



Operational Process of the Buddy Tutoring System

The Buddy Tutoring System was implemented through a structured but flexible process. The purpose was to ensure that support was based on observed student needs rather than assumptions. The process combined information from the family, direct observation in the learning environment, student participation, tutor-team discussion, subject-teacher feedback and continuous review.

Table 1. Operational process of the Buddy Tutoring System

Stage	Operational purpose
1. Initial consultation	The project manager or relevant team member discussed the student's educational situation, parent/legal-representative expectations, existing difficulties, previous support experience and practical participation needs with the parent or legal representative.
2. Observation and adaptation	During the first period of participation, tutors observed task initiation, independence, communication, attention, emotional responses, peer interaction, help-seeking, digital-learning habits and response to different adults.
3. Identification of needs and priorities	The team combined parent/legal-representative information, student perspective, observations, attendance, assignments and subject-teacher feedback in order to identify a limited number of realistic support priorities.
4. Buddy assignment	The principal Buddy was selected according to the developing student-adult connection and the tutor's competence in relation to the student's main academic, organisational, emotional, digital-literacy or social needs. The student was informed who their principal Buddy was and how the Buddy could support them.
5. Continuous tutoring and personalised feedback	The Buddy and wider team provided regular check-ins, planning, task review, subject coordination, digital-literacy support, emotional and motivational feedback, online or asynchronous follow-up and parent/legal-representative communication where necessary.
6. Review and adjustment	Support was reviewed through tutor notes, Buddy records, subject-teacher feedback, student reflection, attendance records and team discussion. Adjustments could include changes to schedule, delivery mode, task structure, subject support, digital-learning assistance, planning tools or Buddy assignment.

The process was not treated as a fixed plan. Where the original arrangement did not meet the student's needs, the team adjusted the support format. For example, attendance could be

reduced where the original timetable was too intensive, online support could be added where on-site participation was not possible, or a subject teacher could be involved where general tutoring was insufficient.

Roles and Responsibilities in the Support Process

The Buddy Tutoring System was based on shared support combined with clearly assigned responsibility. The principal Buddy maintained continuity for the individual student, while the wider tutor team, subject teachers, project manager, family and student each contributed to the support process.

The model was designed to avoid two risks: unclear responsibility, where several adults support the student but no one follows the complete process; and excessive dependence on one person, where the Buddy is expected to provide every form of academic, emotional and organisational support personally.

Table 2. Roles and responsibilities in the support process

Role	Main responsibility	Boundary
Project manager	Coordinated the student's entry into the support process, parent/legal-representative consultation, observation period, organisational arrangements, information sharing and management-level decisions.	The project manager did not determine the support arrangement solely from the parent/legal-representative account; direct observation and tutor-team discussion were also used.
Principal Buddy	Maintained continuity, supported goals and planning, followed agreed actions, coordinated with other adults and gradually supported learner autonomy.	The Buddy did not replace the subject teacher, psychologist or parent/legal representative and did not complete work on behalf of the student.
Other tutors	Provided immediate academic, practical, digital-literacy, emotional or social support when needed and communicated significant observations to the principal Buddy.	Other tutors supported flexibility, but significant information had to be shared so that the student experienced one coordinated support process.
Subject teachers	Identified subject-specific gaps, explained content, provided targeted practice, checked understanding and reported relevant subject feedback to the Buddy.	Subject teachers retained responsibility for specialist academic judgement; the Buddy used their feedback for planning and follow-up.
Parent/legal representative	Provided contextual information, supported agreed attendance and routines, communicated relevant changes and participated in review where necessary.	The parent/legal representative was a partner in the process but was not expected to become the student's teacher or complete work on behalf of the student.
Student	Participated in goal-setting, discussed priorities, identified difficulties, asked for help, reflected on progress and gradually took greater responsibility for learning.	The level of responsibility was adapted to age, readiness, educational experience and support needs.

The student was not treated as a passive recipient of support. Depending on age and readiness, the Buddy supported movement from adult-led support towards shared responsibility and increasing learner autonomy. Progress was therefore reflected not only in completed assignments, but also in the student's ability to identify the next step, explain a difficulty, ask for appropriate help, monitor progress and return to learning after setbacks.