

St. Columba's College Stranorlar



Additional Educational Needs Policy

May 2024

Additional Educational Needs Policy and Procedures

Section A: Mission Statement

Mercy Philosophy of Education

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Mercy Education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy education is committed to on-going whole school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the wider community.

Mission Statement

St. Columba's College is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education and Irish Schools Trust). The trustees determine the ethos of the school. St. Columba's seeks to form a community of students, teachers, parents, management and auxiliary staff. The community tries to live by Gospel values that recognize the dignity of each individual.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school:

St. Columba's College hopes to serve all the students in the school without prejudice. The presence of children with additional educational needs enriches our whole school community.

Rationale

St Columba's College strives to be an inclusive educational setting that can meet the needs of all students and aims

- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their son/daughter in our school
- To facilitate a needs assessment of the student and allow time for advance planning and preparation prior to enrolment of a student with additional needs where applicable.
- To comply with the legislation and department circulars, etc.

Note

The terms **AEN (Additional Educational Needs)** and **ANA (Additional Needs Assistant)** are used in this document in preference to SEN (Special Educational Needs) and SNA (Special Needs Assistants) *'Students with additional needs in post-primary schools may be understood as having special educational needs. With the growth of inclusion, students now entering mainstream post-primary schools have a wide diversity of strengths, needs and aptitudes'* (Continuum of Support, NEPS, 2008)

The Aims of the Policy is to

- Outline our whole school approach to teaching /learning in relation to pupils with additional needs;
- Outline procedures and practices to be followed in relation to pupils with additional needs;
- Ensure that all pupils with additional needs will have every opportunity to have their needs met;
- Outline the role and duties of AEN teachers, Year Heads, and Assistants;
- Ensure that there will be a clear framework for the best utilization of additional needs assistants to maximize the pupil's learning and developmental need;
- Establish communication structures for the involvement of parents of pupils with additional needs;
- Ensure that all parents/guardians and pupils become fully aware of systems and structures to support AEN children in school;
- Ensure that the Board of Management in consultation with the principal and staff are clear on the role of the staff in line with any relevant guidelines or circulars issued by DES;
- Ensure the school operates systems in line with legislation and relevant guidelines e.g. Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education Welfare Act 2000, EPSEN Act 2004, Inclusion of Students with SEN Post Primary Guidelines (DES 2007), Inclusive Education Framework (NCSE 2011) and the Continuum of Support in Schools (NEPS 2010), Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (National Education Welfare Board (NEWB 2008)

Section B: Legislative Context

St. Columba's college is committed to the concept of inclusion. The college is committed to the provision of an educational programme which will meet the needs of all the students enrolled in the college, in so far as it is practicable.

The Education Act 1998, Section 9, outlines the functions of a school in relation to students with additional educational needs. It states that a school shall use its available resources to:

“ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for” (1998, p.13)

The Equal Status act 2000 states

‘For the purposes of this Act discrimination includes a refusal or failure by the provider of a service to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability by providing special treatment or facilities, if without such special treatment or facilities it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail himself or herself of the service’ (Part 1 (4))

and

‘This section is without prejudice to the provisions of sections 7(2)(a), 9(a) and 15(2)(g) of the Education Act, 1998, in so far as they relate to functions of the Minister for Education and Science, recognised schools and boards of management in regard to students with a disability’ (Part 1 (5))

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, Section 2 states:

'the provision of education to a child with special educational needs shall take place alongside the provision of education to children who do not have such needs unless that is inconsistent with:

(a) The best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or

(b) The effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated' (2004, p.7)

The Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools - Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017) clearly outlines the principles to guide the implementation process:

- Resources provided to support students with special educational needs should be used to facilitate the development of truly inclusive schools.
- Supports provided to students with special educational needs should be based on identified needs and be informed by regular reviews of progress (in consultation with parents and students) as outlined in the Continuum of Support Guidelines.
- The subject teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all students in the classroom, including students with special educational needs.
- Special education teaching supports provided to schools should be used solely for the support of students with identified special educational needs, including those students for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL). The special education teaching supports **cannot** be used to reduce the student-teacher ratio for general subject teaching or to provide additional subject options for students who do not have special education needs.
- Students with the greatest levels of need should have access to the greatest level of support, and whenever possible, these students should be supported by teachers with relevant expertise who can provide continuity of support.
- Schools should establish and maintain a core team of teachers to meet the needs of students with special educational needs. All members should have the necessary experience and access to continuing professional development to support the diverse needs of students with special educational needs.

The Report of Education Needs for the Purpose of the Assessment of Need Disability Act 2005 states that

- Assessment of Need (AON) is a statutory process under the Disability Act (2005).
- The Health Service Executive is responsible for the AON process. The Assessment of Need process is a HSE led process. The Disability Act 2005 outlines the legal responsibility for the AON process which lies with the HSE. Within the Disability Act, the NCSE has a statutory obligation to nominate 'appropriate persons' to assist the HSE in the AON process.
- The AON process requires an Assessment Officer, working for the HSE, to determine the health and education needs of an AON applicant.

- If an Assessment Officer forms the opinion there may be a need for an education service to be provided, the NCSE has a statutory obligation to nominate ‘appropriate persons’ to assist the HSE in the AON process.
- The Department of Education is satisfied that teachers are suitably qualified and therefore ‘appropriate persons’ to be nominated by the NCSE, as appropriate, to assist the HSE in the AON process.
- Teachers are suitably qualified to assist in the AON process due to their expertise and professional judgement and this position has been upheld in a recent court judgement. One of the functions of a school, as detailed in the Education Act (1998), is to ensure that the education needs of all children/young people, including those with a disability or other special educational needs, are identified and provided for. Further, the EPSEN Act (2004) requires schools to cooperate with the National Council for Special Education in the performance by the Council of its functions. Therefore, schools are required to complete the Report of Education Needs in order to meet this requirement.
- Teachers in mainstream schools can use Special Education Teacher (SET) coordination time to complete the Report of Education Needs and can request support from the NCSE, as required. As an interim measure, and until special schools are provided with additional administrative and teaching supports, in September 2024, requests for support on how to complete the Report of Education Needs will be prioritised by the NCSE.
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- This HSE Assessment of Need is to be carried out without regard to the cost of, or the capacity to provide any services considered necessary to meet the child/young person’s needs as per Section 8(5) of the Disability Act 2005. It is a ‘gold standard’ assessment. As such, teachers should identify any education services they believe are appropriate to address the education needs of the child/young person.
- In finalising the AON report, the Assessment Officer in the HSE is required to make a professional judgement based on all of the information available to them, including that provided by the teacher.

Section C: Defining Additional Needs

St. Columba’s College understands Additional Educational Needs to include students with: Special Educational Needs (SEN), as described in EPSEN 2004; Exceptionally able and gifted students; English as Additional Language (AEL); Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD), and students with school attendance concerns.

The additional needs of a student are those judged by St. Columba’s College to warrant additional support in order that the student can participate in, and benefit from, the education provided.

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Bill 2004 states
”special educational needs” means a restriction in the capacity of the child 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' (EPSEN 2004, p.6)

Section D: Inclusion

St. Columba's College is committed to the concept of inclusion and striving towards the provision of an inclusive educational setting.

The Inclusion of Students with SEN Post Primary Guidelines (2011, DES) states

The goal of inclusion is to create a framework within which differences between individuals are accommodated and celebrated. Inclusion in education relates not only to students with special educational needs, but also to a welcome for and acceptance within the school of all students who have learning differences (p.39)

The Inclusive Education Framework (NCSE 2011) describes inclusion as a process of:

- *Addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities and*
- *Removing barriers within and from education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her attendance at school (p.14)*

St. Columba's College notes the distinction outlined in the Inclusive Education Framework between integration and inclusion.

This concept of inclusion promotes the active participation of the learner as the primary aim rather than simple placement or accommodation. It also emphasises the need for changes within the education system and the school to accommodate the learner. The goal, therefore, is inclusion, not integration and the onus for achieving this is placed firmly on governments, schools and the wider community. Essentially, the difference is between "being there" and "taking part" with integration prioritising the placement of pupils in particular settings and inclusion promoting actual participation and accommodation. (p.14)

Section E:

Roles, Responsibilities and Procedures in relation to Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

Board of Management

The Board of Management has responsibility for overseeing the development, implementation and review of school policies and services in relation to the inclusion of students with special educational needs, including exceptionally able and gifted students.

'The board shall use the resources provided to the school from monies provided by the Oireachtas to make reasonable provision and accommodation for students with a disability or other special

educational needs, including, where necessary, alteration of buildings and provision of appropriate equipment' (Education Act 1998, 15(g))

Principal

The principal has overall responsibility for ensuring the development, implementation and monitoring of the policy, and the sourcing and allocation of available resources. These tasks may be delegated to members of AEN Core Team.

Deputy Principals

The deputy principals (DPs) co-ordinate the work of the Student Support Teams, and work in close collaboration with the Support Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, Parents, and External Agencies.

Additional Educational Needs Core Team

- The AEN Coordinator, Support Teachers and the Guidance Counsellors, comprise the core Additional Needs Teachers group, with responsibility for in school assessment and intervention, support to students, teachers and parents, and as appropriate link to outside agencies.

The team is responsible for the

- gathering and secure retention of student data
- compiling an AEN register
- communicating the relevant information to teachers
- student profiling
- needs assessment and diagnostic testing
- involve students in target setting
- coordination and provision of the teaching and learning for AEN students
- coordination of support provided by the Additional Needs Assistants
- monitoring progress, evaluating the learning plans
- liaising with parents and outside agencies as appropriate
- making recommendations to management, staff, students and parents
- providing relevant information to substitute teachers/new staff on AEN students in their classes
- advise school management on CPD needs of the staff in the area of additional needs
- weekly meeting with ANA's and student support meetings with Year Heads
- liaise on an ongoing basis with student support team

At Junior and Senior Cycle these teachers along with a Deputy Principal, AEN Coordinator and guidance counsellors comprise the Student Support Team. The Student Support team is a student focused mechanism put in place in order to:

- Co-ordinate the support for students;
- Facilitate links to other agencies;
- Assist staff to manage needs effectively ensuring good communication between all staff;
- Meet at regular times chaired by the Deputy Principal;

A referral process for teachers has been established (see Appendix 1 Consultation Form). Action plans are agreed and reviewed at each meeting.

Ancillary Staff (Infirmary, Caretaking, Admin, Catering, Cleaning Staff)

Ancillary staff may be advised of the identity of AEN students as appropriate, and will inform the Principal/Deputy Principals of any observed concerns relating to the health and safety of the students.

They will support the additional needs of the students.

The ancillary staff may provide incidental informal support to students with additional needs and report to the AEN Core Team as appropriate.

They will act to ensure the health and safety of students

They will act to ensure Child Protection Procedures are followed enacted upon

Parental Responsibility

- to inform and update the school about their child's special educational needs.
- to provide consent to access records
- to actively support the school's programme(s)
- to engage and communicate with AEN team

Student Responsibility

- to co-operate with staff in the implementation of the student's programme of learning
- to co-operate with staff to agree learning targets
- to develop ownership of the skills and strategies that they are taught during their support classes and learn to apply these skills to improve their own learning

Section F:

Identification of Students with Additional Educational Needs

First Year Students

A Student Support File will be opened for students transferring to St. Columba's College with identified needs from primary School (see template in Appendix 2)

All information gathered in relation to a student with AEN will be stored securely, treated confidentially and used only for educational purposes.

A profile of the student will be developed from:

- Information on the student's application form and documentation provided on enrolment
- Information given by parents / guardians who contact the school directly to discuss their child's needs
- Psychological or other assessments provided to the school
- Primary School Passports
- Assessment tests carried out after enrolment and other assessments as appropriate (e.g. assessment of behavioural/social skills)

- Information provided by visiting teachers or other external multiagency professionals involved with the student.

Existing students with Emerging Needs

When concerns re the learning/progress of existing students are raised by parents, staff or by the student themselves, the student support team and the AEN core team will cause the relevant assessments be carried out.

'Students who have needs that emerge during their post-primary education, would typically have their needs met through the Continuum, by first receiving Support for ALL. The process of identifying needs, gathering information and planning and reviewing interventions, will help identify students with higher levels of need who will need additional support. In turn, the processes inherent in School Support (for some), will identify those needing School Support Plus (for few). Therefore, students with emerging needs might typically work their way through the levels of support, as needed. Of course, many students will be able to have their needs met at School Support and will not need the level of support needed at School Support Plus, while others might need School Support for a period of time and then revert to Support for ALL. However, sometimes a student will be 'fast-tracked' because needs emerge quickly and require intensive levels of support.' (Continuum of Support, NEPS, p. 10, 1.4.2)

Record Keeping

All records in relation to students with special needs will be held securely by the AEN coordinator. One copy of psychological assessments and other confidential documentation will be stored securely by Principal and AEN coordinator. Relevant information is provided to teachers at the first staff meeting of the school year. Students identified as having AEN requiring SETS will be brought to the attention of the relevant personnel as it arises during the school year. This is the responsibility of the AEN coordinator. All data is stored in line with Data Protection Legislation 2018. Refer to Data Protection Policy for further information.

Placement of Students in Classes

On entry into First Year students are placed in mixed ability classes based on subject choice and gender balance (random selection) by the Principal in cooperation with the Deputy Principal with responsibility for allocation of students to classes.

All students have the opportunity to study core subjects (English, Maths and Gaeilge) at higher or ordinary level, in consultation with parents and teachers.

Irish, English and Mathematics are timetabled at the same time in order to provide additional support as necessary, by creating a small group where support can be provided. This arrangement allows students to learn at a pace which best suits their needs.

Students exempt from Irish who are identified as having additional educational needs, may receive support when Irish is timetabled. Support teaching is provided in consultation with the students, parents/guardians and teachers.

Section G: Continuum of Support

St. Columba's College offers support to students matching need to school provision.

3 Levels of support is on offer: Support for all. School Support (for some), and school support plus (for few). The level of support offered will increase in intensity and is matched to the need of the student.

The AEN co-ordinator will hold records of students identified as having needs at each level of support in school. The Student Support Team will work with the AEN co-ordinator to ensure the needs of students at each level of support are being met along the continuum of support.

Step 1: Identification of need.

- enrolment form-provides opportunity for parents to inform us
- open day-provides opportunities for meeting parents
- CAT 4
- WIAT-III-UK-T
- DASH test for RACE applications (handwriting test)
- NGRT
- Completion of various tests greatly assists the AENCo with meeting with feeder schools and parents
- Meetings with feeder schools.

Step 2: Meeting needs: A continuum of support- (SSPs – sets targets, strategies, documents progress and assists in providing support)

Step 3: Review Process: deciding whether to continue or discontinue with current levels of support or to upgrade the support to 'student support plus'.

Categories of Additional Education Needs as set by DES and NCSE

These include

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance and/or behaviour problems
- Severe emotional disturbance and /or behaviour
- Mild general learning difficulty
- Borderline general learning disability
- Specific learning disability ie dyslexia
- Moderate general learning difficulty
- Severe or profound learning difficulty
- ASD (autistic spectrum disorder)
- ADHD/ODD/ADD
- Specific speech and language disorder

Support for All

Support for ALL aims to support and promote positive student learning and behaviour.

Key elements of this approach are:

- Creating positive learning environments
- Best practice in teaching, with a diversity of learning opportunities
- Establishing and teaching clear behavioural and learning expectations for students
- Having a system for reinforcing and monitoring students
- A student support team
- Listening to the voice of the student

This approach may include

- The use of differentiated teaching and learning materials
- Identification of learning outcomes
- Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies
- Assessment/Screening for Learning Difficulties and BESD
- Assessment/Screening for exceptionally able and gifted students
- ANA support
- Assistive technology where appropriate
- Use of ICT

School Support (for Some)

Some students who need additional supports will be assessed in order to

- Identify Concerns and Gather Information
- Plan Interventions
- Monitor and Review

This approach may include support for all interventions but also include:

- Individual or small group teaching to address specific needs (e.g. reading, spelling, numeracy, lifeskills, social skills, behavioural competence)
- Team teaching
- Movement breaks
- Time-out with ANA
- Tea and talk with ANA
- In class Support
- Support teaching in smaller groups
- Lunchtime Activities
- Mentoring programme

Provision for students with AEN on timetable (Practical Examples)

- Tutor Time for Junior Students is timetabled each morning

- For teachers who are not in the Tutor System, their timetable allows for 11 hours of contact time which can be used to provide additional support teaching based on emerging needs. This will be based on emerging needs of the school throughout the academic year and will depend on the availability of teachers.
- Smaller classes in Maths and English are timetabled to assist and support some students who may have difficulty accessing the curriculum in the larger classes. There is fluidity within the structure of the timetabling for students to access smaller/ 1 on 1 teaching. This is dependent on the emerging needs of the student. The teacher/support teacher will closely observe the progress of the student in the short, medium and long-term. Some students will need support teachings/smaller classes for a short period of time and others may need support teaching over a longer period. Teachers, ANA's and AENCo will collaborate to support this process.

Student Support Plan

The Student Support Team will work together to ensure plans are in place to meet students' needs at Junior and Senior Levels. The plan will vary depending on identified need – see p.51 A Continuum of Support for Post Primary schools

Plan of Work, Targets, Strategies, Schemes of Work etc

School Support Plus

The School Support Plus processes will generally require more intensive and individualised supports and may involve external professionals and support services.

School Support Plus applies to students whose needs are enduring and/or severe and complex and whose progress was considered inadequate despite carefully planned and reviewed interventions at the previous levels.

Some kind of individualized plan is usually needed at this point. This may take a number of forms, but they are most likely to reflect the good practice set out in the Guidelines on the Individual Educational Planning Process issued by the NCSE in 2006, which specify:

- The nature and degree of the student's abilities, skills and talents
- The nature and degree of the student's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her educational development
- The present level of educational performance of the student
- The special educational needs of the student
- Social, emotional and behavioral difficulties
- The special education and related support services to be provided to the student to enable the student to benefit from education
- The goals which the student is to achieve over a period not exceeding 12 months e.g. The student's priority learning needs long and short term targets to be achieved
- Monitoring and review arrangements to be put in place

In addition to the supports listed under Support for All and Some, it may also include

- Reduced Curriculum
- Social Skills Programmes
- Behavioural Programmes

When the EPSEN Act 2004 is fully implemented the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) will be consulted in relation to the preparation of the IEP for students who come under the terms of the Act and will receive a copy of this plan.

Exceptionally able and Gifted Students

The college will work to support exceptionally able and gifted students by aiming to:-

- Ensure that all students are suitably challenged in all lessons so that gifted, talented and exceptionally able students make appropriate levels of progress
- Provide the opportunities for differentiated work / resources and opportunities for open-ended homework
- Develop and provide opportunities for extension work / projects and provide appropriate pastoral care
- Provide opportunities for professional development of teachers when available to inform teaching strategies e.g make contact with experts external to the school
- Provide a wide range of extra- curricular opportunities to encourage talent to flourish
- Provide mentoring and additional provision for students of exceptional ability where deemed appropriate
- Promote the development of independent learning by allowing students to organize their own work, to carry out tasks unaided, evaluate their work and become self-critical

The NCCA document, 'Exceptionally Able Students: Draft Guidelines for teachers' (2007), suggests that 5 to 10% of any school population may be consider gifted in any of the following areas:

- general intellectual ability or talent
- specific academic aptitude or talent
- visual and performing arts and sports
- leadership ability
- creative and productive thinking
- mechanical ingenuity
- special abilities in empathy, understanding and negotiation
-

The college will continue to cater for these students through the curriculum on offer and also through the extra-curricular activities which students are encouraged to participate in.

Additional Curricular Options

Junior Cycle

Parents may be invited to consider the JCSP programme in 2nd year and or/ a reduced Junior Cert. curriculum. Any implications arising from this in terms of the Leaving Cert exam and post-Leaving Cert courses will be explained to parents.

Senior Cycle

LCA is available to students at Senior Cycle

Additional literacy / numeracy /BESD interventions may be provided where appropriate and within available resources.

A reduced curriculum may be offered as appropriate and may include Level 2 Learning Programmes to students with learning difficulties

Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs - often referred to as SNAs)

Circular 30/2014 states

‘SNAs are recruited specifically to assist in the care needs of pupils with disabilities in an educational context. SNAs therefore do not have a teaching/pedagogical role and it would not be appropriate for pupils with special needs to be taught by unqualified personnel. Section 22 (1) of the Education Act 1998 states the primacy of the teacher in the education and personal development of students in schools. The classroom teacher is responsible for educating all pupils in his/her class, including any pupil with a special educational need. The class teacher has primary responsibility for the progress and care of all pupils in his/her classroom, including pupils with special educational needs’.

The ANA’s provides support and assistance to students to whom ANA access is deemed by the school to be necessary.

The circular explains that the purpose of the ANA scheme and the support provided by ANAs

‘The purpose of the SNA scheme is to provide for the significant additional care needs which some pupils with special educational needs may have. It is therefore important to set out what constitutes significant care needs under the terms of this scheme, and which will normally qualify for SNA support under the scheme.

For a child to require or qualify for access to SNA support, a child must have an assessed disability. The care needs outlined must be of such significance that they are beyond that which would normally be expected to be provided to a child by the child’s class teacher, support teacher, or other school teachers, or beyond the level of assistance which could be offered to the student by his/ or her fellow pupils in school.

The care needs must also be those beyond which could normally be provided for by alternative supportive approaches or modifications of the classroom environment, teaching approaches and/or assistive technology or specialist equipment.

The type of significant care needs that pupils may have can be varied, depending on the nature or level of the disability or sensory impairment that a child may have. Given the variety of medical conditions that children may suffer from, it is not possible to list all of the care needs that may arise here. However, examples of the primary care needs which would be considered significant – and which might require SNA support are:

- Assistance with feeding: where a child with special needs requires adult assistance and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time

- Administration of medicine: where a child requires adult assistance to administer medicine and where the extent of assistance required would overly disrupt normal teaching time
- Assistance with toileting and general hygiene: (including catheterisation) where a child with special needs cannot independently self-toilet, and until such time as they are able to do so
- Assistance with mobility and orientation: on an ongoing basis including assisting a child or children to access the school, the classroom, with accessing school transport (where provided, school Bus Escorts should, in the first instance, assist a child to access school transport), or helping a child to avoid hazards in or surrounding the school. (Every effort must be made by the school to provide opportunities for independence e.g. the removal of hazards.)
- Assisting teachers to provide supervision in the class, playground and school grounds: at recreation, assembly, and dispersal times including assistance with arriving and departing from school for pupils with special needs where the school has made a robust case that the existing teaching resources cannot facilitate such supervision
- Non-nursing care needs associated with specific medical conditions: such as frequent epileptic seizures or for pupils who have fragile health.
- Care needs requiring frequent interventions including withdrawal of a pupil from a classroom when essential: This may be for safety or personal care reasons, or where a child may be required to leave the class for medical reasons or due to distress on a frequent basis.
- Assistance with moving and lifting of children, operation of hoists and equipment.
- Assistance with severe communication difficulties including enabling curriculum access for pupils with physical disabilities or sensory needs (See also section 9) and those with significant, and identified social and emotional difficulties. Under the direction of the teacher, this might include assistance with assistive technology equipment, typing or handwriting, supporting transition, assisting with supervision at recreation, dispersal times etc.(Circular 30/2014, DES)]
- Assistants will observe and keep notes and records on their observations and feedback to management and AENCo at the assistant meetings.

The classroom teacher, support teacher, tutors, AEN coordinator/AENCO, Year Head, Guidance Staff, Principal/Deputy Principal and Parents/Guardian will liaise with the ANAs as appropriate. The Principal/Deputy Principals and/or Co-ordinator of Additional Needs will meet weekly with the ANAs.

Section H:

RACE Applications and Irish Exemptions

Applications for reasonable accommodation in state examinations and exemption in Irish for students with special needs will be made by the teacher with responsibility for R.A.C.E. in the school in consultation with staff /students/parents and NEPS Psychologists. School staff operate within SEC (State Exams Commission) and DES eligibility criteria.

Section I: Other Services

Psychological Service (Clinical Psychology Services and NEPS - *National Educational Psychological Service*)

These services provide for assessment and intervention of students with additional educational needs and provide support to teacher, parents and students. NEPS provide school based service, working closely with staff, students and parents.

The NEPS Psychologist works with staff along the Continuum of Support, i.e. Support for All, Some and Few. If deemed necessary, the NEPS psychologist can attend student support meetings.

Students may be referred to HSE through their GP or through NEPS. They will then deal with clinical issues and support students and parents in a clinical setting.

Other DES Agencies

National Council for Special Education (NCSE) which includes Visiting Teachers for the Sensory Impaired, Special Educational Needs Organisers (**SENOs**), Special Education Support Service (**SESS**), National Behavioural Support Service (**NBSS**) and the Professional development Service for Teachers (**PDST**) liaise with the school as appropriate.

TUSLA & HSE

TUSLA Social Work, Educational Welfare and School Completion services in addition to HSE, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Autistic Support Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy etc. also liaise with schools as appropriate.

Confidentiality

In the interests of confidentiality student files are retained only by the Year Head and AEN coordinator. These files are kept at all times in one storage location and can be accessed only the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head and AEN co-ordinator.

Subject teachers may view files on a need to know basis in the storage location and with the prior agreement of the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Files may not be removed from the storage area without the permission of the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Section J: Review

The Additional Needs Policy will be reviewed annually by the AEN team and the School Planning coordinator.

Changes to the Policy will be informed by the changing needs of the student body, changes in legislation and new DES guidelines

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 15th May 2024.

Signature: P. J. McGowan Date: 15/5/24
(Chairperson, St. Columba's Board of Management)

Signature: [Signature] Date: 15/5/2024
(Principal)

Date for Review: April 2026

Appendix 1: Staff Consultation Form



**St. Columba's College,
Stranorlar,
Co. Donegal.**

Student Support Team Consultation Form

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Name of Student: _____

Year: _____

Class: _____

Class Teacher: _____

Year Head: _____

State how you know the student: _____

Is it a pastoral care / learning concern (please tick one)?

Pastoral care

Learning

Reason for concern:

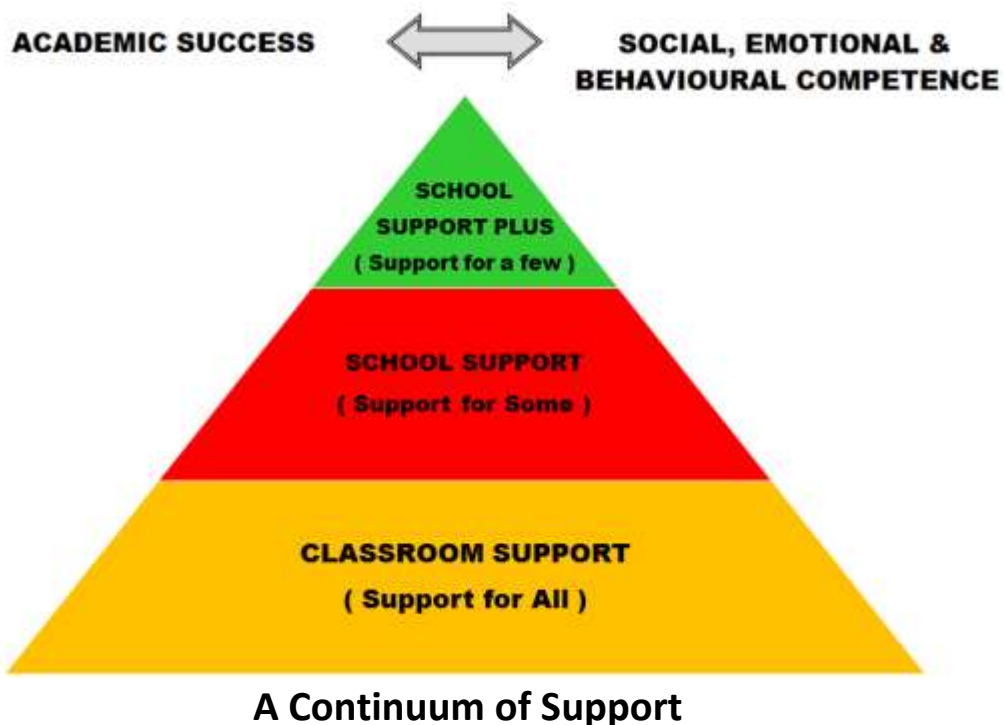
Signed: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM – DEPUTY PRINCIPAL, YEAR HEAD, GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR OR LEARNING SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR

Appendix 2: Student Support File



STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	



Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/ guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

Support Checklist		
Name:	Age:	Class:
General Information	Date Checked	Comments
1. Parents/ Guardians Consulted		
2. Information from previous school/preschool gathered		
3. Hearing		
4. Vision		
5. Medical Needs		
6. Basic Needs Checklist completed		
7. Assessment of learning- screening		
8. Observation of learning style/approach to learning		
9. Observation of behaviour		
10. Interview with pupil		
11. Classroom work differentiated?		
12. Learning environment adapted?		
13. Yard/school environments adapted?		
14. Informal or formal consultation/advice with outside professionals?		
15. Advice given by learning support/resource teacher or other school staff?		
16. Other interventions put in place in school?		
Action needed		
<i>Helpful references: SEN: A Continuum of Support: Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 13-16, 18 to 20; BESD: A Continuum of Support, p 7; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp32-36; Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools, pp20</i>		

SUPPORT PLAN*

Classroom Support (All)
 School Support (Support for SOME)
 School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s).

For help, see *SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers: BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers* pp.71-74; *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers*, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Student's name		Age	
Lead teacher		Class/year	
Start date of plan			
Review date of plan			
Student's strengths and interests			
Priority concerns			
Possible reasons for concerns			
Targets for the student			
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets			
Staff involved and resources needed			
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)			
Signature of teacher			

*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this plan.

SUPPORT REVIEW RECORD*

Classroom Support
 School Support (Support for SOME)
 School Support Plus (Support for A FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s) as a review of the plan and as a guide for future actions.

For help, see *SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers*; *BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers*; *A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource pack for Teachers*; *Student Support Teams in Post-Primary Schools*.

Student's name	Class/ Year	
Names of those present at review	Date of Review	
What areas of the plan have been most successful and why?		
Since the start of the plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?		
Have the student's needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?		
Recommended future actions – <i>what, how, who, when?</i>		
Any comments from the student?		
Any comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s) comment?		
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)		
Signature of teacher(s)		

Outcome of review			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revert to previous level of support- Support for All/ Classroom Support OR Support for Some/ School Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress to next level of support- Support for Some/ School Support OR Support for a Few/ School Support Plus
<input type="checkbox"/>	Continue at Current Level of Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Request consultation with other professionals

*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/ other professionals may contribute to this review.