



## **Scoil Mhuire agus Íde**

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# **Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Policy**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of students who have Additional Educational Needs as defined in Section 52 of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004;

'Special Education needs means a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate and benefit from education on account of enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition'

## 1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

Our vocation and purpose in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is to help our students to take their place in society as educated, mature, and committed Christians. We want our school to be not only a centre of academic excellence but a caring community where personal faith is nurtured and developed.

At Scoil Mhuire agus Íde we aim to:

- Create a caring environment in which everyone recognises the value of each individual and to encourage an awareness of, and a response to, the needs of others
- Foster an appetite for learning and to develop self-discipline, initiative, responsibility and perseverance
- Involve the students in the life-long process of education and to ensure that everyone achieves success in life
- Value all kinds of achievement, and to learn to cope with success and failure

The importance of the individual student is emphasised in the aims and philosophy of Scoil Mhuire agus Íde. It is therefore the policy of Scoil Mhuire agus Íde to identify and to endeavor to provide for those students who have additional educational needs.

## **1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE AEN POLICY**

This policy is drafted within the context of the specific provisions and definitions regarding children with disabilities and additional educational needs, and the statutory requirements placed on schools and Boards of Management by:

- The Education Act 1998
- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- The Equal Status Acts 2000
- The Disability Act 2005
- The Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018
- The Children First Act 2015

Within the context and parameters of Department of Education regulations, programmes, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Inclusiveness
- Equality of access to and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages, and ways of life in society.

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde aims to comply with the above legislation to the best of our ability within the resources available to us.

## **1.3 INCLUSION**

Students with AEN are welcomed and provided for in an inclusive way at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, in line with the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act (2004), the Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs Post-Primary

Guidelines (2006), and The Guidelines on the Provision of Special Education at Post Primary level (2007). We are committed to inclusive, student-centered learning that supports progress in all areas.

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is committed to fostering a positive school culture and climate that welcomes difference and diversity throughout our community. We believe that inclusion underpins and drives our ethos and central mission.

To best meet the needs of all students, including those with Special Educational Needs, we utilise the continuum of support model as outlined in the guidelines for Inclusion of Students with Special Education Needs in Mainstream Schools. This model employs a problem-solving approach to understanding and developing interventions for students experiencing a range of learning, behavioural, emotional, or social difficulties. Recognising that the needs of students with additional educational needs exist on a continuum, we provide support on a continuum basis.

Furthermore, we enhance inclusion through:

- Offering a realistic and inclusive curriculum developed in consultation with students, parents, relevant outside agencies, and staff.
- Integrating inclusive curriculum elements such as SPHE, Wellbeing, and Religion.
- Building positive daily interactions and relationships within the school community.
- Embedding restorative practices throughout the school.
- Actively participating in whole-school initiatives like health and wellbeing week, arts and culture week, and charitable events.
- Celebrating student achievements, both academic and otherwise, through weekly announcements.

By implementing these strategies, we strive to ensure that all students feel safe, valued, and included in every aspect of school life.

## **1.4 ALLOCATION**

Allocation will be provided in line with the new model of allocation as outlined in Special Education Teaching Allocation (Circular 0014/2017). This model provides a single unified allocation for special educational teaching needs to each school, based on the school's educational profile.

## **1.5 CHILD WELFARE**

In accordance with circular 0081/2017 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary School 2017', all staff are Garda vetted and complete TULSA's 'Children First E-learning' and the PDST Child Protection E-Learning Programme.

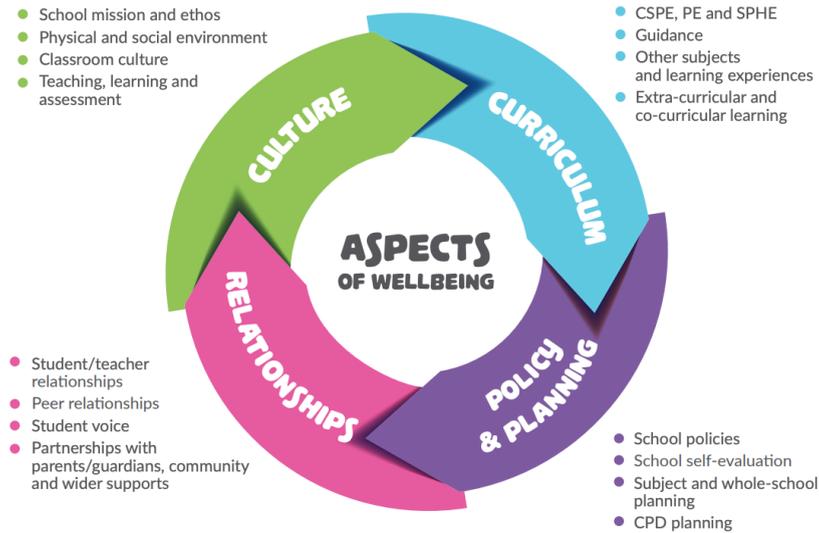
## **1.6 WELLBEING**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde recognises that student wellbeing is central to learning, as outlined in "Looking at Our Schools 2022." We are committed to promoting a supportive environment, especially for students with AEN who may face social, emotional, and mental health challenges.

We adhere to the updated Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines, which provide:

- Up-to-date policy and planning guidance.
- Clear answers to common planning questions.
- Examples of effective 400-hour Wellbeing programmes.
- Guidance on assessment and reporting.

Our focus includes the key wellbeing indicators: active, responsible, connected, resilient, respected, and aware.



### 1.6.1 SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR AEN STUDENTS

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde recognises that students with AEN may face additional social and emotional challenges that impact their learning. The school takes a proactive approach in supporting these students by:

- Providing structured support sessions focusing on self-esteem, resilience, and managing anxiety.
- Encouraging participation in extracurricular activities to build confidence and social skills.
- Assigning key staff members (e.g., Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, SNA's) to provide check-ins for students requiring additional emotional support.
- Embedding restorative practices and peer mentoring to create an inclusive and supportive school environment.

The school's Guidance Counsellor and AEN team work collaboratively to ensure that students struggling with social or emotional challenges receive the necessary interventions in a timely manner.

### 1.7 AIMS OF AEN PROVISION

The objectives and values underpinning this policy are:

- To support students who have any form of additional educational need and to minimise its impact on their education and development, thus fostering positive self-esteem.
- To promote an environment that meets students' learning, physical, social, emotional, and sensory needs.
- To acknowledge and support each student's role in the school community.
- To prioritise the nurturing of teaching and learning relationships.
- To recognise individual talents and abilities, ensuring that all achievements are valued.
- To promote strong collaborative relationships between students, staff, parents/guardians, and external support agencies.
- To ensure that every student has the widest possible access to the curriculum.
- To provide clarity on policies, roles, responsibilities, and tasks in line with student support planning.

## **1.8 RATIONALE**

This policy aims to show how students with AEN are catered for in Scoil Mhuire agus Íde. This AEN policy should be considered in tandem with the relevant Department of Education circulars, the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools, and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Guidelines. It aligns with the NEPS Continuum of Support framework and key legislation, including:

- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN)
- The Education Act 1998
- The Education Welfare Act 2000
- The Disability Act 2005
- Looking at Our Schools 2022

## **2. CATEGORIES OF AEN AND AEN TEAM**

### **2.1 CATEGORIES OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATION NEEDS (AEN)**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde provides for the following categories of AEN:

- Borderline/Mild General Learning Disability
- Moderate General Learning Disability
- Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties – ADD/ADHD
- Specific Learning Difficulty – Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia, Spelling difficulty
- Physical Disability
- Specific Speech and Language Disorders
- Sensory Difficulties – hearing and visual impairments
- Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Down Syndrome
- Multiple Disorders
- Disability arising from an Assessed Syndrome
- Gifted and Talented students
- English as Additional Language (EAL)

### **2.2 ROLES WITHIN SPECIAL EDUCATION (SE)**

#### **2.2.1 THE ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (AEN) COORDINATOR**

The AEN Coordinator is responsible for the daily management, coordination, and strategic planning of the AEN Department. Their duties include:

- Assessing and recording students' needs and progress.
- Developing and implementing a whole-school AEN policy under the direction of the Principal.
- Leading the provision of support for AEN students, ensuring their learning needs are met effectively.
- Administering formal and informal assessments.
- Overseeing the completion and maintenance of Student Support Files.

- Consulting with parents regarding their child's individual learning needs and required supports.
- Liaising with external agencies to facilitate educational assessments and secure necessary provisions for AEN students.
- Managing the transition of AEN students from primary to post-primary and between schools.
- Leading the three-step process of identification of need, intervention, and monitoring outcomes.
- Collaborating with the Principal and Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) on resource allocation for AEN students.
- Applying for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and assistive technology.
- Arranging for the purchase and allocation of assistive technology funded through the DES Grant.
- Monitoring and reviewing student progress and interventions.
- Providing guidance and effective support to mainstream teachers in implementing inclusive practices.
- Managing Irish exemptions
- Leading the application process for Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations (RACE).
- Working with the Guidance Counsellor to support students with social and emotional needs, including AEN students.
- Supporting students experiencing learning, social, or emotional difficulties by meeting with parents and staff as required.
- Coordinating the provision of Reasonable Accommodations in House Examinations in collaboration with the Examinations Secretary and Deputy Principal.
- Overseeing the allocation of support for AEN students within the school timetable.
- Leading and supervising the provision of SNA support for AEN students.
- Ensuring ongoing communication of AEN-related information to the Principal, Deputy Principal, and all relevant staff.

- Advising Senior Management on individual cases requiring additional support or intervention.

## **2.2.2 ROLE OF MAINSTREAM TEACHER WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION (SE) HOURS**

Subject teachers who have SE hours play a vital role in supporting and addressing the individual learning needs of students requiring additional support. Their responsibilities include:

- Attending an initial meeting with the AEN department at the beginning of the school year to review the additional needs of assigned students.
- Contributing to the development and implementation of Student Support Plans (SSPs) by setting and recording SMART targets for students under their care.
- Reviewing SMART targets at the end of the allocated learning support period and making recommendations on whether targets have been met or if additional support is required.
- Developing tailored teaching plans to support the learning needs of students with SE hours.
- Engaging in informal meetings with the AEN department to ensure ongoing support and evaluation of student progress.
- Liaising with the student's subject teachers to assist with planning and differentiation in their classes.
- Maintaining accurate records of student progress and adjustments to support plans as needed.

## **2.3 ROLES OF PARTNERS IN THE AEN TEAM**

### **2.3.1 THE PRINCIPAL AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS**

The Principal and Deputy Principals assume overall responsibility for ensuring that the needs of students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) are met. They oversee the establishment and promotion of whole-school policies and procedures that support the learning and inclusion of all students, including those with AEN.

Their responsibilities include:

- Working with the Board of Management (BOM), teachers, and parents to develop, implement, and review whole-school policies that promote the inclusion of students with AEN.
- Consulting and liaising with external agencies such as the Department of Education (DES), National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), National Council for Special Education (NCSE), and Health Service Executive (HSE) to support AEN provision.
- Ensuring that necessary resources, including Special Education Teachers (SETs) and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), are secured and allocated effectively to meet students' needs.
- Overseeing applications for additional supports, such as assistive technology and Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations (RACE), in collaboration with the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO).
- Supporting professional development opportunities for Special Education (SE) teachers to enhance inclusive education practices.
- Facilitating effective communication between AEN staff, parents, and external agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to student support.
- Ensuring a smooth transition for students with AEN from primary school to post-primary by identifying students with existing needs before entry and engaging with parents and primary school staff.
- Arranging meetings with parents of incoming First-Year students to discuss their child's needs in a supportive environment.
- Organising school visits for incoming students with AEN prior to their start date to help them transition smoothly.

### **2.3.2 THE MAINSTREAM TEACHER**

In accordance with the Education Act 1998, the mainstream teacher has the primary responsibility for the learning progress of all students in their class, including those with Additional Educational Needs (AEN). It is essential that mainstream teachers create a stimulating and supportive classroom environment that promotes inclusive education and enables all students to access the curriculum effectively. This role is reinforced in Circular 0014/2017 and Circular 0055/2022.

At the beginning of each academic year, mainstream teachers have access to the AEN register/Provision Plan for a limited period. It is their responsibility to liaise with

the AEN department to gather relevant information from student files to ensure appropriate classroom support is in place. In line with the Continuum of Support Guidelines and the "Looking at Our School" framework, mainstream teachers should gather information through both formal and informal means to inform interventions and differentiated teaching strategies.

Mainstream teachers play a crucial role in:

- Identifying and referring students who may require additional support, including those not yet formally assessed but showing signs of need.
- Collaborating with the AEN department to develop and implement differentiated teaching strategies that meet the diverse needs of students with AEN.
- Providing evidence of differentiation to the AEN department before an Irish exemption can be granted, as required by Circular 0055/2022.
- Creating a positive, inclusive classroom environment that affirms students' abilities to learn and participate in school life.
- Assessing, recording, and reporting on students with AEN in their subject areas, ensuring sensitivity to individual needs where appropriate.
- Engaging in ongoing collaboration with the AEN department to support students effectively and seek advice where needed.
- Participating in professional development opportunities, including AEN training and CPD courses, to enhance their capacity to support students with additional needs.

### **2.3.3 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT (BOM)**

The Board of Management (BOM) has a fundamental role in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the school's Additional Educational Needs (AEN) policy. As the school's primary regulatory body, the BOM ensures that AEN provision aligns with national legislation, best practices, and the needs of students.

The Board of Management is committed to:

- Ensuring the school has a comprehensive, up-to-date AEN policy that is effectively implemented and reviewed annually.
- Overseeing the inclusion of students with additional educational needs through an inclusive enrolment policy and whole-school approach.

- Providing a broad, balanced, and differentiated curriculum that equips all students with the necessary skills for full participation in society.
- Promoting and maintaining positive partnerships with parents, guardians, and relevant external agencies, ensuring that parents are informed and actively involved in decisions regarding their child's education.
- Allocating appropriate resources to AEN provision and advocating for additional support where necessary, including assistive technology, learning support, and professional development for staff.
- Supporting staff through access to ongoing training and development opportunities to enhance their ability to meet the needs of students with AEN.
- Complying with relevant legislation, including the Education Act (1998), the Equal Status Act (2000), the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004), and the Post-Primary Guidelines for Inclusion (2007).
- Conducting annual reviews of AEN policies and procedures to ensure alignment with best practices and national guidelines.

### **2.3.4 THE GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR**

The Guidance Counsellor is a key member of the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Team, playing a crucial role in supporting students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) throughout their school journey. Their role extends beyond academic guidance to include emotional and personal support, ensuring that all students have equitable access to education and opportunities to reach their full potential.

#### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Student Support and Inclusion
  - Assist in facilitating the inclusion and education of students with AEN.
  - Provide individualised guidance and support tailored to the needs of each student.
  - Assist students in developing study skills, behavioural skills, and coping mechanisms to navigate school life effectively.
  - Offer a safe and confidential space for students to discuss personal challenges impacting their education.

- Career Guidance and Progression
  - Support students with AEN in making informed career and further education decisions.
- Collaboration and Communication
  - Work closely with AEN teachers, school management, parents, and external agencies to ensure students receive appropriate support.
  - Ensure that relevant information about students with AEN is shared sensitively with teachers to enable effective support strategies while maintaining confidentiality.
- Referral and External Support
  - Act as a point of contact for self-referrals, staff referrals, and parental concerns regarding student well-being.
  - Refer students to external agencies when additional support is required beyond the school's capacity.
  - Liaise with other support structures within the school as needed.

### **2.3.5 YEAR HEADS**

Year Heads play a vital role in fostering an inclusive school environment that supports students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN). As key figures within the school community, they contribute significantly to the implementation of AEN support structures and act as primary points of contact for students, parents, and guardians.

#### **Year Heads**

The role of the Year Head includes:

- Supporting the creation of an inclusive climate within the school by promoting awareness and respect for students with AEN.
- Monitoring the academic, social, and emotional progress of students within their year group, ensuring that any emerging concerns are identified and addressed promptly.
- Liaising with the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Coordinators and relevant outside agencies to ensure that students' needs are met effectively.

- Facilitating the inclusion of students with AEN by working closely with the AEN Department, mainstream teachers, and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to support learning and engagement.
- Initiating referrals for AEN support following communication from parents/guardians, class tutors, mainstream teachers, SNAs, or through analysis of student attainment and behavioural observations.
- Communicating regularly with the AEN Department regarding student behaviour, work rate, emotional well-being, and any patterns that may indicate the need for additional support.
- Assisting with progress reports and contributing to AEN planning by gathering relevant information and observations.

### **2.3.6 PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Parents and guardians play a crucial role in supporting their child's education, particularly in the context of Additional Educational Needs (AEN). Through their unique knowledge of their child's development, strengths, and challenges, they contribute significantly to their child's learning programme and overall success in school. The participation of parents/guardians in a meaningful and consistent manner is a key determinant of positive student outcomes.

#### **Role of Parents/Guardians in AEN Support**

- Providing relevant information and documentation regarding their child's learning needs, strengths, difficulties, and any concerns they may have. This enables the school to plan effectively for their child's inclusive education.
- Keeping the school informed of their child's progress at home, including any challenges or developments that may impact learning.
- Communicating with the school at enrolment if they observe any learning or related difficulties at home.
- Participating in meetings and discussions related to their child's AEN support.
- Informing the AEN Department of changes in their child's circumstances that may impact their education.
- Engaging with the school in the application process for accommodations such as:
  - Irish Exemptions

- Assistive Technology
- Access to Special Class placements

### **Collaboration with the AEN Department**

The AEN Department advocates for a collaborative partnership with parents/guardians to ensure the best possible outcomes for students with AEN. Parents are encouraged to avail of the school's open-door policy to:

- Seek guidance on strategies to support their child at home.
- Provide updated reports, assessments, or diagnoses.
- Raise concerns regarding their child's emotional or academic needs.
- Stay informed on AEN supports and interventions available to their child.

Continued cooperation between parents/guardians and the AEN Department fosters a strong support network for students, ensuring their evolving educational and emotional needs are met. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep the school updated on any emergent or transient needs of their child to facilitate appropriate and timely interventions.

### **2.3.7 THE STUDENT**

Students play an active role in their own learning and development. The involvement of students in setting and reviewing their learning targets, participating in their support plans, and engaging in school life is a fundamental principle of effective AEN provision.

#### **Student Responsibilities**

Students receiving additional support are encouraged to:

- Develop a positive attitude towards their learning and actively participate in their educational journey.
- Become familiar with their learning targets and contribute to setting realistic and meaningful goals.
- Engage in selecting relevant learning materials and activities that will help them achieve their targets.
- Take ownership of the skills and strategies they develop through additional support and apply them to improve their learning.

- Participate fully in assessments and progress reviews to track their development.

## **2.4 SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT (SNA)**

### **2.4.1 ROLE IN SUPPORTING STUDENTS**

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) provide essential non-teaching support to students with disabilities or additional care needs, helping them to access education and develop independence. Their role is focused on assisting with care needs, promoting well-being, and supporting inclusion within the school environment.

SNAs contribute to the school's commitment to inclusive education by:

- Providing individualised assistance to students as outlined in their AEN support plan.
- Encouraging independence and fostering social, emotional, and educational development while avoiding over-reliance.
- Being mindful of health and safety considerations in all aspects of student care and school life.

### **2.4.2 ROLE IN SUPPORTING TEACHERS**

SNAs work in collaboration with teachers to enhance the learning experience of students with AEN by:

- Assisting in classroom organisation, including preparing materials and resources as required.
- Observing and reporting relevant information about students' progress, engagement, or challenges to teachers and the AEN team.
- Providing support during lessons, as agreed with the class teacher, to help students engage meaningfully with learning activities.
- Assisting students with care needs in accordance with Department of Education guidelines (e.g., mobility support, hygiene assistance, and supervision).

### **2.4.3 ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SNA**

Beyond direct student support, SNAs contribute to the wider school community by:

- Maintaining accurate records of their work with students, including class notes and incident reports, which are shared with the AEN department as required.

- Participating in the development and review of Student Support Plans, in collaboration with teachers, parents, school management, and external professionals.
- Assisting in school supervision at break and lunch times, as well as accompanying students on school trips when needed.
- Providing support during in-house examinations where care needs are present.
- Offering assistance to students with specific difficulties, such as using assistive technology or organising materials.
- Engaging with parents and guardians as directed by school management.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times in accordance with school policy and professional standards.

### **3. AEN MODEL OF ORGANISATION**

#### **3.1 WHOLE SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is committed to fostering an inclusive learning environment where all students, including those with Additional Educational Needs (AEN), are supported in reaching their full potential. The school's AEN policy is central to this commitment, ensuring equitable access to education and appropriate supports at every stage of a student's academic journey.

#### **Junior Cycle**

- In First Year, all classes are organised in a mixed-ability setting to ease the transition from primary to post-primary education. This approach provides continuity in learning, fostering confidence and engagement for all students.
- Mixed-ability groupings are maintained in Second and Third Year, with some subject-specific alterations:
  - Maths, English and Irish: Students are grouped into two bands to support differentiated learning and facilitate access to higher-level study where possible.
- This model ensures that all students have the opportunity to reach their academic potential while receiving necessary supports.

## **Senior Cycle**

- After the Junior Certificate, students self-select subjects and levels, ensuring autonomy and flexibility in their learning choices.
- In core subjects (Irish, English, Maths), students also self-select their level for the Senior Cycle. While teachers provide guidance, students are encouraged to challenge themselves without restrictions.
- The school's model promotes equal access to higher-level study, with additional support provided where necessary to enable students with AEN to achieve their best possible outcomes.

## **Inclusive Education Approach**

- The school is dedicated to ensuring that students with AEN have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, with appropriate accommodations in place.
- Differentiated teaching strategies, learning support, resource teaching, and in-class interventions are used to provide tailored support to students with additional needs.
- The AEN Department works closely with subject teachers, SNAs, parents, and external agencies to monitor progress and adapt support structures as needed.

This model reflects Scoil Mhuire agus Íde's commitment to inclusive education, fostering a supportive and adaptable learning environment where every student can thrive.

## **3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF AEN**

At Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, the identification of students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) is a collaborative and ongoing process. The school follows a structured approach to ensure that all students receive the support they need to access a broad and balanced curriculum. This process involves consultation with parents/guardians, feeder primary schools, school staff, and external agencies, following the Continuum of Support model.

### **3.2.1 FEEDER SCHOOLS IDENTIFICATION**

- The AEN Team liaises with feeder primary schools to gather relevant information about incoming students with AEN.

- The Pupil Passport (NCCA Guidelines 2016), including the 6th Class Report Card, My Profile, and My Child's Profile, provides insight into the student's learning history, strengths, and challenges.
- Individual meetings with parents/guardians of students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) are facilitated at this stage.
- The Deputy Principal and AEN Coordinator collate this information to ensure that students receive appropriate support upon entry.

### **3.2.2 SCHOOL BASED IDENTIFICATION**

Throughout the school year, AEN may be identified through teacher observations, class assessments, and student progress monitoring.

Mainstream teachers, class tutors, or year heads may refer students experiencing difficulties to the AEN Department.

Informal indicators of AEN may include:

- Persistent underperformance in class tests
- Difficulties with literacy and/or numeracy
- Social, emotional, or behavioural challenges, including anxiety
- Language and communication difficulties
- Patterns of absenteeism

To assist in early identification, all incoming First-Year students complete standardised assessments such as CAT4, and literacy/numeracy screening.

The results of these assessments, along with teacher observations and parental input, help identify students who may require additional support.

### **3.2.3 SCHOOL SUPPORT**

- The AEN Department, Year Heads, and Guidance Counsellor collaborate to determine appropriate interventions based on student needs.
- Students may receive in-class support, small group teaching, team teaching, or individual intervention, depending on their requirements.
- Parents are informed, and consent is sought before any further diagnostic testing is carried out by the AEN team.

- A Student Support Plan (SSP) is initiated for students requiring targeted interventions, ensuring a structured and monitored approach to support.

### **3.2.4 OUTSIDE AGENCY SUPPORT**

In keeping with the ethos of Scoil Mhuire agus Íde and our commitment to holistic student development, we work collaboratively with various external support agencies to ensure students with additional educational needs (AEN) receive appropriate interventions and supports.

Engagement with these agencies is always conducted with parental/guardian consent, and the school prioritises a student-centred approach in all liaison efforts.

Key Support Agencies and Their Roles:

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) – provides psychological assessments and advice on learning and emotional well-being.
- Primary Care Teams – support for physical and mental health needs, including developmental assessments.
- Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) and Occupational Therapists (OTs) – for students with communication, motor, or sensory difficulties.
- Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) through the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) – supports applications for resources, assistive technology, and special transport.
- Limerick Intervention Services (HSE) – multidisciplinary supports for children with additional needs.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (HSE) – for students requiring mental health assessments or interventions.
- Visiting Teacher Service for Deaf and Visually Impaired Students – specialist support for students with sensory impairments.
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) Educational and Clinical Psychologists – additional assessment and guidance.
- Medical Personnel – including GPs and specialists involved in student care.
- Jigsaw – youth mental health service providing early intervention and support for emotional well-being.

By collaborating with these agencies, Scoil Mhuire agus Íde ensures that students receive a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to AEN support, helping them reach their full potential in both learning and wellbeing.

### **3.2.5 PARENTAL IDENTIFICATION**

Parents/guardians play a vital role in identifying and supporting their child's AEN. Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns about their child's learning or emotional well-being. If a parent identifies that their child is struggling, they can request a preliminary screening. If AEN is confirmed, a support plan is put in place.

Parents are actively involved in:

- Providing updated reports or diagnoses
- Applications for exemptions (e.g., Irish Exemption)
- Applications for assistive technology or special transport

All information shared by parents and professionals is treated with the utmost confidentiality and securely stored.

The identification and support of students with AEN at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is an ongoing, flexible process, ensuring that all students are given the opportunity to reach their full potential within an inclusive and supportive school environment.

### **3.3 MODELS OF AEN DELIVERY**

When determining the most appropriate mode of support for each student, Scoil Mhuire agus Íde follows the guidance outlined in Circular 0014/2017 and the NCSE Toolkit. These resources provide a structured framework known as the Continuum of Support, which ensures that students receive targeted interventions based on their individual needs. The Continuum of Support is implemented as follows:

## Identification of Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

<p>Classroom Support  (FOR ALL)</p>	<p>The class teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all pupils in the class. A classroom support plan is developed and / or adjusted over time for those pupils who do not respond appropriately to the differentiated programme.</p> <p>This is informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Parental consultation</li> <li>· Teacher observation records</li> <li>· Teacher-designed measures /assessments</li> <li>· Basic needs checklist *</li> <li>· Learning environment checklist*</li> <li>· Pupil consultation - My Thoughts About School Checklist</li> <li>· Literacy and numeracy tests</li> <li>· Screening tests of language skills</li> </ul> <p>A Classroom Support plan runs for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>
<p>School Support  (FOR SOME)</p>	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teacher observation records</li> <li>· Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>· Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>· Learning environment checklist</li> <li>· Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>· Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>· Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measure for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>A support plan at this level may detail suitable teaching approaches including team-teaching, small group or individual tuition. A School Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review</p>

<p>School Support Plus (FOR FEW)</p>	<p>This level of the Continuum is informed by a detailed, systematic approach to information gathering and assessment using a broad range of formal and informal assessment tools, reports from outside professionals (as appropriate) and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Teacher observation and teacher-designed measures</li> <li>· Parent and pupil interviews</li> <li>· Functional assessment</li> <li>· Results of standardised testing such as measures of cognitive ability; social, emotional and behavioural functioning; adaptive functioning etc.</li> </ul> <p>Data generated from this process are then used to plan an appropriate intervention and can serve as a baseline against which to map progress. A support plan at this level is likely to be more detailed and individualised, and to include longer term planning and consultation</p>
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At Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, we are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. Our AEN policy aligns with Circular 0064/2024, ensuring that students with additional needs receive tailored support that enables them to access the curriculum effectively. The following provisions are guided by the Continuum of Support framework, which allows for a graduated response to student needs, ranging from whole-school approaches to targeted interventions.

### **Team Teaching/In-Class Support**

Team teaching is implemented in certain classes where timetabling and staff availability permit. The mainstream teacher and Special Education (SE) teacher collaborate to determine the most effective co-teaching model to support the students in the targeted class.

### **Inclusion of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) in Specific Classes**

Students with access to an SNA receive support in designated classes. SNAs are allocated between the ASD units and mainstream classes based on individual student needs and allocated hours. If a student scheduled for SNA support is absent, the SNA is reassigned to support other students requiring assistance during that period.

## **Small Group Withdrawal**

This remains a primary model of AEN delivery at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde. In 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years, students with Special Educational Needs are withdrawn during Irish and/or Modern Foreign Language (MFL) periods to receive academic and social/emotional support. For senior students, support is tailored based on subject choices, with teachers possessing relevant subject expertise providing assistance, typically during Irish and Religious Education (RE) time slots.

## **Individual Withdrawal**

Individualised one-to-one teaching is employed when necessary. To ensure transparency and safety:

- Doors remain slightly open during sessions.
- An SNA may accompany the teacher during certain sessions, at the discretion of the teacher and principal.
- Parents are informed when their child is scheduled for one-to-one sessions

## **Curricular Reduction**

Except for students in the ASD units and students with existing Irish exemptions, all 1st-year students commence with a full timetable. Students facing challenges are considered for timetable reduction only after all other support avenues have been explored. Students with primary-level Irish exemptions are immediately recognised at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde and may opt to study a foreign language. Decisions regarding intervention durations are made collaboratively with parents/guardians, class teachers, and students.

## **Assistive Technology Support**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde recognises the role of assistive technology in supporting students with additional educational needs. The school applies for assistive technology grants through the Department of Education and allocates these resources based on professional recommendations, including psychological assessments and occupational therapy reports.

## **Support in Mhuire**

While inclusion is central to our AEN delivery, students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have access to our ASD Unit/Special Classes. Recognising that some ASD students may find aspects of the mainstream curriculum challenging, Scoil Mhuire agus Íde established its first ASD Unit, "Mhuire", in 2022. These structures ensure that Scoil Mhuire agus Íde aligns with the principles outlined in Circular 0064/2024, promoting an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

## **3.4 MHUIRE – THE ASD UNIT**

### **3.4.1 THE ROLE OF MHUIRE**

As part of the Continuum of Support, Mhuire represents Level 3 of this model at Scoil Mhuire & Íde. The unit provides a specialised learning environment for six enrolled students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Teacher and Special Needs Assistant (SNA) support within the unit are allocated based on guidelines that reflect the individual needs and movements of the students.

Mhuire plays a vital role in supporting students with ASD within our school community, ensuring they have access to education in a way that best suits their learning styles and personal development. The unit provides a structured, safe, and comforting space for students who may find the mainstream school environment overwhelming. By having access to Mhuire, students can regulate their emotions and sensory needs while being encouraged to participate in academic and social aspects of school life as much as possible.

While inclusion remains a central goal at Scoil Mhuire & Íde, we acknowledge that students with ASD may require periods of withdrawal to help them engage effectively with school activities. The school also provides access to a sensory room, which enables students to take sensory breaks when needed, supporting their overall well-being and ability to participate in learning.

This policy has been developed in line with Circular 0064/2024, which outlines the operation, application, and deployment of Special Education Teaching (SET) resources to support students with additional learning needs.

### **3.4.2 ENROLMENT AND ADMISSION TO MUIRE**

Admission procedures for Muiire are guided by the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000), and the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act (2004). The Board of Management oversees admissions in accordance with this policy and ensures that no child is refused entry based on ethnicity, disability (including severity of diagnosis), Traveller status, political beliefs, family or social background, sexual orientation, gender, or religious beliefs.

In addition to the general Admissions Policy the following criteria apply to the admission of students to the Autism Classroom in Scoil Muiire agus Íde;

- Parents/Guardians must fully complete the Mainstream Application Form and contact the office for Appendix 1 of this form to request a place in the Autism Classroom subject to availability.
- Circular 0039/25 updates the eligibility criteria for admission to all special classes and special schools. Regarding a special class for autism, the following must be provided in support of an application for admission;

Professional report(s) outlining:

- Diagnosis of Autism: DSM IV/V or ICD 10/11 (psychologist, psychiatrist, multidisciplinary report) AND
- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need/s evidenced in the professional reports AND
- Given the severity or complexity of the child's support needs, a clear professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the rationale for same AND
- a letter from the NCSE confirming that the child is known to them and that the child has the required diagnosis and recommendation for a special class for autism.
- Parental permission to access the applicant's primary school/previous educational setting records, including copies of the most recent Student Support File and records of attainment will be sought. It is desirable that the

AEN Co-ordinator in the school speak to the previous school/educational setting personnel to determine the applicant's level of academic achievement.

The applicant must be capable of a reasonable level of integration into the whole school environment with the support of the Autism Classroom in the school. Scoil Mhuire agus Íde provides a support class that is an open, inclusive and unrestricted environment and setting. It is not a highly dependent class. Indicators are that the needs of the student not capable of any level of integration are best met in a Special School placement.

In the case of oversubscription, Scoil Mhuire agus Íde will follow the criteria outlined for the mainstream school in accepting students to the Autism Classroom. Where a special class is oversubscribed, the Admissions to School Act 2018 requires schools to compile a waiting list for a special class in accordance with their admissions policy. The school must use this list to fill any vacancies arising during the school year in question only. If the school receives late applications for the special class, these applicants should be added to the bottom of the waiting list. These late applicants, even if they are already enrolled in the mainstream classes of the school or are local children and young people, cannot be prioritised over those on the existing waiting list for the special class.

The parents of the applicant must accept and agree to the school's Code of Behaviour (and the terms of this policy) and our Health and Safety Statement. It is accepted that children with special educational needs may display difficult, defiant or oppositional behaviours. All efforts will be made by the school to manage behaviour using various strategies and through the implementation of the student's Student Support Plan. Where a student's behaviour impacts on a negative way on the other students in the Autism Classroom or other mainstream classes to the extent that their constitutional rights to an education is being interfered with as judged by the Board of Management of the school, the school reserves the right to imply the Code of Behavior and seek NEPS/CDNT advice on placement suitability.

Admission is always subject to a place being available and resources being sanctioned prior to the admission of the student. Admission is subject to the number of places and classes sanctioned by the NCSE. The limit under Health and Safety

Guidelines is a maximum of six students per class. Scoil Mhuire agus Íde will strictly observe this limit. Applications will be considered during the admission period. Late applications will be dealt with in the order in which they are received subject to place availability.

Acceptance form as issued by the school must be returned within the required time period.

Under Department of Education and Skills guidelines, the number of places in Mhuire is capped at six students.

### **3.5 PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

At Scoil Mhuire & Íde, we currently offer the following programmes on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ):

At Junior Level:

- Level 3 Junior Cycle (JC)

At Senior Level:

- Transition Year Programme (TY)
- Leaving Certificate (LC)

#### **3.5.1 TIMETABLING OF SE PROVISION**

All students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, with necessary adaptations for those with AEN.

- Junior Cycle: Support may be provided during Irish, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), Religion, or PE as appropriate, with many students benefiting from team teaching.
- Transition Year: Students with AEN who do not study Irish or MFL may receive support during these times, with provision reviewed annually.
- Senior Cycle: AEN support is available during Irish, Religion, or PE as appropriate, and many students are also supported through team teaching in the traditional Leaving Certificate curriculum.

#### **3.5.2 IRISH EXEMPTIONS**

Students with AEN who have an exemption from Irish are timetabled for additional support during this time and may also receive support during Modern Foreign

Languages (MFL) classes where appropriate. Exemptions from Irish are granted in accordance with Circular 0055/2022.

To qualify for an exemption, a student must:

- Score at or below the 10th percentile in one subtest of word reading, spelling, or comprehension on an approved test (WIAT-III is used for assessment).
- Have received differentiation in the mainstream classroom and a block of intervention from the AEN team.
- Be accessing or recommended for placement in a special class.
- Have lived abroad before the age of 12 for three consecutive years.
- Experience persistent and significant barriers to participation in learning and school life, with evidence of difficulty for at least two school years.

Students who were granted an exemption from Irish at primary level remain exempt at post-primary level. New applications for an exemption must be submitted to the school principal for processing. As far as possible, additional teaching is provided during Irish class time.

Applications for exemptions from the third-language requirement for NUI colleges are processed by the Guidance Counsellor.

### **3.5.3 MFL SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

Students with an exemption from Irish often choose not to study a Modern Foreign Language (MFL). In such cases, they are allocated AEN support during this time.

- Junior Cycle: Students who do not take an MFL and either have an Irish exemption or an identified AEN need will receive AEN support. However, students who choose to withdraw from MFL without an AEN need will remain in the MFL classroom.
- Senior Cycle: As languages are optional at this level and timetabled against other subjects, students who do not study a foreign language select an alternative option subject instead.

### **3.5.4 REDUCED TIMETABLING/SUBJECT WITHDRAWAL**

In certain cases, and with parental consent, students may be permanently withdrawn from a subject following consultation with the subject department and guidance

counsellors. While this is not encouraged, it may be necessary to support the student's continued inclusion within Scoil Mhuire & Íde.

### **3.5.5 ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) SUPPORT**

While EAL has not been a major aspect of AEN provision at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, the school is committed to adapting to the evolving needs of our student community. We recognise the importance of supporting students with English as an Additional Language and will implement the following measures as needed:

- Allocating resources, including AEN and SNA support, where funding permits.
- Assessing EAL students to determine their level of English language proficiency.
- Providing staff with relevant information and guidance to foster an inclusive learning environment.
- Developing and utilising resources such as visual aids, bilingual dictionaries, and materials from Language Connects to support language development.
- Offering structured individual or small-group interventions where appropriate.
- Encouraging participation in extracurricular activities to promote social integration.
- Providing social and emotional support through existing school support structures.
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of EAL interventions and making necessary adjustments.

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is committed to ensuring that EAL students can fully engage in school life and reach their academic potential.

### **3.5.6 EXCEPTIONALLY ABLE/GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is committed to fostering an environment where all students can reach their full potential. We recognise that exceptionally able, gifted, and talented students may require specific interventions to support their learning and maximise their performance. Through differentiated teaching strategies and enrichment opportunities, we aim to nurture and challenge these students to excel.

### **3.5.7 RACE PROVISION**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is committed to ensuring that students with additional educational needs have equitable access to examinations. The AEN Department supports students in applying for Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE) through the State Examinations Commission.

#### **Available Accommodations Include:**

- A waiver in spelling and grammar for language subjects
- The use of a reader or reading pen
- Access to a scribe
- Use of a word processor
- Examination in a separate or shared special centre

#### **Application Process:**

- The school identifies eligible students through formal and informal assessment, including standardised tests, teacher reports, and professional recommendations.
- Parents are informed and involved in the application process.
- Applications are submitted to the State Examinations Commission, with appeals facilitated where necessary.
- Accommodations granted at Junior Cycle can be reactivated at Leaving Certificate level upon request.

## **4. COMMUNICATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

### **4.1 METHODS OF COMMUNICATION**

The school uses a variety of methods to communicate with parents, including:

- VsWare
- Regular parent-teacher meetings.
- Written reports.
- Email and phone communication.

### **4.2 AEN PUPIL REGISTER**

At the beginning of each academic year, the AEN team provides staff with an overview of students on the AEN register. This includes information on identified

needs, support categories, and recommended strategies to facilitate inclusive teaching and learning within the classroom.

### **4.3 RECORD KEEPING**

All relevant information, including communications with parents and external agencies, is documented in the student file and/or recorded in meeting minutes.

The following records are maintained to support students with AEN:

- Pupil Personal Plans (PPPs): Developed for students with SNA access (Support for Few).
- Student Support Plans (SSPs): Maintained for students receiving AEN support in mainstream settings (Support for Some and few).
- Weekly Records: Kept for all Special Education (SE) classes and all classes in ASD units/special classes to track progress and interventions.

Each of these documents is a working document and is reviewed and updated as required to ensure that student needs are continuously met.

## **5. ENROLMENT AND ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT POLICY**

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde operates an admissions policy, which can be found on our website [www.smincw.ie/about/policies](http://www.smincw.ie/about/policies), This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act (2004) the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. This policy promotes quality of access, participation and benefit for all; in as far as the school can fulfil the needs of an individual student. The Board of Management is committed to ensuring full entitlement and access for pupils with special educational needs to high quality education with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self-esteem. This is consonant with the provisions of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, Section 2, which provides that a child with additional educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or the degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with (a) the best interests of the

child in accordance with any assessment carried out under this act, or (b) the effective provision of education with whom the child is to be educated.

The Admissions Committee will deal with any applications for enrolment in the Autism Classroom. Only applications received by the deadline will be considered. Members of the Admissions Committee are - Principal, Deputy Principal and Coordinator of AEN in the school. Late applications will be considered in date order received if not at capacity. The remit of the panel is:

- To review all applications including reports and documentation relevant to a student applying for a place in the facility in order to meet the criteria.
- To verify the facility's suitability in meeting the needs of the applicant.
- Apply main criteria to decide place allocation
- To make recommendations based on these findings to the Scoil Mhuire agus Íde Board of Management.

## **5.2 TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAMME**

The school has a comprehensive transition programme to support students moving from primary to secondary school.

### **5.2.1 SHARING OF INFORMATION**

Primary schools play a key role in identifying students with AEN before they transition to Scoil Mhuire agus Íde. Direct communication with primary school teachers helps us gather essential information regarding students' learning needs. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share any relevant information regarding their child's AEN to facilitate appropriate planning and resource allocation.

### **5.2.2 STEPS IN MOVING TO SCOIL MHUIRE AGUS ÍDE**

The following steps are taken in transitioning students from primary to secondary school:

- Feeder School Visits: Staff members visit feeder primary schools to provide an overview of the educational experience and facilities at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde.

- Open Night for Parents: Parents of incoming First-Year students are invited to an Open Night where they can learn about school life and available supports.
- Registration & AEN Information: During registration, parents complete a form detailing any AEN requirements, ensuring appropriate provisions are in place.
- Assessment on Entry:
  - Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) – Measures verbal, numerical, and spatial reasoning skills.
  - WIAT III – Spelling. Provides baseline data.
  - NGRT - Provides reading age
  - School devised maths test – Assesses mathematical ability.

These assessments help identify students with additional support needs and inform class placement.

- Mixed-Ability Class Formation: First-Year students are placed in mixed-ability classes to support an inclusive learning environment.
- First-Year Induction Day: A dedicated Induction Day at the start of the Autumn Term ensures that First-Year students are the only year group in the school for the day. This allows them to settle in through structured activities and familiarisation with their new learning environment.

These measures ensure a well-supported and inclusive transition process for all students, particularly those with AEN.

## **5.3 ASSESSMENT**

### **5.3.1 PURPOSE**

Assessment at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde is conducted with the intention of using the results to support student learning and development. Assessments may be carried out for the following purposes:

- To track student progress and identify areas for support.
- To establish a baseline of students' attainments, including those with English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- To inform the formation of mixed-ability classes.
- To identify students who require additional teaching support.

- To support applications for Irish exemptions, Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations (RACE), and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE).
- To assist with National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) referrals.
- To establish a student's needs following an internal or external referral.
- To provide relevant information to external agencies for diagnostic or intervention purposes.

### **5.3.2 METHODS OF ASSESSMENTS**

#### **Formal Assessment**

Formal assessment in our school consists of standardised, criterion-referenced, and diagnostic tests, which provide both summative and formative data to guide teaching and learning.

- **Assessment of Learning:** This includes standardised and diagnostic tests, class-based assessments, and state examinations. Tests administered include:
  - Cognitive Ability Testing (CAT4): Verbal, numerical, and spatial ability.
  - Woodcock-Johnson III (WJIII) & Wechsler Individual Achievement Test III (WIAT-III): Used for assessing learning needs, including eligibility for an Irish exemption.
  - Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH): Administered where handwriting difficulties are a concern.
  - Post-Primary Assessment Kit for English as an Additional Language (EAL): Supports students for whom English is an additional language.
  - School-Based Assessments: Class tests, end-of-unit assessments, chapter tests, term exams, CBAs, final projects, and state examinations.
- **Assessment for Learning:** Teachers use various strategies to inform teaching and enhance student learning, including:
  - Success criteria
  - Effective questioning (aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy)

- Self-assessment and peer assessment
- Constructive feedback
- Assessment as Learning: AEN students receive targeted support to develop self-reflection and peer evaluation skills, enabling them to take an active role in their learning journey.

### **School-Based Standardised Testing**

The first formal assessments occur in 1st Year, when students complete:

- WIAT-III Spelling Test
- Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4)

These tests provide valuable baseline data to inform teaching, identify students requiring additional support, and assist in curriculum planning. AEN staff administering these tests have received appropriate training in their administration and interpretation.

All students in the school undergo the following standardised tests at various stages:

- New Group Reading Test (NGRT)
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test for Teachers (WIAT3) - Spelling
- School-Devised Mathematics Entrance Exam
- Cognitive Ability Testing (CAT4) – Verbal, Numerical, and Spatial Ability
- Differential Aptitude Test (DAT)

Additional testing may be conducted for some students, including:

- WRAT-4 Word Reading Test
- WIAT-III Word Reading, Spelling, and Comprehension Tests
- DASH (Handwriting Assessment)  
(This list is not exhaustive.)

### **Informal Assessment**

Informal assessment plays a key role in monitoring student progress across various school environments, including classrooms and social spaces. Information gathered through informal methods helps guide individual student support. Methods include:

- Classroom progress checks (quizzes, whiteboards, tweet boards, number lines)
- Teacher, SNA, or peer observations
- Homework evaluation
- Analysis of language and social development
- Student interactions with peers and staff
- Tracking of student progress via journals and VsWare
- Assessment of organisational and self-management skills
- Teaching and learning strategies, such as:
  - Think-Pair-Share
  - Exit Tickets
  - Success Criteria

### **Diagnostic Assessment**

Diagnostic testing is conducted to identify students' strengths and learning needs, aiding in the planning of tailored learning programmes for students with AEN. These assessments also provide valuable background information for NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) psychologists and are used as part of the Irish exemption application process.

Diagnostic test results are securely stored in student AEN files and are also recorded in the school's secure digital system, accessible only to the AEN team.

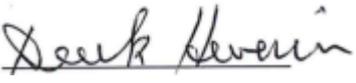
### **Confidentiality & Access:**

- Student AEN files and psychological assessments are securely stored in the AEN Office.
- Mainstream teachers may request access to relevant student information through the AEN Department.
- All teachers have read-only access to the AEN Register/Provision Plan and are encouraged to review these records to inform their teaching and meet student needs effectively.

## **6. WHOLE SCHOOL MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ONGOING REVIEW**

As with all school policies, this policy is subject to ongoing evaluation and review in line with Department of Education policy, continuous assessment by School Management, and input from the Additional Educational Needs Team. This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly to ensure it remains aligned with current legislation, Department of Education guidelines, and best practices. Ongoing review will take into account new developments, feedback from national management bodies, staff, parents/guardians, and students.

**Policy Effective Date:** 23/2/26

**Signed:** 

**Date:** 23/2/26

**(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

**Signed:** 

**Date:** 23/2/26

**(Principal)**