



# St Clare's Comprehensive School

## Inclusion Policy

*Teachers, Parents, students and the Board of Management of St Clare's Comprehensive School, amongst others, were consulted during the review and or formation of this policy.*

*This policy operates within the broader framework of the School Plan and other policies associated therein.*

**Ratified by the Board of Management on: 26th November 2024**

Gerard Reilly

Chairperson, Board of Management

Maeve Kelly

Secretary, Board of Management

## **Mission Statement:**

To create a caring, disciplined and Christian environment where all students and staff can reach their potential.

Aims:

- To educate for life.
- To promote tolerance, justice and respect.
- To encourage teamwork and respect individuality.
- To nurture ambition and leadership.
- To promote pride and confidence in one's own ability.(self esteem)
- To motivate our students in the pursuit of a high standard of academic achievement and critical thinking by providing a varied range of learning experiences and a varied range of teaching excellence.
- To help all students do their best
- To work in partnership with parents in the promotion of the overall good of the student, acknowledging the role of parents as the primary educators of the child.

### **School Values**

We are a learning Community

Learning with **Respect**

Learning with **kindness**

Learning with our **community**

Learning to experience **success**

### **Introduction/Vision**

This policy is in keeping with the Education Act 1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004, the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2004 and Circular 14/2017 (New Model of Allocation), the corresponding Guidelines for Post Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools (2017) and The NEPS Continuum of Support.

St. Clare's Comprehensive School is an inclusive school and no student will be refused admission on discriminatory grounds as referred to in Admissions Policy. No person in the school will be discriminated against on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, race, age, physical or intellectual disability or other additional educational needs. This list is not exhaustive.

The principles of inclusivity and respect are enshrined in St. Clare's Comprehensive School and are lived out as much as possible in the day-to-day life of the school. All students are members of a tutor group and a year group. The school aims to provide a caring, happy and safe environment to foster a love of lifelong learning and to develop each person's academic, physical, moral, cultural and spiritual potential.

St. Clare's Comprehensive School aspires to be a responsibly inclusive school. The principles of inclusivity and respect are enshrined in the Mission Statement of St. Clare's Comprehensive. Responsible inclusion means working towards what is best for the student. To have responsible inclusion, St. Clare's Comprehensive School has a curriculum, which includes all aspects of education in school life, (hidden, implied, social skills, life skills, extra-curricular activities etc) and that considers curriculum as a process and education as the development of students.

Inherent in this is an understanding that individual needs or learning differences should not prevent a student from flourishing in St. Clare's Comprehensive School. It is our aspiration that if a child is assessed or diagnosed as needing support, they will receive the assistance they require to enable them to reach their full potential (subject to this support being resourced by the Department of Education). This will involve a whole-school approach to supporting the child with individual needs.

## 2. Aims

St. Clare's Comprehensive School Aims to:

1. Highlight the various practices in the school that promote and champion inclusion.
2. Ensure that students with individual needs are educated in a responsibly inclusive environment.
3. Ensure that students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) 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.
4. Give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children who have a disability or who have other AEN's, as they relate to education.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Provide for the involvement of parents in the education of their children and in the decision-making process in relation to the children.
8. Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at school and at home.
9. Acknowledge the primary responsibility of the subject teacher and to work to support them in meeting the needs of the student.
10. Develop staff expertise in supporting students with AEN..
11. Ensure that students with individual needs are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and they are provided for in an inclusive way.
12. Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the individual needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area.
13. Ensure that additional educational needs are not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
14. 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 special educational needs.
15. Co-ordinate the advice, guidance and support of other agencies, including the staff of St. Clare's Comprehensive School, in supporting students with additional educational needs.
16. Provide programmes that meet the individual needs of a student. At Junior Cycle such programmes might include Level One & Two Learning Programmes (L2LPs), Short courses, Social Skills, Literacy and Numeracy Support. Senior Cycle programmes might include, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, Skills for Life, Life Skills, Preparation for Work and Preparation for Further Education.
17. Ensure that students can achieve the learning outcomes and intentions of their individual programmes where appropriate in the mainstream class.
18. Set high standards for students with AEN and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging them to achieve their full potential.
19. Ensure the effective and efficient use of resources.
20. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of students with additional educational needs.

### **3. The Student**

All students attending St.Clare's Comprehensive School are unique. Some students attending St. Clare's Comprehensive School have a variety of individual support needs. We aspire to put the student rather than any specific needs first.

These needs may include (but are not restricted to) the following:

#### **3.1 Physical/Medical Needs**

For example, hearing or visual impairment, wheelchair user, epilepsy, diabetes, cystic fibrosis and coordination difficulties.

#### **3.2 Emotional/Behavioural Needs**

While some of these students can present challenges, (e.g. ADHD, ODD, ADD & other disabilities can apply) with the right support the students can thrive in a "mainstream" environment.

#### **3.3 Specific Learning Difficulty**

Dyslexia	difficulty reading
Hyperlexia	difficulty with comprehension
Dyscalculia	difficulty with numbers
Dysgraphia	difficulty with writing
Dyspraxia	difficulty with motor skills

#### **3.4 General Learning Disability (GLD)**

Students can present with Borderline Mild, Mild, Moderate or Severe and Profound General Learning Disability. Teachers of students with GLD can access a variety of teaching tools and advice from the Additional Educational Needs(AEN)Team, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Guidelines for students with GLD and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). It is envisaged that students with Borderline Mild and High Mild GLD will participate in the Junior Cycle framework at Level 3 while students who cannot access Level 3 can avail of the Level 1/ Level 2 Learning Programmes. Level 2 is usually suitable for students with a low mild to high moderate GLD and Level 1 is suited to students with low moderate to severe GLD.

#### **3.5 Autism**

Autism is a condition that involves difficulties with

- Social Interaction
- Language and Communication
- Behaviour

Students who have autism when supported may succeed or exceed expectations in the inclusive environment of St. Clare's Comprehensive School. Some students may require the support of our ASD classroom depending on the individual students' needs, while others will be supported in mainstream.

### 3.6 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

English as an Additional Language is described as a temporary difficulty with accessing the curriculum due to a language deficit. EAL classes and tactics such as differentiated teaching styles and individual support where deemed necessary will help enable the EAL students to access the curriculum.

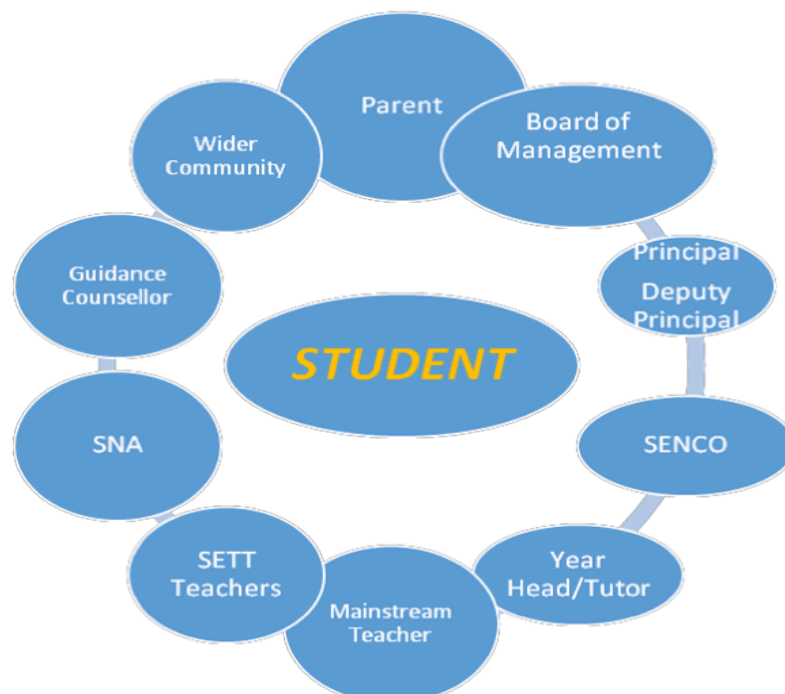
### 3.7 Giftedness

Gifted students may find aspects of secondary education challenging. Our school endeavours to address the needs of the particularly able students, using tactics such as differentiated teaching and individual support where deemed necessary.

Students have a critical role to play in the development and evaluation of their own learning.

The Student can:

- Become more independent as learners and are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Become successful as learners and better able to develop skills and strategies to maximise their own learning and to become critical thinkers.
- Become more aware of different teaching and learning styles – Meta- cognition.
- Contribute to the development of their educational plan.
- Become more aware of the importance and value of working cooperatively with others.
- Engage to the best of their ability in the different communities of the school.
- Achieve their potential.



## Autism Class (Tearmann)

St Clares Comprehensive has two classes for students diagnosed with Autism. Students apply to the school through our admissions process and are sanctioned a place by the Special Educational Needs Organiser working with the National Council for Special Education. The students in consultation with Parents can access all or some of their curriculum in the classroom or in mainstream depending on their level of need. The purpose of the Autism class is to assist students with Autism 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.

Students may require;

- a full time placement with some integration in mainstream, These students will follow a Level One or Level Two Learning Programme.
- a blended approach with some classes in mainstream and some in the Autism class.
- majority of classes in mainstream facilitated by SNAs and cooperative teachers.

## Moderate General Learning Disability (Rang Mhic Dhiarmada)

St Clares Comprehensive School has one class for students diagnosed with a moderate general learning disability. Students apply to the school through our admissions process and are sanctioned a place in the class by the Special Educational Needs Organiser working with the National Council of Special Education. Students sanctioned a place in the class will follow either a Level One or Level Two Learning Programme. Students also attend Check and Connect and some mainstream classes.. The purpose of the class is to assist students with a Moderate General Learning Disability 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.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### 4. Parents/Guardian

Where the word "parent" is used, it is understood to refer also to "guardian" if appropriate. The effectiveness of any assessment or intervention will be crucially influenced by the involvement of the student's parents as per the Department Education Act 1998, 'the parent is the primary educator'.

- Parents will access information through the School website regarding AEN e.g. The Inclusion Policy.
- Parents have a central role to play in the School transition programmes, primary to secondary and secondary to National Learning Network or Further Education and Training Opportunities.
- Throughout the year further updates and details will be communicated to parents. In return parents are expected to keep the AENCO updated with developments from their perspective. They are also expected to work closely with the AEN team to make their child's learning experience as positive as possible.

- Parents are invited to contact the AENCO during the year in addition to meeting the AEN teachers at Parent/Teacher meetings.
- Parents are encouraged to attend school induction evenings where they can obtain further information from the AENCO regarding AEN.
- Permission in writing is sought from parents if a student is to be referred for assessment. A meeting is arranged to discuss the outcome of the assessment, with a view to creating and developing and reviewing an educational plan.
- Parents are expected to support the work of the school with the student and to ensure the correct use and maintenance of any aids or equipment that are provided for the student.
- Parents are expected to share any information, reports, or reports pending from health professionals, and/or concerns regarding their child's development. Copies of professional reports should be provided to the school at the enrolment stage
- Parents are encouraged to support the work of the school and keep the subject teacher, AEN teacher, and/or Year Head Informed of the progress and challenges they observe in their child's learning.

## **5 Board of Management**

Ultimate responsibility for the education of children with individual needs in St. Clare's Comprehensive rests with the Board of Management.

The Board and the Principal acting on its behalf will:

- a. ensure that all students' Additional Educational Needs are identified and assessed.
- b. ensure that St Clare's Comprehensive School has an Additional Educational Needs policy team in place,
- c. monitor the implementation of that policy and to ensure its evaluation.
- d. ensure that a balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided in St Clare's Comprehensive School to ensure in as far as is practical that students with Additional Educational Needs leave St Clare's Comprehensive School with the skills necessary to participate to the level of their capacity in an inclusive way in society.
- e. ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with Additional Educational Needs.
- f. promote the development of positive partnerships with Parents / Guardians and other relevant agencies / personnel.
- g. ensure that Parents / Guardians are informed of their child's Additional Educational Needs and how these needs are being met.
- h. To ensure that Parents / Guardians are consulted with regard to and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education.
- i. ensure that the Special Educational Plan forms part of the School Plan.

- j. develop a whole St Clare's Comprehensive School approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of the Education for Persons with Additional Educational Needs Act 2004.

## **6 Principal**

The School Principal should:

1. Assume overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the school's policies and procedures relating to the inclusion of students with special educational needs
2. Oversee a whole-school approach to assessment and screening to identify needs and to guide the allocation of appropriate supports
3. Ensure effective engagement with feeder primary schools to support the transition of students with special educational needs
4. In collaboration with the in-school management team, discharge a key function in the deployment of staff, allocation of resources, organisation of students, and timetabling
5. Ensure that systems are in place for the effective sharing of relevant information on students' needs with all subject teachers
6. Facilitate the continuing professional development of all teachers in relation to the education of students with special educational needs and ensure that all school staff (subject teachers and special education teachers, guidance counsellors, special needs assistants) are clear regarding their roles and responsibilities in this area
7. Ensure that whole-school procedures are established to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, students, and external professionals/agencies.
8. Form an AEN core 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 his/her overall statutory responsibilities, the principal may delegate the performance of specific responsibilities to other staff members, including members of the Additional education needs team.

## **7 Additional Educational Support Needs Co-ordinator (AENCO)**

The Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator will have overall responsibility for the management of the daily operations of the AEN team. These duties are reviewed regularly and may change to ensure the priorities of the AEN team are addressed. The special roles and responsibilities of personnel are as described in the DES publication "Inclusion of Students with Special Needs Post Primary Guidelines 2007". The AENCO will liaise with the Principal/Deputy Principal and administration staff regarding Enrolment policy and allocation of places in September/October every year for the following academic year.

AEN Coordinator (AENCO);

1. Communicates with the principal in relation to AEN matters on an on-going basis

2. Liaises with external agencies about the provision for students with additional needs
3. Liaises with the NEPS psychologist, the AEN team and class teachers to prioritise students for psychological assessments (NEPS) and Occupational Therapy (OT) assessments.
4. Liaises with all staff to identify, support, and monitor students with additional needs
5. Co-ordinates regular AEN team planning meetings to ensure effective communication and support for students with additional needs
6. Collaborates with senior management and the AEN team in creating timetables for additional support
7. Meets with parents, where necessary, regarding any concerns about their child, advise parents on procedures for availing of special needs services and update them regarding their progress
8. Develops and maintains electronic and written records in the AEN folder
9. Organises and facilitates standardised testing.
10. Co-ordinates the screening of students for additional support, using the results of standardised tests.
11. Manages ordering and ensure sufficient stock of assessments
12. Selects students for external diagnostic assessment, where parental permission has been sought and granted.
13. Monitors the progress of students.
14. Maintains lists of students who are receiving additional support - using the continuum of support.
15. In conjunction with AEN teachers, devise AEN Student Profile for incoming students with an Educational Psychological Report or clinical report on file
16. Develops and reviews student support plans of the mainstream students in collaboration with relevant subject teachers and SEN core team members where necessary.
17. Organises and purchases resources
18. Assists in the screening and testing of students when a referral or concern is raised.
19. In conjunction with the Transition Co-ordinator and AEN teachers, plans the transition for students with AEN from Primary to post-primary
20. Provides supplementary teaching for literacy and numeracy on a withdrawal and in class support basis.
21. Works with the AEN team to co-ordinate list of students granted Irish Exemptions
22. Works with students and families who apply for Irish exemptions and keeps all necessary documentation on file.
23. Coordinate and assess students that may be eligible for RACE and assist in making RACE applications as required in conjunction with Guidance Counsellors.
24. Coordinates and makes applications for students who have been recommended Assistive Technology.
25. Assist with the preparation and distribution of SNA timetables

## **8. Special Class Coordinators**

1. Being the main point of contact for parents.
2. Involving parents in the education planning process (e.g., Individual Learning Plans, home/school communication, phone calls and meetings as necessary)

3. Overseeing the preparation of Student Support Plans and/or Care plans with the student, their parents, their teachers and in consultation with their multi-disciplinary teams.
4. Setting up the environment to suit the sensory preferences of the learner
5. Coordinating the supporting work on the SNAs on a regular basis
6. Working with mainstream class teachers to identify suitable opportunities for integration/inclusion in mainstream classes.
7. Working with mainstream class teachers to identify and implement accommodations that the student may need to be successful in the mainstream classroom
8. Attending weekly meetings of the Additional Educational Needs Core Team.
9. Gathering information on new students in the class
10. Meeting with relevant multidisciplinary professionals
11. Organising and facilitating a range of structured lunchtime activities
12. Holding weekly progress meetings with the SNA team. (Continuous ongoing informal contact with SNAs re student needs and progress)
13. Coordinating work in last week of May preparing and planning for next school year
14. Holding meetings with the teaching team
15. Regular communication with parents/guardians (add this to 2 above)
16. Organising a Transition programme for students starting in the class in consultation with 6th class teacher, CDNT, Parents and students.

#### **9. The Additional Educational Needs Core Team**

The Principal, Deputy Principal, AEN Coordinator, Autism Coordinator, Moderate class coordinator, EAL teacher and a Special Needs Assistant will form the core AEN team with overall responsibility for in-school assessment and intervention, support to students, teachers, and parents, and as appropriate, link to outside agencies. The activities of the AEN team may include both teaching & non-teaching duties, including assessment, RACE applications, AT applications, meetings with students and parents, and other administrative duties as appropriate to the role. The roles should be viewed as interdependent and collaborative and assume a degree of flexibility, particularly during peak assessment times. The activities of the EAL team include completing language assessment, grading, allocating resources, timetabling for both students and teachers.

#### **10. Additional Education Needs Whole School Team**

The Additional Educational Needs (Whole School) Team (AEN) Team comprises of; the Student with AEN, Parents, Board of Management, Principal, Deputy Principal(s), AENCO, Special Class Coordinators, Year Heads, EAL teacher, Class Tutors, Subject teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Guidance Counsellor and visiting teachers. AEN team meetings are held weekly with the Principal, Deputy Principal, AENCO, Special Class Coordinators, AEN and EAL teachers.

## **11. Student Care Team**

Teachers involved in the Student Care Team will participate in the AEN programme in the St. Clare's Comprehensive, working with the AEN team on an on-going basis to provide support and services to the relevant students. This will include, but is not limited to:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Middle management team
- Year Heads
- Guidance Teachers

### **Chaplain**

The School Chaplain has a specific mission toward the spiritual care and faith development of the entire school population and the promotion of apostolic activities within the school. The work of the Chaplain can be described under four headings: 1. Ministry to the students 2. Ministry to the family of the student 3. Ministry to the staff 4. Ministry through the Liturgy

### **4.8 Additional Support Needs.**

A team of staff will teach individual and small groups of students requiring learning support. Develop Student Support Files for these students.

- Offer advice to subject teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources in their subject teaching.
- Liaise with Year Heads re specific requirements for students in their year group.
- Liaise with Parents/ Guardians if and when required.
- AEN coordinator will meet regularly, usually once a week, with the AEN Team to support all students with AEN.
- Senior management will meet regularly with the Special Needs Assistant providing care and support to students in their year group.
- Liaise with external agencies if requested to do so by management or the AENCO. Where there are large numbers of students with AEN, administrative duties are assigned to some teachers in the AEN team. Some AEN team members will be required to assist in the testing of students eg. RACE etc.

### **4.9 Subject Teachers**

The subject teacher has a key role in bringing about the successful inclusion of students with additional educational needs in mainstream classes, moderate learning unit and the ASD class. The class teacher has primary responsibility for the educational progress of all students in his/her class. It is particularly important that all class teachers create a classroom environment that accommodates and takes account of all learning and physical difficulties. It is expected that teachers will implement differentiated approaches to teaching,

learning and assessment to ensure that the skills of all students, including students with AEN are developed.

Subject teachers will make themselves aware of the special educational needs of students in their classes. Information from the feeder primary schools is made available at the first staff meeting at the beginning of the year. This information is available on the shared AEN Google Drive and all teachers have access to this. Teachers take steps to inform themselves of the additional needs of any student in their classes and to bring any new concerns regarding students to the AENCO

The subject teacher also plays an important role in the early identification of students with AEN. The subject teacher is alert to the possibility of general and specific learning difficulties and brings their concerns to the attention of the AEN team. A key element of successful provision for students with AEN is a high level of consultation and cooperation between the class teacher and the AEN team. A subject teacher, tutor or Year Head can refer any student they are concerned about to the AENCO.

The academic progress of students through the school tests in the first instance with the mainstream class teacher. In order to ensure that, as a school, we meet the needs of all our students with additional educational needs, all teachers are encouraged to:-

- Be aware of the School's policy and procedures for dealing with students with AEN
- Seek advice from the AEN Co-ordinator or members of the AEN team regarding students with AEN
- Take responsibility for their own continuous professional development particularly with regard to common difficulties, e.g. Dyslexia
- Develop an attitude of ownership to the education of students in their classes with AEN
- Plan how to most effectively engage the ISA, where relevant, in consultation with the AEN Co-ordinator
- Support/encourage independence in the student; this is particularly important for Senior Cycle students.

#### **4.8 SNA Support**

SNAs are assigned to address particular care needs which if left unaddressed would be a barrier to inclusion. Each student assigned an SNA will have access depending on the level of need. All students assigned an SNA will have a student support plan with a specified role for an SNA. The role of the SNA, whilst being mindful of health & safety, is to support students participation in all activities of the school and to ensure that, wherever possible, their additional care needs do not prevent inclusion. SNAs support programmes aimed at developing students independence and life skills, in and outside the classroom.

Depending on an allocation being granted, an SNA will cater for the care needs and particular non-educational difficulties of some students.

The SNA's will provide assistance as required which could be in the area of student organisation, extra-curricular activities, helping teachers in the supervision of students with AEN, or helping students to become more independent and self-reliant.

Students are granted "Access to SNA Support" and this could mean that the number of students in receipt of Access to SNA Support can be greater than the number of SNAs allocated to the school. In this case, senior management must assign access based on primary care needs. Therefore, students may be in some classes without SNA support.-SNAs should be involved in training and attending meetings relevant to their role. They will also carry out duties as assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal and AENCO:

#### **4.9 Guidance Counsellor**

As a member of the AEN team, the Guidance Counsellor will:

- Work with members of the AEN team in facilitating the education of students with AEN and their inclusion in the School.
- Liaise with AEN Team in relation to DARE, HEAR, RACE applications to ensure appropriate accommodations are in place for State Exams and in the CAO process.
- Counselling in personal, educational and career development.
- Provide career information.
- Present at the Information Evening for students and parents progressing to Senior Cycle.
- Consult with parents and staff.
- Provide vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience (as part of the LCVP Program).
- Work closely with Year Heads and the ASN team to identify students requiring support.
- Facilitate individual appointments for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Transition Year and Leaving Certificate year groups to support them in making career decisions.
- Advising students and parents on subject choices.

#### **4.10 Outside Agencies**

St. Clare's Comprehensive School has fostered and maintained positive links with a significant number of outside agencies that support our students.

These include:

- National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS)
- Children's Disability Network Team (HSE) / (CDNT)
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- National Learning Networks (NLN)
- Special Education Support Services (SESS)
- State Examinations Commission (SEC)

- HSE Social services
- Middletown Centre for Autism
- Home Youth Liaison Services
- Occupational therapists
- Outside Agencies – both public and private services to include:
- Speech and language therapists
- TESS- TUSLA Education Welfare Support service
- National Learning Networks
- Medical practitioners

This list is not exhaustive and the school will develop further links with outside agencies as the needs of the students dictate.

It may be necessary to hold case conferences with relevant professional experts with the permission and knowledge of the student's parents (and often their attendance) in order to determine the best approach and provision for that student. It may be necessary to complete questionnaires/forms from these agencies regarding our students. These forms are filled with the permission of the relevant parents and always returned directly to the supporting agent.

## Identifying Students with Individual Needs and Learning Differences

### 5.1 Access to Support

As of March 2017, there is a new model of allocating teaching resources to students. Individual students are no longer granted specific hours from the NCSE based on their diagnosis. Since September 2017, schools have the autonomy to allocate teaching resources based on the level of a student's need, rather than on the basis of diagnosis.

Decisions on the support offered to students will be made based on a number of criteria. These include, but are not limited to:

- Information gathered from a psychological assessment (where the student has presented with same).
- Information gathered from parents.
- Information gathered from primary school.
- Teacher referrals: student's learning, emotional, behavioural and social needs are evaluated. The AEN coordinator will gather all the relevant information and consult with school management, the parents and the student.
- Formal and informal school assessment
- Observation by teachers.
- Communication with outside agencies.
- Student self-referral.

A student plan is then developed to support the student. This plan will be made available to all staff, monitored and reviewed and student progress will be recorded.

## **5.2 Methods of Identifying Students with Individual Needs and Learning Differences**

- On acceptance of their child's place in the school, parents will forward relevant documentation to the AENCO, as requested in the letter offering a place. This is in line with the Admissions Policy of St. Clare's Comprehensive.
- The AENCO then works with feeder schools on a transfer programme. This may include the AENCO visiting feeder primary schools etc
- The AENCO and/or Principal will meet with parents in order to ensure that adequate resources can be accessed for that student.
- It is to be understood that the ability of the school to respond to the educational needs of any student applying for admission is dependent on the Department of Education supplying the appropriate facilities and resources to allow the school to answer that need. It may therefore be necessary for the Board of Management to defer enrolment of a student.

### **Model of SEN provision**

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

##### **Support for All**

The subject teacher considers how to differentiate the learning programme effectively to accommodate the needs of all students in the class. A Student Support Plan is shared in Google Drive by the AEN Department for identified students with Additional Educational Needs. In-class support may be assigned on a case-by-case basis whereby a Cooperative Teacher comes into the classroom to support the classroom teacher in meeting the full range of needs of the students in the class.

Where students continue to present with significant difficulties, despite whole school interventions such as differentiated teaching, Support for Some is initiated.

##### **Support for Some**

Support at this level can take many forms, for example, cooperative teaching, small group or individualised tuition.

A Student Support Plan outlines the nature of support given and timeframe for review and is recorded in a student's file in the AEN office as well as in the Google Drive. The SET team offers targeted support on the basis of data gathering. The SET teacher completes targets for students and reviews targets and actions on a regular basis.

Where a student has an exemption from Irish or a reduced timetable, support is given during the class periods from which he/she is exempt in so far as resources allow.

## **Support for a Few**

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.

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:

- Support Teaching
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- Curricular reduction

The period of intervention recommended to each student is dependent on the nature and extent of their individual need. The duration of provision is reviewed at the end of every half term. 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 parents/guardians, class teachers and student.

## **Provision for EAL students**

### Identification and Assessment

The school identifies students requiring EAL during the entry application process. Teachers are also responsible for identifying students' EAL needs. The school is responsible for and assessing EAL students' needs, including their language proficiency. This involves using NCCA assessment tools. assessments provided by the NCCA (<https://ncca.ie/en/resources/eal-post-primary-assessment-kit/>) and/or observations in the classroom.

Student support plans are developed which set out specific targets and strategies for supporting student's language development and academic progress. These student support plans are reviewed and updated regularly and involve the student's parents/guardians and any relevant outside agencies. In class support

EAL students benefit from targeted support in the classroom, such as differentiated instructions, visual aids, and/or collaborative learning activities. Teachers are provided with

resource recommendations to help support where possible co-teachers are assigned to classes with EAL learners.

In some cases, EAL students may need additional support outside the classroom, such as small group or one-to-one instruction. This instruction is provided by a specialist EAL teacher.

EAL students' progress is assessed and evaluated regularly to ensure that their needs are being met and they are making sufficient academic progress. This involves a variety of assessments and adapting assessments to take into account the student's language proficiency.

## Testing

### **Standardised Tests for First Year Students:**

- In the first term all 1<sup>st</sup> year students are screened using standardised screening tests in literacy and numeracy – CAT 4, NGRT PTM 11
- In the last term all first year students are assessed with the NGRT test again and results compared with the earlier NGRT result to monitor how students are progressing.
- All results are shared with parents.
- Students who are achieving below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile in literacy and numeracy may be selected for further diagnostic assessments
- If considered appropriate, these students' parents will be offered the opportunity for their child to avail of support.
- Further referrals may be made to outside agencies HSE etc , privately, in consultation with parents and the SENO, where it is deemed appropriate by the AENCO or Principal.

### **Standardised Tests for Second Year Students:**

- In the last term, 2nd year students are assessed using the PTM 12 and NGRT.
- Results are compared to the student's first year results and support offered if required.
- All results are shared with the parents /guardians.

### **Standardised Tests for Fifth Year Students:**

- In the first term, 5th year students are assessed using the CAT

- Results are compared to the student's previous results and support offered if required.
- All results are shared with the parents /guardians.

### **Students with AEN who transfer from another post-primary school:**

Students with AEN who transfer from another post-primary school are expected to present with their educational passport and ensure that information is passed to the AENCO. These students will be assessed according to the criteria used for assessing students and will have the appropriate resources made available to them.

### **On-going assessment of students:**

- From time to time, it can emerge that a student who was not previously identified as having individual needs and learning differences is experiencing barriers to learning. For students who continue to cause concern, referral to the AEN Team may be appropriate.
- If the AEN Team decides that a student would benefit from further intervention they will assess the student informally. Parents are informed and their consent is sought prior to any assessment taking place. The outcome of this assessment and school resources will determine what course of action is taken.
- The results of the assessment may indicate that a student does not have a learning difficulty. In this case the student's needs are supported through the structures available to all students. If the results of the assessment show that the student has emotional/social difficulties a decision may be made to the parents for a referral to a relevant outside agency.
- In its operations, the school shall be guided by the New Model of Allocation (DES) [https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014\\_2017.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0014_2017.pdf) , the DES Guidelines

### **Summary - Informal assessment may involve all or some of the following:**

- Observations from mainstream teachers
- Consultation with subject teachers, parents, and students
- Student Journal
- Meeting with student
- Formal assessment may involve some of the following:
  - Review of Primary Passport
  - Review of in-house exams and reports
  - Behaviour Record (if appropriate)
  - Consultation with Guidance Counsellor
  - Administering and interpreting diagnostic tests

### **Tracking, Recording & Reviewing Provision of AEN Students.**

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.

## **Irish Exemptions**

The study of Irish is compulsory in the Irish school system. Receiving an exemption from the study of Irish is a serious decision and one that is highly regulated by the Department of Education, as outlined in Circular 0055/2022.

To be granted an exemption from the study of Irish is a process that takes time. Test results need to be interpreted, information needs to be gathered, plans need to be put in place and reviewed and every opportunity needs to be given to the student to succeed in the subject. Having a recommendation of an exemption by a Psychologist/Psychiatrist/etc. is not enough in its own right to be granted an exemption, as outlined in the previously mentioned circular. It is incumbent on the school to ensure the process applied is in line with the Department of Education's circular, without exception. Please be aware that decisions regarding accessing resource teaching, in lieu of Irish instruction time, is a separate decision completely and being granted an exemption does not automatically qualify a student for resource support.

## **Student Support File**

A Student Support File (soft copy) is used to plan interventions and to track a student's pathway through the Continuum of Support. It facilitates documenting progress and needs over time and assists in providing an appropriate level of support to students, in line with their level of need. The Student Support File is based on the NEPS template and is kept securely in the AEN area of the schools Google Drive where it is updated on a regular basis. The AENCO is responsible for coordinating, developing and maintaining the digital student support file for school support (some) and school support plus (few) in collaboration with the AEN core team

All digital support files include:

- Cover sheet with student's details

- A timeline of actions
- Record of support received
- Standardised/ Diagnostic test scores
- Strengths & Needs

### **Individual AEN Files**

The AENCO may open a Student Support File (hard copy) once a student is placed on classroom support on the continuum.

All students' AEN files are stored in a locked filing cabinet in the AEN Office. At the beginning of September new SET and SNAs are given training on managing, maintaining, and organising the files.

- In September, the AENCO meets the parents to collaborate in drafting an IEP, action planning for the student commences at this stage.
- In January/February, the IEP is reviewed at an IEP meeting and amended if necessary
- In May, information is gathered by reviewing formal and informal assessments. This informs student progress and IEP review in September.

The following are stored in hard copy:

- Student Support File
- Psychological Report
- Copy of referrals made to outside agencies
- Copy of reports from outside agencies
- Record of AEN meetings with parents, outside agencies and inter-school meetings
- Record of AEN correspondence between parents, outside agencies and school staff

### **Individual AEN files for students in special classes**

Students in both Tearmann and Rang Mhic Dhiarmada have individual support files. It is the responsibility for the coordinators of these classes to follow the above procedures in relation to student files and to report on the progress at the AEN core team meetings at relevant times throughout the school year.

## **Allocation of Resources and Teaching of Students with AEN**

NCSE resources in St. Clare's Comprehensive School will be directed towards the student with the greatest need and in accordance with the model of allocation for resource hours.

The AEN Team will interpret the outcome of assessments and consider the most appropriate form of intervention for the student, in consultation with parents, subject teachers, SNAs and relevant outside agencies.

St. Clare's Comprehensive School aspires to educate students with AEN in an inclusive setting within the mainstream tutor group/ year group supported by an SNA, where appropriate. This may take the form of co-teaching in particular subjects. It may also take the form of small class groups. One - to - one classes may occur if other students of similar needs are not available at that time in the day.

If withdrawal of students with AEN from mainstream classes for supplementary or support teaching is deemed necessary, parents' permission will be sought.

## **Models of Provision of Support**

We aim to provide a model of responsible inclusion that best meets the needs of the individual student, in line with the New Model of Allocation and Guidelines (DES).

As an inclusive school, support for achieving learning outcomes or intentions in the mainstream class group is the preferred method of provision. Co-Teaching – where students with additional educational needs and all students are supported in the mainstream classroom when an additional teacher teaches and supports students in cooperation with the subject teacher.

Small group classes are arranged on the basis of similar need profiles and the capacity to withdraw students at the same time. The organisation of these groupings is the responsibility of the deputy principal and the Principal. Withdrawal for small groups usually occurs at times when the students have official exemptions from particular subjects.

Individual support classes are used only where a student requires specialised individual support.

Literacy and numeracy, curricular and organisational, emotional, and social skills, and technology support is given during individual and small groups where appropriate.

An alternative timetable may also be arranged for a small number of students for whom it is deemed necessary, after consultation with the parents and teachers. These students have their timetable reduced because they cannot sustain a full curriculum. In this instance appropriate communication with DES will occur.

Then SENO allocates places in the special classes. (see Admissions Policy for detailed information).

## Approaches to Learning in the AEN Team

The AEN Team will provide a variety of experiences/activities during a course of study and during a lesson. Teachers will identify the learning style of the individual and use suitable methodologies to appeal to the kinaesthetic, auditory, sensory, linguistic, visual and interpersonal intelligences. There are opportunities for individual and group activities.

Lessons are conducted in a secure, supportive and disciplined manner. The students and the staff interact in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect. Our school believes that learning takes place most effectively in the context of a caring relationship and that a good teacher/student rapport fosters trust and promotes self-reliance and initiative in the student.

Some of the programmes offered include:-

- Level Two Learning Programmes
- Literacy and Numeracy Programmes
- Social Skills
- Independence Programmes
- Behaviour Support

### Reasonable Accommodations

The AEN Team will liaise (members of the AEN team will test the relevant students using the assessments recommended by SEC) with the State Examinations Commission (SEC) to secure and facilitate reasonable accommodations for eligible students with individual needs and learning differences during State Examinations. Eligibility is based on the criteria set out by the SEC. <https://www.examinations.ie/schools/IR-1004-57457486.pdf> Application dates and guidelines are given to schools each academic year by the SEC. Parental permission is always sought at this stage.

Students awarded RACE will then receive guidance from the AENCO and appropriate teacher to ensure they understand their accommodation in the state examination.

Students with individual needs and learning differences sit mock exams in accordance with the school procedures. Within resource constraints, students who have officially been awarded RACE for State Examinations may have the benefit of the same in mock examinations.

### Equipment

The AEN Team will liaise with the Department of Education and Skills and the NCSE/SENO to secure and facilitate personal equipment (such as laptop computers, mobile devices,

notebooks, voice recognition software) for eligible students with individual needs and learning differences. Assistive Technology (AT) Assistive technology plays an important role in the education of pupils with unique needs. Computer Based AT applications can help overcome some of the barriers created by a learning difficulty and can allow pupils to read, write and communicate more effectively. If a student has a recommendation for assistive technology in a professional report an application may be made to the SENO as per Circular No 0010/2013. If this application is successful: The equipment will be purchased. Although the equipment will be sanctioned for a particular pupil the equipment will remain the property of the school and will be available for allocation to subsequent pupils with similar disabilities.

Specialist furniture and equipment may be recommended by professionals working with students with SEN. The school will liaise with the SENO to ensure appropriate furniture and equipment is available to students to ensure access to an inclusive environment.

### School Transport

The school can apply to the SENO for transport (with parental approval) if students with SEN are unable to access school transport because of their special needs.

### Code of Behaviour

All students in St. Clare's Comprehensive School are expected to adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour. However, it is accepted that for some students extra layers of support/interventions will be needed before implementing sanctions according to the Code of Behaviour. This does not remove sanctions but adjusts the sanctions to meet the individual situation. It is accepted that if the ladder of referral or discipline pathway does not change the student's behaviour, students will face appropriate sanctions. ([See Code of Behaviour for detailed information](#))

### Health and Safety

Every staff member and student are 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 student with AEN, every effort will be made to ensure that the supports to which the student 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.

### Relationship with other School Policies

The Inclusion Policy adheres to the terms of all other policies in St. Clare's Comprehensive School.

Other relevant policies

Child Protection

Administration of Medication

One to one teaching

Intimate Care Policy

Code of Behaviour

Anti Bullying

Data Protection



Appendix 1

St. Clare's Comprehensive School - MIC Post-Primary Provision Map© (Fitzgerald, 2018)

Area of Need <sup>1</sup>	Whole-School Support for All <i>Interventions delivered at whole-school level to support and promote positive behaviour and learning for ALL</i>	School Support for Some <i>Interventions delivered at School Support/ support for SOME level to support students with SEN who are in receipt of additional interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework</i>	School Support for Few <i>Interventions delivered at School Support Plus/ Support for Few level to support students with SEN who are in receipt of additional interventions through the Continuum of Support Framework and external professionals</i>
<b>Social and Emotional Learning</b>	Range of speakers organised throughout the year PE offered to all classes Primary Transition Programme Student Passports School Induction Anti-bullying policy SPHE Curriculum Student Support Team Teacher observations Student referral forms Student Support Team Career Guidance -All Year groups Cyber Bullying Speaker Record systems Critical Incident Response Team Parental engagement	Student Support Team Guidance referral system SEN department referral Diagnostic informal assessment SSPs/BSPs Working Things Out Small group withdrawal HYL - Group Activities	Individualised school support plans JC L2LPs – ASD plans aimed at emotional & social learning. Input from NEPS / NCSE/ CAMHS Reduced timetables for students having difficulty Individual in-school counselling Individual guidance counselling SSPs/ BSPs Reduced subject load HYL one to one. One to one guidance appointments Stay Safe Programme Zones of Regulation – for ASD class for emotional regulation

<sup>1</sup> Area of need will include students who are identified as having additional needs at school level (i.e. without a psychological report) and those whom have an identified disability with a report from external agencies like, for example, ASD, ADHD, Dyspraxia.

	<p>Student voice Cooperative group work</p>		
<b><i>Social and Communicati on Skills</i></b>	<p>SPHE curriculum Well-being committee Public speaking – debating School Musical Field trips including foreign trip Working Things Out Why Try</p> <p>Differentiated questioning Scaffolding/ recasting/ imitation and expansion Gaisce award (TY, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>) School Choir Sports teams Student Council initiatives Whole staff CPD</p>	<p>SEN department referral</p> <p>SSPs/BSPs One to One Guidance Appointments</p>	<p>Individualised school support plans JC L2LPs - ASD Class &amp; Moderate Class Input from NEPS / NCSE/ SLT Reduced timetables Individual in-school counselling SSPs/BSPs One to One Guidance Interviews – Mock Interviews Visiting Teachers – Visually Impaired &amp; Hearing Impaired</p>
<b><i>Self-manage ment and/ or organisation al skills</i></b>	<p>Class tutor system Regular outside speakers to help with organisational skills -Amazing Brains 8-week transition timetable – taster programme – 1<sup>st</sup> Yrs Incoming 1<sup>st</sup> year primary school visits Visual Supports/ Visual Schedules – Tearmann – Autism Class Classroom routines Graphic organizers, mind maps, Journals - timetable, school codes of behaviour, Lockers</p>	<p>SEN department referral Lockers SSPs Quiet place - Tearmain</p>	<p>ASD Class – Use velcro checklists on lots of areas. One to one guidance available</p>

	Homework given. Handouts Co- Teaching		
<b>Study Skills</b>	After School Study Pre-mock in preparation for Mocks and State exams Mind mapping & Graphic organisers Highlighting and summarising strategies	Study skills – SPHE module Differentiated handouts Visual representing SSP	Individual study skills development SSP One to one – Guidance re study planning on request.
<b>Life Skills</b>	LCVP curriculum option for 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> year students Organisation of School trips/events Work experience C.V. creation Wellbeing programme Gaisce awards	Conflict – SPHE Topic	Individualised school support plans Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Occupational Therapist JC L2LPs CAMHS and NEPS support/ intervention SNA Access
<b>Behaviour</b>	Merit system Student support team Staff monitoring lunch/break times Code of Behaviour- Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support Use of Journals Detention Awards Parent/guardian communication	Report sheets Seating plans encouraged throughout school BSPs SSP	Individualised school support plans Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Education Welfare Officer Year head liaison, go to person for students needing time out of class.  Behaviour target setting and review CAMHS instructed initiatives NCSE (NBSS) tailored behavioural and academic programmes  Movement Breaks & Sensory Room used to help students regulate.  Regular check in - check out throughout the day

			HYL
<b>Language</b>	<p>Multi-sensory approach to subject teaching</p> <p>Key word displays in classrooms</p> <p>Teaching the language of subject/s,</p> <p>Word banks – literacy Diary</p> <p>Class discussions and debating</p> <p>Orally presenting work</p> <p>Role play</p> <p>Mock orals preparations scaffolding information in classes and using visuals to support where and when possible.</p> <p>Think/Pair/Share. Wait time</p> <p>JC CBA</p> <p>ICT</p> <p>Visual Supports around the school</p>	<p>SEN department referral</p> <p>Withdrawal from third language / Irish (if exempt) class for extra support with English</p> <p>Keys words journal</p> <p>Mind maps, graphic organisers</p> <p>oral descriptive and expressive skills development</p> <p>Sight word building</p> <p>EAL support</p> <p>Vocabulary Diaries</p> <p>School Library - Novels</p>	<p>SEN language development linked to Speech and language therapist or identified needs.</p> <p>Speech and Language Recommendations – practised in class – Moderate Class SSPs</p>
<b>Literacy</b>	<p>Literacy committee</p> <p>Sharing of learning intentions / keywords</p> <p>Public speaking – debating offered</p> <p>Integration of technology into subject teaching</p> <p>Standardised Intake tests</p> <p>Primary school liaison</p> <p>Follow up CAT4 test</p> <p>Further testing in 2nd and 5th year.</p> <p>Literacy plan,</p> <p>AFL,</p> <p>Literacy Journals,</p> <p>AFL,</p> <p>School newsletter TYs</p> <p>Library access to books for students reading ages. -moderate class, dictionaries, use of ICT.</p>	<p>SEN department referral</p> <p>Small group withdrawal</p> <p>Individual classes timetabled</p> <p>RACE accommodations for state exams</p> <p>Classroom content notes provided by teachers</p>	<p>SSPs</p> <p>Individual classes timetabled</p> <p>RACE accommodations for state exams</p> <p>Reading Material – levels available</p> <p>Level 2 Literacy PLUs – Moderate ASD Class</p>

<p><b>Numeracy</b></p>	<p>Staff training in highlighting Numeracy across the curriculum Multi-sensory approach to subject teaching Sharing of learning intentions Integration of technology into subject teaching Notes/ content available on Google classroom Intake screening Follow up CAT4 testing Further post testing in 2nd and 5th year, Maths week, teaching of vocabulary, Key word banking, Numeracy links identified in all subject areas, AFL, Diagnostic pre and post testing. Use of ICT</p>	<p>SEN department referral Small group withdrawal Individual classes timetabled Notes handed out SSPs Access to real life situations</p>	<p>SSPs SNA's allocated to assist in class Individual classes timetabled Tailored maths initiatives Organisational skills Sequential development Scaffolding Pre-teaching class topics Social maths/ functional maths Level2 JCP PLUs</p>
<p><b>Physical and/or Sensory</b></p>	<p>Sensory Room Primary school liaison prior to enrolment Building is fully accessible with lifts and ramps Corridors wide enough so -one way system Adequate natural light in building Green space around building Building is clean and safe Range of modern PE equipment Teachers made aware of student's difficulties, Seating plans,</p>	<p>Additional toilet and changing facilities with space for wheelchairs Sensory room Sensory breaks Movement breaks Fidgets in moderate class Lift Access in the gym SSPs Care bags for students with anxiety.</p>	<p>SSPs Collaboration with outside agencies e.g. Occupational Therapist / HSE Student with visual impairment situated in base class with access to computer and digital magnifier Teachers using auditory system for students with hearing impairment  Sloping boards Heathfield chairs Use of Bambach chair Balance board Sensory diets</p>

			SSPs
<b>Medical</b>	Identified staff to all to administer general first aid and monitor for signs of illness.	Identified staff administer medication as directed by GP.	GP/ HSE external monitoring ISA support