



Bush Post Primary School

Additional Educational Needs Policy

January 2026



Table of Contents

1. Introduction

- Definitions / Key terms
- Bush Post Primary School Mission Statement
- Introduction to AEN policy
- Review cycle
- Scope
- Rationale
- Legislative & Policy Framework

2. Bush Post Primary AEN Philosophy, Vision & Principles

- Our commitment to inclusive education
- LMETB Guiding principles (e.g. Equality, Care, Excellence, Respect, Community)
- Rights of students and their families
- Aims and Objectives of AEN delivery in Bush Post Primary
- Collaboration with stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, external agencies)

3. Roles & Responsibilities

- Board of Management
- Principal / Deputy Principal
- AEN Coordinator
- Subject teachers / Class teachers
- Special Education Teachers (SETs)
- Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)
- Guidance / Counselling / Pastoral staff
- Support staff (e.g. learning support, resource, itinerant teachers)
- Parents / Guardians
- Students
- External agencies (e.g. NEPS, Health Services, visiting teachers, therapists)

4. Identification, Assessment & Admission

- Identification & Referral procedures
- Collection of background information (past reports, standardised tests, teacher observation)
- Formal assessment procedures (psychological, diagnostic, medical, etc.)
- Use of the NCSE / HSE Assessment of Need process
- Admission of students with AEN
- Transition (from primary schools, from other schools, within school)
- Confidentiality & Data Protection

5. Continuum of Support / Levels of Intervention

- Explanation of continuum model (i.e. universal / whole class, targeted / small group supports, intensive / individual support)
- How supports are determined / allocated
- Criteria for movement between levels
- Review mechanisms

6. Individual Education Plans / Student Support Plans (SSPs)

- When a plan / SSP is used
- Who is involved in creating the SSP
- Key features / contents of the SSP (e.g. learning outcomes, support strategies, timeline, roles, progress indicators)
- Implementation of the SSP
- Monitoring, reviewing and revising the SSP (frequency, procedures)
- Transition planning (e.g. from year to year, post-school)
- Parental / student involvement

7. Support Provision & Resources

- Deployment of SET resources (how the school utilises Special Education Teachers) in line with Department/NCSE SET Guidelines
- Deployment of SNAs (role, allocation principles, supervision)
- In-class support, team teaching, co-teaching, withdrawal, in-school resource teaching
- Assistive technology, ICT accommodations, differentiated materials
- Physical / environmental accommodations (e.g. accessible layout, sensory rooms, lighting)
- Access to auxiliary support (e.g. therapists, visiting teachers)
- Other support services (e.g. exam accommodation, exam supports, access to resource rooms)

8. Access, Inclusion & Participation

- Ensuring access to the full curriculum
- Differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies
- Exam and assessment accommodations
- Extra-curricular and co-curricular participation
- Anti-bullying, behaviour supports, pastoral care
- Social inclusion, peer support, mentoring
- Reasonable accommodation and modifications

9. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

- Ongoing monitoring of student progress
- Internal review of support effectiveness
- Periodic evaluation of AEN policy itself

- Stakeholder feedback (students, parents / guardian, staff)
- Reporting to Board and to Department / NCSE as required

10. Professional Development / Staff Support

- Induction for new staff on AEN and inclusion
- Ongoing training (in differentiation, inclusive practices, assistive technology)
- Collaborative planning time
- Support for teachers implementing SSP'S
- Participation in external training (NCSE, NEPS, etc.)

11. Parental & Student Involvement / Communication

- Role of parents / guardians in planning, review, decision-making
- Communication protocols
- Involvement of the student (voice, choice, self-advocacy)
- Dispute resolution / appeals / complaints procedure

12. Transition Planning

- Transition into Post Primary (from primary)
- Transition between years / subject changes
- Transition from school to further education, training or employment
- Life skills, career guidance, support

13. Data Management, Confidentiality & Record Keeping

- Student records, documentation (e.g. assessments, SSPs, reviews)
- Access to records & data protection
- Sharing information with relevant staff / agencies
- Retention / archiving policies

14. Organisation of the Hub classes – ASD suite

- Eligibility
- Inclusion of students
- Staffing
- Review of ASD suite placement
- Staff development & whole-school readiness

15. Health, Safety & Welfare Considerations

- Medical needs and emergency procedures
- Risk assessments (for individual students, for classroom adaptations)
- Safe handling / assistance (if relevant)
- Safeguarding, behaviour policies

16. Policy Implementation & Governance

- Oversight, accountability and responsibility for implementation
- Communication of the policy to staff, students, parents/guardians
- Monitoring compliance
- Review and amendment procedures

17. Appendices / Supporting Documents

- Appendix A - Additional Educational Needs Department – Annual Operational Calendar
- Appendix B - Additional Educational Needs Department – Internal Referral Form
- Appendix C - Additional Educational Needs Department - SSP template
- Appendix D - LMETB INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM
- Appendix E - Additional Educational Needs Department – Pupil Voice Survey results, November 2025
- Appendix F - Additional Educational Needs Department – Parent Voice Survey results, November 2025
- Appendix G - Additional Educational Needs Dept – Pupil Friendly Version AEN policy
- Appendix H - Additional Educational Needs Department and the school DEIS plan

1. Introduction

Definitions / Key Terms

AEN – Additional Educational Needs: A broad term encompassing students who require extra educational support, including those with special educational needs, learning difficulties, or social, emotional, and behavioural needs.

SEN – Special Educational Needs: Needs arising from disabilities, learning difficulties, or medical, sensory, or emotional conditions that require additional or different educational provision.

SET – Special Education Teacher: A teacher who provides additional teaching support to students with identified learning needs through individual, group, or in-class interventions.

SNA – Special Needs Assistant: A staff member who supports the care and access needs of students with significant additional or medical needs, under Department of Education allocation.

NCSE – National Council for Special Education: The statutory agency that supports schools, students, and parents regarding special education provision and resources.

NEPS – National Educational Psychological Service: Provides psychological support to schools, including assessment, consultation, and advice on interventions.

DES / DoE – Department of Education (formerly Department of Education and Skills): The government department responsible for education policy, curriculum, and provision.

DEIS – Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools: A Department of Education programme aimed at addressing educational disadvantage through targeted supports.

EPSEN Act (2004) – Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act: Legislation providing for the education of students with special educational needs and outlining assessment, planning, and resource allocation procedures.

Education Act (1998) – Establishes the right of every person to education and defines the functions of schools and boards of management.

Disability Act (2005) – Provides for assessment of needs and access to services for people with disabilities.

Education (Welfare) Act (2000) – Governs school attendance, participation, and the role of Tusla in supporting student welfare.

Equal Status Acts (2000–2018) – Prohibits discrimination in the provision of education and access to educational services.

Tusla – The Child and Family Agency responsible for school attendance, child protection, and welfare services.

IEP – Individual Education Plan: A written plan outlining a student's learning targets, supports, and interventions (often used informally, as not yet legally mandated under the EPSEN Act).

SSP – Student Support Plan: A plan developed as part of the **Continuum of Support** to coordinate targeted interventions for a student requiring additional help.

Continuum of Support – A framework developed by the NCSE to help schools identify and meet students' needs through three levels of intervention: *Classroom Support*, *School Support*, and *School Support Plus*.

Circulars – Official Department of Education directives that outline procedures and guidelines for schools (e.g., Circular 0013/2017 regarding special education teaching).

CAO – Central Applications Office: Manages applications to higher education institutions in Ireland; relevant for students progressing to third level with supports.

RACE – Reasonable Accommodations at Certificate Examinations: Supports provided by the State Examinations Commission (SEC) to ensure students with special needs can access exams fairly.

SEC – State Examinations Commission: The body that administers the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate examinations.

HSE – Health Service Executive: Provides health and therapeutic services to children and young people, including assessments, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy.

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services: HSE service providing support to students with significant mental health difficulties.

NCSE Guidelines (2017) – *Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*: The national guidelines that inform the operation of special education teaching in Irish schools.

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Coordinator: The staff member (often the SET or AEN coordinator) responsible for overseeing special education provision and liaison with the NCSE and parents.

IE – Inclusive Education: A model that seeks to remove barriers so that all students can access and participate fully in education.

AIM – Access and Inclusion Model: A framework for supporting inclusion in early years education (relevant for transitions from pre-school).

SDP – School Development Planning: The process of whole-school planning, including AEN and DEIS planning.

BoM – Board of Management: The body responsible for the governance of the school, including policy ratification and oversight.

WSE-MLL – Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning; an inspection process carried out by the Department of Education.

Bush Post Primary Mission Statement

We acknowledge the uniqueness of students in our care: each with individual needs and potentialities. The realisation of each student's potential is our mission.

We recognise the importance of self-esteem. It is our mission to engender, foster and protect a positive self-image for each person in our care.

Our mission is to create an effective educational environment, where our school community will thrive. This environment, managed with fairness and firmness, will allow each person in our care to develop personally, educationally, socially, and spiritually.

Our School Motto "Ar thóir na tuisceana" translates as "in Search of Understanding".

Core Values in Louth Meath Education and Training Board Schools



Louth Meath Education and Training Board Schools and colleges are state schools, co-educational and multi-denominational. The Core values for schools in Education and Training Boards of Ireland (ETBI) are:

- **Care**
- **Community**
- **Equality**
- **Respect**
- **Excellence in Education**

Introduction to AEN policy

Bush Post Primary School is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable, and nurturing learning environment where every student is supported to reach their full potential. In line with the DEIS framework and the Department of Education's policy on inclusion, this Additional Needs Policy outlines the school's commitment to identifying, supporting, and celebrating the diverse learning needs of all students. Guided by the Continuum of Support model and the advice of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), we recognise that students may require varying levels of support—ranging from classroom-based differentiation to targeted or individualised interventions.

Our approach promotes collaboration among teachers, Special Education Teachers (SETs), parents/guardians, students, and external agencies to ensure a coordinated and holistic response to need. The school endeavours to remove barriers to learning and participation, ensuring that all students—regardless of ability, background, or circumstance—are included as valued members of our school community. This policy underpins our belief that inclusive education benefits all learners, reflecting the core DEIS values of equality, opportunity, and respect.

Review cycle

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, Department of Education guidelines, or school practice. The review process will involve consultation with school management, staff, parents, and where appropriate, students and external support agencies. The revised policy will be ratified by the Board of Management and made available to the school community.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in Bush Post Primary School who may require additional educational, social, emotional, or behavioural support to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life. It encompasses students with identified special educational needs as defined by the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, as well as those who may experience temporary or emerging needs. The policy also guides the work of teaching staff, Special Education Teachers (SETs), Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), and all members of the school community involved in supporting inclusion. It outlines procedures for identification, planning, intervention, and review of supports within the Continuum of Support framework, ensuring that every student is provided with equitable opportunities to achieve their full potential in line with DEIS principles.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students in Bush Post Primary School are provided with meaningful access to education in an inclusive, supportive, and equitable environment. The school recognises that students have diverse abilities, backgrounds, and learning profiles, and that some may require additional provision to reach their full potential. This policy provides a structured framework for identifying and meeting those needs in accordance with the **Education Act (1998)**, the **EPSEN Act (2004)**, and the **NCSE Continuum of Support**. As a **DEIS school**, we are committed to addressing educational disadvantage and promoting inclusion through early identification, targeted intervention, and collaborative planning between staff, parents, students, and relevant external agencies.

Legislative & Policy Framework

Provision for students with additional educational needs in Bush Post Primary School is guided by the relevant national legislation, circulars, and policy frameworks set out by the Department of Education and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). The school is committed to adhering to the requirements of the Education Act (1998), the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004), the Disability Act (2005), the Education (Welfare) Act (2000), and the Equal Status Acts (2000–2018). Practice is further informed by Department of Education circulars relating to special educational teaching allocation, inclusion, and resource provision, as well as the Continuum of Support framework developed by the NCSE and the Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017). Together, these documents provide the statutory and procedural basis for identifying, planning, implementing, and reviewing supports for students with additional needs within an inclusive educational setting.

2. Bush Post Primary AEN Philosophy, Vision & Principles

Our commitment to inclusive education

Inclusion at Bush Post Primary School is not limited to the work of individual teachers or support staff but is embedded within a whole-school approach that values teamwork, shared responsibility, and continuous reflection. All members of staff play a role in supporting inclusion through differentiated instruction, proactive planning, and fostering positive relationships that promote belonging and engagement.

Effective inclusion is achieved through collaboration among all stakeholders — including students, parents, teaching staff, Special Education Teachers (SETs), Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), school leadership, and external professionals such as NEPS psychologists, NCSE support services, and health agencies. The school values this collective expertise and partnership as central to ensuring coherent, coordinated, and effective support for all learners.

LMETB Guiding principles

Bush Post Primary School, under the patronage of **Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB)**, is committed to creating an inclusive learning community where every student is valued, supported, and encouraged to achieve their full potential. Guided by the LMETB core values of **Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community, and Respect**, the school promotes a holistic approach to teaching and learning that recognises and celebrates the individuality of each learner.

Our philosophy is grounded in the belief that **education is for everyone** and that inclusion enriches the educational experience for all. We view diversity not as a challenge, but as a strength that fosters empathy, creativity, and social cohesion. Within this framework, students with additional educational needs are supported through proactive planning, differentiated instruction, and collaboration between teachers, Special Education Teachers (SETs), parents/guardians, students, and external agencies.

The school's vision is to provide a **welcoming and equitable environment** where barriers to learning are identified and reduced, enabling all students to access the curriculum, engage in meaningful learning, and participate fully in school life. Our practice is underpinned by the principles of the **DEIS framework**, the **NCSE Continuum of Support**, and the **Department of Education's policy on inclusive education**, ensuring that all interventions are evidence-based, student-centred, and outcome-focused.

In upholding the LMETB core values:

- **Excellence in Education** drives our commitment to high standards and continuous improvement in teaching, learning, and support.
- **Care** informs our daily practice, ensuring every student feels safe, valued, and supported.
- **Equality** ensures that all students have fair access to educational opportunities, regardless of background or ability.
- **Community** reflects our partnership with parents, staff, students, and external professionals in fostering inclusion.
- **Respect** underpins our interactions and promotes a culture of dignity, understanding, and mutual support across the school.

Through this philosophy and vision, Bush Post Primary School affirms its dedication to providing an education system that meets the diverse needs of all learners within a caring and respectful environment.

The school is firmly committed to the principles of inclusive education, ensuring that every student—regardless of ability, background, or circumstance, can access, participate in, and benefit from a high-quality education. Inclusion is seen as central to the school's mission and as a shared responsibility of the entire school community.

Our approach is grounded in the principles of equity, ensuring that each learner receives the support they need to thrive; access, by removing barriers to learning; participation, by encouraging every student to engage meaningfully

in all aspects of school life; and respect and dignity, by recognising and celebrating everyone's strengths, voice, and potential.

Rights of students and their families

Bush Post Primary School recognises the rights of students and their families to appropriate educational provision and to active involvement in decisions affecting learning and support. The school is committed to transparent communication, shared decision-making, and collaboration with parents and guardians as essential partners in the educational process, in line with national legislation and Department of Education policy.

Aims and Objectives of AEN delivery in Bush Post Primary

The primary aim of this policy is to ensure that all students in Bush Post Primary School, regardless of ability or need, are provided with equitable opportunities to access, engage, and succeed in education. The school is committed to upholding the principles of **inclusion, equality, and respect** as articulated in the **LMETB core values** and national legislation.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- **Promote inclusion** by ensuring that students with additional educational needs are educated alongside their peers in an environment that values diversity and fosters mutual respect.
- **Ensure early identification and assessment** of students' learning, social, emotional, or behavioural needs through collaborative and evidence-based approaches.
- **Provide appropriate interventions and supports** in line with the **NCSE Continuum of Support** model, ensuring that each student receives the level of assistance required to achieve their full potential.
- **Facilitate collaboration** among teachers, Special Education Teachers (SETs), Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), parents/guardians, students, and external agencies in planning and reviewing support.
- **Promote professional development** among staff to enhance understanding, competence, and confidence in inclusive teaching and learning practices.
- **Monitor and evaluate** the effectiveness of supports and interventions to ensure that they are impactful, equitable, and aligned with the student's evolving needs.
- **Embed DEIS principles** in all aspects of additional needs provision, ensuring that social inclusion, equity, and student well-being remain at the centre of school practice.
- **Foster a culture of care and belonging**, where all students are valued members of the school community and encouraged to participate fully in academic, social, and extracurricular life.

Through these aims and objectives, Bush Post Primary School seeks to provide a **student-centred, inclusive, and high-quality education** that empowers every learner to achieve success in line with their individual strengths and aspirations.

Collaboration with stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff, external agencies)

Bush Post Primary school is committed to high-quality, proactive collaboration with all stakeholders to secure the best possible outcomes for students with Additional Educational Needs. We recognise that effective planning is strengthened by the voice of the pupil, the partnership of parents/guardians, the expertise of staff, and – where appropriate – the guidance and supports of external professionals and agencies. We will communicate clearly, regularly and respectfully with each stakeholder group, share relevant information in a timely manner, and actively seek input to co-construct plans, targets and reviews. We will maintain a culture of professional curiosity, shared problem-solving and mutual respect, ensuring that collaboration remains purposeful, solution-focused, and always anchored in the student's lived experience, strengths and needs. The AEN department aims to:

- Have the SEN needs of students on the continuum, shared on COMPASS for staff, parents/guardian and the students by mid-October
- Ensure each pupil who has learning support tuition has targets inputted on COMPASS by their lead Learning support teacher, to support for staff, parents/guardian and the students. These targets should ideally be reviewed by Mid-January and new targets set.
- Gain feedback from all stakeholders via a pupil, parent and staff voice questionnaire, completed annually.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective implementation of this Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Policy relies on a shared commitment from all members of the school community. Inclusion is a whole-school responsibility that depends on collaboration, clear communication, and a student-centred approach. The following outlines the key roles and responsibilities of those involved in supporting students with additional educational needs at Bush Post Primary School.

Board of Management

- Ensures that the school complies with relevant legislation and Department of Education circulars relating to inclusion and special educational provision.
- Ratifies and reviews the school's AEN Policy and ensures adequate resources and training are made available to support its implementation.
- Promotes equality of access and participation for all students.

Principal

- Has overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the AEN Policy within the school.
- Oversees the deployment of **Special Education Teachers (SETs)**, **Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)**, and other support resources in line with Department of Education allocation guidelines.
- Ensures that staff are informed of their roles and that professional development opportunities related to inclusion are encouraged.
- Promotes a whole-school culture of inclusion, care, and respect.
- Liaises with the Board of Management, the NCSE, and other external agencies regarding AEN provision.

AEN / Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator

- Coordinates the day-to-day operation of AEN provision in the school.
- Maintains records, timetables, and planning documents for students receiving support.
- Facilitates communication among staff, parents/guardians, and external agencies (e.g., NEPS, NCSE, HSE).
- Supports teachers in planning and implementing differentiated teaching strategies and interventions.
- Leads the development, implementation, and review of **Student Support Plans (SSPs)**.
- Supports Year Heads in the development of IBP's (**individual behaviour Plan**).
- Coordinates the **RACE** application process.

Special Education Teachers (SETs)

- Ensure targets are collaboratively created with input from the student, class teachers and parent/guardian; then shared with staff and parents/guardian on COMPASS twice annually, Mid-October & Mid-January.
- Deliver targeted and individualised support in line with the **Continuum of Support** model.
- Collaborate with subject teachers to plan, co-teach, and differentiate classroom activities to meet the needs of all students.
- Participate in ongoing assessment, progress monitoring, and review of interventions.
- Communicate regularly with parents and the AEN Coordinator regarding students' progress.
- Ensure all relevant information for students they support is included in the SSP.

Class and Subject Teachers

- Are responsible for the learning and progress of all students in their classes, including those with additional needs.
- Implement **differentiated teaching strategies** and use assessment information to adapt lessons appropriately.
- Collaborate with the SET team and participate in the development and review of Student Support Plans.
- Foster an inclusive and respectful classroom environment that supports all learners.

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

- Support students with significant care, access, or medical needs to enable them to participate fully in school life.
- Work under the guidance of teachers and the SEN Coordinator to promote independence and inclusion.
- Contribute to the wellbeing and safety of students in their care.

Parents / Guardians

- Are key partners in their child's learning and inclusion.
- Provide relevant information and reports that help the school plan appropriate supports.
- Engage in open communication with teachers and attend review meetings where appropriate.
- Support the implementation of learning goals at home and collaborate with the school to ensure consistency of approach.

Students

- Are encouraged to take an active role in their learning and to express their views in relation to their educational experience and supports.
- Are supported to develop independence, self-advocacy skills, and positive relationships with peers and staff.

External Agencies

- The school collaborates with agencies such as the **NCSE, NEPS, HSE, CAMHS**, and **Tusla** to provide specialist support and guidance.
- These partnerships enhance the school's capacity to meet the holistic needs of students.

4. Identification, Assessment & Admission

Identification & Referral Procedures

Early identification of students with SEN is essential to ensure appropriate intervention and support. Bush Post Primary School adopts a proactive and systematic approach:

- **Teacher Observation:** Teachers monitor all students for signs of difficulty in learning, behaviour, communication, or social development.
- **Referral Pathway:** Teachers complete a SEN referral form (appendix B) for students they are concerned about and submit it to the SEN Coordinator (SENCO).
- **Parent Communication:** Concerns raised by parents/guardians are equally welcomed and addressed through meetings, emails or a phone call
- **Tracking Systems:** Academic tracking and pastoral care systems are used to highlight students at risk or presenting emerging needs.

Collection of Background Information

The AEN team compiles a student support plan (SSP) using multiple sources:

- Reports from primary school or previous settings (via the Education Passport).
- Standardised testing results (e.g., CAT4, NGRT).
- Psychological, medical, or speech and language reports (if available).
- Teacher checklists, classroom-based assessments, and behaviour reports.
- Parent questionnaires and interviews.

This information informs the level of support required and identifies specific learning, emotional, or physical needs.

Formal Assessment Procedures

- **Psychological Assessments:** Arranged via NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) or through private practitioners with parental consent.
- **In-House Testing:** Diagnostic tools used by Special Education Teachers (SETs) to assess literacy and numeracy (e.g., WIAT-III-T).
- **Medical Assessments:** Reports from medical professionals, including paediatricians and specialists, are considered as part of the planning process.
- **Speech & Language / OT Reports:** Integrated into support planning where applicable.

Use of NCSE / HSE Assessment of Need Process

- For students with complex needs, the **HSE Assessment of Need (AON)** process under the **Disability Act 2005** may be initiated by parents or guardians.
- The SENCO assists families in accessing AON services and liaises with HSE and the **National Council for Special Education (NCSE)**.
- Outcomes of AON may lead to applications for:
 - SNA support
 - Assistive Technology
 - Additional teaching hours
 - Access to therapy services

Admission of Students with SEN

In line with the Education Act 1998 and the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004:

- Students with SEN are welcomed and included in the admissions process equally.
- Parents are encouraged to share relevant reports or diagnoses during the enrolment process.

- Transition planning is initiated early to ensure all supports (e.g. resource allocation, environmental adjustments) are in place from day one.
- Admission decisions are not based on the presence or absence of SEN, in accordance with anti-discrimination legislation.

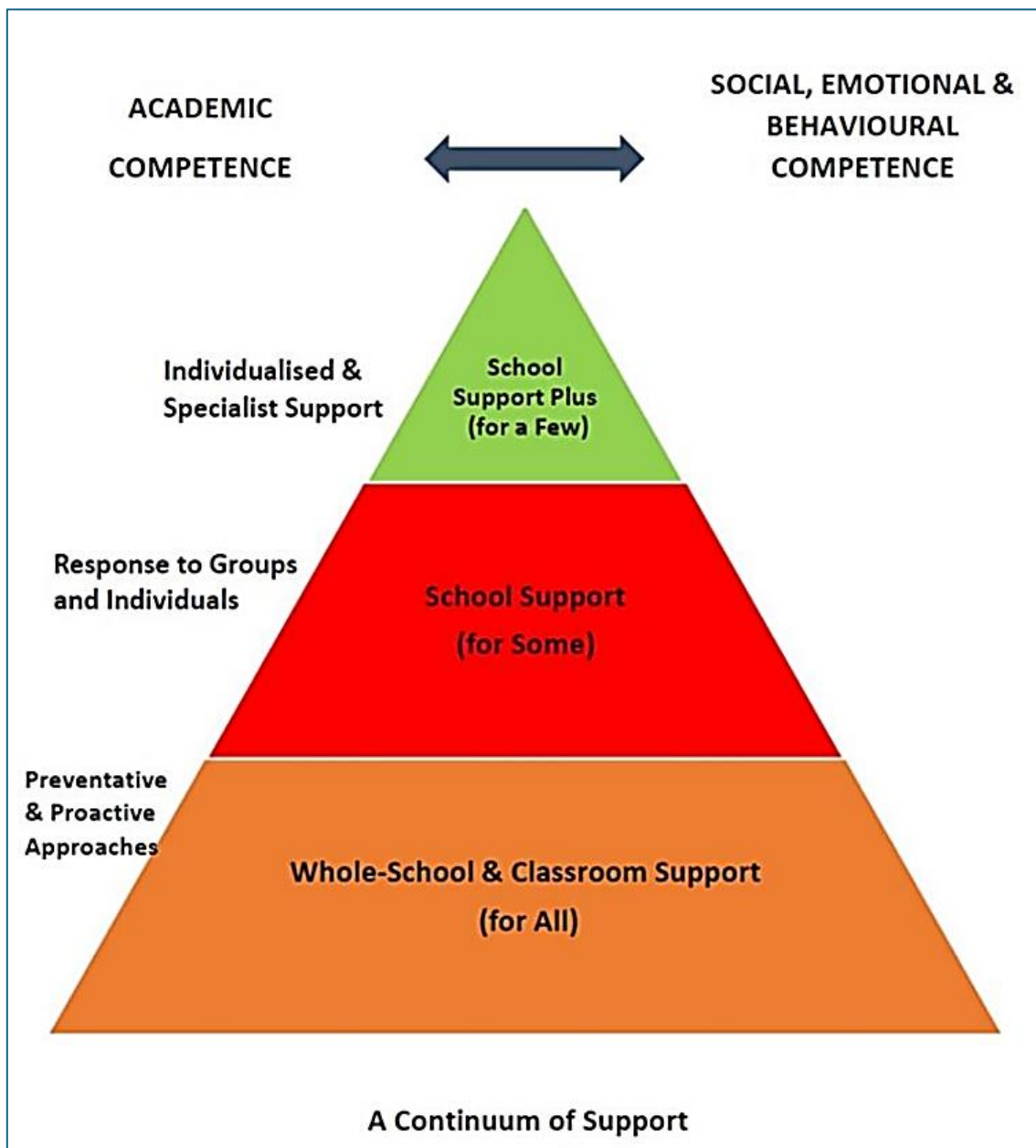
Transition (From Primary, Other Schools, Within School)

- **Primary to Post Primary:**
 - Visits to primary schools by the SENCO or Deputy Principal.
 - Open Night the AEN team are available to answer any questions parents may have
 - Incoming parent information evenings and individual meetings where needed.
 - Use of the NCCA Education Passport and SEN files from the primary setting.
- **Between Schools:**
 - Requests for previous learning plans, assessments, and relevant reports.
- **Within School:**
 - For students with significant needs, Year Head, SENCO and Guidance Counsellor collaborate on a tailored support plan and the most suitable education programme.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

- All personal and sensitive data is managed in compliance with **GDPR**, and the **Data Protection Acts 1988–2018**.
- Access to SEN records is restricted to relevant staff (e.g. Principal, SENCO, SETs).
- Parental consent is obtained before sharing information with external agencies.
- Secure systems are used for storing and transferring data (e.g., encrypted files, locked cabinets).

5.Continuum of Support/ Levels of Intervention



Explanation of the Continuum model

The Continuum of Support is a framework developed by the **National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)** to help schools identify and respond to students' needs in a **graduated, flexible, and needs-based** way. It recognises that students' needs exist along a spectrum, and that supports should increase in intensity in proportion to the level of need.

The Continuum of Support

	Subject Teachers	Specialist teachers (learning support/resource/EAL/guidance counsellors/HSCL/ tutor/heads of year)	School Management
Support for all	Differentiate teaching and learning activities Create positive classroom environment, including use of positive and constructive feedback Assess & monitor progress Create opportunities for success Communicate concerns to colleagues Collaborate with specialist teachers	Collection and analysis of school-wide screening data, including intake screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records Collaboration with subject teachers	Leadership in developing relevant whole school policies: enrolment/ assessment/ inclusion Strategic management of implementation of policies and practices Strategic support for evidence-based interventions
Support for some	As above, plus Contribute to group or individual planning and review Implement agreed strategies Communicate progress and concerns to co-ordinating teacher	As above plus Diagnostic testing Liaising with parents Gathering information from subject teachers/ other staff Plan, implement and review individual and/or group intervention Seek external professional advice, as needed Undertake tasks of coordinating teacher as needed	As above plus Assign roles and responsibilities Keep records of those receiving this level of support
Support plus (for a few)	As above plus Prepare information for SSP planning meetings Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies Direct the work of SNAs* in the classroom	As above plus Plan, implement, monitor and review specialist and individualised responses Direct the work of SNAs in the school	As above plus Compliance with statutory requirements when EPSEN* is implemented

How Supports Are Determined / Allocated

Support levels are determined by:

- **Teacher observation and monitoring** of progress in class.
- **Standardised test results** (literacy, numeracy, cognitive assessments).
- **Referrals from teachers, parents/guardians, or students** expressing concern.
- **Information from primary schools** during transition (e.g., transfer files, psychological reports).
- **Professional assessments** (e.g., educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, occupational therapist).
- **Review meetings** (SEN team, year head, teachers, parents/guardians, student).

Allocation of support (SET hours, SNA support, group or individual intervention) is managed by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Coordinator in consultation with the Deputy Principals and Principal following Department of Education Circular 0014/2017:

- Resources are school-based, not diagnosis-based.
- Students are prioritised according to level of educational need, not solely on labels or assessments.
- SET time is allocated in proportion to need — i.e., more intensive and frequent interventions for those at Level 3.

Criteria for Movement within the continuum

- Movement between levels is **dynamic** and based on ongoing monitoring and review. A student may **move up or down** the continuum depending on progress.

Movement on the Continuum	Criteria/ Indicators
From Level 1 (for all) → Level 2 (for some)	- Persistent difficulties despite classroom differentiation. - Below expected progress in standardised tests. - Teacher/parent concern sustained over time.
From Level 2 (for some) → Level 3 (for a few)	- Limited progress after a period (usually 10–20 weeks) of targeted intervention. - Evidence from assessment indicating significant need (e.g. <10th percentile). - Professional/NEPS recommendation for individualised support.
From Level 3 (for a few) → Level 2 (for some) / Level 1 (for all)	- Demonstrated progress toward targets. - Student able to access curriculum with reduced or no additional support. - Review meeting agrees to reduce intensity.

- Decisions are typically made collaboratively by the **SEN Team**, in consultation with **subject teachers, parents/guardians, and students** (where appropriate) and any external agencies e.g. educational psychologists where necessary.

Review Mechanisms

Regular review is an essential part of the continuum.

Each level includes structured monitoring and evaluation:

Level	Review Process	Frequency/ Tools
Level 1 (for all)	Classroom teacher monitors progress and adjusts teaching. Concerns are referred via our SEN referral form.	Ongoing/ per term
Level 2 (for some)	Short term interventions are tracked using Student Support Plans (SSPs). Progress is evaluated against measurable targets	Twice yearly
Level 3 (for a few)	Individual Support plans are reviewed formally with parents, SEN team, students and any relevant outside agencies. Adjustments are made based on progress	Once a term or more frequently if needed
Whole- school review	SEN coordinator reviews distribution of resources, caseload and impacts of supports; reports to the deputy Principal, Principal and Board of management	Annually

Documentation used includes:

- Student Support Files/ Individual Behaviour Plans
- Assessment data (**standardised test results, teacher-based assessments**)
- Observation notes / intervention logs
- Parental and student feedback

6. Student Support Plans (SSPs)

When an SSP used

A Student Support Plan (SSP) is developed for students who require additional and sustained support beyond classroom differentiation and short-term interventions.

It is typically used when:

- A student is at Level 3 (Support for a Few) or Level 2 (Support for Some) on the Continuum of Support.
- The student's learning, behavioural, social, or emotional needs are significant and ongoing.
- There may be a formal psychological or professional assessment recommending targeted interventions.
- The student receives SET (Special Education Teacher) or SNA support.
- The school deems that systematic planning, coordination, and documentation of support is needed to ensure progress.

Who Is Involved in Creating the SSP

The creation of an SSP is a **collaborative process** involving all key stakeholders to ensure a shared understanding of the student's strengths, needs, and goals.

Participants may include:

- **SEN Coordinator / Special Education Teacher (SET)** – leads the planning process and drafts the plan.
- **Subject Teachers** – provide information on academic performance, classroom strategies, and target areas.
- **Parents / Guardians** – share insights on the student's strengths, interests, and needs at home.
- **The student** – where appropriate, contributes views and personal learning goals.
- **Principal / Year Head / Guidance Counsellor** – may advise on timetabling, pastoral supports, and resources.
- **External Professionals** (if involved) – e.g. NEPS psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, CAMHS, etc.

Key Features and Contents of an SSP

Appendix D is a SSP template. The SSP is built around the **three levels of support**:

- **Support for All (Classroom Support)**
- **Support for Some (School Support)**
- **Support for a Few (School Support Plus)**

Each level includes its own planning and review documentation, enabling a graduated response to need.

Each SSP will include:

Student Profile

- Summary of strengths, interests, and talents
- Summary of needs (academic, social, emotional, behavioural, sensory, medical)
- Primary and secondary areas of need

Background Information

- Relevant family, medical, developmental, and school history
- Summary of any external professional reports (e.g. NEPS, HSE, CAMHS)

Student Views

- Student input on what helps them learn
- Preferred learning styles or strategies

- Concerns or goals (age-appropriate)

Parental Views

- Concerns, expectations, insights about their child's strengths and challenges

Targets for Learning and Support

- Clear, specific, measurable short-term targets
- Linked to the student's assessed needs
- Usually 3–5 targets per plan
- Each target should include:
 - Area of focus
 - Specific outcome
 - Timeframe
 - Person responsible

Support Strategies and Resources

- Differentiated teaching methods
- Additional resources
- Environmental adjustments
- Staff involved (e.g. SET, SNA, subject teachers)
- External support (e.g. SLT, OT, NEPS, CAMHS)

Monitoring and Review

- Record of how progress will be assessed (e.g. teacher observation, standardised testing)
- Review date
- Outcome of the intervention (e.g. progress made, barriers, recommendations)
- Decision on next steps (e.g. maintain level, increase/reduce support)

Record of Actions/Meetings

- All Meetings are recorded and actions agreed with relevant member of staff and student

Implementation of SSP:

The SSP will be implemented through coordinated support from class and subject teachers, the SEN team, and, where relevant, external professionals. Agreed strategies and targets will be integrated into classroom teaching and learning. The SEN Coordinator will oversee the delivery of supports and ensure that all relevant staff have access to the plan and understand their responsibilities

Monitoring, reviewing and revising the SSP (frequency, procedures)

Each SSP will be reviewed at least twice annually, or more frequently if required. Reviews will consider progress toward agreed targets, effectiveness of strategies, and any changes in the student's needs or circumstances. The review process will involve the class teacher, SEN teacher(s), SEN Coordinator, parents, and the student where appropriate. Updated SSPs will be shared with all relevant staff and stored securely on the schools SharePoint. A summary of the SSP is available on the schools Compass system which can be accessed by all teaching staff and the students' parents.

Transition Planning (e.g. from year to year, post- school)

Transition planning forms an integral part of the SSP process. Key information, including progress summaries and current supports, will be shared with the next class teacher or new setting to ensure continuity of provision. For

students moving on from school, transition planning will include liaison with parents, guidance staff, and relevant external agencies to support appropriate post-school pathways

Parental/ Student involvement in the SSP

Parents and students are central to the SSP process. Parents are consulted at all stages — from initial identification to target-setting and review. Students, where appropriate, are encouraged to contribute their perspectives, reflect on their progress, and participate in setting achievable goals. Ongoing communication is maintained through regular meetings and updates.

7. Support Provision & Resources

Deployment of SET resources

The school deploys its Special Education Teaching (SET) resources in line with the Department of Education and NCSE Guidelines. SET hours are allocated based on the Continuum of Support model, ensuring that resources are directed towards students with the greatest level of need.

The SEN Coordinator oversees the equitable distribution of SET hours, considering assessment data, teacher feedback, and student profiles.

Support may include:

- In-class support through co-teaching or small group work
- Targeted withdrawal for specific skill development (e.g. literacy, numeracy, social skills)
- Individualised support for students with significant needs

The deployment of SETs is flexible and reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet students' needs effectively.

Deployment of SNAs (role, allocation principles, supervision)

The school allocates Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) in line with NCSE Circulars and guidelines, ensuring that their role is focused on care needs rather than academic instruction.

SNA allocation is determined by assessed need and reviewed annually.

SNAs work under the direction of the Principal and SEN Coordinator, and in collaboration with class and subject teachers, to:

- Support students with significant care needs
- Promote independence and inclusion
- Assist in implementing care plans and risk assessments
- Supervise students as part of the school's overall supervision arrangements

SNAs are included in relevant team meetings and receive ongoing guidance and training.

In-class support, team teaching, co-teaching, withdrawal, in-school resource teaching

A combination of support models is used to best meet students' diverse learning needs. These include:

- **In-class support:** SETs and subject teachers collaborate to differentiate instruction and support inclusion.
- **Team/co-teaching:** Joint planning and delivery of lessons where both teachers share responsibility for learning outcomes.
- **Withdrawal:** Short-term, focused intervention for specific skill development (academic, social, emotional). The choice of support model is informed by the student's SSP, teacher feedback, and data from ongoing assessments. The emphasis is always on inclusive practice and minimising unnecessary withdrawal from mainstream learning.

Assistive technology, ICT accommodations, differentiated materials

The school supports the use of assistive technology to enhance participation and learning for students with SEN. This may include laptops, tablets, text-to-speech software, and digital note-taking tools as recommended by the NCSE or external professionals.

Teachers use ICT to differentiate instruction, providing accessible resources (e.g., simplified text, visual supports, captioned media).

The SEN team assists teachers in identifying and integrating suitable digital accommodations within lesson.

Physical / environmental accommodations (e.g. accessible layout, sensory rooms, lighting)

The school is committed to maintaining an inclusive and accessible learning environment. Adjustments may include:

- Accessible classrooms and circulation spaces
- Appropriate lighting, sound, and sensory regulation areas (e.g. sensory room, calm space)
- Flexible seating arrangements and furniture to support mobility or attention needs
- Access to specialist rooms (e.g., resource rooms) for individual or small-group support

All adaptations are made in consultation with parents, students, and relevant professionals where appropriate.

Access to auxiliary supports (e.g. therapists, visiting teachers)

Where necessary, the school liaises with external agencies and specialists to support students' individual needs. These may include:

- NEPS psychologists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Visiting Teachers for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Visually Impaired
- CAMHS or other health services

The SEN Coordinator facilitates communication between external professionals, school staff, parents, and students to ensure consistent support.

Other support services (e.g. exam accommodations, exam supports, access to resource rooms)

Students with specific needs may access Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations (RACE) in line with SEC criteria (e.g., reader, scribe, separate centre, use of word processor).

Additional supports available in-school may include:

- Access to a resource or sensory room
- Use of quiet spaces for regulated learning
- Modified timetables where appropriate

All supports are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and effective for each student.

8. Access, Inclusion & Participation

Ensuring access to the full curriculum

The school is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum in line with their abilities and interests.

Teachers plan and deliver lessons that provide equitable access to learning through differentiation, modified resources, and flexible teaching approaches. Where necessary, students may follow Level 2 or Level 1 Learning Programmes, or individualised curricular pathways, as recommended through the SEN Support Plan (SSP). Collaborative planning between subject teachers, SETs, and the SEN Coordinator ensures that adaptations and supports are embedded across subjects and year groups.

Differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies

Teachers use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to create inclusive learning environments that anticipate and address the diverse needs of all learners.

This includes:

- Presenting information in multiple ways (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic)
- Allowing for varied methods of engagement and expression
- Providing scaffolding, visual supports, and flexible grouping
- Differentiating learning outcomes, materials, and assessments to suit students' strengths and needs

Professional collaboration and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) in inclusive teaching and UDL approaches are encouraged and supported by school leadership.

Exam and assessment accommodations

The school ensures fair access to both in-house and state examinations for students with SEN.

Students may receive Reasonable Accommodations in State Examinations (RACE), such as a reader, scribe, word processor, rest breaks, or separate centre, in accordance with SEC (State Examinations Commission) guidelines.

In-house assessments mirror these accommodations where feasible to promote familiarity and fairness.

Teachers adapt assessments to ensure students can demonstrate their learning without disadvantage (e.g., alternative formats, oral instead of written tasks).

Extra-curricular and co-curricular participation

Students with SEN are encouraged and supported to participate fully in the life of the school, including all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities such as sports, clubs, cultural events, and school trips.

The SEN team works closely with activity coordinators to identify and remove barriers to participation, providing adjustments, supervision, or additional support where needed.

Participation in wider school activities is recognised as a key element of inclusion and wellbeing.

Anti-bullying, behaviour supports, pastoral care

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Positive Behaviour recognises and protect the rights of students with SEN. Staff are trained to identify and respond appropriately to the needs of vulnerable students and to apply behaviour support strategies that are proactive, positive, and restorative.

Pastoral care structures—including the Year Head system, Guidance Counsellor, SST and SEN team—work collaboratively to promote inclusion, wellbeing, and emotional safety.

Where appropriate, individualised Behaviour Support Plans are developed in consultation with parents and external professionals.

Social inclusion, peer supports, mentoring

The school promotes social inclusion by fostering positive peer relationships and a culture of respect and empathy.

Initiatives such as peer mentoring, buddy systems, cooperative learning, and inclusive group work are encouraged.

Students are taught to value diversity through SPHE, Wellbeing, and whole-school initiatives.

The SEN team supports students who may experience social isolation to build confidence, independence, and belonging.

Reasonable accommodations and modifications

The school provides reasonable accommodations to ensure that students with disabilities or additional needs can access and participate in all aspects of school life on an equal basis.

These may include:

- Adapted timetables or reduced subject loads
- Modified homework or assessment requirements
- Physical or sensory adjustments to the learning environment
- Support with transport, access routes, or classroom layout

All accommodations are determined through consultation with parents, students, and professionals, and are reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness and appropriateness.

9. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring of student progress

Student progress is monitored continuously through teacher observation, class-based assessments, and review of targets within each Student Support Plan (SSP).

Subject teachers, SETs, and the SEN Coordinator collaborate to track academic, social, and emotional development. Information from ongoing monitoring is used to adjust teaching approaches, update targets, and inform future planning.

Progress records are maintained securely and shared with parents at agreed intervals, ensuring that support remains responsive and effective.

Internal review of support effectiveness

The school regularly reviews the effectiveness of AEN supports and interventions. This includes:

- Evaluating individual and group outcomes from specific programmes (e.g. literacy, numeracy, social skills)
- Reviewing deployment of SET and SNA resources to ensure equitable and efficient use
- Analysing data from assessments, teacher feedback, parent/Guardian and student voice
- Identifying professional development needs among staff

Findings from internal reviews inform planning for the following term or school year, ensuring continuous improvement in AEN provision.

Periodic evaluation of AEN policy itself

The AEN Policy is a living document and is formally reviewed every three years, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, Department circulars, or NCSE guidance.

The review process evaluates how well the policy supports inclusion, access, and achievement for all students with AEN. Revisions are made in consultation with staff, parents, and students, and ratified by the Board of Management before implementation.

Stakeholder feedback (students, parents, staff)

The voices of pupils, parents/guardians and staff must be meaningfully heard and actioned in relation to our AEN provision, including the ASD Suite. We will provide structured opportunities for all stakeholder to express their perspectives safely, to have their views listened to by decision-makers, and to see clear evidence of how those views inform planning, target-setting and practice. At least once annually, the school will administer a feedback questionnaire for pupils, parents/guardians and staff, and will collate, analyse and share themes arising. Findings will be reviewed through the lens of improvement and will directly inform whole-school planning, professional learning priorities and iterative adjustments to our AEN systems and supports.

Reporting to Board and to Department / NCSE as required

The school will ensure that all reporting obligations relating to Additional Educational Needs are fulfilled in a timely, accurate and compliant manner. AEN updates (including staffing, enrolment to the Special Class, deployment of SET hours and key risk / improvement areas) will be reported to the Board of Management at least once per term, and more frequently if significant changes arise. Formal returns to the Department of Education and/or NCSE will be completed in line with circulars, deadlines and data collection requirements. All reports will be prepared and presented by the Principal and/or SENCo and shall be retained as part of the school's formal records. The school will ensure that all reporting is evidence-based, GDPR-compliant and aligned with the school's Child Protection and Data Protection procedures.

10. Professional Development / Staff Support

The school is committed to fostering a culture of continuous professional learning to ensure all staff are equipped to meet the diverse needs of students with additional educational needs. Professional development in inclusion and special educational needs (AEN) is viewed as a shared responsibility of all teachers, not solely the Special Educational Needs Team. The school promotes ongoing professional dialogue, reflection, and the sharing of good practice among staff. The SENCO (SENCO) supports teachers in accessing relevant resources, guidance, and training opportunities provided by the NCSE, Oide, and other recognised professional bodies.

Induction for New Staff on AEN and Inclusion

All new teachers receive an induction on the school's inclusive ethos, the operation of the AEN Department, and key procedures for supporting students with additional needs through the annual staff handbook and weekly staff notes. This includes an overview of the continuum of support, differentiation strategies, the use of student support files, and engagement with Individual Education Plans (SSPs). New staff are introduced to relevant policies such as the Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Procedures, and the Admissions Policy at the beginning of the academic year. The SENCO and Year Head collaborate to ensure that new staff understand the communication channels for liaising with parents, SNAs, and external agencies. All mainstream AEN teachers are expected to teach their learning support classes in the Learning Support classroom where possible; this supports shared practice and collaboration.

Ongoing Training

Teachers are encouraged and supported to engage in regular professional learning in the areas of differentiation, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), inclusive classroom practices, and the effective use of assistive technology. The school provides both formal and informal training opportunities through staff meetings and pop-up sessions. The integration of digital tools and adaptive technologies is promoted by the digital learning team, to support student access, participation, and progress in learning.

Collaborative Planning Time

The school recognises the importance of structured collaborative planning time for teachers working with students with AEN. Subject teachers, learning support teachers, SNAs, and the SENCO liaise regularly, share information, and plan for inclusive teaching and learning. Effective communication between mainstream and support teachers ensures a coordinated and consistent approach to meeting student needs.

Support for Teachers Implementing SSPs

Learning Support Teachers, implementing Student Support Plans (SSPs), are provided with guidance and practical support from the SENCO and AEN Team. This includes help with setting measurable targets, monitoring progress, and recording outcomes. The SENCO ensures that all relevant teachers have access to the key information needed to support each student's learning, in line with data protection requirements. Regular review meetings are facilitated to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and to adjust plans as necessary. Collaboration between subject teachers, parents, and support staff is central to the SSP process. Targets are set at the beginning of each academic year, communicated to all teachers and parents, and placed on the COMPASS app for viewing. These targets are regularly assessed and updated when appropriate.

Participation in External Training

Staff are encouraged to participate in external professional development opportunities offered by the NCSE Support Service, NEPS, Oide, and other accredited agencies. The school supports staff attendance at relevant seminars, conferences, and webinars that enhance understanding of inclusive education, mental health, and evidence-based intervention strategies. Where possible, learning from external training is shared with the wider staff through in-school presentations or resource-sharing sessions. This approach promotes collective capacity-building and ensures the school's practices remain aligned with national policy developments and best practice.

11. Parental & Student Involvement/Communication

The school recognises that effective communication and strong partnerships with parents, guardians, and students are central to supporting positive educational outcomes for learners with additional educational needs (AEN). Collaboration, transparency, and respect guide all interactions between the school, families, and students.

Role of Parents/Guardians in Planning, Review, and Decision-Making

Parents and guardians are key partners in identifying and supporting students' learning needs. They are actively involved in the development and review of Student Support Files, and their insights inform decisions on teaching strategies, accommodations, and interventions. The school values parents' contributions and aims to work collaboratively to ensure that supports are responsive to each student's needs.

Communication Protocols

The school aims to maintain clear and consistent communication with parents and guardians through scheduled review meetings, parent-teacher meetings, and regular written or digital progress updates. Additional meetings may be arranged as needed to discuss specific concerns or review interventions. The SENCO coordinates initial communication between subject teachers, the AEN Team, and families to ensure information is accurate, timely, and confidential. AEN teachers provide continuous support for identified students and maintain regular, open communication with parents and the student throughout the year. This in turn is communicated to the teachers through the students SSP.

Involvement of the Student (voice, choice, self-advocacy)

Students are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning and planning. Their views, preferences, and goals are sought during the development and review of SSPs. The school promotes self-advocacy by encouraging students to express their needs, make choices about learning approaches, and reflect on their progress. This approach supports independence, confidence, and personal responsibility.

The AEN department aim to complete at least 1 student voice questionnaire annually, to support the self-advocacy of students

Dispute Resolution / Appeals / Complaints Procedure

Bush Post Primary school is committed to resolving concerns or disagreements regarding AEN provision in a fair, transparent, and respectful manner. Parents or guardians are encouraged to first discuss any concerns with the SENCO or relevant teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, it may be referred to senior management in line with the school's Complaints Procedure. Every effort will be made to reach a mutually agreeable solution in the best interests of the student.

12. Transition planning

Transition into Post Primary (from primary)

Our AEN Department works proactively to support the smooth transition of students with Additional Educational Needs from our feeder primary schools into our school. In the final term of 6th Class, the AEN Co-ordinator engages with feeder primary schools to gather relevant information, including student profiles, support plans (such as the Support Plan / School Support Plus), and any psychological, clinical or professional reports provided by parents/guardians.

The AEN co-ordinator or Deputy Principal will visit each of our feeder schools, listed below.

- Ardagh - Omeath
- Bellurgan
- Dulargy – Ravensdale
- Faughart
- Monksland
- Muchgrange – Boher
- Mullaghbouy
- Rampart - Lordship
- Rathcor
- Naomh Phádraig - Kilcurry
- St Lawrence's – Omeath
- St Olivers – Carlingford

The AEN Department will:

- **Engage with feeder primary schools**
 - request and review support plans (Support Plan / School Support Plus)
 - gather relevant reports (educational, clinical, therapeutic) supplied by parents/guardians
 - ensure student voice is included in the process, where appropriate
- **Co-design a familiarisation pathway for students with AEN**
 - offer individual / small-group pre-entry visits
 - provide orientation opportunities with key AEN staff and the building / routines
 - share visual supports, timetables and student-friendly induction resources
- **Use gathered information to plan provision at entry**
 - advise teachers re: differentiation and universal supports
 - identify reasonable accommodations and targeted supports at subject / timetable level
 - align allocation decisions to the Continuum of Support, NCSE guidance and **DE Circular 0014/2017**

This transition process is reviewed annually to ensure fidelity to best practice, effective deployment of resources, and equity of access for all students.

With parental consent, pupil voice is sought to ensure students' own strengths, interests and concerns are included. Where appropriate, pre-entry visits, small-group induction opportunities and learning support orientation sessions are arranged to familiarise incoming students with key staff, routines and the school environment. Collected information is used to inform appropriate subject-level differentiation, reasonable accommodations, and timetabled support at entry. This process is aligned with the Department of Education Continuum of Support, the NCSE Guidelines, and Circulars relating to AEN provision, and is reviewed annually for effectiveness and equity.

Transition between years / subject changes

The AEN Department supports continuity of learning for students with Additional Educational Needs during all in-school transitions, including movement between year groups and when subject levels or subject choices change. The AEN Co-ordinator, in collaboration with Year Heads, Guidance and senior management, reviews progress data, support plans and teacher feedback at key points in the school year. Where a subject or level change is being considered, relevant information is shared on a need-to-know basis with teachers to ensure continuity of differentiation, reasonable accommodations and access to targeted supports as appropriate. Student voice and parental/guardian consultation are actively sought before adjustments to a support plan or timetable are finalised. Updated support plans are recorded in line with the Continuum of Support model and communicated to teaching staff at the start of each academic year and at agreed review intervals. The AEN Department ensures that transitions are planned, documented and tracked, so that support is responsive, evidence-based and consistent across years.

Transition from school to further education, training or employment

The AEN Department supports students with Additional Educational Needs as they prepare to leave school and progress to further education, training programmes or employment. Transition planning is integrated within senior cycle guidance, support planning and student voice processes. The AEN Team will, where appropriate:

- collaborate with Guidance and Year Heads to align support planning with student pathways
- provide information for students and parents/guardians on access supports in FE, apprenticeships and higher education (e.g. Disability Support Services, DARE, apprenticeships support)
- liaise, with consent, with external agencies and relevant progression providers (e.g. NCSE, HSE, ETB programmes)
- support applications for reasonable accommodations where relevant (e.g. RACE, HEI / FE disclosure processes)
- ensure that student strengths, goals and needs are represented in transition documentation

Transition planning is documented according to the Continuum of Support and reviewed annually for effectiveness.

Life skills, career guidance, support

The AEN Department promotes functional independence, wellbeing and future-readiness for learners with Additional Educational Needs. This work is integrated with the Junior Cycle key skills framework, Senior Cycle guidance programme, and the Continuum of Support. The AEN Team will, where appropriate:

- collaborate with Guidance on access to career guidance interviews, interest inventories and pathway planning
- provide targeted small-group or 1:1 life-skills supports (e.g. organisation, planning, self-advocacy, study skills, communication)
- co-design scaffolds for goal setting, reflective learning and self-management within classrooms
- teach, model and reinforce person-centred self-advocacy skills (e.g. how to ask for help, how to disclose access needs)
- signpost students and parents/guardians to external supports, community programmes and relevant agencies

Provision is needs-led and is reviewed in line with support plan review cycles.

13. Data Management, Confidentiality & Record Keeping

Student records, documentation (e.g. assessments, SSP, reviews)

The school maintains accurate and up-to-date records for all students receiving AEN support, in line with Data Protection legislation and Department of Education circulars.

Records may include:

- Assessments, screening results, and reports from external professionals
- Student Support Plans (SSPs), Personal Pupil Plan (if required), Behavioural plan (if required)
- Notes from review meetings and progress reports
- Correspondence with parents and relevant agencies

All documentation is securely stored—either electronically on a password-protected system or in locked filing cabinets—accessible only to authorised personnel.

Access to records & data protection

Access to personal data and AEN records is strictly governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Acts (2018–2023). Students and parents/guardians have the right to access their own records upon written request, subject to legal requirements and the school's Data Protection Policy. All staff handling sensitive information receive guidance on confidentiality and the secure management of personal data.

Sharing information with relevant staff/agencies

Information about students with AEN is shared only when necessary and with those directly involved in supporting the student's education and welfare. This may include class and subject teachers, SNAs, the AEN team, guidance counsellors, or external professionals such as NEPS, the NCSE, or therapists. Consent from parents/guardians (and students, where appropriate) is sought before sharing information externally, except in circumstances where disclosure is required by law or necessary to protect the welfare of the student.

Retention/archiving policies

Records relating to students with AEN are retained in line with the school's Data Retention Schedule and Department of Education guidance.

Typically:

- AEN files are maintained while the student is enrolled in the school
- On transfer to another school, relevant records are shared securely with the receiving school (with parental consent)
- After a student leaves, essential records are archived for the legally required period before secure destruction

The school ensures that all paper and electronic records are disposed of safely and confidentially when the retention period has expired.

14. Organisation of the Hub classes – ASD suite

Eligibility

Enrolment of students into the ASD suite will be based on the Bush Post Primary admissions policy.

- Identified students in the area with relevant professional reports showing complex/severe needs that require a special class (e.g., per SP/ED 02/05 criteria).
- Enrolment considered only where there is clear evidence the student cannot access mainstream for most/all of the school day, even with appropriate supports.
- Professional report(s) must confirm:
 - (i) the relevant disability for the class designation and
 - (ii) the complex/severe learning needs necessitating a special class placement.

Inclusion of students

The Hub / ASD suite in Bush Post Primary exists within the continuum of provision; students engage with mainstream classes / subjects where appropriate and have their placement reviewed appropriately.

Students enrolled in the HUB Classes / ASD suite are valued members of the whole-school community, and inclusion is enacted as a lived daily practice rather than an event. Students access mainstream classes, activities and social spaces as appropriate to their needs, interests, strengths and personal targets. Inclusion will be flexible and individualised – recognising that the *right* level of inclusion is not identical for every student at every moment – and decisions will be guided by ongoing assessment, consultation with parents/guardians and external professionals, and the voice and comfort of the student. The overall aim is that each student experiences genuine belonging, participation, dignity and progress across academic, social and wellbeing domains.

Staffing

Teacher numbers are based on DoE pupil–teacher ratios by disability type and pupil-SNA ratios are also set by the DoE and not the school.

Post-primary principals balance continuity (key adults) with access to subject specialists.

Review of ASD suite placement

Each student's placement is kept under continual review by the school. At a minimum, a review will take place once a year (depending on the profile and needs of the student) with student/parent/guardian/teacher/relevant professional input where the suitability of special class vs mainstream or alternative setting may be considered.

The review will consider:

- Student's views and those of parents/guardians, teachers and other relevant professionals
- The suitability of the special class placement
- Whether the student's needs might be best addressed in a mainstream setting or whether a different setting is required (e.g. a special school)

Following a decision that the special class is no longer the most appropriate placement; a student may move to:

- a mainstream class in the same school or
- a mainstream class in a school more local to the student's home or
- a different category of special class or
- a special school.

Class viability will be monitored with the NCSE; a class may become inactive if numbers fall below DoE retention rates, there are no further local students identified, or needs can be met elsewhere; classes can be re-designated if local needs change. [ncse.ie+1](https://www.ncse.ie/1)

Staff development & whole-school readiness

The school recognises that the success of an ASD Suite is grounded in confident, informed and reflective practice. We are committed to ongoing whole-staff professional learning in autism-informed pedagogy, sensory supports, communication systems, behaviour support, universal design for learning and collaborative problem-solving.

Our aim is to build collective efficacy – not specialist pockets – so that all staff feel equipped to teach, include and support autistic learners across settings. Professional learning will be planned, staged and responsive to need, and we will utilise external agencies, NCSE supports, and staff expertise to sustain a culture of continuous learning. Whole-school readiness includes ensuring that physical environments, policies, expectations and routines are predictable, accessible and transparent to autistic pupils, enabling them to participate, learn and belong.

We will prioritise teachers with AEN knowledge/experience to teach in the ASD Hub whilst providing ongoing CPD (e.g., NCSE/Oide/Middletown Autism Centre resources) for all staff, building our whole-school capacity to support inclusion.

15. Health, Safety & Welfare Considerations

Bush Post Primary school is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of all students, including those with Additional Educational Needs, in line with relevant legislation, Department of Education requirements, Circular 0014/2017, the Continuum of Support and our Child Safeguarding Statement. The school endeavours to promote a physically safe, emotionally secure and inclusive learning environment. Reasonable, proportionate and evidence-based adjustments are put in place to support access, participation, wellbeing and dignity. Risk assessments, care plans and health/medical protocols are developed where required, in consultation with parents/guardians and relevant professionals, and implemented on a need-to-know basis by appropriate staff. The AEN Department works in collaboration with Senior Management, Guidance, Pastoral Care, SNA teams and the wider staff to ensure that support planning is aligned with statutory duties, best practice and the overall duty of care owed to every learner.

Medical needs and emergency procedures

The AEN Department works collaboratively with Senior Management, parents/guardians, relevant health professionals and SNAs to ensure that students with identified medical needs are supported in line with the school's duty of care and statutory Health & Safety requirements. Where relevant, the school will:

- request up-to-date medical information and professional reports required for safe planning
- ensure agreed plans and emergency procedures are shared with relevant staff on a confidential, need-to-know basis
- provide training for staff where specialised medical procedures / emergency responses may be required (e.g. seizure protocol, administration of prescribed emergency medication)
- ensure medication storage / access is in accordance with school policy and legal guidance. Only medication that is essential or needed in an emergency will be stored by the school. ardrics.ie

Planning and responses are proportionate, evidence-informed, consistent with Child Safeguarding and Health & Safety policy, and aligned with the school's overall duty of care.

Risk assessments (for individual students, for classroom adaptations)

The AEN Department supports the safe inclusion of students with Additional Educational Needs by ensuring that individual risk is identified, documented and planned for in a proportionate and rights-respecting manner.

Where a student's needs, behaviour, disability, medical condition or mobility profile may present foreseeable risk to themselves or others, the risk will be assessed in collaboration with Senior Management, relevant teachers, SNAs, parents/guardians and — where appropriate — external professionals. This risk assessment will outline identified hazards, control measures, and required adaptations to routines, environment or supervision. Classroom and curriculum adjustments recommended this process is shared with staff on a need-to-know basis and reviewed in line with the Continuum of Support. Risk assessments are implemented in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and statutory duty of care. See appendix C.

Safe handling / assistance

The school promotes a dignity-centred, rights-based approach to safe handling and assistance for students with Additional Educational Needs. Physical assistance is only provided where it is necessary, proportionate and the least intrusive intervention required to enable safety, access or participation. Staff who may be required to provide physical assistance must follow agreed protocols aligned with the school's Safety, Health and Welfare Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and the principle of "reasonable and minimal physical support". In all environments — including specialist settings such as the Hub — respect for personal space, clear communication, predictable

routines, consent-seeking language should be used where appropriate, and the prioritising of verbal, visual and environmental strategies before physical assistance is considered.

Safeguarding, behaviour policies

The school is committed to ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of students with Additional Educational Needs are protected in line with statutory requirements, the Child Safeguarding Statement, and the school's Code of Behaviour. Safeguarding and behaviour procedures apply to all students equally, while recognising that some students with AEN may require reasonable, evidence-based adjustments to support emotional regulation, communication and safe participation. Behaviour support planning is aligned with the Continuum of Support model, is proactive rather than reactive, and prioritises de-escalation, dignity and relationship-based practice. Where planning is required for individual students, this may include targeted strategies, risk-assessment and the involvement of relevant professionals. All responses are proportional, human-rights-centred and consistent with the school's duty of care.

16. Policy Implementation & Governance

Oversight, accountability and responsibility for implementation

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this AEN Policy and for ensuring that the school meets its statutory duties in relation to inclusion, equality of access, health & safety and child safeguarding. The Principal has day-to-day responsibility for operational oversight and may delegate defined functions to the Deputy Principal, AEN Co-ordinator, assigned teachers and relevant post holders. The AEN Department is responsible for implementing the Continuum of Support at student level, aligned with current Department of Education circulars and NCSE guidance.

Communication of the policy to staff, students, parents

This policy will be communicated to staff at induction and through ongoing professional collaboration, including staff meetings, AEN briefings and annual information updates. Key information will also be made available to parents/guardians through the school website, admissions documentation and, where appropriate, individual student meetings. A student-friendly version of core information may be shared through the SPHE / Wellbeing programme, year group assemblies or targeted induction activities.

Monitoring compliance

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through internal review processes including timetabling, AEN support plan review cycles, SET / SNA deployment oversight, record keeping checks and structured feedback from staff, students and parents/guardians where appropriate.

Review and amendment procedures

This policy will be reviewed on a scheduled cycle (at least every three years) or sooner where legislation, Department of Education circulars or NCSE guidance change, or where evaluation indicates the need for amendment. Proposed amendments will be considered by school leadership and as appropriate, brought to the Board of Management for ratification before implementation.



Board of Management Policy Consultation

Please present this form to your BOM when considering the policy at BOM level for ratification

School:	Bush Post Primary School
Policy:	ADDITIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Staff Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	23.3.26.
Proposed By:	Shene Brennan
Seconded By:	Sheena Gardland.

Student Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	23.9.26.
Proposed By:	(Student Council) Haibhe Hansally
Seconded By:	(Student Council) Katie-Jo M'Bride.

Parents Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	18.3.26.
Proposed By:	(Parents Association Member)
Seconded By:	(Parents Association Member)

Signed Catherine Ruane Date 24/3/26

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed [Signature] Date 24/3/2026

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Appendix A: AEN Department, Mainstream – Annual Operational Calendar

This calendar outlines the annual operational activities of the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Department. It provides an overview of key actions, meetings, and processes carried out throughout the academic year to support students with additional educational needs. The calendar is designed to ensure effective planning, coordination, and communication within the department, and to support compliance with Department of Education, NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), and NCSE (National Council for Special Education) guidelines.

August

- Conduct pre-visits for incoming first-year students (1–2 days before term starts).
- Hold a whole staff meeting to review the Continuum of Support and update medical needs.
- Ensure all Student Support Files are up to date for students on the Continuum of Support.
- Apply for any necessary assistive technology or resources based on prior assessments.

September

- Meet parents of first-year students who have not yet been interviewed to complete student profiles and consent forms.
- Collect outstanding assessments and Irish exemption documents from parents and update student files.
- Meet with SNAs (Special Needs Assistants) to review student personal pupil plans.
- Record AEN class allocations and create the master Learning Support (LS) timetable.
- Share class lists and LS timetables with Year Heads and staff.
- Review summer exam results and update student profiles accordingly.
- Send target sheets to LS teachers with deadlines for completion.

October

- Submit student attendance confirmation forms to NCSE.
- Meet NEPS psychologist to discuss students of concern and set caseload priorities.
- Update behaviour support plans and medical lists.
- Attend LMETB AEN Coordinators' meeting.
- Administer diagnostic assessments (e.g., WIATT testing) as appropriate.
- Review Level 2 Learning Programmes (PLUs) to ensure suitable targets are in place by Christmas.
- Complete RACE (Reasonable Accommodations for State Examinations) testing for any outstanding students.

November

- Prepare and submit documentation for LC (Leaving Certificate) RACE applications.
- Organise assistive technology and room arrangements for in-house exams.
- Communicate with Year Heads and Guidance Department regarding DARE and HEAR processes.
- Update student targets and review progress towards individual learning goals.
- Coordinate student lists for Social Skills Programme and NEPS referrals.
- Host Open Night to inform incoming parents of AEN supports available.

December

- End-of-term review of LS targets with AEN teachers.
- Ensure all samples of work from the first term are filed in student folders.
- Confirm assistive technology arrangements for house exams.
- Update Care Needs and Continuum of Support lists.
- Begin planning RACE accommodations for Junior Certificate students.

January

- Review Level 2 folders and highlight PLUs for the next term.
- Correlate CAT4 and other assessment results for 1st–3rd years and update Student Support Files.
- Collect medical information for RACE applications from Year Heads.
- Liaise with JCSP (Junior Certificate School Programme) Coordinator for planning next year's student list.
- Organise entrance exams for incoming first-year students.

February

- Begin RACE testing for 2nd and 5th years (spelling, writing, reading, etc.).
- Meet incoming parents/guardians regarding AEN and medical needs.
- Create Student Support Files for incoming first-year AEN students.
- Follow up on assessments and Irish exemptions from parents.
- Submit assistive technology applications where required.

March

- Liaise with Exam Coordinator to set up Mock Exam accommodations and timetables.
- Organise assistive technology for practical and written assessments.
- Continue RACE testing for targeted year groups.
- Participate in NEPS primary school transfer meetings.
- Plan and schedule the Social Skills Programme for next term.

April

- Meet with incoming parents/guardians to complete profiles and consent forms.
- Update list of AEN students and supports required for the upcoming academic year.
- Prepare class lists for incoming first-year students, ensuring balanced groupings.
- Continue communication with NEPS regarding student transitions.
- Review and finalise RACE applications for bilingual dictionary use.

May

- Ensure all Level 2 folders are completed and filed appropriately.
- Conduct end-of-year reviews of Student Support Files with LS teachers.
- Update Continuum of Support and medical lists.
- Organise assistive technology and accommodation for in-house and state exams.
- Prepare lists of students for the following year's Social Skills and JCSP Programmes.

June

- Organise assistive technology and resources for summer exams (ensure equipment readiness).
- Remove all student information from AEN room walls prior to exams.
- Celebrate completion of the Social Skills Programme with certificates and events.
- Apply for students' participation in the Summer School Programme through the Department portal.
- Ensure Level 2 students are correctly entered on the P-POD system.

Ongoing Tasks Throughout the Year

- Maintain up-to-date Student Support Files for all students on the Continuum of Support.
- Regularly liaise with parents and guardians to review progress and update plans.
- Collaborate with Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, and SNAs on student progress and well-being.
- Monitor and record attendance, assistive technology use, and accommodations granted.
- Ensure compliance with Department of Education, NEPS, and NCSE guidelines.

Appendix B: Additional Educational Needs Department – Internal Referral Form



AEN

Internal Referral Form

NAME

CLASS/YEAR GROUP

DATE OF REFERRAL

TEACHER MAKING REFERRAL

What is your cause for concern regarding this pupil? (Please tick the appropriate box)

Cognition and learning - general learning difficulties

Cognition and learning – specific learning difficulties

Communication and interaction – including social communication

Speech and language difficulties

Social, Emotional and mental health

Physical gross and fine motor skills; visual/hearing

Other

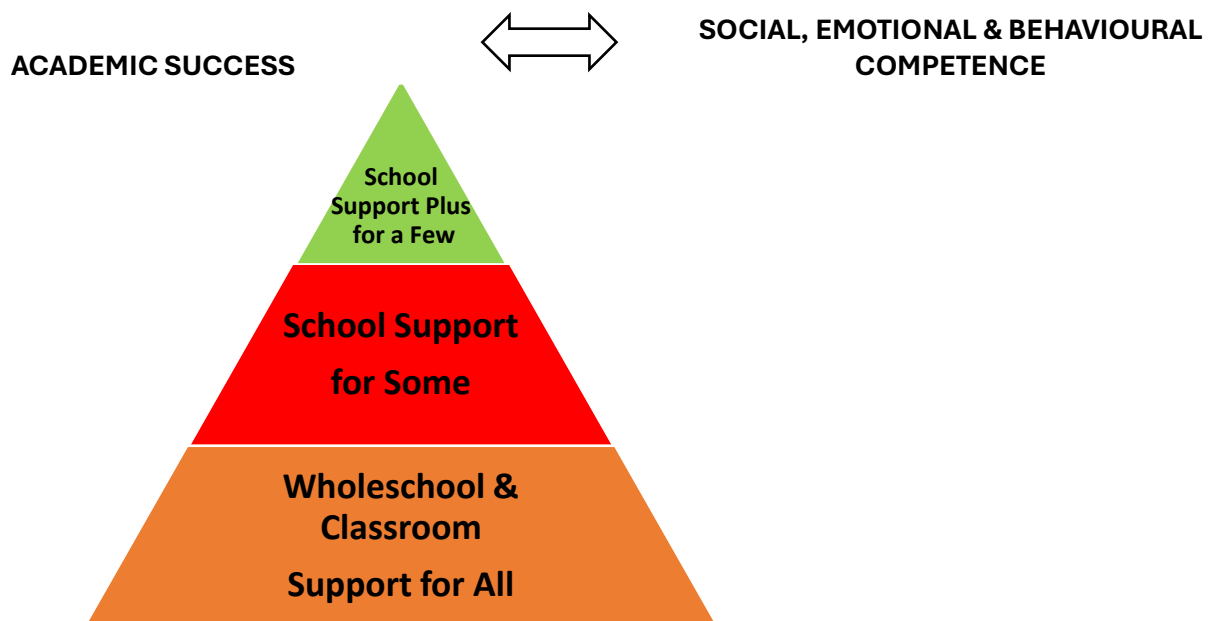
If you can detail further your concerns, please do so in the box below.

Appendix C – Student Support Plan Template



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

A Continuum of Support



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:	D.O.B.	Class:
General Information	Date Checked	
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		
<p><i>Helpful references: AEN: 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></p>		

Targets:

to be completed by the teacher(s).

For help, see *AEN: 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	
Lead teacher	
Start date of plan	
Review date of plan	
Student's strengths and interests	
Targets for the student	

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 AEN: 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	First Year
Names of those present at 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 (tick as appropriate)			
<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 con

Appendix D – LMETB INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT



Aligned Individual Risk Assessment Template

This template is adapted for use in Post-Primary AEN policies and is aligned with LMETB Safety, Health & Welfare documentation structure.

Student Information

Student Name:

Class/Year:

Date of Assessment:

Assessor(s):

Identified AEN Profile / Relevant Medical Information

Describe relevant needs, diagnosis if disclosed, primary functional implications.

Activity / Environment Being Assessed

Describe classroom / room / subject context and relevant foreseeable situations.

Hazards Identified

-
-
-

Risk Level (Low / Medium / High)

Control Measures / Adaptations Required

- Strategies in class
- Environmental adaptations
- SNA / supervision arrangements
- Communication / alert protocols

Additional Notes

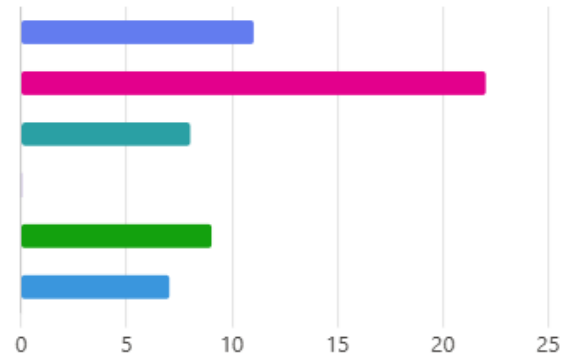
Review Date

Appendix E – Additional Educational Needs Dept – Pupil Voice Survey results, Nov 2025

Results of Questionnaire

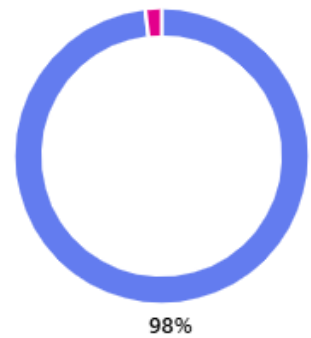
1. What year are you in?

● 1st Year	11
● 2nd Year	22
● 3rd Year	8
● Transition Year	0
● 5th Year	9
● 6th Year	7



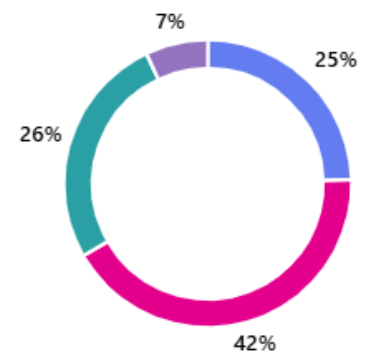
2. Do you get extra help in school (for example, from an SNA or learning support teacher)?

● Yes	56
● No	1



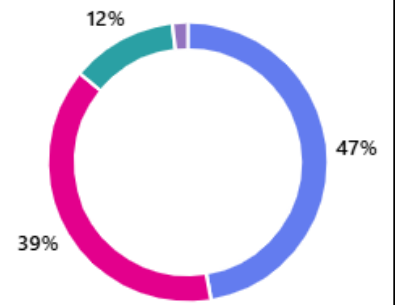
3. Do you feel teachers understand how you learn best?

● Always	14
● Most of the time	24
● Sometimes	15
● Rarely	4



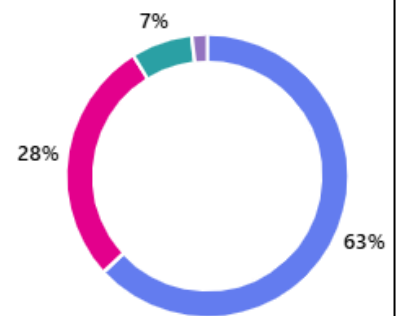
4. How easy is it for you to ask for help when you need it?

● Very easy	27
● Somewhat easy	22
● Hard	7
● Very Hard	1



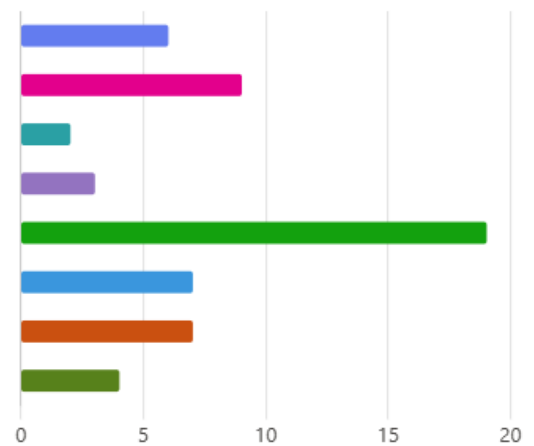
5. Do you feel you get the right kind of help with your learning?

● Yes, most of the time	36
● Sometimes	16
● Not really	4
● No, Never	1



6. What helps you most with your learning?

● Extra Time	6
● A quiet space	9
● Laptops and technology	2
● SNA help	3
● Learning Spport teacher	19
● Notes	7
● Being with my friends	7
● Visual aids and pictures	4



7. What makes learning difficult for you in school?

[More details](#)

51

Responses

Latest Responses

"Too much noise"

"when people talk over me interrupt me"

"loud noise and distractions"

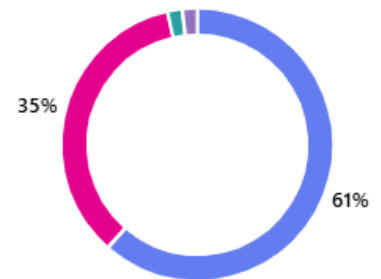
...

6 respondents (12%) answered class for this question.



8. Do you feel included in class activities and school events?

Always	35
Sometimes	20
Rarely	1
Never	1



10. Is there anything that would help you feel more included or comfortable in school?

[More details](#)

50

Responses

Latest Responses

"Somewhere quiet"

"no"

"i think a puppy like a school mascot"

...

3 respondents (6%) answered school for this question.



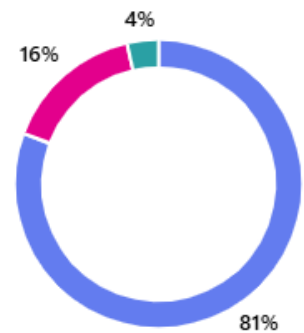
11. Do you know what your targets are for Learning support?

● Yes	53
● No	4
● I don't have any learning support on my timetable	0



12. Have you ever been asked to help plan your own learning support lessons or your targets?

● Yes	46
● No	9
● Not sure	2



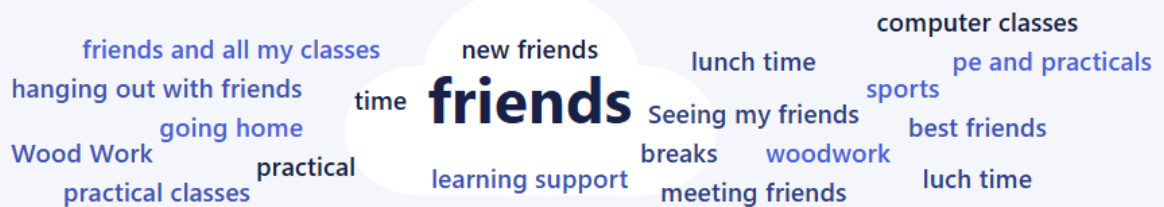
13. What do you enjoy most about school?

[More details](#)

55
Responses

Latest Responses
"Friends"
"being with my friends"
"leaving or going on trips"
...

26 respondents (47%) answered friends for this question.



14. What would you like to change or improve about how the school supports students with additional needs?

50
Responses

Latest Responses

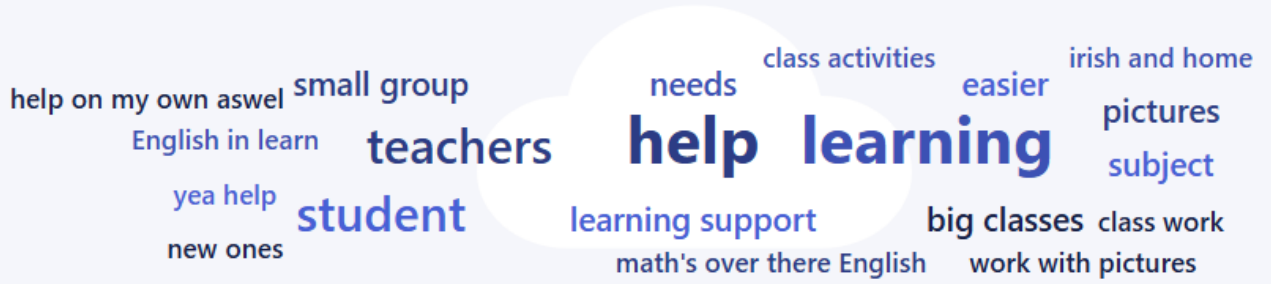
"I don't know"

"nothing"

"Having groups where we do the same subject."

...

4 respondents (8%) answered help for this question.



AEN Student Voice Survey – Summary & Analysis

Overview

This student voice exercise captured reflections from learners receiving AEN supports across 1st – 6th Year. The dataset suggests strong perceived access to support and high relational safety with staff, with a smaller but consistent subset reporting sensory overload, noise, and large-class overwhelm as key learning barriers.

Student voice responses indicate that learners with Additional Educational Needs feel most supported when they have access to individual help from Learning Support teachers, quiet spaces, clear notes, visual supports, and time to process tasks. Peer connection (being with friends) also emerged as a strong protective factor for engagement. The most common barriers identified were noise, classroom distraction, spelling and writing difficulties, time pressure, and challenges translating ideas into written work. Overall, this suggests that relational support and environmental regulation are working well, but sensory load, language processing and pace of learning continue to be the key points of vulnerability. Targeted literacy/numeracy intervention, predictable routines, and proactive access to quiet space are therefore likely to have the greatest impact on academic confidence, participation and wellbeing for this cohort.

Key Themes Emerging

- Most students report that help is available “always / most of the time”.
- ‘Quiet space / calm environment’ is consistently named as the biggest help.
- Being with friends is repeatedly listed as a support and motivator.
- Noise / talking / busy classrooms are the most common learning barrier.
- Students value visual supports, pictures, notes, technology, and pre-teaching.
- Executive function supports (organisation / planning / pace) are important.
- A small subset feels isolated / not included in big classes – sensory + social load issue.

Implications for Practice

- Prioritise quiet-space access as a legitimate AEN resource (not reward).
- Continue vocabulary pre-teaching + visual scaffolds.
- Strengthen predictable routines – this reduces cognitive load.
- Make environmental adjustments where possible: noise-reducing seating, smaller grouped instruction.
- Support student social connection on purpose – peer belonging strongly protects engagement.
- Include individual student preference in planning (maths vs English support preference appears in multiple entries).

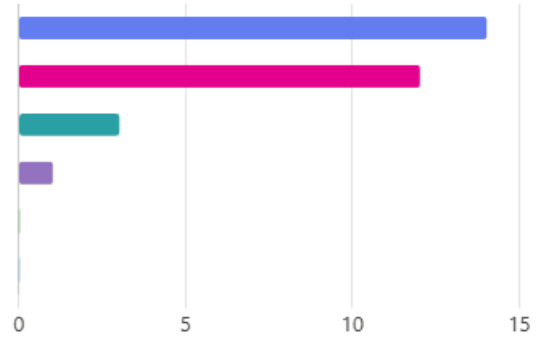
What We Can Learn from our Pupil Voice

Overall, the student voice data supports that the current AEN model is relationally strong – students know who supports them and believe that help is available. The main accessibility barrier is not lack of willingness from teachers, but the sensory and cognitive load of busy classrooms. Adjustments that lower noise / pace / information density, plus explicit visual scaffolds, are where the biggest academic gains are likely.

Appendix F – Additional Educational Needs Dept – Parent Voice Survey results, Nov 2025

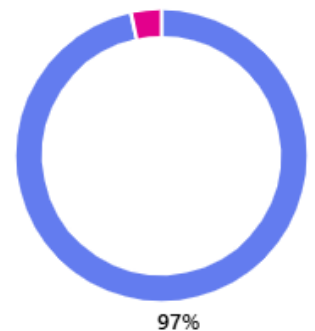
1. What year is your child currently in?

● 1st year	14
● 2nd year	12
● 3rd year	3
● 4th year	1
● 5th year	0
● 6th year	0



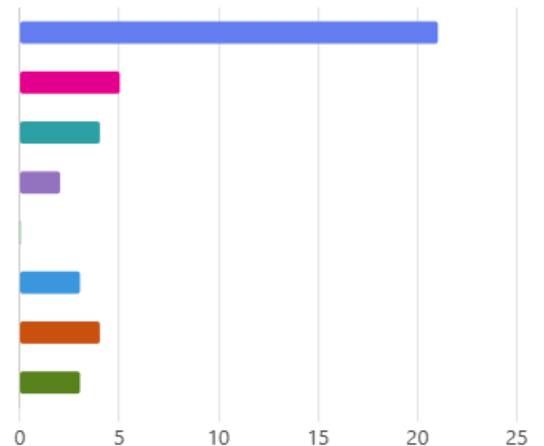
2. Does your child have an identified special or additional educational need?

● Yes	29
● No	1
● Assessment in progress	0



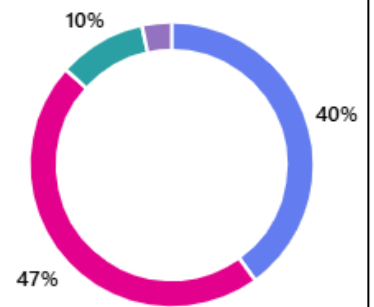
3. If yes, please indicate the type(s) of need

● Specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia)	21
● General learning difficulty	5
● Autism / ASD	4
● ADHD / ADD	2
● Speech and language difficulty	0
● Sensory / physical disability	3
● Social, emotional or behavioural difficulty	4
● Other	3



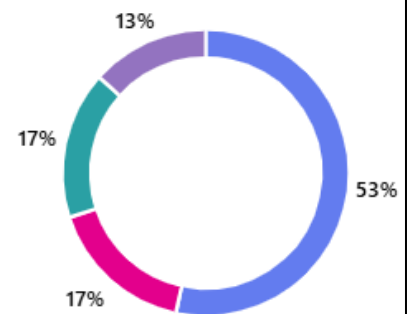
4. Do you feel your child's needs are well understood by the school?

Always	12
Most of the time	14
Sometimes	3
Rarely	1



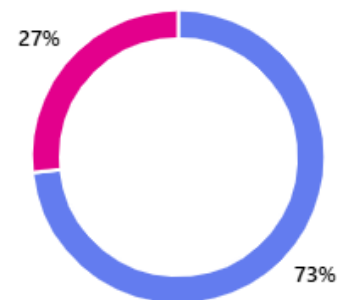
5. How well does the school communicate with you about your child's learning and support?

Excellent	16
Good	5
Fair	5
Poor	4



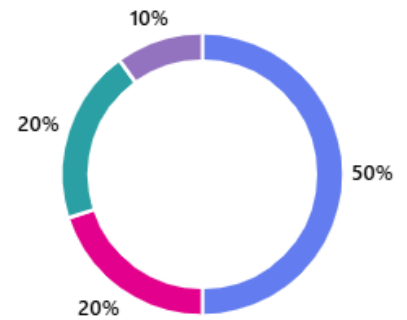
6. Does the school update you on your child's progress or review support plans?

Yes	22
No	8



7. Do you feel involved in decisions about your child's learning supports (e.g. Student Support Plans, meetings, reviews)

● Always	15
● Most of the time	6
● Sometimes	6
● Rarely	3



8. What does the school do well to support students with additional needs?

[More details](#)

20
Responses

Latest Responses

"Creates a specific plan for his needs"

"Communicates with me about learning plan and asks if I have any input"

...

7 respondents (35%) answered support for this question.



9. What could the school improve in supporting students with additional needs?

[More details](#)

19
Responses

Latest Responses

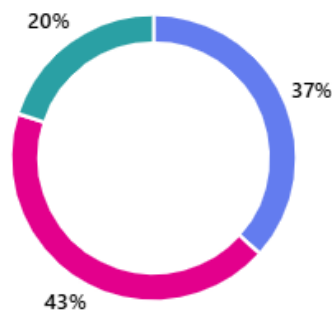
...

5 respondents (26%) answered teachers for this question.



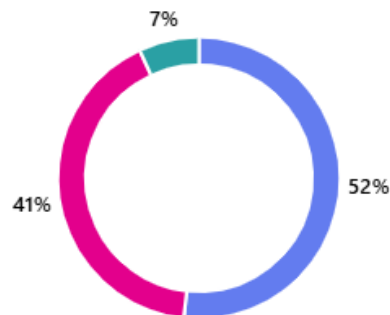
10. Do you think the support your child receives is effective and supporting their learning?

● Very Effective	11
● Quite Effective	13
● Somewhat effective	6
● Not effective	0



11. Do you feel your child's teachers have enough training and understanding of additional needs?

● Yes	15
● Somewhat	12
● Not enough	2



12. How could the school strengthen the partnership between parents and staff in supporting additional needs?

[More details](#)

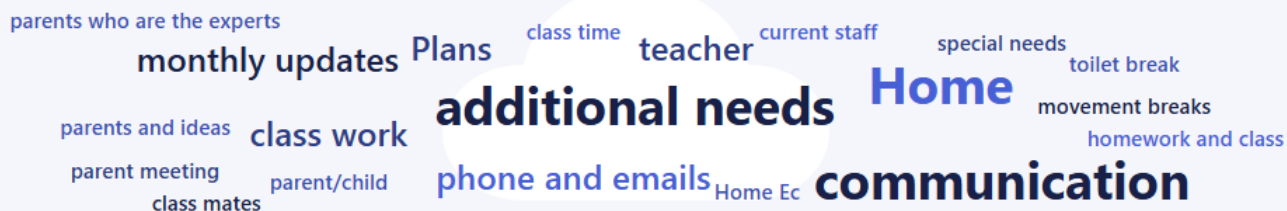
16

Responses

Latest Responses

...

3 respondents (19%) answered additional needs for this question.



13. What are your hopes for your child's learning and development during their time in our school?

[More details](#)

21

Responses

Latest Responses

"I hope he continues to be confident with his learning"

"I hope he continues to be confident with his learning"

...

6 respondents (29%) answered happy for this question.



14. Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

[More details](#)

15

Responses

Latest Responses

"I think it would be helpful if he could do more of his work typed on his laptop rath..."

"It would be helpful for him to do all exams on his laptop, so questions can be read..."

...

3 respondents (20%) answered days for this question.



Parent Voice – Key Findings & Analysis

Parent responses indicate strong appreciation for the relational and pastoral aspects of AEN support in the school. Parents repeatedly reference the Learning Support teachers in positive terms, and most describe the school as supportive, caring and responsive. There is strong evidence that parents *feel their child is known* — a major predictor of retention and engagement for AEN learners in Post Primary.

Positives Emerging from Parent Feedback

- Parents describe the school as supportive, caring and approachable.
- Parents feel that their child is known as an individual — there is strong relational trust.
- Learning Support teachers are repeatedly referenced as helpful, effective and valued.
- Parents report that their child enjoys school and feels comfortable in the learning environment.
- Parents believe that the AEN support is making a positive difference to their child's progress.
- Parents acknowledge that reasonable accommodations (where applied) help their child to access learning.
- There is evidence of positive classroom relationships and strong adult–student rapport.
- Parents express confidence that the school understands the importance of inclusion and support.
- A number of parents explicitly state that there is “nothing in particular” the school needs to improve — which suggests a high level of satisfaction in many cases.

What does the parental voice survey suggest we could do to improve?

The feedback highlights **three recurring improvement themes**:

1) Communication / feedback to parents

Parents want **more regular two-way communication** — not necessarily meetings — but short, occasional, specific check-ins:

- “Keep him informed of what is happening”
- “More parent–teacher communication”
- “Ensure subject teachers are aware”

This indicates a desire for *joined-up messaging* and more visible monitoring.

2) Consistency across subject teachers

Parents feel *AEN supports vary depending on teacher*, and that not all mainstream staff activate the adjustments:

- awareness of needs in mainstream subjects
- consistent follow-through on recommendations in reports (OT, SLT etc.)

This suggests a need for:

- tighter teacher-facing implementation guidance
- better staff-facing individual pages or “one-page profiles”
- SET + Dept Heads collaboration to reinforce reasonable accommodations

3) Access to timely supports / technology / pacing

Parents mentioned:

- laptops not arriving fast enough
- daily / shorter blocks of support
- test accommodations (extra time)

- smaller discussion groups
- consistent quiet space use

This aligns with your student data: environment + pace + clarity are bigger barriers than *capacity*.

What we can learn from parent voice

Parents are aligned with the student data: **the two biggest levers are clarity & consistency.**

They are not asking for more “hours” — they are asking for:

- continuity between teachers
- proactive communication
- predictable follow-through

Parents are describing the “system gap”, not the “staff gap”.

Key Takeaways from parental voice

The parental voice feedback reflects an overwhelmingly positive experience of AEN provision in the school, with parents consistently noting that staff are caring, approachable and genuinely committed to supporting their children. Parents feel that their child is known, understood and valued as an individual, and many referenced the Learning Support teachers as making a meaningful difference to confidence, participation and progress. Overall, the responses demonstrate strong relational trust between home and school, and reinforce that the school’s inclusive ethos is visible, lived and recognised.



Bush Post Primary School



Supports Everyone!

A Pupil-Friendly AEN Policy



Did You Know?

1 in every 8 pupils in our school has a learning need. That's a big part of what makes our school community diverse and amazing!

- Everyone learns in their own way
- Everyone's voice matters



Our Aim

- ★ Help you do your best in School
- ★ Feel included and supported
- ★ Have your voice heard
- ★ Reach your full potential

Whatever your need, you belong here.



Different Types of Learning Needs

- Autism (ASD)
- Dyslexia or Dyscalculia
- ADHD or ADD
- Speech and Language needs
- Physical or Sensory needs
- Emotional or Social challenges
- Medical or Mental Health needs

Whatever your need, you belong here.



Our AEN Team

We have a dedicated team of teachers and SNAs who are here to:

- Support you in class or small groups
- Create learning plans just for you
- Listen to your ideas and worries
- Celebrate your achievements



Our Message to You

You matter.
You are capable.

We are here to support you every step of the way.



Appendix H – Risk Assessment for students with AEN

Bush Post Primary AEN Risk Assessment

Individual Pupil Risk Assessment and Support Plan

Student Name: _____

Year Group: _____

Date Completed: _____

Review Date: _____

Completed By: _____

Purpose

This plan supports the safe inclusion and participation of the student in school by identifying foreseeable risks and outlining preventative and responsive supports.

Identified Risks and Supports

Identified Risk/Behaviour	Possible Triggers	Preventative Supports	Response if Escalation Occurs
Leaving classroom/school area	Anxiety, overload, conflict	Visual schedule, movement breaks, supervised transitions	Follow agreed support plan, alert designated staff, ensure supervision
Verbal/physical dysregulation	Frustration, change in routine, task demand	Clear instructions, reduced demands, calm space, de-escalation supports	Use calming strategies, remove audience if needed, seek support
Throwing objects / unsafe actions	Distress, sensory overload	Environmental adjustments, early intervention, structured support	Follow safety procedures and incident response plan

Early Warning Signs

Indicators that the student may be becoming dysregulated:

- Restlessness or pacing
- Raised voice
- Refusal/withdrawal
- Visible distress or agitation

Early Response:

- Reduce demands
- Offer break/regulation support
- Use agreed de-escalation strategies
- Contact named support person if required

Control Measures in Place - Environmental Supports

- Predictable routines
- Visual supports
- Reduced stimulation space
- Supervised transitions
- Other: _____

Teaching/Support Strategies

- Chunked instructions
- Positive reinforcement
- Check-in/check-out support
- Planned movement breaks
- Other: _____

Emergency/Safety Response

Where there is an immediate safety concern:

- Follow school behaviour and safety procedures
- Alert designated staff member: _____
- Move others from area if necessary
- Contact parents/guardians where appropriate
- Record and review incident

Risk Rating

Risk Area	Low	Medium	High
Absconding risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injury to self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injury to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional notes:

Review and Monitoring

This plan will be reviewed:

- Following any significant incident
- Following change in needs or supports
- At least once each term

Prepared by: _____

SET/SEN Coordinator: _____

Principal: _____

Parent/Guardian consulted: Yes No

Date: _____

Appendix I – AEN and the school DEIS plan

How does the delivery of AEN support our DEIS targets in Bush Post Primary

BPP DEIS TARGETS		How is the delivery of AEN support this DEIS target	What more could we do in AEN department to support these targets?
Partnership	<p>Teachers will use the COMPASS app more commonly to communicate and update parents on class tests, homework, and current/upcoming topics, with at least 80% of parents engaging monthly with the app as measured by app usage statistics and parent feedback surveys.</p> <p>To audit parents to find what areas they might need support and guidance to help support their child's learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AEN department log all AEN communications through Compass (e.g. support plan updates, positive behaviour logs, reminders, test prep prompts) use Compass to document positive feedback (short, behaviour-specific praise messages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> add short “pre-teaching notes” for upcoming topics so parents can preview language / vocabulary with students at home send “Next Week in Learning Support” summaries (one-sentence key concept + link to resource) collaborate with subject departments to push out “topic vocabulary lists” to parents of identified AEN students
	<p>To maintain an effective Parents Association that are actively consulted and involved in policy formation, ratification and implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit the Parents Association meeting to present AEN information inputs once per year (10–15 minutes) so they are briefed on current AEN priorities / NCSE guidance consult with the PA when reviewing the AEN Policy — send a short summary page rather than the full draft, then gather comment themes (works better and respects parents' time) offer the PA a menu of suggested parent training topics (e.g. organisation skills, study supports, junior cycle key skills, communication strategies) and co-design which ones are delivered use PA feedback as a data source to identify what support materials / guides would benefit families (study skills guides, exam accommodations explainer etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share anonymised AEN data trends (no student data) with the PA to inform their voice in school improvement conversations e.g. “top 3 barriers identified this term” provide draft communication materials for PA review (e.g. plain English version of RACE explanation) to ensure messaging is accessible and parent-friendly
	<p>To develop partnerships with the school completion team and Education Welfare Officer, utilising supports offered by these organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> termly check-in meetings (AEN Co-ordinator + School Completion + EWO) to share trends, intervention priorities and attendance risk data — NOT individual student details unless consent / legal basis applies use School Completion referral pathways for targeted attendance / engagement interventions for identified AEN students whose profile shows risk of disengagement use School Completion holiday programmes as a bridge for vulnerable AEN students during extended breaks to maintain connection and reduce regression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invite School Completion staff to contribute to support plan review meetings (Continuum of Support: School Support / School Support Plus) where appropriate co-ordinate AEN literacy / numeracy intervention information so School Completion staff can reinforce strategies in mentoring / key-worker sessions collaborate with the EWO on attendance action plans where AEN-related barriers are contributing to reduced attendance or school refusal share anonymised pattern data (e.g. themes such as anxiety, executive function difficulties) with School Completion to inform targeted group programme design
	<p>By May 2027, establish a school alumni network with at least 50 active members, providing role models, mentoring, and talks to current students about education, careers, and resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AEN team identify past students with whom had student/parent relationships and refer those names to the Careers teachers/Year Head / Senior Management We provide input to alumni events / talks so that selected speakers include representation from neurodivergent students, students with additional learning needs, and students from diverse pathways (e.g. apprenticeships, QQI, PLC, FE, TY, HE, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-deliver structured Q&A themes for alumni talks (e.g. “what helped you most with exams?”, “how did you advocate for yourself in college/apprenticeship?”) gather student voice from current AEN students on what topics would be most useful for alumni talks: organisation, anxiety, motivation, study strategies, disclosure supports etc. co-plan “small group mentoring” with Guidance / School Completion for targeted AEN students — using alumni peer role models in a supervised and school-hosted format

<h1>Literacy</h1>	<p>To improve students’ literacy across all subject areas through a whole-school focus on subject-specific vocabulary, reading comprehension, and purposeful writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We embed visual supports (icons, word maps) for key terms & structures in AEN support sessions support teachers to implement a common literacy Policy run targeted small-group guided reading peer reading groups for identified students (Continuum of Support – School Support / School Support Plus/ NGRT & CAT4 data) use Compass / parent communication to share vocabulary / reading focus areas, so parents can reinforce at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-design & share subject-specific vocabulary lists with departments for high-frequency / high-leverage terms — especially in exam subjects (Science, Geography, Business, etc.) model “pre-teaching of key words” within SET withdrawal and small-group sessions — so students meet vocabulary before the classroom lesson
	<p>New School Library Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce new ‘leaftec’ system alongside ‘Accelerated Reader’ to increase reading for enjoyment across the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library book loans increase by 20%/year by 2026, sustained through 2028. English Department utilize the library for reading lessons, added to their SOW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use Learning Support sessions to model “quiet reading time” / sustained silent reading for identified students, building stamina pre-teach book-choice confidence skills (how to choose a book at the right level, using Leftec system) develop book lists for AEN-friendly levels (Hi/Lo, graphic novels, dyslexia-friendly formats, accessible non-fiction) co-ordinate with the Well-being Dept so that targeted AEN students attend library-based reading lessons with appropriate scaffolds (keyword bookmarks, vocabulary trackers, sentence starters) liaise with the literacy co-ordinator to identify books that reinforce specific literacy goals (e.g. visual support, high-interest short text) and signpost them to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support students to use Leaftec / Accelerated Reader independently — short skills lessons on logging, recordings, quizzes etc.
	<p>Targeted support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For identified 1st-3rd year literacy-support students (based on CAT4 Verbal/NGRT), achieve +0.5 years progress by the end of 3rd year, with ≥70% exiting support within a year. Learning Support & Peer support initiatives used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use NGRT / CAT4 Verbal data to identify targeted students accurately and to group them for small-group support and intervention track entry + exit scores with NGRT so that progress is visible teach self-monitoring strategies (e.g. “does this make sense?” prompt cards) so independence increases communicate progress to parents via Compass (short, specific, positive feedback on reading stamina and strategy use) exit learning support students as soon as independence is functional (no more than 1 year unless evidence supports continued intervention) and re-instate mainstream time — these preserves SET hours for new cohorts and shows impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop system for Accelerated reader to be introduced September 2026
	<p>Junior Cycle English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the percentage of students achieving Higher Merit/Distinction in H level at 27% (2024). (Above National Average) Maintain the percentage of students achieving Higher Merit/Distinction in O level at 56% (2024). (Above National Average) Reduce percentage at Partially Achieved to ≤3% by 2028, in both O & H levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We embed sentence-combining practice — this has one of the strongest effect sizes on writing quality + grammar transfer Learning support focusses upon supporting English literacy as its primary function support co-reading of class novels / key extracts so struggling students don’t fall behind the pace of the main room share individual progress snippets with parents via Compass so reading/writing homework reinforcement at home is easier + more targeted Lead LS teachers track movement between levels (Higher ↔ Ordinary) with the English Dept using data — to ensure decisions are instructional, not anxiety-avoidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-develop differentiated success criteria with the English Dept for extended writing tasks (e.g. what does “Higher Merit” LOOK LIKE in a paragraph?) use sample scripts and annotated exemplars in withdrawal SET sessions so students can see what “Distinction” quality looks like in real writing
	<p>Leaving Certificate English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a 5-point residual or above in the LC data. (On Average each pupil attains 5 points ≥ than target grade) Raise percentage of students achieving H4+ from 85% (2025) to 90% by 2028, while sustaining/improving O3+ outcomes for OL at 53%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> teach high-impact study strategies explicitly (e.g. key quote retrieval systems, 1–page scene/character summaries, flashcards based on keywords) to reduce cognitive load and improve revision efficiency We are aware and part of the level decisions (H ↔ O) with the English Dept using evidence (class tasks, timed writing samples, mock performance) — so decisions are informed and not anxiety-driven use Compass to share targeted revision messages with parents for identified AEN students — short, specific, one skill per message (“this week focus on topic sentence → evidence → link back”) We apply dual-coding & sentence-combining routines in SET sessions — this improves quality of written expression and syntactic complexity, which correlates strongly with grade lift 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> run intervention lessons on core transferable skills that have high examination leverage: → paragraph precision, text structure, vocabulary depth, editing passes, and argument clarity pre-teach topic vocabulary, command words and genre language (e.g. evaluating, critiquing, persuasive techniques) so students come to English class ready to engage at a higher cognitive level embed metacognitive reflection in support sessions: “what worked this week?”, “what lifted my grade in this paragraph?”, “what strategy helped me remember quotes?”

Numeracy

<p>Whole-school mapping: By Dec 2025, every department map two numeracy learning moments (graphs, scale, rate, data) to their schemes; by 2026, ≥80% of subjects include one numeracy-rich assessment with a simple shared rubric In Wellbeing lessons – mental arithmetic Maths 10 minutes at the beginning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify numeracy barriers for specific AEN students (using data provided by the PMT, CAT4 testing) so we can support students in LS with targets specifically accessible to that student. • Liaise with Wellbeing teachers so that “10-minute mental maths starter” uses predictable routines (e.g. same 3 question types of weekly) — predictability supports AEN access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-create keyword lists for numeracy language that <i>other</i> subjects use (rate, scale, average, increase/decrease, compare, table, estimate, approximately, etc.) • pre-teach key numeracy vocabulary before students meet the content in mainstream classes — short SET sessions that build semantic access in advance
<p>Continue with diagnostic numeracy screener for all incoming students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted intervention: For identified 1st-3rd year students based on CAT4 Quantitative/GL PTM/teacher diagnostics), achieve an average standard-score gain ≥10 within one year. (Using IXL platform to support) 		
<p>Junior Cycle Maths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher level - Increase percentage of students achieving Distinction/Higher Merit from 29% (2024) to 32% 2028 (+1%/yr). • Ordinary level - Increase percentage of students achieving Distinction/Higher Merit from 33% (2024) to 36% 2028 (+1%/yr). • Reduce lower grades: Cut Partially Achieved/Not Graded from 8% to ≤5% by 2028, 1% drop/year. (Higher Level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use the screener data (CAT4 / PTM / teacher assessment) to cluster students into <i>specific-need</i> learning support groups • deliver short-cycle numeracy intervention blocks (6–10 weeks) with explicit instruction on the above focus areas, rather than broad general re-teaching • We use IXL granular reporting to assign <i>micro-skill targets</i> for each student — then track % improvements • We teach metacognitive numeracy routines (estimate → calculate → sense-check) so students can transfer learning into mainstream Maths class • Our learning support teachers to de-language tasks when needed — removing linguistic clutter before the student encounters the numeracy thinking • We exit students as soon as they meet the data threshold to allow rotation and protect SET hours for new cohorts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use SET time to pre-teach key vocabulary in advance of classroom content (e.g. equivalent, commutative, ratio, scale, average, approximate, convert) • run “calculator strategy” coaching (when to use it / when not) — for AEN students this often makes the biggest difference in timed tests • communicate progress with parents briefly via Compass (short wins: “X mastered ratio scaling this week — continue IXL goal 20 mins this weekend”)
<p>Leaving Certificate Maths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HL: Raise % achieving H5+ from 84% to 87% by 2028. • OL: Raise % achieving O3+ from 45% to 48% by 2028. • LCA Mathematical Applications credits: 100% achieving pass/merit/distinction each cohort 		
<p>Parent numeracy sessions: Run a series of parent workshops per year (junior/senior cycle focus). Parent survey: +25% increase in “I can support my child with maths study” by 2028.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the HSCL with parents’ groups that support numeracy understanding 	

Retention	<p>To increase retention to Leaving Certificate average to 92% in the years 2025-2028. (1st year pupils who complete 6th year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022-2023 – 89.4% • 2023-2024 – 93% 91.46% Average • 2024-2025 – 92% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use early data flags (attendance dips, repeated subject drops, school refusal, anxiety indicators) to identify at-risk AEN students before retention becomes a Leaving Cert issue. This is done in SST team meetings, liaising with YH's/DP's/Career Guidance staff. • We regularly check-in with LS students around wellbeing and forward plans (AEN Co-ordinator / SNA / Guidance) for identified students in 3rd / TY / 5th year — especially at transition points where drop-off risk is highest • We plan personalised pathway conversations with the Guidance department — some AEN students stay because they can see a pathway (PLC → Apprenticeship → Level 6–8 etc.) • We front-load AEN supports during exam years (e.g. literacy / numeracy boosters, reasonable accommodations support) — confidence is the #1 protective factor against drop-out • We support level decisions (H ↔ O) based on evidence — a well-timed change to Ordinary can protect retention • We build parent partnership via Compass messaging and AEN review meetings — parents are retention influencers • We collaborate with the HSCL who supports the School Completion / EWO to provide targeted attendance plans when AEN needs contribute to absenteeism • We support safe space provision in the Learning Support room as a regulated, predictable “bridge back” if a student dysregulates — this prevents avoidant patterns which lead to long-term disengagement 	
	<p>To identify most at-risk pupils for early school leaving and provide appropriate intervention;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply the school attendance policy to ensure early intervention • HSCL outreach, and home visits, ensuring that every ‘at-risk’ family, is engaged with the school’s retention supports. • Ensure that students identified as at risk of early school leaving (through attendance, behaviour, or assessment data) are offered at least two structured support interventions (e.g., Check & Connect, attendance tracking, SST, guidance meetings) 		
	<p>To provide more intensive support for the 3rd year cohort to support progression onto the most suitable course</p>		

Educational Transitions	<p>A structured transition Programme is in place for all incoming first-year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each feeder school visited, and educational passport completed • All pupils with AEN identified and contacted before first day of school ensuring continuity of support and reducing transition stress • Form tutor system embedded for all first years each year • Pupil Voice surveys show at least 80% of students reporting a positive transition experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AEN co-ordinator visits feeder primary schools in Term 3 of 6th Class to gather <i>structured</i> information — Support Plan / School Support+ data, student strengths, anxiety triggers, sensory notes, literacy/numeracy levels, etc. • The AEN co-ordinator ensures Educational Passport information (NCCA) is collated centrally and shared to relevant staff on a controlled + need-to-know basis (GDPR / DPO compliant) • The AEN co-ordinator contacts parents of students with identified AEN before entry (phone call or Compass message) to build trust, reduce uncertainty, and confirm existing supports / medical information / care plans • offer pre-entry familiarisation visits in June OR late August (ASD suite / LS rooms / key staff / building orientation) • We ensure SET timetabling is in place for the beginning of September for 1st Years so targeted literacy / numeracy support starts <i>early</i> (reduces overwhelm and confidence loss in Term 1) • use Pupil Voice surveys to identify stress points — then feed themes into pastoral / year team meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create “1st Year Transition Profiles” — short one-page at-a-glance support sheets for 1st Year tutors / Year Head / key subject teachers • teach self-advocacy + routines explicitly in 1st Term — e.g. how to ask teachers for clarification, how to use the journal, how to organise materials • check-in with Form Tutors weekly in Term 1 for flagged students (light-touch tracking — early intervention prevents spiral) •
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd-year students have access to individualised subjects and pathway guidance (including TY, LCA, LC, and vocational/apprenticeship options). • 90% of students report in surveys that they felt informed and supported in choosing their Senior Cycle pathway. • Parents are engaged and informed throughout process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We work with Programmes co-ordinator and YH to identify 3rd Year AEN students for early pathway conversations — especially where learning profile may suggest an alternative progression route (TY / LCA / apprenticeship) • We provide individualised learning-profile advice (strengths, barriers, accommodations, stamina factors) to support evidence-based pathway decisions • We regularly help students understand their own learner profile — explicit teaching of self-advocacy, strengths language, and how to talk about their needs in new environments • We use Compass to share key pathway info with parents — concise plain-English signposts to information evenings, deadlines, subject requirement info, RACE implications etc. • We support parents at the consultation stage by offering short 1:1 / phone check-ins for parents of identified students who require help interpreting data / options • We liaise with subject departments where there are AEN-related considerations (e.g. language exemptions, practical subject access, sensory environment) • We ensure AEN supports are mapped forward into TY / LCA / LC timetabling, so support continuity and retention 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By September 2026, all students progressing into Senior Cycle (TY, LCA, and 5th Year) will participate in a Senior Cycle Readiness Programme focused on study skills, digital literacy, resilience, and wellbeing. • At least 85% of students reporting increased confidence in managing the academic and personal demands of Senior Cycle in follow-up surveys. 		
<p>Leaving Certificate students will successfully transition into third level education and data tracked and reviewed annually. (Previous percentages are 2021 – 84% 2022 – 73% 2023 – 81% 2024 - %)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 - 84% • 2026 - 85% • 2027 - 86% 			

Attendance	1. Whole School Attendance targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025-2026 – target 90.25% (increase of 0.25%, 845 pupils = +350 school days) 2026-2027 – target 90.45% 2027-2028 – target 90.75% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We identify AEN students at early risk using internal flags (late arrivals, patterns of partial absence, subject avoidance) and share these patterns with Year Head / HSCL / EWO Our learning support teacher’s awareness of flagged students — especially on Mondays / after holidays — to maintain connection and reduce “school re-entry anxiety” We use familiar safe spaces (Learning Support / ASD Suite) as structured <i>bridge-back</i> spaces for students who are dysregulated / anxious — instead of going home or avoiding class We explicitly teach routine and organisational skills (bag-packing, timetable planning, homework scheduling) to reduce anxiety in the morning → better likelihood of attendance We communicate specific praise home via Compass when attendance improves — short, positive reinforcement for small gains We liaise regularly with the HSCL where attendance difficulties have an AEN component (co-design incremental attendance goals) We support parents with problem-solving around barriers such as sleep routines, sensory overwhelm, homework load, exam stress — in collaboration with HSCL / Year Head 	
	2. Chronic absenteeism (Pupils missing more than 20 days/year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025-2026 – Target 24% (a reduction of 1% = 8 less pupils with CA) 2026-2027 – Target 23% 2027-2028 – Target 22% 		
	3. Reduce partial day absences (targeting pupil punctuality and leaving school early)		
	4. Identify at risk pupils and provide targeted support throughout the academic year		

Academic Outcomes	Data Collection and distribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide all teachers with tracker excel containing students target grades/current achievement after in-house exams Ensure all staff have access to Athena Tracker, providing progress analysis and opportunity to add class test results Ensure all NGRT, CAT4, PMT and AEN information is uploaded onto COMPASS for easy access for teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use entry data & ongoing assessment (CAT4, NGRT, PTM, CBAs, teacher-generated assessments) to identify priority skill deficits (literacy / numeracy / executive function) rather than generic “extra help” We deliver short-cycle targeted intervention blocks with specific targets for each LS pupil (6–10 weeks) with <i>entry and exit data</i> so progress is visible, and resourcing can rotate to maximise impact We support evidence-based level decisions (H ↔ O) with Year Heads / subject teachers to ensure placements protect confidence, outcomes and wellbeing We communicate progress with parents via Compass — short, positive, specific learning updates encourage reinforcement at home We co-operate with Guidance / School Completion and SST to keep vulnerable learners <i>connected and in the learning cycle</i> — continuity is a prerequisite to attainment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pre-teach key vocabulary & concepts before they arise in mainstream lessons — especially for high-cognitive load subjects (Maths, Science, Geography, English analysis) teach study skills & learning strategies explicitly (retrieval practice, spaced revision, planning, note-making frameworks, exam command words) so students can learn more efficiently <i>across</i> subjects
	Junior Certificate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the overall percentage of PA or NG grades to <5% in all subject areas (2024=7.6%total) Increase the overall percentage of students achieving Merit or higher at HL in CORE subjects (2024= 75.5% average) 		
	Leaving Certificate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the percentage of students achieving below 300 CAO points from current 28% to less than 20%, through targeted interventions, study support, and mentoring Programmes Increase the percentage of students achieving >400 CAO points from 42% to 45%, increasing the percentage of students achieving >500 points from 15% to 18%. To maintain the number of LCA students achieving 120 credits at 100%, and to improve the number of students attaining Merit or Distinction in LCA to 90% All subject areas to aim for a positive residual on their overall results, using data from individual student target grade compared to result 		