movement breaks

- Update AEN info on VSWare
- Complete Student Support Files (SSFs) for students in red/green categories on the AEN Register
- Link with SETs to identify targets for students for SSFs
- Assist SETs in planning intervention using AEN meeting
- Assist SENCO and AEN colleagues with RACE testing, corrections etc
- Identify students in need of reading assistance and/or separate centres for SA1 exams
- Arrange EAL dictionaries for SA1 exams
- Review work to date with SENCO and relevant staff
- Link with SETs to review interventions to date
- Review SA1 results to check progress of students
- Update SSF with SA1 results
- Assist with LC RACE paperwork/testing
- Assist with JC RACE applications
- Identify students who may need assistance after formative assessments in February
- Update SSFs after Semester 2 Assessments
- Identify students in need of reading assistance, technology, separate centres for SA3 exams
- Review the years' work with AEN Team – Finalise/File paperwork for all AEN students in the year group
- Identify possible students for L2LP/L1LPs the following year
- Review of all students receiving support
(See AEN Link Teacher Timeline in Appendix x)

3.9 The Role of the Learning Support/Special Education Teacher

The resource/learning support teacher works closely with students who have AEN, the AEN Link Teachers Team and in partnership with subject teachers thus ensuring that students are supported as effectively as possible. SETs may be used to support learning in any of the following settings;

- In parallel with the English or Maths blocks in either a team teaching or a withdrawal setting
- During Irish withdrawal class where they are exempt from the study of Irish
- EAL Classes
- Withdrawal from mainstream subjects for students who need additional support
- Teaching L1LPs or L2LPs to individuals or small groups

The duties of the Learning Support/Special Education Teacher include:

- Teaching students with AEN in small groups or one-to-one settings.
- Providing additional support in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Planning and implementing effective teaching strategies for students with AEN.
- Liaising with the AEN Link Teacher/SENCO in relation to the AEN Register and the specific needs of each student in the group
- Check the Student Support Files in relation to targets for each student
- Implementing class plans around the needs of and interests of the students, setting and marking assignments.
- Helping students to cope with and overcome problems that arise because of learning

difficulties.

- Encouraging students to develop self-confidence and independence, and to reach their full potential.
- Developing and fostering the appropriate skills and social abilities to enable the optimum development of students.
- Assessing students' progress
- Recording students' progress through the use of progress reports and contributing through the AEN Link teacher to the Student Support files
- Evaluating interventions and teaching methodologies and making the necessary amendments to ensure student learning and progress.
- Adapting the National Curriculum and conventional teaching methods to meet individual needs.
- Using audio-visual materials and computers to stimulate interest and learning.
- Providing advice to subject teachers as to the teaching methodologies best suited to that student where appropriate.

3.10 The Role of the Year Head of First Year

- Be involved with the transition programme of incoming First Years
- Meet with incoming students outside of First Years
- Become familiar with any difficulties each student may have through the AEN Register
- Be aware of students results in psychometric testing
- Communicate the social, behavioural and emotional needs of students with AEN to teachers in conjunction with the AEN Dept.
- Keep records of attendance, punctuality and encourage good practice in both areas
- Monitor motivation level of students with AEN in particular
- Provide the opportunity for students to access information regarding their own learning styles through liaison with Guidance
- Link with the Care Team regarding students with AEN who are at risk
- Communicate with parents of student with AEN re his/her social, behaviour and emotional and learning needs where necessary
- Oversee academic tracking of the year group
- Provide information on students to get involved in extra-curricular activities and leadership programmes
- Monitor students with AEN re the Learning Code as for all students in the year group
- Support the students in developing study and exam skills
- Help in maintaining Student Support Plans and filling out of ISA/BCN1 Forms.

3.11 The Role of the Class Tutor

The role of the class teacher in Athboy is a very important one in the school. The Tutor's responsibilities include:

- Get to know each student in their tutor group
- Become familiar with any difficulties each student may have
- Monitor attendance and punctuality each morning
- Ensure that all students have journals, or a Journal Report
- Check that journals are signed by parents each week
- Check the journal for Assets, ensure all students are recognised when they excel
- Create an environment where students can come to you with Red or Amber notes, and record as agreed by year head

- Support students to avoid getting on Level One of the Learning Code
- Monitor students on Level One of the Learning Code
- Take up journals regularly and put in a note for parents
- Check absence notes and collect completed notes for student files
- Check uniforms and encourage students to check that they have all books and materials for the day at tutorial every morning
- Attend weekly meetings with the year head
- Communicate with home re absence of more than two days – liaise with Year Head if absence persists
- Help students set achievement targets for themselves
- Coordinate wellbeing in the year group with the year head and coordinator
- Implement the SPHE programme as agreed by the school (where you are their SPHE teacher)
- Encourage a positive class spirit by interclass competitions and reward good behaviour
- Encourage students to participate in extra-curricular/leadership activities and encourage students to earn Assets for ECAs
- Monitor friendships and promote good relationships among students

3.12 The Role of the SNA

The SNA provides care assistance to named students who have AEN. They make a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education to these students. The AEN Coordinator and AEN Team work collaboratively in devising an appropriate strategy plan for a student with AEN. The SNA is made aware of this plan and given guidance on their role in the successful implementation of this plan. The SNA plays an important role in the health and safety of the student and in their social, emotional and educational development. It is important that the SNA supports student participation in school life without developing a culture of dependency. The duties of the SNA involve tasks of a non-teaching nature such as:

- Attending Staff and Departmental meetings when appropriate.
- Attending a weekly meeting with the AEN Coordinator
- Assisting/escorting students on school trips.
- Supporting students before and after school at the lockers
- Monitoring students at breaktimes
- Giving special assistance as necessary for students with particular difficulties e.g. helping special needs students with typing, writing or other use of equipment.
- Assisting with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the student.
- Assisting with examinations (if appropriate).
- Assisting the teacher in the supervision of students during assembly, recreation and in movement from one classroom to another.
- Accompanying individual or small groups who may be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom. An SNA should not be asked to withdraw a student from a classroom unless this is a strategy that has been agreed by the AEN department. In such instances, teachers will have been informed.
- Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process.
- Engagement with parents of special needs students in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by the AEN Coordinator.

- Other appropriate duties as may be determined by the needs of the students and the school.
- SNAs may be re-assigned to other appropriate work when special needs students are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise.

3.13 The Role of the Special Educational Needs Support Team

The Special Educational Needs support team comprises of the:

- Principal/Deputy Principal
- AEN Link Teachers
- Learning Support Teachers
- Guidance Counsellor
- Year Head
- AEN Coordinator
- An Cuan Coordinator

The AEN Support Team play a key role in the evaluation of practice and procedures relating to AEN. The school acknowledges that it is particularly important to continually review and develop our practices in relation to:

- Accessing relevant information about all our intake students.
- How AEN information is made available on VS Ware
- Being mindful of GDPR in relation to AEN information (Sensitive information)
- How we use assessment data results, including the Cognitive Ability Tests to support and challenge our students.
- Literacy and Numeracy Testing for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle students.
- How we support the more able students.

4. Transfer from Primary School

4.1 Transition Programme

The Admissions Period during which Enrolment Forms may be provided to the school begins on the first Monday in October each year and ends on the last school day of October. Applicants are made notified on the decision on their applications in mid-November and places must be accepted by the end of November/start of December.

The school hosts an Open Evening on the first Thursday in October each year and invites students in 4th, 5th and 6th Classes in primary schools in the catchment area to come view our building and meet staff and students. Application forms are made available at this event.

An Information Evening is held for all successful applicants in January each year. At this meeting the curriculum and supports are outlined and staff are available for questions and to offer advice and support. The subject options are discussed as is the digital test and how results can inform choice of subject.

The CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) assessment is held shortly after the meeting. Based on the results of the CAT assessment, the AEN Department and Guidance will advise parents on the most suitable options for their child according to his/her strongest cognitive score.

The AEN Coordinator and Year Head of the incoming First Years visit primary schools and meet with class teachers, Special Education Teachers and SNAs to gather information about students to help with preparation of the AEN Register and for planning for the following year.

In May, parents are invited to an Information Evening about First Year and at the same time students will attend a session with their class teacher/year head to meet their new classmates and do some “Get to Know You activities”. The purpose of these events is to allay any anxieties on the part of students or parents about the upcoming transition.

Students with AEN are welcome to attend the school with members of the national school staff such as SNA or AEN teacher or with parents from February to June to smooth their transition.

All First Year teachers are briefed on matters relating to the students they are going to teach or come into contact with. Clearly the extent to which individual teachers are given confidential information is a sensitive matter. It is, however, important that teachers have as much information as possible regarding the students they teach if they are to contribute towards the best possible learning environment for them.

4.2 Students transferring into other Year Groups

The Deputy Principal/Principal will make initial contact with all new students to the school outside of the 1st year cohort and will set up an interview with the relevant year head/Deputy Principal/Principal. Where the student has AEN, the Deputy Principal will ensure that the AEN Coordinator receives any relevant information following the meeting.

5. The Model of AEN Provision

5.1 The Model of SEN provision is focused on the individual needs of the student. It is firmly based on the following principles:

- The support of students with special needs in the school is a whole-school responsibility.
- The Special Needs Coordinator oversees a support team (of teachers and SNAs, i.e. Special Needs Assistants) who assist the class teacher to meet the needs of students with special needs.
- Parents/guardians are involved in the process of supporting their children through their partnership with the class teacher/s, the support team of AEN personnel, Year Head and school management.
- The Principal/Management provides a structure and environment that supports and monitors the learning of all students and is particularly sensitive to the learning needs of students with special needs.

The provision for special needs students is carried out in a number of ways including; withdrawal of students for extra support on a 1-1 basis in a way that does not disrupt their learning in that subject; withdrawal from Irish of students with exemptions to do English/Maths Learning Support work; the creation of small class groupings; In-Class Support (team-teaching).

Each academic school year, Literacy and Numeracy testing is conducted with 1st, 3rd and TY

students in Athboy Community School.

Where possible, learning support time is provided to a student whose scores in literacy and numeracy are under the 16th percentile. Resource time is allocated to those students with and without psychological assessments. Some students have modified programmes and timetables appropriate to their individual needs.

A significant number of students with AEN have Irish language exemptions. The AEN Department have structures in place to ensure that students get maximum benefit from the additional timetable allocation that exemption from Irish creates.

At Junior and Senior Cycle, students with an Irish exemption are withdrawn from all their Irish classes and receive additional lessons in numeracy and literacy with their resource teacher.

5.2 Continuum of Support

The model of assessment and intervention, as practiced in Athboy Community School, is underpinned by recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum from mild to severe and from transient to long term. Our response to the needs of students is organised according to NEPS's Continuum of Support.

5.3 Student Support Plans and Individual Education Plans

A Student Support Plan is devised for students with Special Education needs. All students involved in AEN support will have a tailored learning plan. Prioritising the needs of students informs the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Staff are briefed and informed about the IEPs by the Special Needs Coordinator and the relevant information is made available to staff on Teams.

Once developed, Individual Education Plans for students concerned set clear learning/behavioural/social targets.

The SSF process involves:

- Gathering Information: Personal/ Background details.
- Educational details (primary school details/assessment and learning support details)
- Categorisation of need (assessment reports/ information attained from parents)
- General profile based on formal/informal assessment.
- AEN provision
- Priority Need
- Setting targets for each priority learning need:
- Identifying the strategies and resources required:
- Relevant documentation
- Setting the date for review: A review occurs each academic year. However, it may occur more often dependent on student progress and circumstances

These SSFs aim to include the most relevant information in a clear and concise manner.

5.4 Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable Accommodations for State and In-House Examinations (RACE) Applications are made by the AEN teacher for RACE provision for students with AEN sitting a Junior

Certificate or Leaving Certificate Examination. From October 2016 the State Exams Commission SEC now operates a devolved model at both Junior and Leaving Cert Level. The school makes

an application for relevant accommodations for students who meet the criteria as laid down by the SEC at Junior Cycle and these accommodations can be reactivated for Leaving Cert, with the school being satisfied that the student still has a need for the accommodation.

Further details are available in the RACE Guide for Exam Students 2018 at www.examinations.ie. Where resources permit and when deemed appropriate, readers, scribes and other accommodations are available to students who qualify for such accommodations at mock exams and other school assessments.

If the AEN teacher considers that a student with AEN is entitled to reasonable accommodations, applications will be made to the DES. Generally, this involves:

- The assistance of a scribe or reader
- The use of a tape recorder or word processor
- A waiver in spelling or grammar
- The use of a separate centre

The State Examinations Commission considers and decides on the matter.

6. Monitoring Evaluation, Assessment and Reporting

In Athboy Community School, all students are assessed on an ongoing basis. Assessment may be formal, informal, summative or formative.

6.1 Formal Assessment

Incoming First Year students sit the Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT -Level E) prior to entry. Students sit house examinations at the end of Semesters 1 and 3.

A continuous assessment grade is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings. Students sit Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT -Level G) in Third Year/TY.

First Years are assessed using a Maths Competency Test administered by the Maths Dept and the New Group Reading Test (NGRT) for reading ability by the AEN Dept.

Other professionals working with the school may formally assess students with AEN.

6.2 Informal Assessment

An Assessment for Learning approach to learning is the most suitable approach for students with AEN in particular.

Continuous assessment results based on class tests is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings. These may be based on End of unit/chapter tests, In class questioning and homework/project work.

The literacy and numeracy skills of students with AEN may be assessed.

6.3 Responsibility for Assessment/Testing

The responsibility for many aspects of formal and informal assessments lies in the first instance with the subject teacher. The organisation of the CAT tests is the responsibility of the AEN and Guidance Departments. AEN Link Teachers/SENCO teachers take responsibility for literacy and numeracy testing of students with AEN. The interpretation of results is the remit of the AEN Department.

Using Assessment Data Assessment data is used to:

1. Identify students with AEN.
2. Identify students' individual needs
3. Aid in the design of intervention strategies
4. Monitor student progress
5. Inform future learning direction

6.4 Recording Assessment Data

Teachers record assessment marks both formal and informal in the Teacher Planner. House examination results are included on the school report to parents in December, March and at the end of the school year. A continuous assessment result is reported to parents at parent teacher meetings. Copies of the student's reports are available on their file. The AEN department maintain files for the students with whom they work. Included in these files are any additional assessments that the students may have taken.

6.5 Access to Assessment Records

The school is aware that some assessment material is of a sensitive nature and therefore it is treated confidentially and only made available to appropriate personnel. The AEN Department manage a significant amount of the assessment information for students with AEN. Relevant information is disseminated as appropriate by the AEN team.

6.6 Monitoring Arrangements

The responsibility for monitoring student progress lies in the first instance with the subject teacher. If a student has been identified as having AEN, the AEN Department will play a key role in monitoring student progress.

6.7 Evaluation

The successes of any intervention strategies are monitored on an on-going basis through formal and informal assessment. The AEN department endeavours to evaluate the progress of students with AEN on a continual basis and adjust intervention strategies when and where necessary.

7. Involvement of Parents

Athboy Community School regards the partnership with parents as a very important one and is always open and responsive to expressions of concern made by parents.

Parents/Guardians are invited and encouraged to attend any meeting concerning their children's progress. Year Head and the AEN Coordinator are available to meet with parents regarding concerns. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to discuss any issues or concerns with the school at the earliest opportunity.

The school recognises its responsibility under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with

Special Educational Needs Act 2004 to:

- Inform parents of their child's AEN and how those are being met.
- Consult parents with regard to the making of all decisions of a significant nature concerning their child's education and invite them to participate in such decisions.

The Special Needs Department is in regular contact with the parents of students with AEN. This contact can take the form of a meeting or a telephone call. Students receive a school report on three occasions in the school year. There is one parent teacher meeting each year where parents have the opportunity to meet with all teachers. The AEN Team make themselves available to parents on these evenings.

8. Involvement of Students

Students with AEN are encouraged to adopt an active approach to their education. Where appropriate, their needs and supports required are discussed. Thus, the student is involved in a practical way in learning plans and programmes and assessing progress. Generally, students with AEN are very open to discussing their educational development.

9. Links with Outside Agencies and Services

The school works with a significant number of outside agencies which include;

- National Education Psychology Service
- National Council for Special Education
- State Examination Commission
- Visiting Teacher Service HSE to include:
 - HSE Social Worker Team
 - Psychologists
 - Psychiatrists
 - Consultant paediatricians
 - Foster Care Workers
 - Occupational Therapists
 - Physiotherapists
 - Speech & Language Therapists
- College & University Student Support Services
- Dyslexia Association of Ireland
- Aspire (Asperger's support)
- Association for Higher Education Access and Disability
- National Council for the Blind of Ireland
- Irish Learning Support Teachers Association
- Irish Association of Special Education Teachers
- The Dyspraxia Association

This list is not exhaustive and the school will further develop links with outside agencies as the needs of the students dictate.

10. Conclusion

This Policy is organic by its nature. It is envisaged that with changing perceived needs and with

insights gained that it will need to be constantly appraised and, if necessary, changed.

Intimate Care Policy

1. Intimate Care

1. Definition

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child. Parents have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents/carers. Intimate care can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Supervision of a child involved in intimate self-care

2. Child Protection

In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task, the staff member will report this concern immediately to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). Such issues may include:

- The student seems unusually sore, tender or bruised
- The student seems to misinterpret what is said or done
- The student has a very emotional reaction without apparent cause
- The student makes an allegation against a staff member

Any concerns will be dealt with by the DLP in accordance with Children First and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools.

3. Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

4. School Responsibilities

Athboy Community School is committed to working with parents / guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students who require assistance with intimate care.

- All staff working with children must be appropriately vetted.
- The Principal must ensure that all staff undertaking the intimate care of students are familiar with and understand the Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines together with associated policies and Procedures.
- The SNA team will liaise with the AENCO and parents in order to implement an Intimate Care Plan with the parents/guardians and student, and other health professionals if appropriate.
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be agreed by the school, parents / carers and students (if appropriate).
- Ongoing intimate care arrangements must be recorded in the student's support file and conAENt forms signed by the parents / carers and student (if appropriate).
- Staff should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed in the Intimate Care plan between the School, parents /carers, and student (if appropriate).
- Intimate care arrangements that have been specially agreed with a parent are reviewed annually. The views of all relevant parties, including the child (if appropriate), are sought, and considered to inform future arrangements.
- If a staff member has concerns about a colleague's intimate care practice, they must report this to the DLP or Deputy DLP (Designated Child Protection officers)

5. Guidelines

- All students have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are designed to safeguard both students and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of students.
- Students with a physical disability can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs and follow agreed care plans. Involve the student in their intimate care. Try to encourage the student's independence as far as possible in her intimate care.
- Where the student is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them a choice where possible.
- Check your practice by asking the student/ partner any likes or while carrying out intimate care. Treat the student with dignity and respect and ensure privacy appropriate to the student's age and situation.
- Make sure practice in intimate care is consistent and only carried out by the named staff according to the Intimate Care Plan.
- Sensitive information about a child's intimate care is confidential.
- If the child appears distressed or uncomfortable when personal care tasks are being carried out, the care should stop immediately. Try to ascertain why the child is distressed and provide reassurance.
- Promote positive self-esteem and body image.
- Confident self-assured children who feel their body belongs to them are less vulnerable.

- The approach you take to intimate care can convey lots of messages to a child about their body worth. Your attitude to a child's intimate care is important.
- Keeping in mind the child's age, routine care can be relaxed, enjoyable and fun.
- If you observe any unusual marks, bruises or swelling including the genital area, report immediately to the DLP or DDLP for Child Protection.
- Complete a written record of concern.
- If during the intimate care of a student you accidentally hurt them, or the child misunderstands or misinterprets something, reassure the child, ensure her safety and report the incident immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Adhering to these guidelines of good practice should safeguard Students and staff.
- Some procedures must only be carried out by staff who have been formally trained, if required.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 11 June 2024

Signed:
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date:

Signed:
(Principal)

Date:

Date for next review:

One to One Teaching Policy

Ratified April 2022

1. One to One Teaching

1.1 Context

Provision for all students is based on NEPS continuum of support

Withdrawal of students is generally arranged in small groups and is the preferred method of deliver for support

Individual withdrawal is used only where a student requires specialised individual support such as help with basic literacy, numeracy or support for students with English as a second language etc.

Individual support may be used if a student is absent for the withdrawal group and has missed important learning.

1.2 Environment

Teachers / Staff should ensure a classroom is free prior to withdrawing the student from their lesson. If a repeat intervention will take place a room may be block booked for the duration of the support. VS Ware can be used to check availability of classrooms during the desired time.

Classroom doors should be left open. If this is not possible for any reason, there must be a glass pane to see clearly into the room from outside without any obstruction (blinds, notices) on the glass pane.

Large, common areas should be avoided such as the assembly area etc.

The conference room can be used if it is free but this should be checked prior to any withdrawal.

Individual teaching may occur in a situation where teachers are providing support in relation to oral, practical, task, project or written exams.

1.3 Child Protection

If there are any concerns a report will be filed with the DLP in accordance with Children First and the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools.

