St. Michael's College

Subject Department Plan

Additional Education Department

2024/25

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1. Introduction:

The AEN department at St. Michael's College supports all students with Additional Educational Needs. We work with parents as primary educators to ensure that their sons are given every opportunity to fully access the mainstream curriculum with all support available. Students with learning difficulties, complex needs, social and emotional difficulties and physical needs are all provided with the support and differentiated curriculum to give them the best educational experience possible.

2. Mission Statement

We aim to support all of the students with additional needs who attend St. Michael's College, by ensuring that the teaching and learning in the college reflects the best and most diverse inclusive differentiated teaching strategies. We believe that the wellbeing of these students will be enhanced by the teaching of core skills that will help raise their levels of academic attainment and boost their self-esteem. We believe that all students can experience success. We endorse the school Mission of Believe, Belong, Become in our daily work, as well as taking cognisance of and implementing the NEPS Guidelines that base student attainment on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs aiming for the self-actualisation of all our students.

As a department, we aim to embody the following characteristics:

- A collaborative approach for the planning for students with additional needs among the staff teaching AEN classes.
- Ensure fostering of good relationships with other departments to support differentiated learning and the dissemination of AEN focused resources and teaching methodologies.
- Support for team-teaching across literacy and numeracy classes in the Junior Cycle using shared access to Google Classroom.
- The sharing of resources and of expertise, particularly in teaching strategies
- The facilitation and promotion of good practice.
- Regular meetings, both formally scheduled and as issues arise, with agendas and records of decisions taken.
- Effective systems of communication within the department, with learning-support teachers, and with the management
- Collaborate with Department Coordinators regarding curricular planning, parent consultation, Learning Plans and provision of teaching materials across the team.
- Promote Continuing Professional Development with staff. AEN staff regularly upskilled by attending CPD from SESS and NCSE.
- An innovative approach to ICT and an ability to cater for the varied learning styles of all students - Continue to promote Design for All in the mainstream classroom via use of iPads

3. Role of the Coordinator and Additional Education Teachers :

Coordinator for 2024/5 Ms Jane Delaney

The coordinator and SET is responsible for the following duties:

- Working with the management of the school to devise the AEN timetable
- Coordinating Department meetings, coordinating with AEN teachers
- Coordinating the Transition programme for new 1st year students with AEN
- Collecting and analysing school-wide screening data, including in-take screening, transfer information, attendance, behavioural records and information from subject teachers Collaborating with Year Heads to provide appropriate support to identified students.
- Devising learning plans (IEP's/SSP's) for incoming students
- Providing diagnostic and informal assessments for students to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention.
- Reasonable Accommodation for State Examinations (RACE)
- Disability Access Route To College DARE
- Liaison with outside agencies, NEPS, SENO and NCSE
- Collaborating with subject teachers by advising on teaching methodologies best suited to a student.
- Providing direct teaching to a student with AEN either reinforces the teaching that takes place in the classroom or improves upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully access the second-level curriculum.
- Meeting parents and supporting ongoing learning plans
- Member of the school Core Care Team
- Member of Critical Incident Team
- Providing materials, resources & CPD to staff regarding AEN
- Communication with subject departments regarding students with AEN
- Devising Schemes of Work in conjunction with members of AEN department
- Liaising with the SNA's in terms of student care needs of relevant students
- Writing the AEN policy and AEN department plan

4. Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines (DES, 2007)

http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Inspection-Reports-Publications/Evaluation-Reports-Guidelines/insp_inclusion_students_sp_ed_needs_pp_guidelines_pdf

Level 2 Learning Programmes: Guidelines for Teachers

http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Inclusion/Special_Educational_Needs/Level_2_Toolkit/Guidelines_nc.pdf

NCCA Assessment: Toolkit at Junior Cycle:

http://juniorcycle.ie/Assessment

Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers
http://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Information/NEPS-Literacy-Resource/neps_literacy_good_practice_guide.pdf
My FRIENDS Youth - Emotional resilience programme
https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/FRIENDS-Programmes.pdf
http://www.friendsresilience.org/
Junior Cycle Well-being Guidelines
http://www.juniorcycle.ie/NCCA_JuniorCycle/media/NCCA/Curriculum/Wellbeing/Wellbeing-Guidelines-for-Junior-Cycle.pdf
Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools: Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention
https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Well_Being_PP_Schools_Guidelines_Summary.pdf
NBSS Interventions, Projects and Research
https://www.nbss.ie/interventions-and-projects

5. Teachers

Ms Jane Delaney (AENco) , Ms Aoife Waters, Mr Dave Cunningham (SNA), Edel Ruske and Shane O'Brien AEN assistant role. Other teachers in the school participate by teaching students in a small group or one-to-one capacity as subject specialists. All AEN timetable and planning documents are on a shared Google Drive for the AEN department.

6. Time Allocation for Learning Support Classes

*2 classes on Literacy & 2 on Numeracy where possible

1st Year	4 classes/week
2nd Year	4 classes/week
3rd Year	4 classes/week
4th Year	4 classes/week
5th Year	5 classes/week
6th Year	5 classes/week

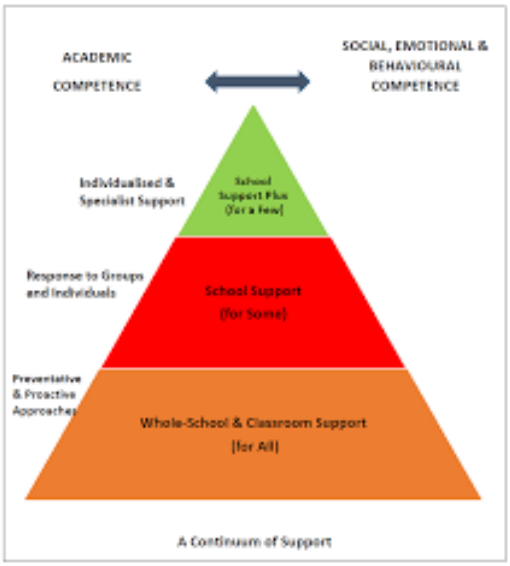
7. Resource Hours Timetable

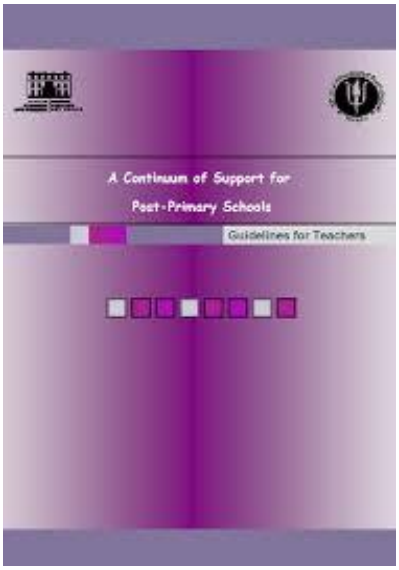
A full resource timetable is devised for all students with complex needs. The timetable is based on the students' Learning Plans and tailored for their specific needs. The time is allocated based on discussion with NEPS/NCSE advisors/ parents/students/pastoral and subject teachers.

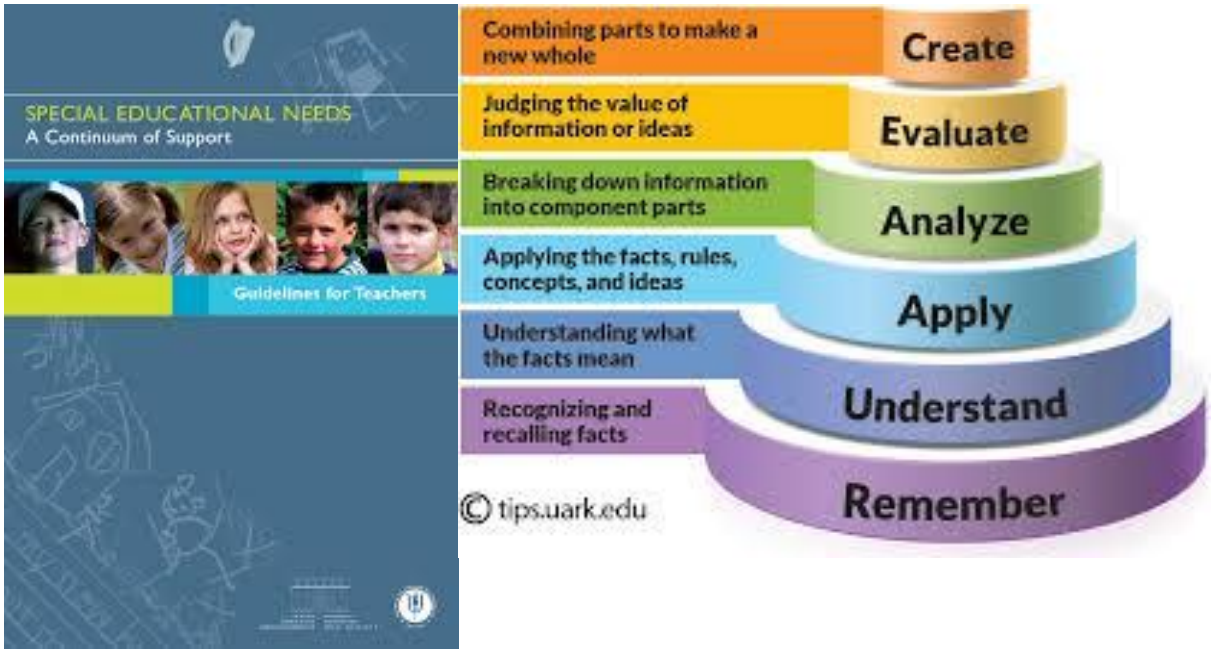
8. Structure of Classes

- Additional Education is delivered via the following means in the college:
- Small classes provided in Learning Support for students with an Irish Exemption focused on literacy and numeracy.
- Resource classes (individual & small groups) for students withdrawn for support with complex needs – literacy, numeracy, study skills & Social Skills..
- Support for mainstream teachers by provision of differentiated resources and learning planning supports.
- All AEN students have access to our school therapy Dog, Mooju.
- The students have access to the sensory Cubbie Hub with specific OT designed profiles for students with sensory needs.
- Students with emotional and mental health issues are further supported by the Core Care team in close working relationship with Guidance Team

9. Rationale for Special Education Instruction in the College: Context and Methodology







The college bases its provision for students with additional needs on the **NEPS Guidelines and Continuum of Suppor**t and draws upon these documents for best practice and resources. As per these guidelines we are aware of **Bloom's Taxonomy and Maslow's Hierarchy of Need** in our teaching and planning methodologies.

Our pedagogical framework is laid out in the school SEN policy in more detail. The SEN department classes are individually tailored to the needs of the individual or small group. An AEN Display Folder is kept by all students/teachers (digitally and physical display folder) to record what is happening in each class. Students have the opportunity

for self-reflection. Each teacher keeps their own professional records. However, to ensure that classes focus on the acquisition of core skills in Literacy, Numeracy and Wellbeing in keeping with the 24 Statements of Learning in the new Junior Cycle, the AEN team have undertaken a review of the Learning Support Curriculum in 1st, 2nd & 3rd year.

The aim is that the trained AEN specialists will make all (google drive library) resources available to all the subject teachers who are asked to deliver elements of the AEN timetable. This Framework is a guide to support the teacher: It aims to provide a general Scheme of Work template, AEN focused resources and a clear link between the work undertaken in the AEN environment in the school and the new Junior Cycle curriculum. Learning Objectives from the English, Maths, Wellbeing, Business and other JC curricula can be added over time. The needs of the individual group will dictate the speed, width and depth of the content and materials used. The individual teacher will use differentiated methods : (resources provided to the staff). The ultimate goal is that the student will have a greater understanding of themselves as learners and an appreciation of their own learning style.

10. Methodologies

- **ICT** – All students in 1st Year now have one-to-one iPads and use blended learning. New Promethean blackboards
- **The Adapted Vocabulary Enrichment Programme, (VEP)**
- The adapted Vocabulary Enrichment Programme (VEP) is a school based, whole class intervention that supports development of oral vocabulary skills in adolescents.
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary
- Organisations skills -e.g. organising of locker/folders/notes - supporting students who type or use ICT with file management on laptop/iPad.
- Using Reading Comprehension Strategies –SQ4R & material from NBSS online
- Typing and Keyboard skills to support classroom learning - Touch Type Read & Spell TTRS
- Numeracy skills via explicit teaching of key strategies – use of www.khanacademy.com , www.ixl.com
- Study strategies – use of flashcards, mind mapping, key word journals etc.
- Pair and Group reading activities – peer work/individual attention
- Use of spelling strategies – "chunking" words, phonetics, Look, Write, Cover
- Use of student self-evaluation strategies (KWL)
- Social Skills programmes as appropriate –
- Emotional Regulation - Zones of Regulation https://zonesofregulation.com/
- Assessment for Learning Strategies
- Use of ICT to access curriculum
- Access to small group learning support that focuses on literacy & numeracy
- Students diagnosed with DCD Dyspraxia use ICT to access the school curriculum and type all written output as a matter of practice

Active Classroom: students to work in pairs/groups/individually as appropriate to the task. Peer Tutoring and Group Feedback to be used regularly

- Appropriate **Assessment For Learning** strategies to be used in classes – including exit cards, KWL and clear classroom objectives noted in the AEN Journal.
- **Standardised Testing** to be used to screen 1st Year groups and to confirm accommodations for Reasonable Accommodation. 3rd/5th year.
- **Oral work** – in light of the new CBA's and to promote student wellbeing all schemes of work should have a focus on oral activities – presentations, drama, debate etc.
- **Written work** – students should develop their writing skills to support access to the Junior Cycle. This includes methodologies on how to plan and develop written work, how to edit and correct your own work, techniques to support better spelling and grammar, Vocabulary enrichment
- **Reading Comprehension:** This is a core cross-subject skill that will be the focus of the 1st Year curriculum. The students will learn a variety of reading comprehension and metacognitive methodologies, using templates from the NBSS, SESS and other reputable sources for SEN.
- **Demonstration** of techniques and methods, especially in the teaching of Social

Skills

- Use of **Social Skills** programs like Carol Gray Social Stories and other recognised Social and Emotional Resources
- **Group Work/Paired** work and one-to-one instruction
- **Project Work**
- **Brainstorming/ Mind-Mapping/Brain-Game** puzzles/Quizzes
- **Group work**
- **Homework Support**
- **Use of Digital /ICT/Audio Technology**
- **PowerPoint/Keynote**
- **Interactive Whiteboards (Resource)**
- **iPads and appropriate apps**
- **Student Laptops**

11. Range and Variety of Resources

- Teaching skills and experience - Staff qualified in Postgraduate in AEN, 3 staff with AEN posts in the College. Two Special Needs Assistants for students with complex needs
- 2 dedicated AEN Rooms in the College, including a "learning hub" that has a sensory Cubbie.
- Online Google Drive Bank of resources and materials compiled by AEN staff
- Textbooks & Resources recommended for working with students with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy explicit instruction
- Social Skills programmes like Social Stories, Talkabout & other recommended strategies
- Educational Games, Scrabble, Mind
- Resources from the NBSS, NCSE and TES specifically designed for AEN instruction and differentiation
- Differentiation Strategies
- ICT: Students who need to type access the curriculum with Laptops provided as part of the Assistive Technology Grant. They also use typing programmes online. Students in need of assistive technology can access speech to write software and other software to support students with visual and hearing impairments. All students in 1st/2nd year will have access to 1-1 iPads by the end of 2024. This enables access to a variety of apps to support students with AEN. The ICT policy embraces the 'Design for All' inclusive approach to AEN teaching.
- Resources from CPD furnished by NCSE on differentiated learning.

12. Junior Cycle -The Twenty-Four Statements of Learning:

The learning at the core of Junior Cycle is described in the twenty-four statements of learning which are set out in Table 1. The twenty-four statements, underpinned by the eight principles, are central to planning for, and the evaluation of, the students' experience of the school's junior cycle programme. The AEN department endeavours to build these statements into their schemes of work and planning. They aim to support

students with curriculum, social, emotional and study needs and to scaffold the mainstream curriculum via Learning Support.

Table 1: Twenty-four Statements of Learning

The student:

1. communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1
2. listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2 and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to her or his ability
3. creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts
4. creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved
5. has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making
6. appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives
7. values what it means to be an active citizen, with rights and responsibilities in local and wider contexts
8. values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change
9. understands the origins and impacts of social, economic, and environmental aspects of the world around her/him
10. has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably
11. takes action to safeguard and promote her/his well being and that of others
12. is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active
13. understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices
14. makes informed financial decisions and develops good consumer skills
15. recognizes the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning
16. describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships
17. devises and evaluates strategies for investigating and solving problems using mathematical knowledge, reasoning and skills
18. observes and evaluates empirical events and processes and draws valid deductions and conclusions
19. values the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal, social and global importance
20. uses appropriate technologies in meeting a design challenge
21. applies practical skills as she/he develop models and products using a variety of materials and technologies
22. takes initiative, is innovative and develops entrepreneurial skills
23. brings an idea from conception to realisation
24. uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner 5 L1 is the language medium of the school (English in English-medium schools; Irish in Irish-medium schools). L2 is the second language (Irish in English-medium schools; English in Irish-medium schools).

13. Senior Cycle - Leaving Certificate

The AEN department focuses its planning for senior cycle students around the curricula of each of the leaving certificate subjects. We also aim to reflect the NEPS Guidelines stated above. We aim to provide students with a focus on literacy and numeracy skills to equip them across the broader curriculum.

Our aim for each academic year is to build in the document

"Looking at our Schools – A quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools" into our planning for Senior Cycle. We are seeking to include Domain 1 – Learner Outcomes and Domain 2 – Learner Experience into our planning

- Students enjoy their learning, are motivated to learn and expect to achieve as learners.
- Students have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand themselves and their relationships.
- Students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding required by the curriculum.

- Students attain the stated learning outcomes for each subject course and programme they have chosen.
- Students reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership and of and responsibility for their learning.
- Students experience opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.
- Students grow as learners through respectful interactions and experiences that are challenging and supportive.
- Students engage purposefully and meaningfully in learning activities.
- Students have a mature and critical literacy to prepare them for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life in all contexts;
- A strong awareness of their learning styles
- A good understanding of the variety of study and learning methodologies that can be employed to suit their learning style.
- The ability to set their own goals and meet targets.
- Effective time-management and study goals
- Managing Myself – linking to the wellbeing guidelines, the students should receive support in managing stress and emotional issues.

14. AEN Department: Student Self-Evaluation

Students are encouraged to engage in reflection about their own learning through the use of metacognitive methodologies recommended by AEN best practice. Students encouraged to use SQ3R, KWL, Exit Cards, write reflections in their AEN folders during LS classes when time allows. They are encouraged to identify what kind of learning they are engaged in by using a tick-box of teaching methods. They are encouraged to use a variety of oral learning techniques like think-pair-share, group discussion, and individual feedback to reflect on their own learning.

Students are encouraged to discover how they learn best by completing the Vark questionnaire on their learning styles https://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/

As part of our commitment to the Wellbeing programme at Junior Cycle, the AEN department uses the **NEPS recommended "My Thoughts about School"** checklist as part of a google form.

15. AFL – Assessment for Learning

As part of the School's Self Evaluation, the AEN Department is committed to Assessment for Learning. This is assessed to support the students access to the mainstream curriculum and is at the heart of good AEN planning. The department made a commitment that all AEN classes will contain AFL methodologies. Methodologies used are recognised methods of metacognition like KWL sheets, Exit Cards, identifying difficult vocabulary and assessing prior knowledge both in oral and written assessment. As such we also commit to using Pre-teaching strategies to assist students in a mainstream setting with concepts, graphics and language acquisition

Learning to Learn

The AEN & Counselling team has created a link on the school website that brings a number of resources together to support all students with study skills. These resources

are based on "learning to learn' and metacognitive principles. The support all students with study skills and revision, with a focus on best practice for AEN
St. Michael's Learning to Learn webpage

The AEN department adheres to the *Two Stars and a Wish* approach to student feedback adopted by the whole school as part of our AFL policy. The department have devised an AEN folder to better record the teaching content and record positive and constructive assessments for the student's work. The students are invited to add their own comments. This may be a note on the wish, how they hope to use the feedback or a question that might clarify the comments made by the teacher. The intention is that the student can enter into a productive dialogue with their teacher so that they may take ownership of their learning and can actively engage with all written feedback.

16. Subject Planning for Students with English as Additional Language (EAL)

The department recognises its role in helping students with English as an additional language to integrate fully into school life. The school supports the AEN department timetable for these students for additional English instruction as necessary, through withdrawal in small groups or with in-class differentiation resources provided to staff. At times, staff with TEFL qualifications are timetabled to give explicit instruction to these students to support their access to the curriculum. The department uses the Trinity College Dublin Immigration Initiative website and resource materials to teach keywords and concepts related to the curriculum for each Junior and Leaving Certificate subject area. Students can also use bilingual dictionaries, keyword journals, and dictionary pens and have access to resources used to teach the language curriculum in Junior Cycle English. AEN and English departments will liaise closely to manage resources and needs.

Teachers working directly with EAL students use many resources from the following website:

https://www.pdst.ie/post-primary/literacy/eal/whole-school-planning

17. Use of ICT and Digital Technology

All classrooms have access to the internet and are equipped with a data projector. These resources are used to access and display a range of learning resources and educational websites. Students in 1st & 2nd Year will all have access to iPads as one-to-one devices by the end of 2024. This enables all students to communicate effectively with Google Classroom, Gmail and other interactive apps. Staff and students have received training both inside and outside the classroom from Select Apple Training in the use of interactive technology that promotes student-centred learning and greater group work opportunities in the classroom. Students with AEN have access to all reasonable accommodations that are supported by ICT in the State examinations and in daily classroom activities. Students have training in how to set up digital folders and organise their work digitally. Classes can be managed with the use of Apple Classroom.

Students have access to a bank of iMac computers in the school library as well as 30 new PCs in the Computer Room. Teachers have access to these computers also, as well as 3 iMac computers and one PC in the staffroom. Many staff members use laptops in their

teaching. All staff have an iPad to support student learning. Training is provided to staff in the use of PowerPoint, Excel and Word as well as in the use of the school's learning platform.

18. Provision for Legal Requirements

- The Health & Safety Policy of the School is adhered to by the AEN department. All students with medical needs have a medical profile that is made available to all staff. Any medication needed by students with AEN is managed by a dedicated staff member and several staff members are trained in first aid. This policy is available through the school website.
- The AEN department adheres to the stated school policies for Inclusion, Enrolment and Child Protection as dictated by the relevant legislation. The department adheres to best practice in the dissemination of learning plans and the storage of sensitive documents, medical assessments and educational assessments. The AEN department is aware of GDPR issues around confidentiality and privacy to protect the student. For more details related to this, please see the more detailed Additional Educational Needs Policy
- The AEN department adheres to the Department of Education Guidelines for RACE and to the CAO DARE guidelines in the preparation of students with Additional Needs for the State Examinations and further education. It works in cooperation with the Guidance Team in this regards
- The AEN department ensures that it is up to date with all the relevant acts and circulars from the Department of Education.
- The AEN department engages with the NCSE portal and ensures that all data is returned to the NCSE and Department of Education.
- All students with complex learning needs have an individual education plan.
- Our AEN Department makes provision for it's legal requirements bounded by the following legal framework requirements:

    - The Education Act (1998)
    - The Education Welfare Act (2000)
    - The Equal Status Act (2000)
    - The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)
    - The Equality Act (2004)
    - The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
    - The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
    - The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
    - The Education (Admissions to Schools Act) 2018

19. RACE and DARE Applications

Reasonable Accommodations for State and In-House Examinations (RACE) Applications are made by the AEN coordinator, Jane Delaney, for RACE provision for students with AEN sitting Junior Cycle or Leaving Certificate Examination.

Accommodations are granted by The State Examinations Commission (SEC). Applications are made at both Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert levels and the school makes applications for relevant accommodations for students who meet the criteria as laid down by the SEC at Junior Cycle and these accommodations can be reactivated for Leaving Cert students, with the school being satisfied that the student still needs the accommodation.

RACE

https://www.examinations.ie/schools/cs_view.php?q=bc8bba7fade7c97ce3281781d5e27f03d4595954

DARE/HEAR

The AEN Dept and Career Guidance work together to help students make their individual applications for DARE.

https://accesscollege.ie/dare/

20. Communication

- The AENco, assistant coordinators and Deputy Principal meet formally once a week. Informal meetings occur on a daily basis.
- Teachers who teach AEN students meet mainstream teachers formally or informally. Mainstream teachers grant shared access to their classrooms via Google Classroom Drives. This way the AEN teacher can scaffold and support topics that are being taught in the mainstream classroom.
- Mainstream teachers, Year Heads, Principal, Deputy Principal and the Career Guidance teachers are also invited to attend any formal AEN team meeting if and when issues arise.
- The AENco aims to communicate with each relevant stakeholder as much information as possible through email in order to share information.
- Student referral forms are available to mainstream teachers to refer any students they are concerned about to the AENco.
- At the beginning of each school year, the AENco updates the **AEN register** and communicates the needs of First Year students with AEN to mainstream teachers. AEN is on the agenda at staff meetings when the need arises to inform staff of AEN matters.
- Information is also communicated via the Year Head's and Core Care Team members.
- Relevant information is also communicated during Parent-Teacher meetings, Individual arranged meetings when the need arises, Telephone Calls, Email
- Meetings involving external agencies, e.g NCSE Visiting Teacher
- Meetings with the AENco and Principal/Guidance Counsellor/Year Head where relevant

21. Record Keeping:

- A full record of all students' psychological reports, Assessment results for RACE/DARE, student passports and other reports are kept in the AENco's office in a locked filing cabinet.
- Records of AEN meetings are kept digitally.
- Mainstream teachers can access student's IEP's via VSware, which provides the individual nature of each specific students difficulty in addition to a list of recommendations as outlined by either the Psychologist, Occupational Therapist or Speech & Language Therapist
- When relevant teachers have permission to access the AEN students Psychological report/OT report/Speech and Language Report. The files and reports are kept in the AENco's office but the information may not be removed from the office.
- Information is managed in accordance with the directives of both the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. Student records are destroyed after seven years.

22. Teacher in-Service Development

- All teachers have access to training on ICT, inclusion and students with Additional Needs via peer-to-peer training and outside support from Oide, NCSE, PDST and ICT training companies like Select Apple Training.
- Staff working in AEN have recently undergone training in:
- RACE/DARE Training, Éirim
- Training programme in administration & scoring of the Woodcock Johnson IV: Tests of Achievement (UK & Ireland Edition)
- Spelling For Me Programme, Limerick Education Centre
- AsIAms Autism Friendly School Programme, Adam Harris
- Autism & Promoting Positive Behaviour in the Classroom, (Virtual), NEPS
- Adapted Vocabulary Enrichment Intervention Programme, Victoria L. Joffe, NEPS
- Speech, Language & Communication Needs, NEPS
- About Dyspraxia/DCD, Dyspraxia DCD Ireland
- REBEL Repurposing Education through Blended Learning, PDST
- Urability, Assistive Technology for Education, (Virtual)
- First Aid Responder Course, HSE
- Childline Counsellor, ISPCC
- Teach Paws b Mindfulness course, The Sanctuary – approved by the DES
- Foundation Course in Psychotherapy - The Tivoli Institute, approved by DES
- Dr. David Coleman "Helping Children to Cope with Anxiety", approved by DES, EPV summer course
- Dr.Tony Attwood - Cognitive Behaviour Therapy course, Exploring Feelings, to help teenagers Manage Anger and Anxiety
- All teachers attend CPD relating to numeracy, literacy and the area of Additional Needs provided by NCSE and relevant agencies. School management disseminates any new training information to all staff.
- All teachers are expected to be familiar with the relevant Acts, Circulars and publications about AEN, Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate relevant to their role in the Department.
- Staff regularly consult with the SENO and NEPS
- All teachers are encouraged to engage in peer review with their colleagues. A member of the department has requested participation in the Droichead program to formalise this work

- All teachers are encouraged to engage in reflective practice on an ongoing basis.

23. Planning & Recording Schemes of Work

Student Learning Plans: IEP/Personal Pupil Planning

As directed by the NEPS guidelines, Jane Delaney will create and update Learning Plans by working with colleagues, parents and students via meetings and email to ensure that the most appropriate learning is in place for each AEN student. These Learning Plans are living documents that will be updated based on regular reviews with parents/students and teaching staff. They will be stored in a secure electronic location and posted on VSWare to advise staff of their learning objective, with specific and individual recommendations according to the individual students needs. This will be done with parental permission and reference to GDPR advice. This will enable staff to individually plan for students with additional needs.

Schemes of Work:

All teachers are required to produce a scheme of work for each class detailing the work to be carried out during the year. This can be kept electronically (on www.googleclassroom.com) or in their own Teacher Journals. The department will collectively create a general scheme of work in literacy and numeracy for each year group to support the variety of new staff who have to adapt to AEN teaching every year. This will allow continuity and ensure on the job training for new staff. An aim for 2025 is to provide a general scheme of work for each year group to be used as a general guide for new and existing staff in the department.

24. AEN Folders

This is provided to each student with additional needs in 1st -3rd Year and each student shall keep a record of work completed in each lesson, complete with lesson objectives and methodologies used. Many students in 1st year keep a digital copy of their AEN folder on their iPad. Students in 4th -6th keep their own work in the relevant student folders. A record of work covered is kept by the teacher.

Teachers also collaborate closely to decide on these schemes. A teacher who works with a one-year group will be responsible for producing a SOW for that group. Literacy & Numeracy Schemes will be kept for each year. The SOW are guidelines only to ensure essential skills are covered in a uniform and comprehensive manner. The teachers will carry out their own AFL for each student and are free to change/adapt the SOW as they feel best supports the student. All teachers should consult the learning plan (IEP) for students with complex needs.

Mainstream teachers share access with Learning Support teachers to their classrooms via Google Classroom. This way support can be provided to the individual students and scaffolding on what the mainstream teachers are covering within their classroom. Continuous communication and collaboration between teachers is a constant so we can all support each other and the individual students.

25. Minutes of Meetings: The coordinator & deputy principal will keep minutes of all meetings and conferences held and add them to the Google document in Drive. Meetings will be held at a designated time every 2-3 weeks, with a weekly planning class agreed with Management. The coordination holds a weekly meeting with the Deputy Principal with special responsibilities for AEN

26. Parent Consultations: All parent meetings should be recorded via an updated IEP or via an email confirming the main talking points at the meeting and the actions /outcomes agreed. Actions should be noted in writing and communicated to parents for agreement. Learning Plans will be kept for all students with complex needs.

27. AEN Department: Self Evaluation

The AEN department is constantly reviewing our methodologies. Consequently, we are re-drafting all our schemes of work to fit in with the new Junior Cycle Statements of Learning. We have recently assessed our contribution to the Wellbeing curriculum and contributed to the wellbeing curricular group. We are currently looking at the following documents and hope to incorporate them into our updated planning for Senior and Junior Cycle.

- Looking at our Schools: A quality framework for Post-Primary Schools (2016)
- The Junior Cycle Wellbeing Indicators

As a Department, we are committed to continuously improving on our practices for the benefit of our students. We aim to reflect regularly on our methodologies and student outcomes. We aim to collaborate with our colleagues so that we may share good practice. Our aim through self-evaluation is to improve the learning of our students.

We have engaged in SSE (Student Self Evaluation) by using the NEPS My Thoughts about School checklist. We have used Google Forms to encourage SSE and reflection.

28. Transition Planning from Primary to Post-Primary

As outlined by NEPS, the school receives Student Passports and the AEN department liaises with all the feeder Primary Schools and parents to prepare students with a high level of need for entry to the College. Thus, transition meetings may be arranged between primary and post-primary schools in advance of transfer. The Post-Primary Transfer Review Form provides a useful template for collating assessment data relating to students' academic, attainment and personal development needs in order to inform intervention planning following transition. Student files are collated by the AEN coordinator in conjunction with the feeder schools and parents.

NCSE applications: The school uses the New Model of Support Guidelines SET 2024/5 to plan for students and liaises with the S.E.N.O. to ensure that all applications for Assistive Technology, SNA's and additional hours for students with complex needs are completed correctly and that the student is advocated for effectively by the school.

29. Exemptions from Irish and Foreign Languages

- Incoming first years with Irish and Foreign Language exemptions are noted. Certificates of exemption from the study of Irish and Foreign Languages must be submitted with the enrolment application.
- A revised circular was introduced by DES in September 2019 – Circular 0053/2019 sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a student an exemption from the study of Irish.
- The guidelines set down by the Department of Education and Skills will be strictly adhered to in Circular M10/94 & Circular 2019
- Where possible, withdrawal for Special Education provision is arranged for AEN students who do not study Irish, during Irish class. This is not guaranteed and is limited by timetable restrictions and staff availability and completed in accordance with the Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools, Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2007) and with parental consent.
- Applications for Irish exemptions on the grounds of AEN are made by the AEN coordinator and signed by the Principal.
- A parent on behalf of the student, must make a formal application to the school for an exemption from the study of Irish

30. Special Needs Assistants

- Our school's Special Needs Assistants (SNA's), Aoife Waters and Dave Cunningham provide care assistance to named students who have special educational needs. They make a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education to these students
- They recognise their role in the health and safety of the student and in their social, emotional and educational development, without developing a culture of dependency. They assist/escort students on school trips.
- They bring timetables students to the Cubbie Sensory Hub and/or for a well-being walk with school therapy dog Mooju.
- Bring certain students over to the gym for proprioceptive/vestibular input.
- Give special assistance as necessary for students with particular difficulties e.g. helping a student with AEN with typing, writing or other use of equipment.
- Assist with house examinations, Mock Exam Special Centres.
- Assist the teacher in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and in movement from one classroom to another.
- The SNA may be re-assigned by the AEN co-ordinator to other appropriate work when special needs students are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise.

31. Wellbeing & Mental Health

The AEN department sees its role as central to the wellbeing curriculum in the school. As such, it ensures that relevant social skills programmes, wellbeing resources and communication skills are explicitly taught to students with emotional behavioural or social difficulties due to a special educational need.

The SENCo is an active member of the college Care Team and advises on the Wellbeing of students with a diagnosed emotional, social or behavioural need in that context. The AEN team also liaise with the Year Head to ensure that a team approach is taken regarding the pastoral needs of students with additional needs. They are also a part of the curricular development team for the new JC Wellbeing subject, contributing resources on social skills and emotional wellbeing. A list of students with wellbeing concerns is updated regularly and discreetly shared with staff via VSWare.

The table below shows how as a department we actively consider our role as teachers who often work with the students with the greatest academic and emotional needs in the school and as such, our commitment to wellbeing precedes the new curriculum and is drawn from the NEPS Continuum that looks at Maslow's Hierarchy and Bloom's Taxonomy

Wellbeing Indicators	In my role and in my relationships with students, how do I support their learning journey towards	**How do the STMC SEN dept promote this indicator in our own practice?** ***Strategies, Assessment, Methodologies, Supports or Resources***
Active	• being a confident and skilled participant in physical activity • being physically active	● Supporting students in their wellbeing by supporting Sli Na Slainte walks in our small groups & individual classes as appropriate, playing table-tennis, and taking classes outdoors on occasion.
Responsible	• being able to take action to protect and promote their wellbeing and that of others • making healthy eating choices • knowing when and where their safety is at risk and enabling them to make the right choices	● Supporting students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties through our explicit teaching of social skills. ● Supporting Year Heads with our input into positive behavioural planning. ● Planning Learning via IEP's for students with Autism to support their care needs in the school. ● Working with SNA team to support care needs of students.
Connected	• feeling connected to their school, their friends, community, and the wider world • understanding how their actions and interactions impact on their own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts	● Promoting social groups via our small classes where pair and group activity boosts peer relationships and self-esteem. ● Encouraging students with ASD to reflect on their social behaviour via counselling and social skills classes ● Supporting at risk students as part of the Care Team
Resilient	• feeling confident in themselves and having the coping skills to deal with life's challenges	● Encouraging the use of metacognition and learning to learn strategies in our SEN students.

	• knowing where they can go for help • believing that with effort they can achieve	● Supporting our students by advising them on the best assistive technology for use in their studies ● Help students explore and develop their own learning styles and stragegies.
Respected	• showing care and respect for others • having positive relationships with friends, peers, and teachers • feeling listened to and valued	● Student with SEN should feel valued as an equal member of the school community and we help to foster an inclusive environment for A. N. Students. ● Staff working in SEN provide students with 'one good adult' who can listen to them and we promote positive teacher-student relationships by supportive one-to-one and small group teaching
Aware	• being aware of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours and being able to make sense of them • being aware of their personal values and able to think through their decisions • being aware of themselves as learners and knowing how they can improve	● Support students with their application for Reasonable Accommodation ● Allow them to reflect on their own learning and support the writing of their personal statements for DARE ● Offer constructive feedback on their academic work and teach explicit cross-curricular skills to give students greater confidence in their own learning.

32. Planning

Our AEN team reviews and evaluates our work each year by consulting with students, parents, colleagues and management. We also have a duty to keep abreast of ongoing developments in this specialised field and as such commit to ongoing CPD and academic literature review in the field of special education. We also have a duty to ensure that the AEN department in the college is familiar with the following:

- Dept of Education Circulars relevant to AEN
- All Acts of Law that pertain to the field of special education
- Recommendations from the NCSE and SENO
- Guidelines and criteria for RACE set out by the SEC
- Recommendations from the Board of Management
- Guidelines from Enable Ireland, NEPS, Aspire, AsIAm and other agencies supporting young people with additional needs.

Aims for 2024/25

- To include the most recent best practice in and incorporate best practice guidelines, continue with staff training and continuous professional development
- To reflect on the most recent recommendations, most particularly the Continuum of Support at Post-Primary Schools (NEPS), recent Child Protection legislation and GDPR
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning about pupils with additional needs
- Continue to ensure that students with AEN are educated in an inclusive environment
- Continue to ensure that all members of staff are aware of the specific needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area
- Continue to ensure that students with AEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way
- Do a self-reflection survey with students to assess how the school is meeting their individual needs in Learning Support