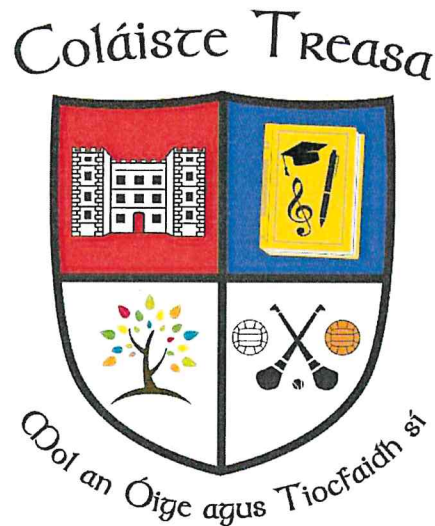


# Additional Educational Needs Policy

## Colaiste Treasa



### 1. Introduction

Additional Educational Needs (AEN) are defined as ‘a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, Sensory, mental health or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition’. (EPSEN Act 2004)

#### (i) Rationale

The mission statement of our school is *to offer a broad based education with strong emphasis on the cultivation and development of good social and moral values which will prepare students for adult life in the context of modern Ireland.*

The school community at Colaiste Treasa are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment which incorporates the values of our mission statement.

## **( ii) Aims & Objectives**

- To ensure that Colaiste Treasa fosters an inclusive learning environment that enables students with Additional Educational Needs to realise their full potential through access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To enable students with Additional Educational Needs to function as independently as possible through the provision of educational supports as are necessary to realise this potential.
- To facilitate the social, emotional, educational and physical wellbeing of students with Additional Educational Needs, during their time in Colaiste Treasa.
- To acquire the basic personal, social, literacy, numeracy and IT skills needed for life.
- To ensure that parents/guardians are involved in decisions about their children's education.
- To develop a caring and safe environment in which they can realise their potential.

## **Categories of Additional Educational Needs**

The various categories of Additional Educational Needs, the definitions of these categories, and 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:

- Physical disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Emotional disturbance and/or behaviour problems
- Severe emotional disturbance and/or behaviour 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 special educational needs arising from an assessed syndrome
- Specific speech and language disorder
- Multiple disabilities
- Students for whom English is not their First Language (EAL)

We also include:

- Gifted and Talented students

## **Identifying students with Additional Educational Needs**

- The Open Night for incoming first years allows parents to meet with school personnel to share information about educational, medical or other needs.
- The enrolment form contains a section that parents are asked to complete if their child has any additional educational need, it is also noted that any relevant professional reports should be forwarded.
- There is regular communication with our feeder schools. Primary schools are required to forward an education passport for each incoming student following confirmation of enrolment (Circular 45/2014). The Special Educational Needs Co Ordinator is in contact with the Learning Support teachers in the feeder primary schools in the last term of each school year.
- Parents of students with Additional Educational Needs are invited to meet with personnel Special Needs Department.
- Incoming students are often invited to meet the AEN department and tour the school if it is deemed to be beneficial for the student.
- Transition meetings are arranged for students with a high level of need.
- Details of all students with additional needs are available for all teachers on VSWare in the AEN tab. Recommendations from professional reports are uploaded to this tab also.
- The CAT 4 test is carried out prior to entry to first year. Results of the test will be available for teachers on VSWare and sent to parents to aid subject choice for Second Year.

- The PPADE test is carried out on all First Year students in the October following entry. Results of the test and recommendations for the teaching of each student will be available for teachers to view on VSWare.
- Diagnostic testing (WIAT III– T) is used as necessary on students identified as having additional needs. This testing will be used to determine RACE eligibility.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the AEN department if they have any concerns regarding their child’s learning or progress.
- Teachers can refer students to the AEN department if they become aware of difficulties in class.
- Advice obtained from and referrals can be made to NEPS, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Educational or Clinical Psychology and the CDNT when deemed appropriate. Parents/Guardians are consulted in this process.
- An AEN Manual is distributed to all staff members at the start of the school year. It contains detailed information on each category of Additional Needs and advice for teachers on how to differentiate accordingly.

**Progress of additional needs students can be assessed by the following means:**

- House Exams
- Consultation with subject teachers, year head and management
- Consultation with parents
- Consultation with relevant professionals involved with the student
- Discussion with parents

- Standardised testing

## **Provision Mapping Programme**

Colaiste Treasa is part of the ETBI School Provision Mapping Cycle 2023 – 2025

In developing a school-wide approach to learning, teaching, and assessment for all students, including those with special/additional needs, Provision Mapping emphasises the importance of classroom level inclusive teaching practices and recognises that all teachers are teachers of all students. The data collection (from surveying staff, parents and students) will focus on identifying the needs of subject teachers in their efforts to implement teaching strategies that promote learning for diverse class profiles, and subsequently support teachers to continue to implement evidence-based practices with consistency and build all teachers' toolbox of inclusive teaching practices.

### **Levels of Support:**

**Support can be provided through SNAs, in-class support, team teaching, as well as small group or individual support dependent on DES allocation.**

### **The Continuum of Support:**

When planning the allocation of additional teaching supports, the principal, deputy principal and SEN team ensure that resources are deployed to address identified needs of students so that those with the highest level of need have access to the greatest level of support. Circular 0014/17 brings forth the revised allocation model. The Continuum of Support framework assists schools in identifying and responding to students' needs.

The model of assessment and intervention outlined is underpinned by a recognition that additional educational needs occur along a continuum, from mild to severe and from transient to long term. It ensures that responses to the needs of students is also offered along a continuum, from whole school and preventative approaches to individualised and specialist approaches. It enables schools to gather and analyse data, as well to plan and review the progress of individual students.

### Identification of Educational Needs through the Continuum of Support Process

<p>Whole-School and Classroom (Support for All)</p>	<p>The Post-Primary Continuum of Support contains a range of ideas and resources to assist in identification, intervention and monitoring of outcomes. The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class.</p> <p>Identification of those needing additional support can be informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake screening</li> <li>• Collection of information from primary schools, including Student Passport</li> <li>• Teacher observation</li> <li>• Teacher assessment</li> <li>• Learning Environment Checklist</li> <li>• Student Support Team involvement</li> <li>• Standardised tests of literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Student consultation</li> <li>• Parental consultation</li> </ul> <p>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) is initiated.</p>
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School Support (for Some)	<p>At this level a Support Plan is devised and informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher observation records</li> <li>• Teacher-designed measures / assessments</li> <li>• Parent/student interview</li> <li>• Learning environment checklist</li> <li>• Diagnostic assessments in literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Formal observation of behaviour including ABC charts, frequency measures</li> <li>• Functional assessment as appropriate, including screening measures for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</li> </ul> <p>Support at this level can take many forms, for example: team-teaching, small group or individualised tuition, peer mentoring, inclusion in social skills groups, behaviour reward and consequence systems.</p> <p>A Support Plan operates for an agreed period of time and is subject to review.</p>
School Support Plus (for a Few)	<p>At this level, subject teacher(s), parents and special education teachers, in collaboration with outside agencies, as required engage in a more detailed and systematic approach to information gathering and assessment. This involves using a broad range of formal and informal assessment and diagnostic tools, including teacher observation, student interview, measures of cognitive ability and social, emotional, behavioural and adaptive functioning, as appropriate.</p> <p>Data generated from this process are used to plan an appropriate intervention and serve as a baseline against which to map progress.</p> <p>A Support Plan at this level is likely to be more detailed, individualised, and to involve longer term planning and consultation.</p>

### Modification of the Curriculum



Lessening the curriculum for an individual student is considered when it is deemed absolutely necessary. All relevant parties are consulted with before any decision is made. When possible, learning support interventions or Sensory breaks will be implemented in the timetabled slots that become available.

## **Irish Exemptions**

Currently, the granting of exemptions from the study of Irish is guided by DES Circular 0055/2022. It clearly states that exemptions from the study of Irish are to be granted in exceptional circumstances.

The exemption from the study of Irish does not automatically give the student access to learning support hours.

### **Process of applying for an Irish Exemption**

1. A parent/guardian must make an application to the principal for an Irish exemption.
2. Circular 0055/2022 states that the granting of an exemption from the study of Irish should only arise under the following exceptional circumstances:

## **Granting an exemption from the study of Irish**

### **2.1 An exemption should be granted only in exceptional circumstances**

Exempting a student from the study of Irish will be considered only in those exceptional circumstances set out in section 2.2 of this Circular. The decision to exempt a student from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her future learning. The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal, but it must be made following detailed discussion with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the class

teacher/s, special education teachers and the student. A decision to grant an exemption should only be considered in the circumstances set out in section 2.2 below.

## **2.2 The circumstances in which a student may be granted an exemption from the study of Irish**

An exemption from the study of Irish may be allowed in the following circumstances, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3 or 2.2.4 only:

### **2.2.1 A student moving from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language**

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a student whose education was received outside the State (for a minimum period of three consecutive years) where he/she did not have opportunity to engage in the study of Irish

**AND either (a) or (b)**

(a) who is not less than 12 years of age on the day of their enrolment or re-enrolment

**OR**

(b) who is enrolling following the completion of the full course of primary education recognised by another state.

### **2.2.2 A student who experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to their learning across the curriculum**

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a student:

(i) who presents with significant literacy difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in all subjects/across the curriculum and over time. Documentary evidence to this effect, held by the school, should include Student Support Plans detailing:

- regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment
- target-setting

- evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (Word Reading, Reading Comprehension, Spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review

**AND**

(ii) who, at the time of the application for exemption presents with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

**2.2.3 A student who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the student's participation and engagement in their learning and school life**

It is recognised that there is a small cohort of students who have a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to their participation and engagement in their learning and school life. In the case of these students, consideration may need to be given to adjusting the range of learning experiences to ensure that their needs are met and that they may engage purposefully in their learning in school. In very exceptional circumstances, this means that consideration may need to be given to exempting them from the study of Irish.

An exemption from the study of Irish may be granted to a student:

(i) who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a very significant and continuing barrier to his/her participation and engagement in his/her learning and school life

**AND**

(ii) whose school has substantial written evidence that these needs persist despite targeted and individualised Student Support Plans to address those needs

**AND**

(iii) whose school has substantial written evidence that these individualised Student Support Plans have been implemented over not less than two school years, and have been monitored and reviewed by the school in collaboration with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student

**AND**

(iv) who has been given every reasonable opportunity to participate in the learning of Irish in mainstream classes for as long as possible in keeping with the integrated approach to language skills development and the communicative approach underpinning the Specification for Junior Cycle Irish (L2) and the Leaving Certificate Syllabuses for Irish.

**AND**

(v) the principal is satisfied that the granting of an exemption is in the overall best interests of the student concerned.

**2.2.4 A student in a recognised special school or class or who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class or who has a recommendation and has been deemed eligible for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school**

(i) Where a student is currently enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school or who has previously been enrolled in a recognised special school or special class in a mainstream school and who is transitioning to mainstream provision, that student is automatically entitled to an exemption from the study of Irish without an application.

**OR**

(ii) Where a student has a recommendation and has been deemed eligible for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school, an application for an exemption from the study of Irish will be required.

3. The decision to exempt a student from the study of Irish may have implications for his/her future learning. Detailed discussion with the pupil's parents/guardians, career guidance councillor and the pupil will be had. The principal will inform the parents/guardians of the decision on the application within 21 days.
4. Where the application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, a parent/guardian can appeal the school's decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee (IEAC). The appeal must be lodged within 30 calendar days of receiving the letter of refusal from the school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Board of Management**

- To ensure that the policy is developed and evaluated.
- To approve the policy.
- To consider reports from the Principal on the implementation of the policy.

### **The Principal**

- Assumes overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies and procedures.
- Key role in the deployment of staff, allocation of resources and timetabling.
- Facilitate CPD for all teachers and SNA's in relation to SEN.
- Consult and liaise with relevant external bodies and agencies such as the DES, NEPS, CAMH, HSE.
- Liaise regularly with the SEN co ordinator.
- Ensure that all staff are clear regarding roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure compliance with current legislation.

### **Role of the SEN Co-ordinator**

The SENCO assumes an overall responsibility for coordinating the school's provision for the inclusion of students with special educational needs:

- Co-ordinate data gathering, screening and testing.
- Co-ordinate transition planning for students with special educational needs.
- Ensure that Staff are aware of information regarding student's needs.
- Lead role in planning, implementing and reviewing student support plans.
- Liaise with other relevant agencies.
- Liaise with parents and students.
- Assist in programme planning.
- Make applications for assistive technology, specialised equipment, resources.
- Make applications for RACE.
- Facilitate arrangement of psychological and other assessments.
- Liaise with the Guidance Counsellor with regard to DARE applications.
- Make applications to the SENO.
- Liaise in the management and procurement of specialised learning and teaching resources for students with SEN.
- Review SEN student's progress and provide advice and support to mainstream teachers, as required, in regard to the selection and implementation of appropriate resources and programmes for students with SEN.

### **Role of the Subject Teacher**

- Responsible for the education of all students.
- Must plan for the individual needs of the student.
- Plan lessons to address diverse needs.
- Provide a range of differentiated learning experiences.
- Provide students with the opportunity to be active participants in their own learning.
- Liaise with the SENCO with regard to students with special educational needs regarding the implementation of an agreed learning support programme.
- Identify students experiencing difficulty and refer them accordingly to the SENCO.
- Be familiar with the SEN section of VSware relating to the students in their classes.

### **Role of the Special Education Team (SET)**

- Withdrawal of students with additional needs as appropriate.
- Liaise with class teachers and the SENCO with regard to implementing a support programme.
- Team teaching with mainstream teachers.
- Specific support for students with SEN in other areas such as organisational skills, social skills and life skills.

### **Role of Parents/ Guardians**

- To sign parental consent forms for accessing resources or SNA support as required.
- To submit all relevant documentation for accessing support
- To maintain contact with the school
- To encourage and support the child with SEN to maximise the benefit of the support for the student.

### **Role of the SNA**

SNA's assist students with specific care needs arising from a disability in the educational context.

- Support students with mobility issues around the school and in boarding transport.
- Support students with organisational skills on a daily basis with the aim of making the student more self reliant and independent.
- Ensuring that students have the necessary class requirements to enable them to participate in class.
- Support students where health and safety may be an issue.
- Supervise and support AEN students at break times, before and after school
- Support student in class in order to minimise disruption to class or teaching time for the student or his/her peers.
- Facilitate rest and Sensory breaks .

### **Role of The Guidance Counsellor**

- To ensure that counselling and guidance for students with AEN, in accordance with their individual needs is included in the Guidance plan.
- Assist students with AEN to make career decisions.
- Advise students of college access programmes e.g. DARE.

### **Role of the Visiting Teacher Service**

- Provide support for students who are visually or hearing impaired and enrolled in mainstream schools.

### **Review**

This policy will be subject to review by staff, students, parents and the Board of Management.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 4/3/24

Signed: John Paul O'Shea

Date: 4/3/24