

Additional Support Pathways for the Primary Mathematics Curriculum

What are the Additional Support Pathways?

The Additional Support Pathways (ASP) is a tool that is designed to support teachers to provide for more individualised and inclusive learning experiences for children with additional needs. It provides a lens through which to conceptualise and recognise the kind of learning experience which are most appropriate for these children as they engage with Learning Outcomes in the curriculum.



Benefits for the child

Each child is an individual with a unique set of strengths that needs to be nurtured. The ASP recognises and attends to the diversity among children in the classroom. By aligning the child's learning experience with their individual strengths, needs and interests; children can experience more success, challenge and enjoyment in their learning. The ASP also support continuity and progression for children as they transition between classes and into post-primary.

How teachers can use the ASP

The ASP allows the teachers to look at (breaks down) the learning experience in greater detail to identify varying levels of cognitive demand for the child. Each of the seven pathways describes how children might access, engage with and demonstrate their learning as they work towards a Learning Outcome.

The pathways are displayed sequentially, however, given the diverse ways that children learn, these should not be interpreted as a conventional linear path of development. A child may be at 'attending' in some areas of mathematical learning and 'responding' in others.

The 'experiencing' pathway can present a challenge to teachers in assessing whether or not the child has experienced mathematical learning rather than being 'merely present' in the lesson/activity. The stimulus or activity to engage with their mathematical learning should be intentionally chosen in the context in which planned and incidental teaching and learning take place. Any signs of 'noticing' should be noted and used to inform planning for future mathematical experiences and activities. For instance, a stimulus such as a sound, if presented continuously, may not be noticed by a child with profound needs or may cause him or her to 'shut down' in order to block it. By using an on-off pattern, where a stimulus is presented and removed several times, it becomes easier for the adult to determine whether the child has noticed it or not.

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