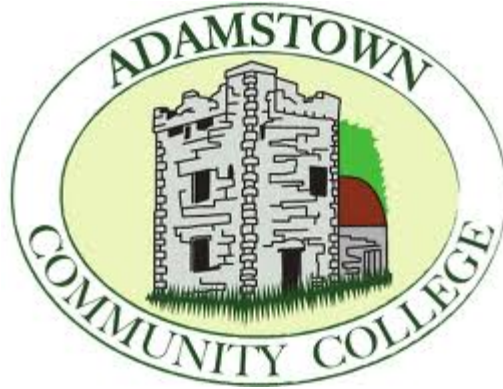


Adamstown Community College



Additional Educational Needs Policy

Rationale

This policy document aims to outline the form that additional educational support for students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) takes in the college and reflects current practice. It is written in the context of:

- The Education Act 1998
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education Act (Welfare) 2000
- The Data Protection Acts (1998, and 2003)
- The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act (2004) and the Disability Act (2005)
- Circular no:0014/2017 and 008/2019: Special Education Teaching allocation
- The Education (Admission to School) Act 2018

Supporting Publications:

- Inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines (DES,2007)
- Supporting Students with Educational Needs in mainstream Schools (DES, 2017)
- Special Educational Needs: A Continuum of Support- Guidelines for Teachers

This rationale is based on the three major principles laid out in the EPSEN Act:

“The education of people with SEN shall take place in an inclusive environment with those who do not have such needs”, “People with SEN shall have the same right to avail of and benefit from, appropriate education as do their peers”, and “That people with SEN, like their peers, should leave school with the skills necessary to participate, to the level of their capacity, in an inclusive way in the social and economic activities of society and to live independent and fulfilled lives.”

Adamstown Community College aims to:

- . Create an inclusive and nurturing educational environment that responsibly accommodates the diverse needs of all students.
- Ensure that students with additional educational needs are identified and provided for in a fair and equitable manner so that their learning potential and their sense of self-worth and dignity is developed and respected.
- Give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children who have a disability or who have other additional educational needs, as they relate to education.
- Provide, in line with the new model of allocation, a level and quality of education appropriate to the needs and abilities of all students in the school.
- Affirm that students with additional educational needs have the same right to avail of, and benefit from, education as students who do not have those needs.
- Provide for the involvement of parents/guardians in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to their children.
- Co-operate and work closely with the National Council for Special Educational Needs (NCSE) and other agencies with regard to the education of students with additional educational needs.
- Foster a positive environment by ensuring that all staff members are well-informed about the individual needs of students and recognise the valuable contributions they can make in addressing those needs.
- Ensure that additional educational needs are not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
- Ensure that students with individual needs are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Provide assistance to maximise success in State Examination through the Continuum of support and Reasonable Accommodations in State Exams. In addition, other programs may be provided as needed. At Junior Cycle such programmes might include Level Two Learning Programmes (L2LPs), Short Courses, Social Skills, Literacy and Numeracy Support. At Senior Cycle programmes might include Leaving Certificate Applied, Preparation for Work and Preparation for Further Education.
- Ensure that, where appropriate, students can achieve the learning outcomes/intentions of their individual programmes in the mainstream class.

- Set high standards for students with additional educational needs and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging and motivating them to achieve their full potential.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with additional educational needs.
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents/guardians, in order to achieve appropriate and relevant support at school and at home.
- Co-ordinate the advice, guidance and support of other agencies in supporting students with additional educational needs.
- Optimise ..the effective and efficient use of resources.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with additional educational needs.
- Acknowledge the primary responsibility of the subject teacher and work to support them in meeting the needs of the student.

Whole School Context

Adamstown Community College strives to create an inclusive learning environment where the needs of all students are catered for. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum at both Junior and Senior Cycle. As well as AEN Coordinator, Adamstown Community College has a Testing Coordinator who coordinates all elements of testing in conjunction with the AEN Coordinator. Adamstown Community College has a Student Transfer Coordinator who gathers all AEN information from our feeder primary schools in conjunction with our AEN Coordinator.

First Year students at Adamstown Community College are placed in classes which are of mixed ability. Common exams are held in February and May. Students may be re-assigned to classes at the end of First Year based on maintaining mixed ability classes. Irish and Maths are timetabled concurrently from the beginning of second year with banding of students for these subjects. Whether students are taught in mixed ability or banded classes it is expected that teachers will implement differentiated approaches for teaching and learning, ensuring that the skills of all students are catered for.

Transition Year is an optional year between Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate. Transition Year provides a comprehensive curriculum that embraces the diverse needs and interests of students.

At Senior Cycle, students may study the Leaving Certificate Programme or the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme..Students benefit from guidance and information as they make programme choices, enabling them to select the programme that aligns most effectively with their individual needs.

Inclusion

Under the revised model, the Department of Education provides Additional Educational Teaching Support directly to schools based on their educational profiles. **A key principle underpinning this revised model is that all students, irrespective of additional**

educational needs, are welcome and enabled to enrol in their local schools.

In addition, a fundamental objective is that additional education teaching resources are utilised in an optimum manner to enhance learning experiences and educational outcomes for students with additional educational needs. (Special Education Circular 0014/2017)

Categories of AEN

The various categories of Additional Education Needs, the definitions of these categories, the criteria for the allocation of additional resources, and the procedures for application are set by the Department Of Education and Skills (DES) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and are as follows: (NCSE, Children with Special Educational Needs, 2014).

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems
- Severe emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems
- Mild General Learning Disability
- Borderline General Learning Disability
- Specific Learning Disability
- Moderate General Learning Disability
- Severe or Profound General Learning Disability
- Autism/ Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Pupils with additional educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome
- Specific speech and language disorder
- Multiple disabilities

We would also include Gifted and Talented students with whom we aim to foster a culture of achievement by creating a climate of teaching and learning excellence throughout the school. Please refer to our Gifted Students Policy.

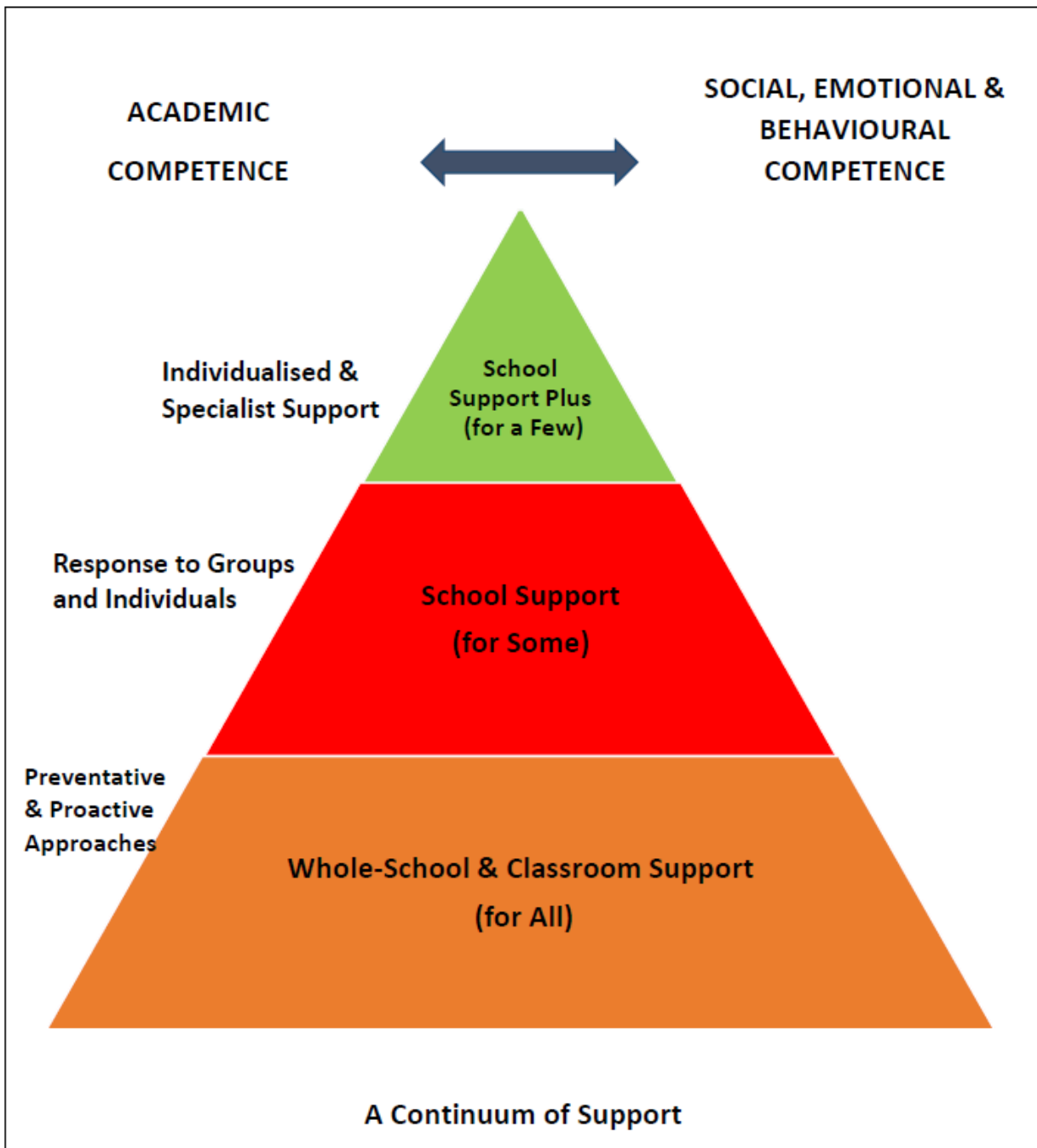
English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Adamstown Community College has a significant number of students that have English as an Additional Language(EAL). The Additional Education Teaching allocation model provides all schools with a baseline teaching allocation to assist pupils requiring assistance and support with the acquisition of English through targeted interventions.. For further information please see our EAL Policy.

The Continuum of Support

The Department has set out the Continuum of Support framework to assist schools in identifying and responding to students' needs. This framework recognises that additional educational

needs occur along a continuum; ranging from mild to severe and from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified educational needs. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress.



Roles within the AEN Team

The Board Of Management:

- To ensure that the school has an up to date AEN policy in place and monitor the implementation of that policy.
- To oversee a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.
- To oversee the development of positive partnerships with parents/guardians and other relevant agencies and to ensure that parents/guardians are being informed of their child's AEN and how these needs are being met within Adamstown Community College
- To oversee that parents/guardians are being consulted.
- To oversee the development of a whole school approach to Literacy and Numeracy under Section 14 of EPSEN.

The Principal:

The Department's post-primary guidelines on inclusion outlines the role of the school principal in supporting students with additional educational needs. It states that 'Under current legislation the principal of the school has overall responsibility for ensuring that the special educational needs of students are met. As a consequence, the principal has the general responsibility for establishing and promoting whole-school policies and procedures that are supportive of the learning of all students, including those with special educational needs' (Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines; DES, 2007, p 67).

The role of the school principal includes the following:

- Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies and procedures relating to the inclusion of students with additional educational needs.
- Oversee a whole-school approach to assessment and screening to identify needs and to guide the allocation of appropriate supports.
- Support the engagement with feeder primary schools to support the transition of students with additional educational needs with our Transfer Coordinator.
- In collaboration with the in-school management team, and the AENCO, discharge a key function in the deployment of staff, allocation of resources, organisation of students and timetabling.
- Ensure that systems are in place for effective sharing of relevant information on students' needs with all subject teachers.
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with additional educational needs, and ensure that all school staff (subject teachers and Additional Education Teachers, Guidance Counsellors, Special Needs Assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area.

- Promote whole-school procedures which are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents/guardians, students and external professionals/agencies.

In implementing the resource allocation model, the principal gives careful consideration to the formation of an Additional Education Needs team whose members have expertise and interest in special education so that provision can be coordinated efficiently and flexibly to meet a range of needs. Subject to their overall statutory responsibilities, the principal may delegate the performance of specific responsibilities to other staff members, including members of the special education needs team.

AEN Co-ordinator

The teacher with the responsibility for coordinating provision for additional educational needs liaises closely with the principal and the additional educational needs support team and acts as an advocate within the school for the students with additional educational needs. This teacher, by arrangement with the principal (Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-Primary Guidelines; DES, 2007):

- Assumes an overall responsibility for coordinating the school's provision for the inclusion of students with additional educational needs.
- Takes a leading role in making arrangements for the planning, implementation and review of student support plans for students with additional educational needs when the relevant provisions of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) are implemented.
- Assists in programme planning for individual students with additional educational needs and, as appropriate, provides advice to teacher colleagues on curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, textbooks, and other teaching and learning resources with the additional education support team.
- Where appropriate, liaises with others, within and outside the school, to research new programmes and options that may need to be added to the school's range of curricular provision.
- Consults and collaborates with the Coordinator of Leaving Certificate Applied, Testing Coordinator and Transfer Coordinator in relation to students with additional educational needs.
- Facilitates the making of applications for Reasonable Accommodations in Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate examinations (RACE) for students with additional educational needs and facilitates in-school arrangements in order to provide the appropriate accommodations.
- Liaises with support personnel and external professionals and agencies, including the coordination of applications to the Department of Education and Science, NCSE, NEPS, SESS, HSE and other education and health agencies, as appropriate, for resources and support services for students with additional educational needs.
- Facilitates the arrangement of psychological or other assessments, as appropriate, of students who have additional educational needs or students who are suspected of having additional educational needs.
- Monitors a tracking system for all students with additional educational needs who are receiving additional education support.
- Promote development opportunities in additional education.

Additional Education Teacher

Adamstown Community College has a core team of teachers with responsibility for additional education needs. This is to ensure that those students with the greatest level of need have access to supports. Part of the core team consists of a Link Teacher for each year group. Included in the Additional Education Team are the school Guidance Counsellors and their role is to help promote inclusion of students with additional educational needs.

The role of the Additional Education teacher is:

- To have awareness of diagnostic assessment (along with the AEN Coordinator and the Testing Coordinator), programme planning, consultation with parents/guardians, teachers and pupils, communication with the whole staff and for teaching, monitoring and evaluating students progress.
- To provide additional teaching support to students with low achievement in literacy or numeracy and to those with mild or transient difficulties. To familiarise themselves with the Continuum of Support and put in place the required provision to the students (Support for some or Support for few)
- To liaise with Subject Teachers in order to implement a plan that will benefit students with additional needs.
- .Embrace a positive approach by understanding and tailoring teaching and support to match individual student profiles, learning styles, and needs.
- To take an active role in the classroom during Co-Teaching.
- To get involved in the writing process of the Student Support File, familiarise themselves with the targets and review the plan with the AEN coordinator.
- To plan lessons, programmes, interventions and record them on the Student Support File. Outcomes for students should be routinely assessed, recorded and used to review progress. These outcomes should also be used to inform the targets for the next phase of intervention.
- To complete the Student Review Report for each student once a year.
- To source resources for use with AEN students.
- The development, implementation and monitoring of a whole-school approach to the education of students with additional educational needs.

Guidance Counsellors:

The Guidance Counsellor is a member of the Additional Educational Needs Support Team and works with other members of the team in facilitating the provision of inclusive education of students with additional educational needs and their inclusion in the school as well as coordinating DARE applications.

The Guidance Counsellors role within the AEN department may include the following:

- Counselling in personal, educational and career development
- Providing career information.
- Presenting at the Options Information Evening for students and parents/guardians of students progressing to Senior Cycle.
- Consulting with parents/guardians and staff.
- Consulting with community organisations.
- Providing vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience.
- Working closely with Year Heads and the AEN team to identify students requiring support.
- Facilitating individual appointments for students in third year, TY and Leaving Cert Year to support them in making career decisions.
- Advising students and parents/guardians on subject choice and subject load.
- To liaise with students, parents/guardians and the AEN team in relation to DARE applications.

Special Needs Assistants:

The role of Special Needs Assistants (SNA) within the AEN Department in Adamstown Community College is instrumental in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment and can assist children with additional educational needs who also have additional and significant care needs. The support is provided in order to facilitate the attendance of those pupils at school and also to minimise disruption to class or teaching time for the pupils concerned, or for their peers, and with a view to developing their independent living skill (Circular 0030/2014).

The role of the Special Needs Assistant within the AEN Department includes the following:

- To provide care assistance to named students who have additional educational needs. They make a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education to these students.
- To 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.
- Assisting/escorting students on school trips.
- Giving additional assistance as necessary for students with particular difficulties e.g. helping a student with AEN with typing, writing or other use of equipment.
- Assisting with house examinations, Mock Exam Special Centres (if appropriate).
- Assisting the teacher in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and in movement from one classroom to another.
- Engagement with parents/guardians of students with AEN as required and directed by school management.
- Other appropriate duties may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school.
- The SNA may be re-assigned by the AEN co-ordinator to other appropriate work when students with additional needs are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise.
- Update and contribute to the support plans of the students in their care.
- Collaborate with and engage with the SET team and AEN Coordinator in creating and evaluating support plans.

Mainstream Teachers:

Subject teachers have access to information relevant to teaching students with additional needs. A list of all students with Additional Educational Needs is shared with teachers at the beginning of the school year. The role of the mainstream teacher includes: (DES circular 14/07)

- To seek advice from the AEN Department regarding students with AEN.
- To participate in CPD in the area of AEN.
- To support/encourage independence in the student.
- To differentiate teaching and learning activities for students, including exceptionally able/gifted students.
- To create a positive classroom environment for all students.
- To create opportunities for success.
- To use assessment for learning
- To establish and teach behavioural and learning expectations.
- To assess/monitor progress.
- To consider the needs of students with AEN in all aspects of classroom planning.
- To refer students to the link teacher within the AEN team
- Contribute to group or individual planning and review.
- Implement agreed strategies.
- Implement individualised and specialist programmes (such as L2LP programme) and strategies.
- To have an awareness and understanding of students' needs, particularly when engaging in activities off site eg. trips, sports etc., and to liaise with Link Teacher where clarification is required.

Parents/Guardians:

Parents/Guardians should:

- Actively communicate with the school if they observe any learning or related difficulties in their child at home.
- Be proactive and supportive of the school in implementing this policy.
- Use their unique knowledge of their child to further their child's support plan.
- Meet with teachers, SET AET team or pastoral team where appropriate.
- Provide support for homework and learning.
- Provide the school with any information or reports around AEN which they may have received, concerning their son/daughter, while they attended another school.
- Ensure that they are active participants in the formulation and review of Student Support Files.

Students:

Students with Additional Educational Needs are involved in the development, implementation and review of their Student Support File.

The role of the student is to:

- Support School Policy.
- Participate in their learning in a group, individual or class setting in a positive manner.

Identification of AEN:

The identification of pupils with additional educational needs is accomplished in a number of ways as outlined below.

- **Information from Parents / Guardians**

Parents/Guardians have an obligation on enrolment to make known to the school authorities details of any previously diagnosed disability or additional educational need and to make available to the school reports of examinations or assessment tests which have previously been carried out.

- **Liaison with Primary Schools:**

Prior to entry to Adamstown Community College the transfer coordinator and the AEN coordinator visits or contacts the feeder Primary Schools. This liaison is an important step in ensuring proper identification of students with additional educational needs and the continuity of provision of support. Information received from the Primary Schools through feedback and educational passports, coupled with the incoming first year CAT 4 , which helps the school identify those students who may need additional support at Post Primary level. Where possible, visits are arranged for students with additional educational needs prior to their transfer to Adamstown Community College.

- **Enrolled Students**

Adamstown Community College follows the guidelines outlined in the Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools document provided by the Department of Education. Once students have begun classes at Adamstown CC, mainstream classroom teachers are responsible for raising concerns to the link SET teachers about any students experiencing difficulties. This triggers a process that includes a review of appropriate interventions and supports that can then be put in place.

- **Testing:**

Incoming 1st Year Students

Students that have enrolled with the school sit an assessment test the January before they start. They sit the Drumcondra Reasoning Test. When the results become available the Additional Education Needs (AEN) Department meets and students with particular needs are identified. Mixed Ability Classes are put together.

1st Year Students

At the start of 1st Year, all students sit the CAT4, New Group Reading Test (NGRT) and the Progress in Maths Test (PMT) and the results are analysed by the AEN Department.

2nd Year Students

All 2nd year students are tested again in February using the (New Group Reading Test (NGRT) and the results are analysed by the AEN Department which show progress across their first two years.

All Years

All identified students for English as Additional Language (EAL) support are tested using the Cambridge English Placement test in the first semester of each year. Additional testing using the Wide Ranging Achievement Test 5 (WRAT5) and Wechsler Individual Achievement Test 3 (WIAT-III) is used where appropriate. Information is also gathered from an analysis of a student assessments, parent referral, student request and through diagnostic tests undertaken by the AEN department as outlined.

As per Circular 0014/2017, the identification of students for supports takes into account the following:

- Standardised tests used to screen and identify students' performance in reading and mathematics.
- Those students performing below the 10th percentile should be prioritised for support in literacy and numeracy.
- Students who were previously in receipt of supplementary teaching from a resource or learning support teacher and who continue to experience significant learning difficulties.
- Students who are identified as having significant needs through a process of ongoing assessment and intervention as set out in the Continuum of Support Process (DES, 2010). This will be evidenced through school-based assessment of attainment and behavioural, social and emotional functioning and ongoing monitoring of learning outcomes. Adamstown Community College also takes into account needs set out in professional reports, where available.
- Students with mild or transient educational needs including those associated with speech and language difficulties, social or emotional problems, or co-ordination or attention control difficulties.
- Students who have specific learning disabilities.
- Students with significant Additional Educational Needs. For example, students with significant learning, behavioural, emotional, physical and sensory needs. These students need additional teaching support because they require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are tailored to their needs.
- Adamstown Community School also carefully considers the needs of other students who may present a range of learning whose interaction may present a significant barrier to the students' learning and ability to access the curriculum.
- Students who have additional literacy or language learning needs including those students who need additional English Additional Language Support

Model of AEN provision:

In assessing and deciding which students need to be in receipt of supplementary teaching and which students may benefit from support within the mainstream context the following options are considered:

- Curricular differentiation
- Team teaching/Co-operative Teaching
- In-class support/differentiation
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- Organisational skills
- Social Skills

The period of intervention recommended for each student is dependent on the nature and extent of their individual need. The decision on withdrawal of students versus co-teaching is based on the extent of the needs and levels of the students. The duration of provision is varied and is reviewed throughout the intervention. There are cases where support is needed on a short-term basis, after which the student is in a position to recommence with the regular curriculum. All decisions in this regard are discussed with the parents/guardians, class teachers, the student, AEN team, principal and guidance counsellor.

Exemption from Irish

Arrangements for the Exemption from the study of Irish are provided for under the Circular 0055/2022. Students who are exempt from Irish, participate in Irish language classes in the first year. In second year, students who are Irish Exempt are offered an alternative subject as outlined in Department Of Education “Exemption from the study of Irish: Guidelines for Post Primary Schools” (2022). Also:

- Certificates of exemption from the study of Irish must be submitted with the enrolment application.
- Applications for Irish exemptions are set out in Circular 0055/2022. This sets out the exceptional circumstances in which consideration may be given to granting a student an exemption from the study of Irish.
- A parent on behalf of the student, must make a formal application to the school for an exemption from the study of Irish.

Other curricular modifications/reductions are considered for individual pupils where deemed absolutely necessary. Consultation between all relevant parties is deemed essential when making such decisions. The timetabled periods which become available due to such curricular modifications will be used, where possible, to implement individual resource interventions and learning support.

Student Support Plan (SSP):

A SSP is devised for students with AEN. All students in the Adamstown Community College AEN register have an SSP which facilitates the tracking and monitoring of specific targets that are specific, measured, attainable, realistic and time based. Student progress is also monitored

regarding specific interventions, levels of support and teacher referrals. Compiling the Student Support Plan involves:

- Gathering information from primary schools, assessment reports and information obtained from parents/guardians.
- Identifying and highlighting students strengths and interests
- Building a profile based on formal and informal assessments.
- AEN provision.
- Determine and prioritise key academic, social, and emotional needs
- Setting targets for priority learning needs.
- Identifying strategies required.
- Deciding a review date.
- Collaboration with students, parents/guardians and teachers/SNAs and external specialists, such as psychologists or therapists.

Liaison with other professional agencies:

It is the role of the Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator to attend meetings with and liaise closely with a number of out-of-school agencies including:

National Council for Special Education (NCSE): The SENO represents the local delivery aspect of the work of the NCSE.

DDLETB Psychological Support Service:

This service operates under the following framework:

- Consultation about individual students
- Recommendations and advice on individual students needs
- Advice on classroom strategies and resources
- Advisory work in relation to AEN policy and practice
- Consultation and recommendations in relation to R.A.C.E. (Reasonable Accommodations in Certificate Examinations)
- Full psychological assessments available to students.
- Each case presented is prioritised for assessment on its merits in consultation with the AENCO and school Principal.

Health Service Executive:

Referrals will be made as appropriate by school management to the HSE.

CAMHS

Collaboration with our Local Adolescent mental Health Service on a case by case basis when necessary.

Review/Evaluation:

As with all policies, this policy is reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to meet the changing needs of ACC. Responsibility for review rests primarily with the Principal and with the Board of Management. This policy is due for review during the 2025/2026 academic year.

Ratified by the board of management:

Ratified 10 March 2021

Signed _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date _____