



Friends' School Lisburn

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

1. Context

The policy is set within the context of our Mission Statement, 'excellence within a caring, supportive community', and our Pastoral Care policy which has the following aims:

- to support the academic, social and personal well-being and development of all pupils
- to create a caring, secure and supportive atmosphere for all members of the School community
- to value all members of the School community as individuals of equal worth
- to encourage pupils and staff to value Friends' School as a community to which each individual can make a unique and valued contribution
- to prepare pupils for the challenges of adult and working life

The policy has due regard for the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (Department of Education 1998) and the Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Need and for Making Statements of Special Educational Need (NI Education and Library Boards, 2009). The statutory context is set down in the Education (NI) Order 1996 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SEND0).

2. Aims

The Aims of this Policy are:

- to promote inclusion
- to provide support and appropriate provision for pupils identified with Special Educational Needs
- to have clear procedures for the admission of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs

3. Definition of Special Educational Needs¹

A child has 'special educational needs'² if he/she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

A child has a 'learning difficulty' if:

- a) he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age
- b) he/she has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his/her age in ordinary schools

4. Admission Arrangements

Decisions on admission are made by the Education Committee of the Board of Governors and in liaison with the School's SENCO and the EA (SE Region).

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be admitted to School in the event that:

- a) they meet the criteria for admission appropriate to their age and level
- b) their attendance would not be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other pupils
- c) their attendance would not be incompatible with the efficient use of resources

¹ As set down in Article 3 of the 1996 Order

² Appendix 1 sets out the seven areas of Special Educational Need as identified by the Department of Education

5. Access to Curriculum

Pupils with special educational needs will have access to the N.I. Curriculum at a level appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude and attainment. In consultation with parents, guidance will be given on appropriate choice of subjects at key transition points, examination entries, careers and further and higher education options. In addition, pupils with identified special educational needs will be encouraged to participate as fully as is feasible in the extra-curricular activities of School. Risk assessments will be undertaken, where deemed necessary, to ensure pupil safety. The need for reasonable adjustments will be assessed and implemented in accordance with legislation.

6. Identification

Friends' School acknowledges that early identification and assessment are crucial to providing appropriate interventions and laying the foundation for maximum learning and progress.

Pupils requiring special educational needs provision may be identified in the following ways:

- a) liaison with feeder primary school at admission stage
- b) parental concerns expressed to School
- c) information from other school(s)
- d) observation and monitoring of pupil's work, progress, behaviour, attitude, social interaction, organisation by subject and pastoral staff
- e) a Statement of Special Educational Needs

In all cases appropriate evidence will be obtained and documented. All evidence will be communicated and transferred to the SENCO who reports to the Vice-Principal Pastoral and the Principal.

7. Intervention and Assessment

Pupils' needs will be identified and assessed within the 5 Stage approach stipulated in the DENI Code of Practice. The means of assessment will depend upon the nature of the pupil's need. The following assessment tools are likely to be used:

- observation by teacher
- diagnostic tests
- interviews
- medical and psychological evidence

Depending on outcomes, a range of strategies, including Individual Education Plans, will be put in place.

8. Responsibilities

In meeting the Special Educational Needs of individual pupils, the procedures outlined in the 5 stages of the Code of Practice will be followed. The first three of the five stages are based in School, calling as necessary on external specialists; at Stages 4 and 5 the Board shares responsibility with schools.

- The **Board of Governors** is responsible for ensuring that every child is a valued and valuable member of the School community with equal access to the same opportunities and high quality learning experiences.
- The **Principal** has overall responsibility for Special Educational Needs. This involves:
 - developing a whole-school culture of inclusiveness
 - ensuring that pupils' needs are identified, assessed, provided for and reviewed regularly
- The **Vice-Principal Pastoral, Stephen Alexander**, is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of Special Educational Needs provision (in conjunction with the SENCO).
- The **Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, Mary Waring**, has responsibility for the operation of the Special Educational Needs Policy. The SENCO is responsible for:
 - overseeing and coordinating the identification of pupils with Special Educational Needs
 - liaising with teachers, classroom assistants, nurse, parents and outside agencies re appropriate strategies of support

- disseminating relevant information to appropriate persons
- maintaining a Register of pupils with Special Education Needs
- drawing up and maintaining Individual Education Plans for pupils
- drawing up and maintaining Transition Plans for statemented pupils
- managing parent and pupil annual review of statements (with Principal)
- reporting to Principal on Special Educational Needs issues
- monitoring the effectiveness of Special Educational Needs provision (with Vice-Principal Pastoral)
- making arrangements for pupils whose special needs are met through the provision of home tuition

● **Whole School**

All members of the School Community have a responsibility to act in accordance with the SEN Policy. All staff are involved in the support of all learners within their classes, whatever their individual needs, to enable them to reach their learning potential. All staff are therefore involved in the implementation and development of the Policy. It is envisaged that most needs will be met within the normal classroom setting and through whole class teaching. Differentiated teaching strategies, flexible learning and group work are integral parts of the Revised Curriculum.

In line with departmental policies, all staff are responsible for the monitoring of pupil progress and where a persistent area of difficulty is highlighted for a pupil (e.g. organisation, spelling, behaviour etc) information is passed to the SENCO.

All staff are advised annually of their roles with regard to Special Educational Needs provision and they are provided with a detailed Special Educational Needs Register and strategies to assist Special Educational Needs pupils. Staff are also encouraged to seek advice and guidance from the SENCO regarding any aspect of Special Educational Needs.

9. Partnership with Parents

The involvement of parents is sought at an early stage in the identification, intervention, assessment and provision for Special Educational Needs. The first point of contact for parents is the SENCO, Mrs Mary Waring, Senior Teacher Pastoral. The assistance and support of parents in implementing the Individual Education Plans is welcomed and encouraged.

10. Partnership with External Agencies

Links between the SENCO and certain outside agencies and support services include:

- Social Services
- School Psychology Service (EA SE Region)
- Special Educational Needs Advisors (EA SE Region)
- Health Trust
- Clinical Medical Officer
- Learning Support staff
- The Lisburn Area Learning Community

11. Inservice Training

School acknowledges its responsibility to provide necessary and appropriate training for all and particular staff members. On an annual basis, members of the Leadership Team review training and development in relation to the needs of Special Educational Needs pupils in School.

12. Allocation of Resources

SEN provision includes:

- employment of classroom assistants
- employment of learning support teachers
- purchase of diagnostic tests/learning packages
- production of learning materials
- photocopying costs
- adaptations to building e.g. wheelchair access

13. Examinations

In line with the external Examination Boards' policy concerning provision of extra time for pupils with Special Educational Needs, School provides an additional 25% time for all internal examinations to those pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register, as appropriate to their needs. Other special provision may include:

- use of a computer
- amanuensis
- enlarged script
- alternative venue

Otherwise, all pupils are expected to complete the same home and class study.

14. Review

The content of the Policy will be reviewed each year in the light of its appropriateness to provide for the special needs of Friends' School pupils and to meet legislative requirements.

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Appendix 1

Areas of Special Educational Need, Department of Education 2005. Recording children with Special Educational Needs. The Department of Education has identified seven 'areas' of Special Educational Need and, within each area, a number of SEN categories.

1. Cognitive and Learning

- Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia/Developmental Co-ordination Disorder
- Mild Learning Difficulties
- Moderate Learning Difficulties
- Severe Learning Difficulties
- Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties
- Unspecified Cognitive and Learning Difficulties

2. Social, Emotional & Behavioural

- Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties
- ADD/ADHD

3. Communication and Interaction

- Speech and Language Difficulties
- Autism
- Aspergers

4. Sensory

- Severe/profound hearing loss
- Mild/moderate hearing loss
- Blind
- Partially sighted
- Multi-sensory Impairment

5. Physical

- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus
- Muscular dystrophy
- Significant accidental injury
- Other physical

6. Medical conditions/Syndromes

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Down
- Other medical conditions/syndromes
- Interaction of complex medical needs
- Mental Health Issues

7. Other

Appendix 2

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service

The Dispute Avoidance & Resolution Service (DARS) came into effect on 1 September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO). Disagreements may arise between a parent/guardian and either a School or Education and Library Board in relation to the special educational provision being made for a child or young person. If initial attempts to resolve the disagreements have not been successful, it may be appropriate to make a referral to the DARS.

References

The Education Support for Northern Ireland web site, covering information for the Education Authority in Northern Ireland, provides useful guidance on Special Educational Needs.

The link is:

<http://www.education-support.org.uk/parents/special-education/>