Prepare, Praise, Progress.
Roddensvale School Development Plan
2025-2028

Context/Ethos:

Roddensvale School caters for 276 pupils aged 3-19 with Severe and/or Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, split across three campuses.

The Early Years Centre opened at the former Upper Ballyboley Primary School in September 2025, catering initially for 16 Nursery pupils. The EA plans to expand this site to include P1 pupils from September 2026.

Currently the original school site houses 21 classes, ranging from Nursery to Key Stage 2, with 2 post-16 classes in a double mobile. The ASD/Sensory Department of 8 classes is based in this building.

Nine classes are currently based at Larne High School in a self-contained wing of the school. These cover Key Stages 2-4, alongside 2 Post-16 classes in a standalone double modular building. The classes at the Base have access to the PE halls and Home Economics rooms in Larne High School, timetabled into these alongside pupils there.

A multi-disciplinary approach is very much in evidence in Roddensvale. Teachers, Classroom Assistants, Therapists, Parents/carers, the Board of Governors and other non-teaching staff work together in liaison with external agencies as appropriate to provide excellent learning and

teaching where the pupils reach their maximum potential at whatever level this may be. The school was the first in Northern Ireland to gain a Silver Attachment and Trauma Sensitive School Award, as well as being the pilot school for the development of Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) in EA. The principles of TIP underpin the ethos of the school, and our culture and ethos developed through an Attachment and Trauma Informed approach, where relationship is at the heart of every interaction and supports the whole school community to include our pupils, our staff, our parent(s)/carers and all other agencies working alongside us.

The aims of the school are:

1. To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of each pupil
2. To provide a trauma-informed, rich and stimulating learning environment which will encourage pupils to explore and investigate.
3. To make learning fun
4. To devise PLPs for each pupil which will meet their individual needs and maximise each pupil's potential.
5. To provide opportunities for pupils to experience success in a variety of contexts.
6. To recognise and praise progress, success, hard work and the effort of all pupils.
7. To prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
8. To help all pupils to communicate more effectively using a variety of methods including signing, symbols and Alternative & Augmentative Communication (using Makaton/PECS etc.).
9. To nurture positive links between home, school and the local and wider community and to encourage parental involvement in all aspects of school life.
10. To develop personal qualities such as self-confidence, independence, resourcefulness and self-discipline and to develop the whole child – socially, intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

SECTION 2

Effective Leadership:

The school has a new Senior Leadership Structure following the Management Structure Review for special schools. Leaders set clear goals and lead by example, supporting staff to develop an environment in line with our trauma-informed ethos, where each child and young person is safe, celebrated and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Child Centred Provision:

In Roddensvale School we believe in placing every child at the centre of every decision we make, and relationship is at the heart of every interaction. We adapt our curriculum, environments, and resources to reflect each child and young person's unique strengths, interests, and challenges. We work closely with parents/carers, Allied Health Professionals and external agencies to ensure every child's voice is heard and that care, education, and therapy are integrated in a way that supports the whole child to thrive.

Teaching and Learning:

In Roddensvale School we believe in providing every child with the opportunity to experience an outstanding education academically, emotionally and socially. We strongly believe that by identifying the barriers to learning, we can provide an inspiring and relevant curriculum that considers the whole child and provides the necessary support for pupils to achieve, develop and reach their true potential. Our priority as a school is to ensure psychological and environmental safety first; it is the foundation on which everything else depends. We work collaboratively with parents/carers, external agencies and Allied Health Professionals to reduce barriers to learning and support pupils to achieve, develop and reach their true potential.

Teacher Professional Development:

Teacher professional development is a core feature of Roddensvale School. We invest in training all staff to ensure they have the skills, competencies, confidence and tools to meet the changing needs of our learners, whilst ensuring our trauma-informed ethos drives forward all

we do. Roddensvale School's application for the TPL funding has been approved, and we welcome this focus from the Education Minister on high quality professional learning for teachers. We are committed to training staff, building capacity and working to develop longevity through investing in training for future leaders, as well as developing the competencies of staff to lead training for colleagues and for parents/carers. Through high-quality training, we are providing the best opportunity for our pupils to reach their full potential.

A School Connected to its Community:

In Roddensvale School we recognise the value of links with the wider community. With 9 classes based at Larne High School, we value the close links and the opportunities of being based there, as well as with our other partners in the Larne Learning Community – Larne Grammar School, St Killian's College and Northern Regional College. We have close links with our closest primary school, Moyle Primary School, alongside the other local primary schools and nurseries. In line with our trauma-informed ethos, and relationships, we work closely with families, offering a range of training and wellbeing events for parents and friends of the school. We have close links with the local nursing home, Gillaroo Lodge, and are part of the wider "Kindness Network" in Larne. We recognise the value of work experience and build on the links established with local businesses and providers, e.g. AEL Ltd, Inver Garden Centre and Larne Football Club.

Evaluation of Previous School Development Plan 2022 – 2025

Child Centred Provision:

Autism Support –

- ✓ TEACCH training completed for all new permanent teachers, both full and part time
- ✓ Planning reviewed to ensure needs of pupils with ASD are considered and accurately reflected in PLPs
- ✓ Visual schedules reviewed and matched to needs of individual pupils, and reflected in communal areas
- ✓ Classroom Assistants and temporary teaching staff all received training on visual strategies. Forms part of annual training now
- ✓ ASD passport used throughout the school
- ✓ ASD assessment tool used to accurately assess the needs and development of learners with ASD and evaluated as effective

ASD working group only now established through Heads of Department, under the Head of Pupil Support
Work has started on the communal areas for sensory integration, but this has been limited by overcrowding and building work

Communication for All –

- ✓ Augmentative and alternative communication established in Assemblies and regular update sessions held for staff
- ✓ New coordinator for The Curiosity Programme and staff all trained in using this
- ✓ Gestalt Language Processing training held for all staff in conjunction with Speech and Language
- ✓ New Communication Coordinator (TA1) appointed
- ✓ Communication passports used for all pupils and updated at least annually

As the Communication Coordinator was only appointed in April 2025, the establishment of working groups for communication is only in process now

Meeting Sensory and/or Behaviour that can be Challenging –

- ✓ Sensory integration built into PE, the Daily Mile and sensory circuits set up in collaboration with OT. Sports day for ASD and Foundation Departments now moved to sensory circuit-based day
- ✓ Better Together set up to allow collaboration with other SEN schools in North Eastern area to focus on behaviour
- ✓ Head of Pupil Support (TA3) appointed
- ✓ Positive Behaviour Policy updated
- ✓ Pupil Support Plans and recording all updated and more meaningful for the pupils throughout the school

- ✓ New graduated recording of behaviours in place
- ✓ Pupil support process in place

Planning to Meet Individual Need –

- ✓ PLPs used in all classes, bar the 2 oldest
- ✓ Parents familiar with PLP and the parental views form
- ✓ Majority of parents now giving their views, either via the paper form, or via Seesaw
- ✓ Use of Microsoft Forms/sheets with text or visuals to gather pupil views for both PLP and Annual Review
- ✓ Number of outcomes and language used reviewed and refined to better reflect the needs of the leaner on PLPs
- ✓ All Annual Reviews completed via the EA Connect Portal
- ✓ Pupils in PMLD class now integrate into other classes to increase their presence and profile in the school

Fagus has been carried forward to the 26/27 academic year as Fagus have paused new online subscriptions until then

Safeguarding and Living in Safety –

- ✓ Operation Encompass in place. Parents/carers, Governors and staff are all aware of this. Contacts set up and trained
- ✓ Staff all trained
- ✓ Policy updated
- ✓ New E-Safety Coordinator appointed
- ✓ Updated E-Safety training for all staff
- ✓ Pupil training set up and established with PSNI and White Ribbon
- ✓ Monthly e-safety newsletter sent out to all parents/carers

E-safety code of conduct update delayed to this year due to change of personnel

Health and Fitness, including Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing –

- ✓ Healthy eating and healthy tuck shop re-introduced after Covid. Links with ASDA and Healthy Eating week established for

promotion of this

- ✓ Community of Lifesavers established, and staff trained to deliver this to KS3 upwards
- ✓ Appropriate resources for the delivery of this established
- ✓ All staff trained in TIP Levels 1 & 2
- ✓ Links established with CSSC and with Educational Psychology for TIP
- ✓ Number of staff trained in Rebound increased to allow its implementation in school
- ✓ All classes set up with calm boxes, safe spaces and areas for regulation, in line with our TIP ethos
- ✓ A Health and Wellbeing policy and strategy developed, with a Wellbeing Coordinator (TA1) appointed, and successful application made in May 2025 to both Take 5, and EA's Being Well Doing Well

Links have been made with Liquid Listening for the hydrotherapy pool, but not fully progressed

A School Connected to its Community:

Family Worker and Early Intervention –

- ✓ A new referral system for the Family Worker was established and streamlined referrals
- ✓ A second counsellor for families was taken on, increasing the number of families we can support
- ✓ A range of new wellbeing and training sessions were organised for parents (Extended Schools)
- ✓ The training offered through Early Intervention programme was extended to Nursery and Foundation Department parents
- ✓ New advertising for Toy House, and links with all Health providers who work with 0-3 years

Entitlement Framework –

- ✓ Links established and working well with Larne High School for use of appropriate shared resources, e.g. Home Economics, PE, canteen for the 9 classes located there
- ✓ Joint sessions with the Learning Community students for Makaton
- ✓ New work experience links set up with Inver Garden Centre
- ✓ AEL Ltd programme expanded for post-16 pupils
- ✓ NRC links expanded and wider number of pupils now completing OCR under NRC
- ✓ CCEA Entry Life Skills units better planned to offer progression and avoid duplication across 14+

- ✓ Independent Travel Training re-established fully after Covid
- ✓ New Exams Officer/Entitlement Framework Coordinator appointed (TA2 – Head of Key Stages 3/4)

Mainstreaming Shared Education –

- ✓ New Shared Education Coordinator appointed (Head of Post-16)
- ✓ Shared Education re-established fully after Covid (links with St Killian's College, Larne Grammar School and Larne High School)
- ✓ Joint PE sessions and Citizenship trips out to various areas
- ✓ With classes based in Larne High School, close links between the students based there in the LSU, and the students in Roddensvale School

<u>Leadership and Management –</u>

- ✓ The Vice Principal has now been released full-time, ensuring the needs of an expanding pupil population are met
- ✓ The Management Structure Review has been completed, and the new Management Structure has: 1 x Head of Pupil Support (TA3); 6 x Heads of Department (TA2); 6 x Middle Leaders (TA1). All have been appointed, bar the final TA1 post.
- ✓ All new Senior Leaders have completed their relevant training and are leading the following Departments: Nursery/Foundation; Key Stages 1&2; Key Stages 3&4; Post-16; ASD/Sensory (2 leaders are this Department spans Yrs2-15)
- ✓ The satellite provision at Larne High School has expanded from 3 classes in 22/23, to 7 classes in 24/25, and now sits at 9 classes in 25/26. All builds and moves were managed efficiently, with pupils well settled and learning in the Base
- ✓ The school took on the former Upper Ballyboley Primary School site in 24/25, with work on renovation starting in 2025 in preparation for September (Early Years Site)

  SEP has been delayed and is still ongoing
  The Minor Works to the rear of the site were held up by NI Water and are only progressing in the 25/26 academic year

Overall Evaluation:

Despite the issues and constraints of the building, we moved forward with the majority of areas, most relevant being the Management Structure Review which is showing evidence of allowing us to move forward and effectively meet the individual needs of young people. The

work on behaviours that challenge, particularly on recording and support, has allowed us to gather a clear picture of the needs of pupils and tailor the support we offer them. The focus on ASD has helped us meet the needs of the increasing numbers of pupils with ASD in school, 70% of the learners at Roddensvale have a diagnosis of ASD. We maintain close links with TEACCH and Lorraine Scott (Allied Autism Services) to keep up to date with practice and training specifically for ASD.

From the parental surveys, parents feel their child's needs are met, they enjoy school, communication with school is good and the majority agreed their child was pushed to try to the best of their ability. Surveys did show we need to do some more work on post-16 to develop accreditation and work experience. Emotional wellbeing came across from both parent and staff surveys as an area of priority for all. Staff at the early years identified the need to refine the assessment tools used as the profile of the pupils starting Roddensvale School has changed significantly over the past number of years. Time to collaborate on this came through, which was built into the TPL Funding Action Plan.

Pupils, on the whole, reported feeling happy in school and all could identify who to talk to if they are worried or stressed.

Views of Stakeholders:

In preparation for the School Development Plan, the following groups were consulted:

- Pupils – 41 responses
- Parents/Carers – 36 responses
- Staff – 15 teaching/6 non-teaching
- Board of Governors – 6 responses

3 Year Overview

Initiative	Year 1 (2025–26)	Year 2 (2026–27)	Year 3 (2027–28)
ESAGS: High quality teaching and learning and Child-centred provision ETI 9 CAs: Curriculum for all; Planning Learning Teaching and Assessment; Staff Professional Learning; Collaborative Networks			
Evidence for Learning	Pilot use, build understanding	Expand use, embed in planning	Evaluate, refine, explore advanced features
Curriculum Planning/Assessment	Audit gaps. Start with Play Based Planning audit and assessment	Assessment focus on post-16 provision	Assessment focus on emotional health & wellbeing
Literacy and Communication	Pilot use of "Core Word" programme	Expand use, embed in planning, including PLPs	Review impact, evaluate use
Post-16 Provision	Embed OCR qualifications, build partnerships for work experience	Expand qualifications, real-world learning and assessment of skills.	Refine provision, assess KS5, explore alternatives and transition to post-19
ESAGS: Child-centred provision and a school connected to its local community ETI 9CAs: Health Wellbeing and Keeping Safe; Staff Professional Learning; Collaborative Networks			
Being Well Doing Well	Audit pupils, parents, staff, Governors to establish baseline. Build understanding and develop a focused action plan.	Expand use. Focus on policy and embedding of BWDW in planning. Implement priority targets and agreed actions	BWDW to become fully integrated in the school and reflected in both policy and practice. Refine and carry out mid-way assessment and evaluation of progress through audit of all
CPOMS	Establish system, train staff	Expand use, integrate systems	Use data for strategy, embed safeguarding
Take 5	Introduce Take 5 to the school including a staff briefing and a prominent wellbeing noticeboard	Develop a focused Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing plan and integrate it into the school.	Take 5 steps to wellbeing to become fully integrated in the school and reflected in both policy and practice.
Togetherness (Solihull)	Train staff & devise action plan. Identify target group.	Deliver training programme to stakeholders, further embedding towards Roddensvale values	Developed as an ongoing programme offered regularly to stakeholders of Roddensvale.

ESAGS: Effective leadership and a school connected to its local community ETI 9CAs: Staff Professional Learning (leadership); Collaborative Networks			
Leadership Development	Senior Leadership Team – Leaders as Coach	Middle Leadership – develop supervision model in partnership with Educational Psychology & CSSC	Develop coaching culture
Staff Professional Learning (TPL)	Application and professional learning focus on ASD and building capacity.	Professional learning extension – focus on individual pupil need and collaborative planning and assessment	Evaluation of the effectiveness of TPL on learning, teaching and building capacity for longevity in the school.