

Salesian Secondary College, Pallaskenry



AEN / Learning Support Department Policy

2026/27



This policy applies to all students with AEN, including students with exceptional ability, who attend Salesian Secondary College. It is also intended to serve the school community including the Board of Management, the Principal, the teaching and ancillary staff and parents.

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A whole school approach to the Education and Welfare of our students.

The student is central to all our endeavours.

The Student is at the centre of the educational process in Salesian Secondary College.

The Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, The Wider Community, Special Education Teacher, Parents, Teachers, Year Heads are all involved in allowing all students to maximise their potential, help them grow in confidence and also help them become effective contributors to society.

Introduction

Mission Statement

We, the Teaching Staff at Salesian Secondary College, under the Trusteeship of the Salesian Order, blend the heritage received from Don Bosco (founder of the Salesian Order) and Mary Mazzarello (founder of the Salesian Sisters) with the experience and insights of today, aim to:

- Promote the holistic development – body, emotions, mind and spirit – of the young people with whom we work.
- Create happy, spontaneous and welcoming environments in the places in which we work. This will help the young people to feel they belong and are appreciated and valued unconditionally. In such an environment the young people are supported and challenged to develop their full potential.
- Provide leadership which is offered joyfully and willingly. The young people in turn are invited to become leaders and so help others in their growth.
- Support the young people in the building up of positive and caring relationships with all those involved in their lives; family, peers, educators and all those charged with their welfare.
- Give due importance to learning, especially to learning for life. In the spirit of Don Bosco's Preventive System of education we enable young people to understand the reason behind boundaries, rules and requests. The Preventive System of education promotes the active involvement both within and outside the classroom. This aspires to being always educative, person-centred and interested and engaged with the young people in our care. This helps them to develop emotionally and to become courageous self-motivated people, capable of making free and responsible choices.
- Give a central role to Celebration in the lives of the young, whether it be in the form of leisure and enjoyment, of the meaningful marking of special occasions or of religious celebrations. In all of these we celebrate the fact that we are each loved by the Lord.
- Encourage young people to reach out to the vulnerable and less fortunate in society, to develop an awareness of global issues and to have respect for the environment.
- Call for a critique of economic, political and social systems that oppress young people and to advocate on their behalf.

We have drawn up these aims, mindful of the need to update and evaluate in the face of ever changing times.

The spirituality underpinning this ethos recognises the importance of the role of the Church, of the Sacraments and of Mary. Our works are carried out within a Christian environment where, in an atmosphere of listening, the young people are encouraged to search for meaning and to discover and develop a relationship with God through dialogue, ritual and prayer forms suited to their age and culture. This is most aptly expressed within a community context in which parents/ guardians, educators and young people work together to ensure that the total environment is conducive to the good of the young person.

Consultation

This policy was formulated in consultation with the teaching staff and management of Secondary Secondary College, parents of students with Special Educational Needs (AEN), the Board of Management (BOM), Special Needs Assistants (SNA's), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), and the Special Educational Needs Organiser (AENO).

RATIONALE

- This policy document aims to outline the school's provision of additional educational support for students with AEN
- It outlines the philosophy that underpins this provision
- The policy is written in the context of the various pieces of legislation listed below
- The policy is a working document and will be reviewed annually
- The policy is a reflection of our current practice

RELATIONSHIP TO CHARACTERISTIC ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

The principal aim of Special Education in Salesian Secondary College is to provide a positive learning environment, which will foster the academic, social and emotional development of students with Additional and Special Educational Needs (AEN) and to enable each to realise their individual potential. In line with our ethos and official Department of Education and Skills (DES) recommendations, special education provision will actively seek to include the diverse range of cultures and abilities of its students.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all students with AEN, including students with exceptional ability, who attend Salesian Secondary College. It is also intended to serve the school community including B.O.M, the Principal, the teaching and ancillary staff and parents.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Salesian Secondary College sets out to provide education for all its students, with reference to legislation regarding students with AEN as listed below:

- The Education Act (1998)
- The Education Welfare Act (2000)
- The Equal Status Act (2000)
- The Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)

- The Equality Act (2004)
- The Data Protection Acts (1988, 1998 and 2003)
- The Freedom of Education Acts (1997 and 2003)
- The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)

This policy is drafted in the context of:

- DES Circular Letters and specifically the Special Education Circular 0014/2017
- The guidelines published by the NCSE
- The guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process 2006
- The Guidelines on the Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools (NEPS).
- The guidelines published by the Special Educational Needs Support Service (SESS)
- Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools. Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools published by the DES.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

The principal aim of Learning Support in Salesian Secondary College is to provide a positive learning environment, which will foster the academic, social and emotional development of students with learning difficulties and to enable each to realise their individual potential.

Learning Support provision also seeks to:

- Enable students of all abilities to avail of and benefit from an appropriate education
- Provide students with consistent opportunities to experience success
- Provide supplementary teaching and additional support in literacy and numeracy
- Involve parents in the support of their daughter's/son's education
- Promote collaboration among teachers in the implementation of a whole school policy on learning support for students
- Protect and enhance the self-esteem of the learner

The school hopes to achieve the following by updating the AEN policy:

- To include the most recent best practice in AEN in line with SSE Guidelines and the LAOS Framework. This process will support the school to identify areas of strength and need at a whole school level but also in relation to how the school meets the needs of those with additional and special educational needs.
- To reflect the most recent recommendations, most particularly the Continuum of Support at Post-Primary Schools (NEPS) and the Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools, Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools.
- To outline our whole school approach to teaching/learning in relation to students with AEN.
- To set out procedures for the enrolment of students with AEN in the school.
- To assist parents in making an informed decision in relation to the enrolment of their child in our school.
- Ensure that students with AEN are educated in an inclusive environment.
- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the specific needs of students and of the contribution they can make in this area.

- Ensure that AEN is not viewed in isolation, but in the context of the whole school and community.
- Ensure that students with AEN are offered a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and that they are provided for in an inclusive way.
- Set high standards for students with AEN and provide them with appropriate guidance, encouraging them to achieve their full potential.
- Develop staff expertise in supporting students with AEN.
- Encourage and foster positive partnerships with parents, in order to achieve appropriate support at school and at home.
- To outline procedures and practices which will be followed in relation to supporting the learning of students with AEN.
- To establish communication structures for the involvement of all the partners in the education of students with AEN. (Learning Support Guidelines)
- That appropriate assessment and review procedures will be developed to inform planning for teaching and learning.

DEFINITIONS

Special Educational Needs

In the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) the term “special educational needs” is 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’.

(Government of Ireland, 2004b, section 1)

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2004/A3004.pdf>

Inclusion

For the purposes of this document, the following definition by the NCSE, has been adopted. Inclusion is defined as a process of:

- addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners through enabling participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and
- removing barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements, to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/ her attendance at school.

(*Literature Review of the Principles and Practices relating to Inclusive Education for Children with Special Educational Needs*)
(NCSE 2010, p.39)

http://www.ncse.ie/uploads/1/NCSE_Inclusion.pdf

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTNERS IN THE AEN TEAM

The AEN team comprises the Principal, Deputy Principal, the AEN Co-ordinator, one representative from the Maths Department (TBC), one representative from the English Department (TBC) and AEN teachers (TBC). The AEN Co-ordinator is also part of the Pastoral Care team in the school and works closely with Year Heads and mainstream teachers when the need arises.

The team is advised by the SENO and NEPS psychologist as well as other agencies and professionals involved with AEN students in the school. The specific roles and responsibilities of personnel are as described in the DES Inspectorate publication.

(Inclusion of Students with Special needs, Post-primary Guidelines) (2007).

The following are the roles of the different partners involved in the provision of AEN in Salesian Secondary College.

Board of Management

- To ensure that all students with AEN are identified and assessed.
- To ensure that the school has an up to date AEN policy in place, monitor the implementation of that policy and ensure its evaluation
- To ensure that a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum is provided to ensure that students learn the skills necessary to participate in society
- To ensure that necessary resources are sought on behalf of students with AEN
- To ensure the development of positive partnerships with parents and other relevant agencies and ensure that parents are informed of their child's AEN and how these needs are being met
- To ensure that parents are consulted with regard to and invited to participate in the making of all significant decisions concerning their child's education
- To develop a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy under Section 14 of EPSEN
- To promote the inclusion by ensuring that an awareness of AEN is instilled in all of the school community

The Principal

- To appoint an AEN Co-ordinator and work closely with the co-ordinator.
- To inform the Board of Management of issues with AEN
- To consult with the AEN Co-ordinator and other personnel who liaise with the Department of Education regarding needs and provisions

- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, including the allocation of resource hours and funds
- To promote a whole school approach to special educational needs, make all staff aware of their responsibilities in this area and to facilitate appropriate staff development in this area
- To promote the development of positive partnerships with parents of AEN students
- To ensure that procedures exist for consultation with primary schools with regard to the enrolment of students with AEN
- To process applications for Irish Exemptions
- To provide leadership in developing relevant whole school policies: enrolment/assessment, inclusion/integration
- To manage the implementation of policies and practices
- To provide strategic support for evidence based interventions
- To assign roles and responsibilities
- To keep records of those receiving support and of the level of support provided
- To ensure compliance with statutory requirements when EPSEN is implemented
- To direct the work of the SNA's
- To facilitate CPD for staff in the area of AEN and Inclusive Education

AEN Co-Ordinator

- To coordinate/ devise a school AEN Plan
- To create and maintain a school register of students with AEN
- To communicate the needs of students to teachers
- To assist in the identification of students with AEN
- To ensure that Student Support Plans are in place for students with AEN
- To advise teachers of the recommendations made in professional assessments relating to individual students
- To assist the Principal in the allocation of resources
- To process applications for Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Examinations at State Exams (RACE)
- To provide RACE in-house exams where possible given the resources available
- To liaise with outside professionals
- To meet with parents in order to plan and to review interventions
- To administer and correct standardised assessments
- To ensure that systems are in place for the referral of students by teachers, parents, etc
- To report annually to the BOM
- To be a member of the Student Support Team.
- To advise and collaborate with SNA's around the care needs of relevant students

- To facilitate a weekly meeting of the AEN team
- To identify appropriate CPD for SETs
- To advise colleagues in relation to appropriate evidenced- based approaches to teaching and learning for students with AEN

These duties are reviewed regularly and may change to ensure the priority needs of the department are met.

Year Heads

- To support the creation of an inclusive climate within the school and contribute significantly to the work of the special educational need team
- To facilitate the inclusion of any individual student with special educational needs by monitoring the student's progress within the year group
- To encourage an awareness of special educational needs from the students, including a respect for students with AEN

Special Education Teachers

Support teachers have a key role in supporting students with AEN either through withdrawal to small class groups, one to one lessons or co-teaching.

The Support teacher will:

- Familiarise themselves with the needs of the student through all internal documentation such as transfer information from primary, screening assessments and VSWare profiles
- Collaboratively develop Student Support Plans for each pupil selected for support within each level of the continuum, to include student voice, parental voice and staff voice, and to include a PPP section for students with care needs in collaboration with SNAs
- Collaborating with subject teachers by giving advice on teaching methodologies best suited to a student
- Communicate with parents/guardians/carers about setting targets for the year
- Use approaches appropriate for the targets and recommendation outlines for the students in their plan
- Update and maintain planning and progress records for each individual or group of pupils in receipt of school support

- Monitor and record progress through formative assessment and review Student Support Files in a timely manner
- Providing direct teaching to a student with AEN either to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom or to improve upon the core skills that may be necessary to successfully access the second level curriculum
- To provide team teaching/ co-operative teaching when withdrawal from the classroom may not be the most appropriate means of supporting the student
- Contributing at meetings involving parents and/or outside agencies when appropriate
- Liaise with student support team, Guidance Counsellor
- Collecting and analysing school-wide screening data, including in-take screening, transfer information, attendance and behavioural records. Gathering information from subject teachers/ other staff
- Seeking external professional advice, as needed
- To advise SNA's around the care needs of relevant students

Guidance Counsellors

- To work with the other members of the AEN team in facilitating the provision of education for students with AEN and their inclusion in the school.
- Counselling in personal, educational and career development
- Co-ordinating a number of assessments including the CAT4 prior to entry in First Year and again in later years with for example DATS testing
- Providing career information
- Presenting at the Options Information Evening and Open Nights for students and parents of students progressing to Senior Cycle
- Consulting with parents and staff
- Consulting with community organisations
- Providing vocational preparation – job search skills, preparation for work experience
- Working closely with Year Heads and the AEN team to identify students requiring support
- Facilitating individual appointments for students in Third year, TY and Leaving Cert Year to support them in making career decisions
- Advising students and parents on subject choice and subject load
- To liaise with students, parents and the AEN team in relation to DARE applications and also to process them.

Special Needs Assistants

- To provide care assistance to named students who have special educational needs
They make a valuable contribution to the school's capacity to provide inclusive education to these students
- To be made aware of the AEN plan, devised by the Special Needs Support Team, and given guidance on their role in the successful implementation of this plan
- To recognise their role in the health and safety of the student and in their social, emotional and educational development, without developing a culture of dependency
- Attending both Staff and Departmental meetings when appropriate
- Assisting / escorting students on school trips
- Giving special assistance as necessary for students with particular difficulties e.g. helping students with AEN with typing, writing or other use of equipment
- Assisting with clothing, feeding, toileting and hygiene, being mindful of health and safety needs of the student
- Assisting with house examinations (if appropriate)
- Assisting the teacher in the supervision of students during assembly, recreation and in movement from one classroom to another
- Accompanying individual or small groups who may be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom. An SNA should not be asked to withdraw a student from a classroom unless this is a strategy that has been agreed by the AEN department and Principal, where teachers and parents will have been informed
- Give general assistance to the subject teacher, under the direction of the Principal/Deputy Principal, of a non teaching nature. The SNA may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class
- Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process
- Engagement with parents of students with AEN as required and directed by school management
- Other appropriate duties determined by the needs of the students and the school
- The SNA may be re-assigned to other appropriate work when special needs students are absent or when particularly urgent work demands arise
- To treat all matters relating to school business and their work, as strictly confidential
- SNA's are expected to provide and update a timetable during the school year and furnish the Principal and AEN Co-ordinator with a copy

Mainstream Teacher

- To be aware of the School's policy and procedures (as outlined in this policy) for dealing with students with AEN, and ensure all students' needs are met
- To seek advice from the AEN Department regarding students with AEN
- To participate in CPD in the area of AEN
- To devise a plan, in consultation with the resource teacher or AEN Co-ordinator, on the most effective use of an SNA for a student in the class
- To support/ encourage independence in the student
- To differentiate teaching and learning methodologies for students, including exceptionally able/gifted students
- To create a positive classroom environment for all students
- To create opportunities for success
- To use assessment for learning and comment-only marking
- To establish and teach behavioural and learning expectations
- To assess/ monitor progress
- To consider the needs of students with AEN in all aspects of classroom planning
- To identify students who may be at risk (considering general progress or needs in organisational, communicational, behavioural, emotional or interactions with other students)
- To complete referral forms, transfer of information forms, etc as required by the AEN team
- Contribute to group or individual planning and reviews
- Implement agreed strategies
- Prepare specific subject information for the AEN Team to help in the manufacturing of Student Support Plans
- Implement individualised and specialist programmes and strategies
- Direct the work of the SNA's in the classroom
- Inform parents of the progress of students through the parent-teacher meeting and school reports
- Contribute to the school development planning for their subject area whilst always having concern for students with AEN
- Build a bank of differentiated resources pertaining to their subject area, which are shared collegially and between departments if appropriate

Involvement of Parents

The school recognises its responsibility under Section 14 of the EPSEN Act 2004, with regard to informing and consulting with parents on all matters relating to their child's education.

Parents and transition to and transfer from post-primary school

The quality of a child's experience in making the transition to post-primary education can determine how they will settle in school. Parents can provide valuable support to a child with AEN while the child is making the transition.

Salesian Secondary College provides support to parents by:

- liaising with parents prior to transfer and organising an induction meeting in May, prior to the student transferring
- running an 'Introduction to Second Level' programme where all incoming students can attend the school for a day
- informing parents about the range of extracurricular activities available for first-year students so that the parents can encourage their child to participate
- having an effective anti-bullying policy (including a 'peer helper' system), and keep parents informed of issues relating to bullying
- actively encouraging parents to contact the AEN Co-ordinator

Parents and the transmission of information

The parents of a child with AEN can provide valuable information to the school in relation to their child's learning difficulties, learning differences, and learning preferences. The AEN team seeks relevant professional reports from parents of students with AEN with the acceptance of a place in the school. Once they have accepted a place in the school, parents are asked to complete a form indicating if a student has had educational/medical reports relevant to supporting them in school and if they have previously attended learning support/resource. Copies of IEPS/student support plans are also requested.

Parents and home-school links

The school provides parents with regular reports on the progress of their child.

- The school journal is used for weekly/ daily home-school communication, and parent-teacher meetings are held once a year for face to face communication
- Students receive a number of school reports in the academic year. For some students with AEN a differentiated report is provided (School Support Plus)
- Special arrangements may be made with the parents in relation to the homework that each individual student with AEN is expected to undertake
- Regular communication is available through direct email to AEN Co-ordinator and meetings on request
- Parents help the school by keeping the teachers informed of the progress/ difficulties which they observe in their child's learning as they progress through post primary

school. This should include showing an interest in the completion of homework and familiarising themselves with approaches taken in school

Involvement of Students

The AEN Department fully involves students in skills audits and discussions around their learning needs.

- Students have input into their learning targets
- Students at School Support Plus are involved in the planning of their Student Support plan and are invited to attend the Student Support meeting
- Students on behaviour support plans are encouraged to self-monitor

The school believes that achievements are maximised when students take ownership of their learning.

Provision and the Continuum of Support

Continuum of Support

The model of assessment and intervention, as practised in Salesian Secondary College, is underpinned by recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum, from mild to severe and from transient to long term. Our response to the needs of students is organised according to NEPS's Continuum of Support. All Sixth Class students enrolling in Salesian Secondary College will be required to complete the CAT 4 Diagnostic Test to identify strengths and needs in Word reading, Comprehension, Spelling and Maths. This is a very useful exercise as it highlights the strengths and needs of all students. Students who achieve below the twentieth percentile in any of these areas will be considered for Learning Support within the school.

To further develop our understanding and knowledge of all students, each First Year will complete the PPAD-E Assessment and Maths Competency test. This activity is engaged as teachers are the experts in their own subject area. They are required to present this information to the AEN Department in the month of September of the academic year so that it can be considered and utilised if necessary in manufacturing Student Support Plans and specifically with helping to set targets that are **S**pecific, **M**easured, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime based: **SMART**.

The Post Primary Assessment & Diagnosis Assessment- English (PPAD-E), an Irish designed tool to gauge literacy levels, is run across the entire first year cohort in September and helps to flag any issues not identified to date. Interventions are put into place where necessary following the marking of this test set.

Student Support Plans

A Student Support Plan is devised for students with Special Education needs (Learning Support and Resource Classes). All students involved in AEN support will have a tailored learning plan which correlates Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools, Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools. i.e: A Student Support Plan.

The Student Support Plan process involves:

- Gathering Information: Personal/ Background details
- Educational details (primary school details/assessment and learning support details)
- Categorisation of need (assessment reports/ information obtained from parents)
- General profile based on formal/informal assessment
- AEN provision
- Priority Need
- Setting targets for each priority learning need
- Identifying the strategies and resources required
- Consultation with any relevant documentation
- Setting the date for review: A review occurs each academic year. However it may occur more often dependent on student progress and circumstances

PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH KNOWN AND DOCUMENTED NEEDS

Transfer from Primary School

The transfer of information from primary level to post-primary level is vital to the successful support of students with AEN. At the Open Night for prospective parents the importance of completing the enrollment form correctly is outlined. Following acceptance of a place in the school, parents of incoming First Year students are invited to attend an information meeting outlining practical supports, structure of learning support and resource teaching timetables, pastoral care structures and information regarding Reasonable Accommodations for Certificate Exams (RACE).

The Special Needs Co-ordinator also will:

- Visit or contact the feeder Primary Schools to collect up-to-date information
- Liaise with primary school and parents of students with very specific needs who would benefit from more than one visit to the school
- Meet with the parent/ guardian of students with AEN
- Establish communication with the primary school resource/ learning support teacher

- Apply for Resources/SNA support/Assistive Technology/ Transport Assistance for relevant students

Once accepted to Salesian Secondary College:

- All incoming First year students take a Cognitive Ability Test(CAT 4). This test can also be used to identify strengths and needs of incoming students with AEN. This data is used to help identify students who may need additional support, including the exceptionally able.
- All students sit the PPAD-E assessment in September & a Maths competency test also
- The AEN team will ascertain the students' learning styles and strengths
- The AEN team will create learning targets for each student with AEN. These targets are monitored and evaluated at regular intervals. Once achieved, new targets are set
- At the beginning of each academic year all students on the AEN Register are reviewed individually in terms of type of support needed and curriculum load

Students transferring into other Year Groups

When a student is accepted into a year group other than First Year, information is sought from their previous school (Educational Psychological report, School reports, attendance, etc). This is the responsibility of the Principal/ Deputy Principal. Any relevant information is then passed to the Year Head and the Special Needs Co-ordinator.

PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH EMERGING NEEDS

For students with emerging needs, including the exceptionally able, the concern may have been identified through the whole school screening and monitoring systems (CAT4, WRAT 4, in-class assessment, informal observation, parental concern). Teachers are asked to complete a referral form for students who they have a concern about that focuses on the student's behaviour, academic performance, homework etc. Some students will need further individual or diagnostic testing to identify the nature of their needs (both learning and behavioural). Parental consent is obtained before diagnostic tests are administered. Teachers are also encouraged to refer to students' CAT 4 results to determine the student's areas of strength and their needs and link with at least two other subject teachers before completing a referral form.

Models of AEN provision

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

- Curricular differentiation & UDL Lens
- Curricular reduction (reduced load) - A student with AEN who experiences difficulty in coping with the breadth of the current curriculum is permitted to 'drop' a subject. This occurs only after all avenues have been exhausted. A consultation between the parents/ guardian and guidance teacher is also necessary. Parents must sign a consent form giving permission for a reduced subject load
- Team Teaching/Co-operative Teaching
- In-class support
- Inclusion of SNA in specific classes
- Small group withdrawal
- Individual withdrawal
- Organisational and Real Life Skills lessons
- Special Class placements for Students with ASD diagnosis in line with DSM IV

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

Resources

All teachers have been assigned their own room and students have access to any of these rooms if they are available. There are two computer rooms & two class banks of laptops in the school and they are also used to cater for any student wishing to engage ICT and to aid their learning. All mainstream classrooms have White Boards, PC's and Overhead Projectors

- All First Year classes in the academic year 2017/18 will be given the opportunity to be mentored by Transition Year students. This informal 'Buddy System' is an excellent opportunity for all First Year students to familiarise themselves with the school and also to have Senior students to help them with any concerns they may have
- Salesian Secondary College runs a Lunch Time games Club every day in Rm 10 to any student who wishes. A teacher supervises each day. This room can be particularly

attractive to students who dislike crowds and it also gives students the opportunity to engage and interact socially with their peers

Reasonable Accommodations for State and In House Examinations (RACE)

Applications are made by the AEN Co-ordinator for RACE provision for students with AEN sitting a Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate Examination. Information relating to RACE is provided to parents on an annual basis.

The school will make applications for relevant accommodations for students who meet the criteria as laid down by the SEC at Junior Cycle and these accommodations can be reactivated for Leaving Cert, with the school being satisfied that the student still has a need for the accommodation.

Where resources permit and when deemed appropriate, readers, scribes and other accommodations are available to students who qualify for such accommodations at mock exams and other school assessments. Students in non-exam years sitting a differentiated test will have that noted on their report. Specialised reports can be created where the student has sat many differentiated exams during in-house assessments.

Students at Salesian Secondary College who undergo an Educational Psychology Assessment are required to ensure that the conducting Psychologist includes the school in this procedure. If this step is not taken, the AEN department will make all resource and RACE allocation decisions based on the test scores administered by the school.

COMMUNICATION

AEN Team

- Members of the AEN team can meet mainstream and learning support teachers formally or informally. There may be formal meetings at the beginning of the year between the mainstream teachers and the AEN team with regards to incoming First year students with AEN
- The AEN Team aims to communicate with each other as much as possible through email using the school system of Gmail and Google Drive or School App

Mainstream Teachers

- At the beginning of each school year, the AEN Co-ordinator updates a register of information focusing on the incoming First year students with AEN. This information is shared using Gmail and Google Drive, and all teachers are made aware of its existence at the start-of-year staff meeting and encouraged to consult it regularly.

This information is password protected so that dissemination of data is aligned to GDPR regulations.

- AEN is on the agenda at every subject department meeting
- Teachers are kept up-to-date with regard to all students with AEN through email and the AEN Register on Google Drive, detailing relevant student information
- Information is also communicated via the Year Head and student support structures such as the Pastoral Care Team & Student Support Teams
- Our AEN resource site is updated & shared with staff at the beginning of each year & provides all staff with opps to upskill across the spectrum of needs in our school

Parents

Communication with parents is achieved in the following manner:

- School Open Day
- Parent-Teacher Meetings
- Letters to the parents
- Student Journal
- Telephone Calls
- Email
- Meetings involving external agencies
- Meetings with the AEN Co-ordinator and Principal/Guidance Counsellor/Year Head where relevant.

Record-Keeping

A full record of psychological reports, other reports and records of meetings are kept in the individual students file in the Deputy Principal's or attached to the Students Support File on the schools drive. All information is managed in accordance with the directives of both the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. Student records are destroyed after five years.

Exemptions from Irish

- Incoming First years with Irish exemptions are noted
- Certificates of exemption from the study of Irish must be submitted with the enrolment application
- The school will only consider granting an exemption for Irish when a written request is made by the student's parents and supported by an Educational Psychologist's report or other relevant documentation

- The guidelines set down by the Department of Education and Skills will be strictly adhered to (Circular M10/94)

http://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/ppc10_94.pdf

- Where possible, withdrawal for additional support is arranged for students with AENs, who do not study Irish, during Irish time. This is not guaranteed and is limited by timetable restrictions and staff availability and completed in accordance with the Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools, Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools
- Applications for Irish exemptions on the grounds of AEN are made by the AEN Co-ordinator and signed by the Principal

Related Policies

Other school policies listed below are related to this AEN policy and as such are to be read conjointly.

1. Admissions Policy
2. ASD Admissions Policy
3. Irish Exemption Policy
4. Child Protection Policy
5. Communication Staff & Students Policy
6. Administration of Medicines and Provision of First Aid Policy
7. Assessment Policy
8. Wellbeing Policy

The above policies which can be accessed on the schools website www.salesiancollege.ie.

Student Voice

“Engagement is enhanced when schools listen to and build on pupils’ interests, aspirations and strengths when developing educational interventions. This involves actively including pupils in a shared assessment for the learning process, setting shared learning objectives and jointly reviewing progress.” (Guidelines for Primary Schools,2017, p.24)

Student voice refers to the inclusion of students in decisions that shape their experiences in classrooms and schools, and is fundamental to a rights-based perspective that facilitates

students to have a voice and a say in their education. Salesian Secondary College endeavours to provide this through the following:

- Expression -offers opinions, creates Learner profile on how best they learn
- Consultation - takes surveys, provides input and feedback
- Participation- attends activities with role in decision making,
- Partnership - collaborates with teachers and other learners, contributes to the design of lessons, projects and assignments
- Activism- identifies problems and generates solutions, advocates for change inside and outside of school
- Leadership - guides groups as leaders of change, co-plans and makes decisions, accepts responsibility for outcomes

PRIORITY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Ongoing professional development opportunities for staff in the area of special education. In particular in relation to Assistive Technology and apps for education that are of benefit to our AEN students. Access to our AEN site & sharing of upskilling CPD opportunities as they arise throughout the year.
[SSC AEN Site](#)
- Raising teacher awareness of, and expertise in, differentiated teaching methodologies and consolidating UDL practice
- Ongoing development of storing resources
- Continue development of a cohesive Student Support team Network across the school

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

29/9/2026

Signature –Chairperson, Board of Management:



Signature – Secretary, Board of Management:



Appendix 1- Enrolment Policy

ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Salesian Secondary College welcomes students with special needs and will use the financial and human resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost so that these students are free to participate in the life in the school in so far as it is reasonably practicable.

Salesian Secondary College welcomes applications from students with special educational needs unless the nature and degree of these needs is such that to enrol the student would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated.

The Board of Management must be made aware of any special needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where possible.

Parents are requested to outline the details of a child's special educational needs on the application form. The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met. Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled. The Principal may request a meeting with the parents of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs. The parent of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.

N.B. It may take some time for the Department of Education and Skills to process such applications.

Parents are strongly advised to inform the school as early as possible and discuss their particular situation well in advance of making an application.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after a parent/guardian has provided all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the parents/guardians in writing thereof.

(Education Welfare Act – Section 19 (3))