



St Oliver Post Primary School

Additional Educational Needs Policy

January 2020

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Introductory Statement

St. Oliver Post Primary School aims to fulfil, support and meet the educational needs of its surrounding environs and strives to promote the educational requirements of the community it serves. In doing so, it recognises the contribution of the students, parent/guardians, and staff of the school, statutory bodies and the wider community.

School Information

St. Oliver Post Primary School provides a wide range of subjects in practical, academic and vocational areas of the curriculum. A coordinated system of pastoral care, combined with the promotion of extra-curricular activities, facilitates the holistic development of all students.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide practical guidance to staff, parents and other interested parties about our Additional Educational Needs procedures and practices;
- Outline the framework for addressing additional needs in our school;
- Comply with legislation (Education Act 1998, The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Equal Status Act, 2000 and The Education for People with Disabilities Act, 2004); and
- Fulfil DES circular 0014/17 https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-andForms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2017.pdf

School Mission Statement

St. Oliver Post Primary School believes that its aims are best achieved in a caring, disciplined and respectful environment. It recognises the individual rights and responsibilities of the school community. It encourages commitment and shared responsibility, working towards the achievement of full potential and the common good.

Additional Education Needs Goal:

“It is our hope that our school is a place where we promote and facilitate a whole school approach to additional education needs and so create a community of learning. In our policy and practice, we aim to nurture the values of hope, compassion and understanding in all of our students. We recognise each student as a unique individual with different talents and needs. We endeavour to meet their physical, intellectual and emotional needs through our student focused programmes.

In fostering an atmosphere of learning that is holistic in approach, we nurture each individual student’s personal growth and development. We promote autonomous learning and strive to enable all to achieve their full potential.

We aspire to fulfil this commitment by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in the school, so that the development and contribution of every individual can be acknowledged and valued and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

In St Oliver Post Primary, we strive to offer an inclusive curriculum, which is relevant, realistic and co-operative, and we do so in active partnership with students, parents and staff.”

Aim of the Policy

This policy aims to outline the procedures and practices of how we:

- Identify additional educational needs that our students may have;
- Allocate resources to effectively meet the needs of students with additional needs;
- Divide the roles and responsibilities among our school community in relation to students with additional needs;
- Track, monitor, review and report on the progress of students with additional needs; and
- Communicate information between the AEN team, principal, staff and parents/guardians.

Definition of Additional Educational Needs

In the context of this school, students with AEN are those students whose needs are not met by standard classroom provision.

Those with such needs could be:

- Students who have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students in their class group;
- Students with sensory or physical disability that hinders their use of everyday educational facilities;
- Students with specific learning difficulty;
- Students with emotional or behavioural difficulties that may be short or long term;
- Students with temporary emotional trauma;
- Students with Speech and Language disorder;
- Students with Autism or autistic spectrum disorder;
- Students who fall behind the general level of progress of the class for other reasons e.g. through illness;
- Students whose first language is not English;
- Students who are particularly gifted and need additional stimulus; and
- Students from another educational system.

Some students may fall into more than one of the above categories.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management:

The BOM oversees the development, implementation and review of school policy on AEN. They also ensure that adequate classroom accommodation, secure storage space and effective teaching resources are provided (human and physical resources).

Principal:

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;
- Ensure effective engagement with feeder schools to support the transition of students with additional educational needs;
- Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with AEN 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;
- Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, students and external professionals/agencies; and
- In implementing the new resource allocation model, the Principal will consider the formation of an AEN team whose members have expertise and/or interest in special education so that provision can be co-ordinated efficiently and flexibly to meet a range of needs.

AEN Coordinator:

AEN coordinator (AENCO) should:

- Communicate with the principal in relation to AEN matters on an on-going basis;
- Liaise with external agencies about the provision for students with additional needs;
- Liaise with the NEPS psychologist, the AEN team and class teachers to prioritise students for psychological assessments (NEPS);
- Coordinate regular AEN team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for students with additional needs;
- Collaborate with the AEN team in creating timetables for additional support where necessary;
- Address the issue of AEN at staff meetings and relevant other meetings;

- Coordinate the standardised testing including the selection and the administration of such assessment instruments, interpretation of assessment results, scoring and feedback;
- Maintain lists of students who are receiving additional support;
- Monitor AEN provision in the school and recommend changes/seek external support where this is not working;
- Coordinate the completion of RACE applications;
- Coordinate the identification of students with AEN; and
- Coordinate transfer programmes between primary and second level, and between second level and adult and working/training life for those requiring same.

Class Teacher:

Class teachers have primary responsibility for the teaching and learning of all students in his/her class, including those selected for additional support. They should:

- Create a positive learning environment within the classroom;
- Differentiate teaching strategies, approaches and expectations to the range of experiences, abilities, needs and learning styles in their class;
- Discuss outcomes of standardised testing with AEN team as required;
- Familiarise themselves with the individual Learning Report provided for every student via CAT4 testing;
- Read Support Plans of students in their class and make every reasonable effort to implement the recommendations made;
- Where applicable, collaborate with the AEN team regarding teaching aims and activities for co-teaching;
- Liaise with lead teacher where relevant (i.e. in the case of students in An Grianán, student undertaking Level 2 programme);
- Identification, referral and gathering of evidence of student work to assist the AEN department;
- Responsible for overseeing reasonable accommodations for CBAs and Assessment Tasks in Junior Cycle;
- Liaise with the SNA in relation to the needs of students with AEN within the class(es) to which they are assigned; and
- Refer students to the AEN team, who continue despite classroom intervention, to present with concerns.

Additional Educational Needs Team:

The Additional Education Needs Team serves an important preventative and early-intervention function, particularly in relation to addressing the needs of students with social, emotional, behavioural and well-being needs. The team comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principals, Additional Needs Co-ordinator and Guidance Counsellor). Here referrals are discussed and interventions are agreed, implemented and monitored thereafter.

AEN Teacher

The AEN teacher should:

- Familiarise themselves with a wide range of teaching approaches, methodologies and resources to cater for particular learning styles and to meet a variety of need;
- Assist in the implementation of a broad range of whole school strategies aimed at intervention;
- Collaboratively develop Student Support Files (SSFs) for students selected for School Support and School Support Plus teaching with class teachers, parents, support services, other staff and student;
- Speak with class teachers, parents/guardians and other staff members to identify priority-learning goals for each student in receipt of School Support/ School Support Plus and who require an SSF;
- Liaise with class teachers, relevant staff to review SSFs;
- Administer and interpret standardised and diagnostic tests (where appropriate);
- Communicate with parents regarding any concerns about their child and update them regarding their progress;
- Offer advice and support to class teachers regarding students on their caseload; and
- Discuss the needs and progress of students on their caseload at planning meetings.

Special Needs Assistants:

The duties of the SNA carried out according to the guidelines for Special Needs Assistants from the Department of Education and Skills, the SNA will meet the care needs of the SEN students to which they have been assigned in accordance with Circular 30/2014. https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0030_2014.pdf

Parents/Guardians:

Collaboration and sharing of relevant information between home and school are essential elements of our AEN plan. Parents/Guardians through their unique knowledge of their own students have much to contribute to their child's learning.

Parent/Guardian should:

- Share any information, reports or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of up to date professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage;
- Support the work of the school and keep the class teacher informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning;
- Attend parent-teacher meetings; and
- Inform the post-primary school of their child's needs, at the transition stage.

Students:

Students who are in receipt of support teaching should, as appropriate:

- Become familiar with the targets that have been set for them;
- Develop ‘ownership’ of the skills and strategies that are taught and learn to apply these learning strategies and skills to improve their own learning; and
- Contribute to the evaluation of their progress by participating in appropriate assessment activities, including self-assessment.

Identifying Students with Additional Educational Needs

Students will be identified as requiring supplementary teaching based on:

- Formal Assessment-standardised tests on enrolment;
- Information from parents;
- Information from feeder schools;
- Information from other second level schools where a student is transferring in;
- Reports from the psychological services;
- Informal assessment-observation of progress in mainstream classes; and
- Information from staff.

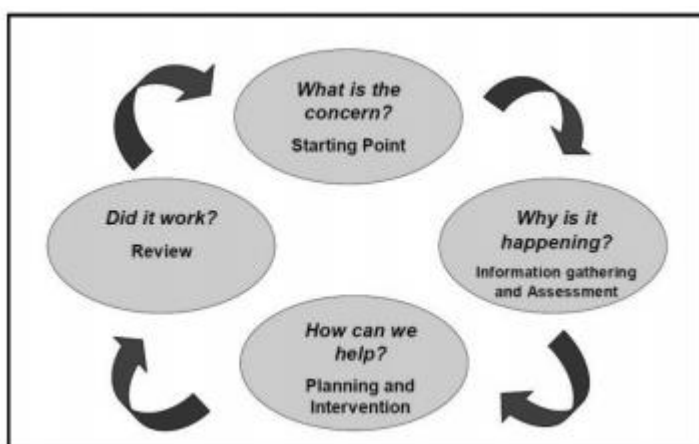
A Register of students with AEN will be drawn up for the school. This will include students for whom these needs have already been documented and students who, after assessment by the school/external agencies, have a demonstrated entitlement to additional educational needs provision.

Continuum of Support

We use the Continuum of Support Framework set out by the Department of Education to identify and support students with additional needs. Like this framework, we recognise that additional educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long-term and those students require different levels of support depending on their identified additional needs. By using this framework, it helps us implement a staged approach to ensure that our support and interventions are incremental; moving from class based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and are informed by careful monitoring of progress.

The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables us to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual students.

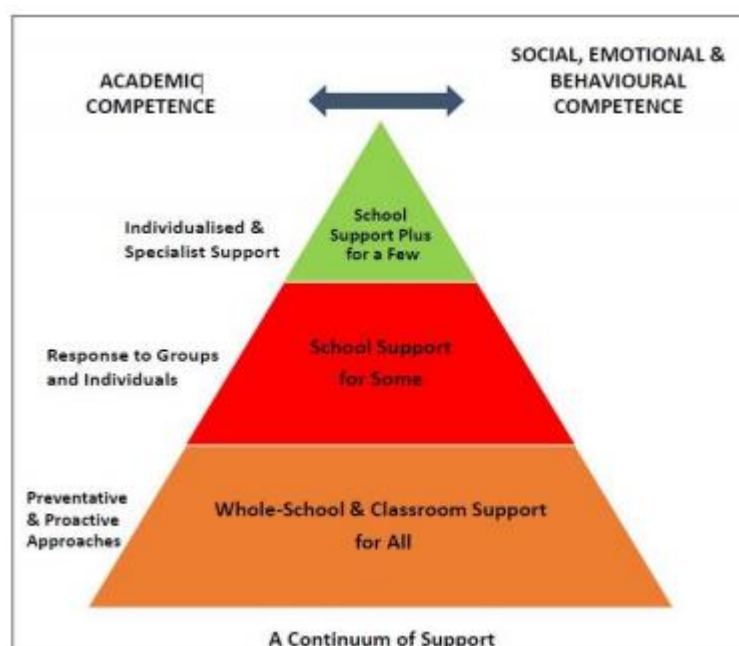
This problem-solving process is illustrated as follows:



Identification of educational needs is central to our policy and the new allocation model. By using the Continuum of Support framework, we can identify students' educational needs, to include academic, social and emotional needs, as well as needs associated with physical, - sensory, language and communication difficulties. This, in turn, allows us to identify and respond to needs in a flexible way.

Levels within the Continuum of Support:

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf



Arising from the implementation of the continuum of support, the additional educational needs of the majority of students within a mainstream class are met by differentiating teaching approaches, constituting Support for All.

Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole school interventions (such as differentiated teaching, a mentoring programme or social skills group), School Support (for some) may be initiated.

At the level of Support for Some, educational support plans are devised and implemented for students identified as having additional educational needs, as appropriate.

Furthermore, some students may be withdrawn on an individual or small group basis for intensive teaching of skills, that is School Support Plus (for a Few). Individualised educational support plans for such students are developed on an informed basis through a collaborative process involving relevant teachers, parents/guardians, the students themselves and outside professionals, as necessary.

At the level of Support Plus, educational support plans are devised and implemented for students identified as having additional educational needs, as appropriate. These are differentiated in line with the individual needs of students and include clear, measurable learning targets, and specify the resources and targeted interventions that are used to address student needs in line with the continuum of support process.

Level 2 is available 'for few' and meetings are organised between a core team and with subject teachers to co-ordinate same

Hence the model of support embraces the three distinct school-based processes comprising Support for All, Support for Some and Support for a Few.

The principle of providing students with the greatest levels of need access to the greatest level of support underpins the implementation of this continuum of support and the level of support individual students receive varies as they move along the continuum.

Meeting the Needs and Allocating Resources

Once students' needs have been identified, additional educational needs teachers are deployed to address these needs as required. We deploy AEN teachers in a variety of ways in order to effectively meet students' needs. We aim to strike a balance between in-class support, group and individual support while ensuring that the needs of students with additional needs are met inclusively.

Importantly, the level and type of support reflect the specific targets of individual students as set out in their support plans and are informed by careful monitoring and review of progress. In this way, following a period of intervention, some students may no longer require additional teaching supports; some may require the same level, while others may require supports that are more intensive.

In planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the over-riding principle is that resources are deployed to address the identified needs of students. Importantly, **those with the highest level of need should have access to the greatest level of support**. We consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as differentiation, heterogeneous grouping, team-teaching and small group teaching. In addition to literacy and numeracy difficulties, many students will have specific needs in such areas as oral language, social interaction, behaviour, emotional development, motor skills and application to learning.

Learning Support will be provided to students who fall into the following categories:

- Students with clearly observable difficulties in acquiring basic skills in literacy and/or numeracy;
- Students whose intellectual functioning is at or below the 12th percentile on standardised tests;
- Students who fall into the category of being Borderline Mild General Learning Difficulty; and
- Students diagnosed with a Specific Learning Difficulty that hinders their ability to process language and/or numbers.

Additional Educational Needs provision will be made for students who present with:

- Physical disability;
- Sensory impairment;
- General Learning Disability (Mild or Moderate);
- Emotional or Behavioural Disorders;
- Specific speech and language disorder;
- Autism or autistic spectrum disorder;
- Assessed syndromes;
- Multiple disabilities; and

- Students with no existing diagnosis.

Support services provided by the HSE will be accommodated in the case of all students enrolled in the school who are entitled to these services as sanctioned by the Special Educational Needs Officer. Persons providing such services will be subject to normal Garda Vetting clearance.

Tracking, recording and reviewing progress

Provision for students with additional educational needs is enhanced through clear identification processes and careful planning of interventions to address academic and/or personal and social development needs. Identification of needs, planning, target-setting and monitoring of outcomes are essential elements of an integrated and collaborative problem-solving process.

In line with the continuum of support model, students' progress is tracked, recorded and reviewed formally three times per annum (support for All), with 'some' students' progress being tracked, recorded and reported more regularly (support for Some/Few)

Student Support File

We use a Student Support File (SSF) to plan interventions and to track a student's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates us in documenting progress and needs over time and assists us in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need. Our Student Support File is based on the NEPS template and is stored on the school server. All support files should include:

- Cover sheet with student's details;
- Referral by Teacher (where applicable);
- A timeline of actions;
- Record of support received;
- Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores;
- Support plans; and
- Checklists (where applicable).

Health and Safety Issues

Every staff member and student is entitled to a safe, secure environment and to be treated with due respect. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of each student with AEN. When a place is offered to a child with AEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the child is entitled are in place as soon as possible. Staff members will be informed of any potential risks and, where necessary, individual plans will be drawn up and implemented.

Supervision/Child Protection

This Additional Educational Needs policy shall be implemented in compliance with current legislation, circulars and procedures issued by the Department of Education and Skills and school policies and procedures relating to Child Protection.

Limitations

St Oliver's Post Primary School will use the financial and personnel resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or additional educational.

St Oliver's Post Primary School will encourage all staff to become involved in additional educational needs teaching and will facilitate their training and in-career development. The school will also promote awareness among all students and parents of issues related to additional educational needs.

An Grianán

An Grianán endeavours to enable all students assigned to it, to belong to an educational community without prejudice and within which individual differences are celebrated. The classes reflect the inclusive ethos of St Oliver Post Primary and wherever possible the students in the ASD Classes are integrated within the mainstream school.

The purpose of An Grianán is to assist students with ASD to leave school with the skills necessary to participate, to the best of their ability, in an inclusive way in society and to live independent and fulfilled lives.

Admissions

See St Oliver Post Primary Admissions Policy.

Teachers supporting in the ASD room

Teachers working in An Grianán prepare a scheme of work for the students timetabled for their classes. Each plan is differentiated to cater for the individual needs of each student. We understand the need to promote independence within the class and aim to get the most from our students.

Mainstream teachers

Each mainstream teacher is aware of the individual student needs in their class and can access the support plans of each student on SharePoint. Each teacher completes a Target Monitoring sheet for the students of An Grianán in order to best accommodate and promote inclusivity, (support for few).

Curriculum and Integration

All students attending An Grianán attend mainstream classes in so far as possible. An Grianán teachers will provide the relevant supports for students with ASDs. This is to enable these students to integrate into the mainstream classes so as they can be taught alongside their peers with the majority of their learning taking place there.

During time in the ASD Class, students have access to an extended curriculum, (either individually or in a small group setting), where they will receive social and life skills training, a sensory programme and/or stress management strategies. Students will also benefit from pre and/or post tutoring of mainstream subjects.

Level 2 Junior Cycle

For those students who are not able to take the existing Junior Certificate, the Level 2 Learning Programmes (L2LPs) have been designed for a small minority of students with particular special educational needs. These programmes are designed to provide meaningful learning and experiences for students who have general learning disabilities in the higher functioning moderate and low functioning mild categories. These programmes are set in the context of the 5 keys principles, (Communication and Language, Living in the Community, Numeracy, Personal Care and Preparing for Work) and 24 statements of learning that frame the new Junior Cycle.

For those students completing the level 2 programme, it is the responsibility of all teachers to plan and assess those students. Please see guidelines on www.jct.ie

The Individualised Timetable

Students in An Grianán operate from an individualised timetable. The number of academic subjects undertaken is wholly dependent on their needs and abilities. Activities in the ASD class are also individualised. Each student's timetable is constantly under review and changes can be made throughout the academic year.

Support Services

An Grianán has established links with the following agencies:

- National Council for Special Education (NCSE);
- Special Education Support Service (SESS);
- Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO);
- National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS);
- Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) and Psychology Services in Health Service Executive (HSE); and
- Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT.ie).

Transition:

For some students with additional needs, it is helpful to begin preparation for the transfer to post-primary school in advance. This is especially true for students with ASD, who can find a change to their routine stressful. Ensuring that students have the skills to cope with these changes, St Oliver Post Primary along with parents, primary school and the student, work together to make this transition a positive experience.

The following transitional Programme is available:

- Visit school during Open Night;
- School visit and subject taster day;
- An Grianán teacher visit primary school;
- Post Primary Transfer Review;
- Transition to Post-Primary School booklet;
- St Oliver Post Primary's Social Story "My New School";
- St Oliver Post Primary's video, "My New School"; and

- Opportunity to visit St Oliver Post Primary prior to starting school.

Implementation and Review

This plan will be implemented from January 2020. It will be reviewed every 2 years.

Ratification

This revised plan was ratified by the Board of Management on

BOM & LMETB Ratification/Resolution Process for This Policy

<i>Date Ratified by the Board of Management:</i>	
<i>Proposed By:</i>	
<i>Seconded By:</i>	
<i>Signed:</i>	<i>(Chairperson, BOM)</i>
<i>Signed:</i>	<i>(Secretary to the BOM)</i>
<i>Scheduled Date for Review of the Policy:</i>	

LMETB Ratification/Resolution of the ETB Board

<i>Date of Resolution of ETB Board</i>	
<i>Signed</i>	<i>(Chairperson)</i>