

Policy:

Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

1. Introduction

At Thames British School, we are committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where all students, staff, and visitors feel valued and protected. Effective incident reporting and management are essential to upholding these values and ensuring that every member of our community can thrive.

This policy outlines the mechanisms for reporting, documenting, and managing non-safeguarding incidents. It aligns with our commitment to excellence and transparency, as expressed in our guiding principles:

At Thames British School Warsaw, we care

Our Principles:

We care:

- that every one of our students reaches their full potential, academically, socially and emotionally;
- that every student is safe and feels safe at school, and this means we are all responsible all of the time;
- that communication and our choice of language is inclusive and respectful;
- about our behaviour and what it may communicate to others. We conduct ourselves in an ethical manner and with integrity at all times;
- about our communities culture, behave in a manner that fosters our values and insist that all members of our community do the same; and
- about learning first and foremost. Teachers are considered facilitators of learning and models for our community and its culture.

Our values:

c	Collaborative & Compassionate	We work together when needed to get the job done. We value the work of others, are compassionate, and recognise that success is mutually beneficial
a	Authentic	We are real, genuine and honest. We are true to ourselves and our community and represent our-selves as such with integrity
r	Responsible & Resilient	We have an obligation to reach our potential and fight to do so. We are accountable for our actions and utterances, and demonstrate respect for others needs and our environment. We don't give up.
e	Enlightened	We act on evidence, are factually well-informed, tolerant of alternative opinions, and guided by rational thought.

2. Purpose

Thames British School is committed to providing an inclusive education that values diversity and ensures all students, including those with Additional Educational Needs (AEN), have access to a supportive learning environment. This policy outlines the school's approach to identifying, supporting, and accommodating the needs of students with AEN, in line with international best practices and local regulatory requirements.

This policy complies with Polish laws and regulations and international standards, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Ensure every student with AEN has equitable access to education.
2. Foster an inclusive and supportive school environment.
3. Outline procedures for identifying, assessing, and supporting students with AEN.
4. Provide clear roles and responsibilities for staff, parents, and external professionals.
5. Ensure compliance with applicable local laws and international standards.

3. Definition of AEN

AEN refers to any learning difficulty, disability, or condition that may require additional or alternative educational provisions to support the student in achieving their potential. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g., dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia).
- Developmental Disorders (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum disorder).
- Physical Disabilities or Health Conditions (e.g., diabetes, allergies).
- Emotional, social, or mental health needs.
- Gifted and talented students (if requiring differentiation).

4. Key Principles

1. **Inclusion:** All students are valued, and diversity is celebrated.
2. **Early Identification:** Prompt recognition of AEN to implement timely interventions.
3. **Personalised Support:** Tailored strategies and accommodations based on individual needs.
4. **Collaboration:** Partnerships between school staff, parents, and external professionals.
5. **Empowerment:** Promoting independence and self-advocacy for students with AEN.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 School Leadership

- Ensure compliance with AEN Policy and allocate resources effectively.
- Support staff training and development on AEN practices.

5.2 Counsellor (School Psychologist)

- Create Individual Educational and Therapeutic Programs (where required).
- Oversee the implementation of AEN recommendations based on pedagogical and/or psychological statements submitted by parents.
- Coordinate assessments, interventions, and communication with parents and specialists.
- Maintain accurate records of AEN students and their progress.

5.3 Teachers

- Differentiate instruction to accommodate AEN needs.
- Monitor student progress and provide feedback to the counsellor.
- Participate in training and collaborate with the AEN team.

5.4 Parents/Guardians

- Share relevant information regarding their child's needs.
- Engage in regular communication with the school about their child's progress.
- Support interventions and strategies recommended by the school.
- Commit to an active partnership with the school ensuring a child-centred approach.

Students

- Participate actively in their learning process.
- Communicate their needs and seek support when necessary.
- Ask for help if they need it.
- Always act in line with the school's values.

6. Identification and Referral

6.1. Identification of the Need

- **Observation and Monitoring:** Classroom observations and student work will inform the initial evaluation. Teachers observe the student's behavior, learning progress, and social interactions and report any concerns to the school counsellor.
- **Parental Consultation:** The form teacher or the school counsellor discuss observed difficulties with the student's parents or guardians to address concerns and seek their input.
- **Notifying the Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** The counsellor communicates the outcome of the meeting with the parents to the Head of School and the Deputy Head of School. A potential support plan is outlined.

6.2 Internal Support and Documentation

- **School-Based Interventions:** The school may implement initial support measures, such as individual assistance or adjustments in teaching methods, to address the student's difficulties.
- **Documentation:** Teachers and the counsellor document observed challenges, interventions, and their outcomes to justify the need for external assessment if school support proves insufficient.

6.3 Referral Decision

- **Parental Consent:** Parents or guardians are seen as vital partners in their child's success and, as such, their consent is essential for any referral to an external centre. Parents must agree to the referral process. However, if parents refuse to follow through with a request by the school to seek help for their child is seen as a lack of partnership. The school may request moving the child to another school.
- **Formal Request:** The counsellor prepares a formal written request for the referral, often including:
 - a description of the observed difficulties;
 - documentation of school-based interventions and their effectiveness;
 - input from teachers, school specialists, and sometimes the student (if age-appropriate);

6.4 Referral to the Psychological-Pedagogical Centre

- The referral is sent to an external Psychological-Pedagogical Centre, with the parents' approval.
- Parents may directly approach the centre with the referral documents from the school or initiate the process themselves.

6.5 Assessment by the Psychological-Pedagogical Centre

- The centre conducts a comprehensive evaluation, which may include:
 - psychological assessment;
 - pedagogical evaluation;
 - speech therapy or other specialist evaluations (if applicable).
- The assessment considers the student's cognitive abilities, emotional and social functioning, and specific learning or behavioral needs.

6.6 Issuance of a Report or Statement

- **Report on Observations:** The Centre provides a detailed report outlining the findings and recommendations for supporting the student.

- **Special Education Needs Statement:** If required, the Centre may issue a formal statement (**Orzeczenie o potrzebie kształcenia specjalnego**) confirming the specific need for additional educational support or specialised interventions.

6.7 Implementation of Recommendations

- Based on the Centre's report, the school adapts its educational approach by:
 - Developing an Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program or another tailored support plan.
 - Ensuring access to specialised resources or support staff (e.g., special education teachers, therapists).
- The school cooperates with parents and, if necessary, the Centre to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented measures.

The referral process to an external Psychological-Pedagogical Centre for a student who may have Additional Educational Needs (AEN) is regulated by the Polish education law, specifically under the provisions of the **Education Law Act** and related regulations.

7. Support and Accommodations

Support Strategies: Depend on the statements issued by Psychological-Pedagogical centres, and may include differentiated instruction, extended time for tasks and tests, modified resources, small group instruction and/or one-on-one sessions with specialists, e.g. a speech therapist, a special pedagogue.

8. Monitoring and Review

- **Reviews:** For students with Statements of Special Educational Needs issued by Psychological-Pedagogical Centres, the team of teachers working with the students conducts a multi-specialist evaluation of the student's functioning at least twice a year. Based on the evaluation, amendments to the Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program are made as needed.
- **Parent-Teacher Meetings:** Scheduled to discuss student progress and address concerns.
- **Data Tracking:** Continuous monitoring of academic and social development.

9. Communication

- **With Parents:** Transparent and regular updates on their child's progress.
- **With Students:** Clear and supportive discussions about their learning goals.

- **With Professionals:** Collaboration with therapists, psychologists, and other specialists as needed.

10. Safeguarding

All staff must remain mindful that students with AEN may be more exposed to safeguarding concerns due to:

1. Increased Vulnerability to Abuse or Neglect

- **Communication Barriers** – some students with AEN may struggle to express themselves, making it harder for them to report abuse or neglect.
- **Social Isolation** – they may have fewer friendships or support networks, making them easier targets for bullying or abuse.
- **Dependence on Others** – some students with AEN rely heavily on adults for care, which increases the risk of abuse going unnoticed.
- **Lower Awareness of Danger** – certain conditions (e.g., autism, learning disabilities) may make it harder for students to recognise inappropriate behaviour.
- **Compliance & Trust Issues** – They may be more likely to follow instructions without question, making them more susceptible to exploitation.

2. AEN May Hide Student's Needs

- **Masking & Coping Strategies** – some students, especially those with autism or ADHD, learn to hide their struggles to fit in.
- **Misinterpretation of Behaviors** – challenging behaviours may be seen as a discipline issue rather than a sign of unmet needs.
- **Lack of Self-Awareness** – some children may not recognise they have difficulties and therefore do not ask for help.
- **Assumed Competence** – teachers might believe the child is managing well because they do not openly express their struggles.
- **Fear or Shame** – some students may not disclose their difficulties due to embarrassment or fear of being singled out.

Addressing these risks requires **early identification, strong communication, and a supportive environment** where students feel safe to express their needs.

11. Confidentiality

All information regarding students with AEN will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and shared only with relevant stakeholders.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current best practices and regulatory updates.