

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Saint Joseph's Convent Primary School
Newry

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Board of Governors and the staff of Saint Joseph's are committed to all children in our care. We promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, educational and physical development of each child in a manner which prepares for the opportunities, responsibilities and activities of an adult life. We promote an inclusive ethos and we believe that all children should have access to a broad and balanced education in order to achieve their full potential. We aim to meet the needs of all the pupils by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and by the most efficient use of all available resources. This ideal can be best achieved through collaboration between pupils, parents, teachers and other support agencies.

AIMS OF SCHOOL POLICY

- To promote inclusive practices
- To ensure those pupils with SEN are appropriately integrated into the life of the school.
- To provide equality of opportunity regardless of ability, disability, race, gender or creed.
- To promote a positive learning environment to offer the maximum opportunity for all children, including those with special educational needs, to achieve their full potential.
- To provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for those pupils with SEN.
- To identify and address special educational needs within school and to develop a support system based on the "Code of Practice" for SEN.
- To deploy a range of teaching strategies suited to age, ability and aptitude.
- To offer a range of relevant learning experiences and a variety of teaching resources to meet a variety of needs.
- To ensure all staff recognise their responsibilities to those pupils with SEN.
- To promote a partnership with parents and to involve them fully in the education of their children.
- To promote a partnership with the wider community
- To promote a partnership with SEN specialist support services
- To monitor, evaluate and review our policy regularly in partnership with the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Governors

This policy is set within the broader context of other policies, both curricular and pastoral.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Definition of SEN

The term “special educational need” is defined as “a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made”.

“Learning difficulty” means that the child has “significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age and/or has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of his age in ordinary schools”.(SEN Code of Practice Paragraph 1.4)

“Special educational provision” means educational provision which is different from or additional to the provision made generally for children of comparable age”.

Definition of Disability

“Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. (Part 1 of Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The admission arrangements for pupils to this school are set out in our admissions policy and are in line with ELB and CCMS guidelines. The admission of statemented pupils is co-ordinated through the ELB and measured against:

- the suitability of the placement for the pupil
- the suitability of the placement for other pupils in the same setting
- the efficient use of ELB resources

Appropriate placement is vitally important and there are consultation mechanisms built into these processes. This is in line with SENDO legislation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We recognise that SEN is a whole school issue. All members of the school community play an important part in delivering quality practice for SEN children

The Board of Governors:

- have regard to DE and ELB guidance related to SEN
- have regard to the SEN policy
- determine, and keep under review, its policy in relation to the provision of education for children with special educational needs
- publish prescribed information with respect to its policy and arrangements in respect of pupils with special educational needs:

Specific duties towards all pupils who have special educational needs....

- ❖ secure provision
- ❖ identification and provision
- ❖ inclusion and integration

The Principal (with the Board of Governors):

- establishes quality provision
- determines the school's general policy and approach to SEN
- establishes staffing and funding arrangements for SEN
- is responsible for the day to day management of all the school's work, including the SEN provision
- keeps the Governors informed
- works closely with the SENCo and the learning support team
- establishes (with the SMT and SENCo) the SEN training requirements of the staff
- ensures confidentiality as appropriate

The SENCO

- is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN Policy
- co-ordinates SEN provision (including the education planning process and the Annual/ Transfer Review process)
- maintains the SEN Register
- supports staff in identifying pupils with special educational needs
- advises and support staff on matters related to SEN

- liaises with outside support agencies when required
- liaises with pupils and parents, when required
- monitors (with the SMT) the SEN policy and provision within the school and keeps the principal informed
- establishes (with the SMT) the SEN training requirements of the staff

The Classroom Teacher

- identifies any children who may have learning difficulties and brings them to the attention of the SENCO
- adapts class work and provides alternative strategies/resources/programmes for children with special needs
- sets targets, implements, monitors and reviews education plans
- encourages children to become involved in their own learning
- monitors the progress of all children including those with special needs
- deploys, organises and guides the work of classroom assistants to support pupils' learning
- liaises with the SENCO regarding their pupils who have special needs
- keeps parents fully informed of their child's progress

Assistants:

- work under the direction of and in partnership with the teacher
- assist the teacher in developing the child's independence
- assist the class teacher in delivering quality practice for SEN children
- are involved in target setting, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the education planning process
- are involved, with the class teacher, in the planning, delivering and evaluation of SEN provision
- are actively involved in the appraisal of their own work

Parents:

- fully support their child's learning
- keep the school fully informed of their concerns or any changes which may occur

Pupils:

- take responsibility for their own learning
- co-operate fully with the teacher and classroom assistant

SPECIAL FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

There are 2 Learning Support Classes (LSC 1 & LSC 2) and an Autistic Spectrum Disorder Class (ASC) in the school.

Reading Partnership

The school endeavours to provide a Reading Partnership Programme each year. This programme is designed to target middle ability pupils who may be under achieving in Literacy.

Withdrawal Groups

The school endeavours to provide withdrawal groups each year. With parental permission, pupils may be withdrawn from class in groups for literacy or numeracy development. After a sustained period and following consultation with class teachers and parents, this support may cease if deemed appropriate.

RESOURCES

To ensure that our SEN provision is effective, we are committed to allocating time and resources to it. Differentiated material is purchased and used in all classes. We recognise that ICT is a valuable tool when teaching SEN children because it is multi-sensory. Voice feedback programmes give visual and auditory feedback simultaneously. The school engages other programmes when appropriate to the needs of the pupils.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In line with the Code of Practice and the breadth of SEN we identify a pupil's difficulties through a range of methods:

Information from parents

The professional judgement of the staff

Formative Assessment

Summative Assessment } See Appendix 1

Standardised Scores } }

Diagnostic tests } }

Consultation with Educational Psychology

Information from H&SS

Information from other outside agencies

Consultation with Special Education

Liaison with previous schools and settings

Education Plans and Review Procedures

After thorough analysis and consultation between the parents, class teacher & SENCo, a pupil is placed on the SEN Register. An individual Education Plan (E.P.) is drawn up and reviewed by the class teacher regularly. When children have been placed on the SEN Register (Appendix 2 summarises stages and process) their progress is monitored and reviewed by the class teacher, the SENCo and the Principal and any necessary action taken. A continuum of provision is maintained. Parents are kept fully informed about the EPs and the Reviews. Reviews of the E.Ps focus on educational outcomes, inform future planning and inform movement through the Code of Practice stages. In consultation with the parents and SENCo, a pupil may be removed from the SEN Register if the teacher has evidence that the pupil no longer has 'a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made'.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The school uses current D.E. and ELB documentation related to SEN as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of SEN provision. The Principal has overall responsibility for the teaching and learning within the school and works closely with the SENCO. The Principal reports on current SEN provision to the BOG annually.

The SENCO monitors provision by:

- updating the SEN Register regularly.
- meeting regularly with classroom teachers (both formally and informally) to gather information regarding pupil's progress.
- monitoring .Education Plans and Reviews for progression
- monitoring the support provided by SEN assistants
- reviewing annually the provision for statemented pupils
- monitoring, with the Principal and other school personnel, the effectiveness of extra support provided for pupils with special educational needs
- monitoring, with the Principal and other school personnel, the summative assessment annually
- ensuring, with the Principal, appropriate teaching and learning strategies are used through lesson observation (PRSD)

Criteria for evaluating the success of the school's SEN policy and provision

When considering the success of the policy the principal, SENCO and staff will consider the effectiveness of the school's system for:

1. Early identification of special needs
2. Formative and summative assessment informing planning for SEN pupils
3. The quality of provision and outcomes for SEN pupils
4. Monitoring and Record Keeping.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROVIDING ACCESS TO A BALANCED AND BROADLY BASED CURRICULUM and EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and DISABILITY ORDER (SENDO)

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order, the school does not discriminate against pupils who have disabilities in admission arrangements, in the education and associated services provided and in relation to expulsion and suspension from the school.

The school takes reasonable steps to ensure pupils who have a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison to pupils who do not have a disability, in relation to education and associated services provided to them. Reasonable adjustments are made so that all pupils who have a disability can access the school premises and can participate in the curriculum.

In line with SENDO, SEN pupils have access to full involvement in all the school offers including extra curricular activities. The needs of SEN pupils are reflected in curriculum planning at a number of levels. At policy level a statement regarding inclusion is included in each policy document. Individual teachers are encouraged to provide for all abilities within the classroom context. Differentiation is part of each class teacher's planning. Each class teacher uses a variety of methods of differentiation:

e.g by task
 by input
 by outcome
 by texts / resources used.

Inclusion and Integration

Pupils with special educational needs are integrated into mainstream classes. Pupils from the Learning Support Classes and the Autistic Spectrum Class have opportunities to be integrated into mainstream classes where appropriate.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S STAFFING POLICIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

In-service Training

Through regular consultation with the staff and SENCo , the Principal highlights areas to be developed within each school year. Staff receives training in designated areas of concern whenever possible. The emphasis is on building the skills of the staff to meet the needs of the pupils. Teachers with specialised training are encouraged to disseminate their good practice. Current D.E. and E.L.B. documentation related specifically to SEN is disseminated to all staff e.g. The Good Practice Guidelines, Learning Difficulties and Strategies, Every School a Good School etc.

Partnerships with Pupils

The school acknowledges the pupils' role as partners in their own education, developing their participation in the decision making process by:

- listening to and valuing their views
- involving pupils, where appropriate, in target setting and formation of E.P.s
- involving pupils, where appropriate, in the review of the E.P.
- recording pupils' views, where appropriate, as part of any review procedure.

Partnerships with Parents

To involve parents fully in the education of their children is a key aim of our SEN Policy. To ensure we achieve this, parents:

- are asked to identify any special educational need their children may have upon entry into school
- are informed of progress through discussions with the class teacher, comments in work books and through formal parent / teacher meetings
- are made to feel welcome in school and are free to highlight any concerns they may have regarding their child with the class teacher
- are notified if it is felt that their child may have special educational needs
- have access to their child's EP and Review
- are kept fully involved and informed if there is a need to refer the child on for specialist support

- are made aware annually of how to access SEN Advice and Information Service (SENAIS) and the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)
- may discuss progress with the school SENCo or Principal.

Partnership with the wider community

In offering a broad and balanced curriculum our pupils will be involved in a range of community visits which may include places:

- related to aspects of study.
- of local interest
- of religious significance
- of topical interest
- of national importance / interest

Partnerships with other schools

The school is committed to developing links with the wider school community. Reasonable effort will be made to access relevant information on children with SEN (commonly EPs and other reports) transferring in from other schools. This may save valuable time in devising appropriate support procedures. Furthermore our school will provide copies of EPs and other reports for other schools, on request, when our pupils transfer to other schools.

Partnerships with specialist support

As identified in the Code of Practice there are a number of specialist support services available for SEN support. Saint Joseph's has established links with a range of outside agencies. These include the Educational Psychologist, Peripatetic Services, Speech and Language Services, Behaviour Management Team, Education Welfare Officer, Action for Children in Education, Curriculum and Special Education Support Services and Health and Social Services. Contact will be made as and when the occasion demands. Parents are consulted and kept fully informed. They are encouraged to avail of these services and every effort is made to ensure full co-operation between all concerned for the betterment of the pupil.

PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns about their child's education.

This should be done in the following way:

First contact – Class Teacher

Second contact – SENCo

Third contact – Principal

Fourth contact – Chairperson of the BOG

In addition, parents are given SELB Advice and Information Service (SENAIS) and the Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS).

This policy will be reviewed in the light of changes in legislation or practice and the changing circumstances within our school.

APPENDIX 1

ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES

Tests are used as screening and diagnostic tools and are linked to a planned programme of remediation. Current procedures in St. Joseph's Primary School are described below.

Year Group	Types of Assessment
A.S.D. Class	PEP 3 (Third Edition) The British Picture Vocabulary Scale (when suitable) (Hodder) Early Literacy Test (when suitable) (Hodder) Basic Number Diagnostic Test (when suitable)
Learning Support Class 1	E.Y.E.S The British Picture Vocabulary Scale (Hodder) Early Literacy Test (Hodder) Basic Number Diagnostic Test
Learning Support Class 2	QUEST SPAR Spelling Test Salford Reading Test (Hodder) Early Literacy Test (Hodder) Basic Number Diagnostic Test
Nursery	Formative assessment – recording daily observations End of term pupil profiles
Primary 1	E.Y.E.S. (First Term) for new pupils to the school and those with possible special educational needs
Primary 2	M.I.S.T. (First Term) Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 6 (First Edition not revised) NFER Progress in Mathematics 6
Primary 3	Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 7 NFER Progress in Mathematics 7 NRIT
Primary 4	Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 8 NFER Progress in Mathematics 8
Primary 5	Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 9 NFER Progress in Mathematics 9 NRIT
Primary 6	Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 10 NFER Progress in Mathematics 10
Primary 7	Standardised Tests (Third Term) NFER Progress in English 11 NFER Progress in Mathematics

Further individual testing will be carried out by the classroom teacher or SENCo on any pupil identified as a result of screening tests.