



Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs) Policy and Guidelines

Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs) are appointed by the Board of Management subsequent to the allocation of ANA hours by the NCSE (National Council for Special Education). Depending on the cumulative number of hours allocated to the school they may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis. ANAs are not specifically assigned to an individual child but rather to the school as a whole.

The Policy is guided by the relevant legislation such as The Education Welfare Act 2000 and the EPSEN Act 2004 and DES Circulars 07/02, 08/03, 24/03, 13/04, 02/05, 0071/2011, 0030/2014

Rationale

The policy was formulated:

- To provide staff and parents/guardians with clear guidelines and expectations with regard to the ANA role and responsibilities within the school
- To ensure each ANA appreciates and understands the important role they have in contributing positively to the learning experiences of the children and the overall efficiency of the school
- To ensure best practice and continuity in how we work in Leixlip ETNS

Aims

- To facilitate the recognition ANAs as valuable members of staff in a whole school context
- To ensure the effective deployment of ANAs to provide support for our pupils with primary care needs as outlined in Circular 0020/2014
- In enhancing the education, wellbeing and self esteem of all pupils with Additional Educational Needs
- To enable the ANA to be an effective support to the class teacher
- To provide optimum learning experiences for all children through judicious use of the skills and talents of the ANA
- To clarify the tasks and duties to be undertaken by the ANA
- To ensure accountability and effective record keeping.

Staff Roles

The Principal has responsibility for

- Deploying ANAs to look after the primary care needs of pupils with the greatest needs
- Formulating timetables for each ANA
- Assigning role specific and child specific tasks to the ANA in association with the class teacher
- Co-ordinating the integration and devising the role profile of the ANA · Monitoring the effectiveness of the ANAs contribution to the needs of designated children
- Promoting in-service training. The Board of Management may fund or part fund this professional development.
- Managing areas of conflict which may arise, with the assistance of the

Special Educational Teacher

- Assume responsibility for overseeing Student Support Files in consultation with all relevant parties including the parents/guardians, ANA, class teacher and principal.

Class Teachers

- Ensure ANA support is available for those who need it in a class situation and identify the appropriate tasks to be completed by the ANAs · Provide a suitable seating arrangement for the ANA and child in the mainstream setting
- Collaborate with the ANA with regard to in-class planning
- In consultation with the ANA, SET (Special Education Teacher) and Principal - devise a list of classroom tasks to be undertaken by the ANA when time is available e.g. Croke Park hours, Staff meetings, preparation time before/after school, etc.

ANAs

- There are two part-time ANAs presently employed in the school. They are considered an important part of the school team and carry out duties of a non teaching nature.
- The ANA always works under the direction of the class teacher or Principal
- The teacher plans lessons and directs learning and the ANA provides support in assisting the pupil to access the curriculum.
- The ANA should be familiar with all relevant school policy, in particular the school Code of Positive Behaviour and Child Protection guidelines.

Guidelines for Special Needs Assistants

<p>Hours of Work</p>	<p>· A full time ANA is paid for 32 hours per week and the part-time ANA is expected to work the number of hours outlined by the NCSE. The ANA is required to work normal classroom hours and in addition to attend before and after school in order to help with the preparation and tidying of classrooms. The time before and after schools to be agreed by the Board of Management. In addition, the ANA must be available for an additional 72 hours (pro rata) (Public Service Agreement, Croke Park) per year outside of the normal school year. These hours are at the discretion of the Board of Management in consultation with the Principal and ANAs.</p>
<p>Confidentiality</p>	<p>· It is a condition of employment that the ANA should maintain confidentiality in relation to all school-related matters</p>
<p>Times and Timetables</p>	<p>· ANAs will be given a timetable by</p> <p>· the Principal at the start of the year. ANAs break time and lunch time will be 10 minutes and 20 minutes (0.83 post) and 15 minutes (0.5) post and will be taken outside of pupils' break times</p> <p>· As part of the ANA contract, ANAs are required to spend ten-fifteen minutes each morning and evening preparing, tidying and organising the classroom. ANAs also work 12 days outside the school calendar at the discretion of the Board of Management and Principal. This is on a pro rata basis for part-time ANAs.</p>
<p>Planning and Reporting</p>	<p>The ANAs is responsible with the Class Teacher for the development of a pupil's PPP (Personal Pupil Plan) and for setting targets and strategies to promote the independence and diminishing needs of the pupil. These should be reviewed each term.</p> <p>The ANAs should keep observational notes for each pupil with ANA access outlining the frequency and nature of the care needs provided</p> <p>The ANA should be familiar with and ensure compliance with the school's Intimate Care Policy and keep records of all Toileting incidences</p> <p>The ANA should be familiar with and ensure compliance with the school's Administration of Medicine Policy and keep records of any medicine administered.</p> <p>The ANA should ensure that all records are kept in a secure manner and comply with GDPR regulations</p> <p>· A copy of the ANA's notes and plans should be available to the SET, Principal and relevant Class Teacher.</p> <p>· A copy of the pupil's PPP should be available electronically to the relevant Class Teacher, the SET and</p>

	<p>the Principal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Time for the teacher to meet with the ANA re. planning should be organised once a month. Class teachers should outline educational expectations for the child including the level of support needed by the ANA. ANAs should provide feedback in relation to the child's primary care needs. · Information received on children, and observations made in classrooms, need to be handled sensitively and carefully · ANAs must refer all matters on curriculum, classroom management, discipline or incidents of concerns etc. to the classroom teacher · ANAs must refer all parental concerns to the class teacher and/or principal
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<p>Level and type of classroom Assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Providing support for a child's primary care need as outlined in Circular 0030/2013 · The focus will be on an 'enabling mode' and the 'velcro model' should be avoided to enable the gradual independence of the child · Avoid over-talking and providing a 'running commentary' of what to do next – this allows the child to concentrate and think independently · Explain how to do tasks but avoid giving the solution to a task or problem. Instead encourage the child to come up with the answer by questioning and prompting. <p>The ANA should be guided by the the class teacher as to how best support the pupil's participation in the curriculum</p>
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<p>Physical contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · As little physical contact as possible, if the child's attention is required, place a hand lightly on the child's shoulder · Physical contact may be required to protect a pupil from harm to themselves or others - in which case, this should be recorded in the ANA's notes · With regards to Intimate Care - toileting, cleaning and changing - the ANA should be familiar with and ensure compliance with the school's Intimate Care Policy · Provide assistance and support where necessary with changing etc. while encouraging independence · Actions of affection from a child towards an ANA should be handled sensitively but while also explaining to the child that certain gestures are not appropriate in school (circle of family/friends/acquaintance/ stranger model) · To carry out some activities, an ANA may need to guide the child's body. This should be done by gently touching the shoulder, back, arms, hands or lower leg only
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<p>Physical Restraint</p>	<p>In very limited circumstances a child may present with certain behaviour that requires the use of restraint. The type of behaviour in question must be of a nature that poses a real imminent risk of physical harm to the child, another child or to staff. In certain circumstances, the safest and least harmful course of action is to intervene and restrain the child but the benefits of the intervention must outweigh the negative impact. Any physical intervention must be absolutely necessary, for the least amount of time with the least amount of force necessary.</p> <p>In the absence of guidance from the Department of Education or Tusla, Leixlip ETNS follows the guidance of Inclusion Ireland in relation to restraint.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Reducing the need for physical restraint and seclusion</p> <p>Positive approaches to managing behaviour that challenges are the first steps to ensuring seclusion and restraint are not used in schools. Staff should be trained in an appropriate system that only resorts to restraint as a very last option.</p> <p>Staff must have training in the reduction of, and alternatives to restraint and seclusion: one such example being implementing positive behaviour supports. While such support is best provided in a proactive manner, teachers [and additional needs assistants] should also have access to a behaviour specialist when a crisis arises, in a timely manner. Children should have the support of a multi-disciplinary team from CAMHS or children's disability services as</p>
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	<p>appropriate. When a child exhibits behaviour that is challenging this is often as a consequence of not being able to communicate in an appropriate manner; speech therapy may be able to assist in such instances. Occupational therapists can assist children who experience sensory overload which can lead to difficult behaviour. For some children there may also be a role for psychology or psychiatry supports.”</p> <p>[Shining a light on seclusion and restraint in schools in Ireland, Inclusion Ireland, 2018 p.20]</p> <p>Physical restraint must only take place where there is an imminent and serious risk to the safety of the child, another child or to staff. The restraint must also be reasonable and proportionate, authorised and a record must be kept.</p>
<p>Parental contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ANAs are encouraged to build a positive relationship based on trust with the parents/guardians of children with AEN (Additional Education Needs) · If required at the end of the school day, escort the child to the school gate and greet the parent/guardian · It is helpful to chat about how the day went or upcoming events but do not pass on information regarding child’s educational progress · parents/guardians with questions, requests or concerns regarding school policy or practice should be referred directly to the class teacher or the Principal. This applies to direct face- to face communication or indirect telephone communication. parents/guardians should contact teachers for information on the child’s progress. · It is not appropriate for parents/guardians to have a private phone number of a member of staff or to contact the ANA outside of school hours · If there are any minor incidents put a note in the homework folder or send an email. · Any major incidents should be reported to the teacher.
<p>Seating Arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An ANA should only sit with a child with AEN when and where deemed necessary by the class teacher · Allow some time during day where child doesn’t have ANA sitting with him · Avoid blocking view of another child · ANA should also have their own chair and table not beside the child.
<p>Supervision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Supervise pupils from a distance if possible · Supervision in the yard and during eating time should promote social interaction and inclusion. After lunch ANA should assist pupils to form a line on the yard and await the teacher. · The ANA should not be responsible for supervising alone in the classroom. If the class teacher leaves the room at any stage, the classroom door should remain open and the neighbouring teacher should be requested to supervise the class until the teacher returns. · Be mindful of children who are at risk of absconding and have an appropriate plan and procedures in place.

<p>Withdrawal Interventions / Sensory Breaks/ Calm Sessions /</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Where a child is overwhelmed and an emotional or behavioural meltdown is imminent or cannot be deescalated the ANA may be asked to temporarily withdraw the child from the classroom for a calming session- · Some pupils may require Sensory Break sessions (as per their PPPs and Student Support Plans), these should follow a specific timetable to be most effective. The content should be worked out with the help from Physiotherapists and/or Occupational Therapist in conjunction with the teacher and a specific programme should be followed. · Teacher should be involved in the planning of Sensory Breaks and of the progress being made · Working one to one is best when helping a child to learn a new skill/game however working in pairs or with a small group may develop social skills, inclusion and teamwork. Depending on a child’s level of concentration and tolerance, timeouts may be necessary daily and should last 10 minutes. · The ANA may also be required to assist the classteacher in evacuating a class where an escalation
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	of behaviour or emotional breakdown of a pupils with AEN leads to a risk or concern for the safety of pupils and/or staff. The pupil with AEN will be supervised at all times.
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The school's Administration of Medicines Policy should be understood and followed at all times· Administer medication discreetly in the classroom· Only prescribed medication should be given· Store all medicines appropriately in line with our Administration of Medicine Policy.

<p>Relevant work</p>	<p>ANAs work under the guidance of the classroom teacher and should not be left in sole charge of a pupil or class. They may however work on their own with children provided that the work in question has been allocated by the class teacher. Work may include any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Preparation and tidying up of classrooms · Assisting school children to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary travel as escort during school hours on school buses may be required. · Special assistance as necessary for children with particular difficulties e.g. helping special needs pupils with typing, writing, computers or other use of equipment · Assisting children to stay on task, follow classroom procedures and interact appropriately · Assisting children in establishing and maintaining a consistent routine · Assisting children to build self-esteem and to develop independence · Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the pupil. · Assistance with accessing the curriculum as far as is possible for children with SEN · Assisting on out-of-school visits, walks, examinations and similar activities. · Accompanying and supervising their assigned pupil on swimming outings · Where direct assistance is needed to change into swimming gear, specific parental consent must be received in writing. · Promoting the importance of personal hygiene and report any difficulties to the class teacher. · Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and dispersal from the classroom for one reason or another. · Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another. · General assistance to the class teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special needs assistants may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class or group of children). · Participation with school improvement planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school improvement process. · Engagement with parents/guardians of pupils with Additional Needs in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management. · Acting as a positive role model for the children in their care · Other duties appropriate to the grade as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Additional Needs Assistants may be redeployed to other work appropriate to the grade when pupils with additional needs are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise. · Work carried out during 'Croke Park' hours should be related to AEN provision in the school.
<p>Staff Meetings</p>	<p>ANAs may be required to attend staff meetings when issues of relevance to their own particular work are up for discussion. The Principal will have a structured staff meeting with the ANAs at least once per term. On days of In-Service - Ancillary staff, and ANAs may be required to attend school to complete tasks laid out by class teachers/Principal.</p>

Developing the Role of the ANA

- It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the ANA is clear about where help is needed. Planning together is essential
- It is also the teacher's responsibility to affirm and outwardly value the role of the ANA
- Daily diaries or diaries recording significant events are essential
- An atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect is fostered
- Regular meetings with the principal and the ANAs are good opportunities to discuss issues and address concerns
- So that children do not build an unhealthy dependency on the ANA it is desirable that the ANA, rather than work exclusively with one child, should work with the whole group of children around the designated child's table. In that way several children in the classroom get the benefit of the ANA's support.
- ANAs allocated to children with physical disabilities will support them as needs require both within the classroom and outside it. This may include shadowing the child while in the playground or helping him to make his way in and out of the school.
- On days when the teaching staff are attending In-service courses, ANAs will report for work as usual. They will be assigned duties to help the classroom organisation of the absent teachers i.e. preparation of classroom displays, organisation of the classroom libraries, preparation of teaching equipment, photocopying etc.

Contract of Employment

Each ANA will be given a contract of employment according to the Department of Education requirements

Seniority

The sequence in which Additional Needs Assistants are appointed to the school determines their seniority. Seniority is important in determining which additional need assistant(s) should be offered reduced hours or have their employment terminated when the allocation of the school is reduced. The seniority listing will be used in determining 'last in, first out' for the purpose of redundancy.

The Board of Management determines the seniority based on Additional Need Assistants' date of commencement of duty as an ANA in a school.

Success Criteria

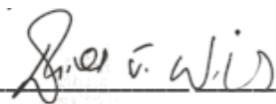
This policy is aimed at making a difference to the teaching and learning of children with Additional Educational Needs in our school. We will know that the policy is achieving its aims when

- children with Additional Educational Needs are included in whole school activities
- children are experiencing a safe and stimulating environment
- the children are becoming independent learners and acquiring life skills
- the child is reaching the targets set out in their Student Support Plans and Personal Pupil Plans

Ratification and Review

This plan was formally ratified by the Board of management on 20 October 2021. The plan will be implemented by the teachers and ANAs and supported by the Board of Management from 20/10/21. It will be reviewed every 2 years.

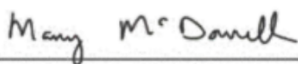
Signed:



Chairperson, BoM

Date: 20th October 2021

Signed:



Principal

Date: 20th October 2021