

**UN CRC Article 23**

If children have a disability, they have the right to special care and education.

Our Learning Support Policy

Adopted: September 2020

Due for next review: September 2022

RATIONALE:

Whiteabbey Primary School, as a learning community, is committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, which will offer equal access for all our children. As a school, we are focused on child-centred education with an aim to foster a safe, caring environment within which our pupils, parents and staff are valued. It is our intention that every child should achieve their full potential and we recognise that all pupils who have special educational needs and/or a disability must be addressed in a caring and supportive manner during their time in our school. We will endeavour to make every possible arrangement to provide a supportive framework, with the available resources at our disposal, to meet their individual needs with due reference to current statutory requirements and guidance.

CURRENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK:

The law dealing with Special Education in Northern Ireland is contained in The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 as amended by The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

CODE OF PRACTICE:

The Department of Education has provided guidance for the Education Authority and schools in the form of a Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (Appendix 1a) and also a Supplement to the Code of Practice, effective from 1 September 2005, (Appendix 1b) which was produced as result of SENDO. Schools, the Education Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts must consider the advice given in the Code of Practice when providing for children with special educational needs.

DEFINITIONS:

The term "Special Educational Needs" is defined in the legislation 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 or

her age and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of everyday educational facilities. "Special educational provision" means educational provision which is different from, or is in addition to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age.

Code of Practice 1998 para. 1.4

The term "Disability" refers to someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

SEN Provisions of SENDO:

'The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of parents or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others.'

'Children who have Special Educational Needs but who do not have a Statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school.'

Article 3(1) SENDO 2005

Key Principles of Inclusion

'Inclusion is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school.'

(Removing Barriers to Achievement, 2004)

As an inclusive school, Whiteabbey Primary School aims to identify pupils who are not achieving their full potential due to barriers which may be hindering their learning. We take practical steps - in the classroom and beyond - to meet pupils' needs effectively, thus promoting tolerance and understanding in a diverse society. Inclusion pays particular attention to the provision made for and the achievement of different groups of pupils within a school, including pupils with Special Educational and Additional Needs.

Teaching at Whiteabbey Primary School is child-centred and responsive to the individual. Employing a range of appropriate strategies which enable quality teaching to occur is central to inclusive practice and should include:

- differentiation strategies (e.g. by Learning Objective, task, outcome, lesson management, resources, timings, visual instructions, chunking, support and scaffolding)
- co-operative learning strategies;
- classroom management strategies; and
- the use of new technology

In recognition of its obligations towards pupils with SEN, the school has appointed a Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC). The LSC liaises closely with all staff to ensure inclusion is a daily reality. In order to embed an inclusive ethos at Whiteabbey Primary School, this policy links with all other policies that have been developed in supporting pupils pastorally and educationally.

Aspects of SEN/Disability are highlighted in the Code of Practice, 1998. Following the SEND Act 2016, updated guidance was given to schools on recording categories of SEN and medical needs. This can be found in Appendix 2. This guidance outlines five overarching SEN categories which can be used by schools when children are first placed on the SEN Register.

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/disability:

- 1. Cognition and Learning (CL) - language, literacy, mathematics, numeracy**
 - a) Dyslexia (DYL) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - language/literacy
 - b) Dyscalculia (DYC) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - mathematics/numeracy
 - c) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
 - d) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
 - e) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

- 2. Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-being (SBEW)**
 - a) Social and Behavioural Difficulties (SBD)
 - b) Emotional and Well-being Difficulties (EWD)
 - b) Severe Challenging Behaviour associated with SLD or PMLD (SCB)

- 3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)**
 - a) Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
 - b) Language Disorder associated with a differentiating/ biomedical condition (LD)
 - c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties (CSID)

- 4. Sensory (SE)**
 - a) Blind (BD)
 - b) Partially Sighted (PS)
 - c) Severe/Profound Hearing Impairment (SPHI)
 - d) Mild or Moderate Hearing Impairment (MMHI)
 - e) Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI)

- 5. Physical Need (PN)**
 - a) Physical (P)

Pupils should be under this category if they have a medical diagnosis that requires provision in addition to reasonable adjustments.

***Under Assessment (U)** - *It is not anticipated that this will be commonly used.*

A pupil with SEN who is recorded in any one of the five overarching SEN categories and who has been assessed by the Educational Psychology Service at the current Stage Three of the Code of Practice (1998) can be recorded as 'Under Assessment' (U) if no other descriptor applies, and:

either

1. They have been referred for a medical diagnosis and are on the waiting list.

or

2. They are too young for an educational psychologist to make a clear category determination and they plan to follow up.

or

3. They have been placed in a specialist provision by Statutory Operations as an emergency placement and are undergoing statutory assessment.

From January 2019 a new separate medical diagnosis register has been used. This medical diagnosis register is the responsibility of the Pastoral Care Team.

The following is a list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population:

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyspraxia/ Development Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Developmental Language Disorder (Medical) (DLD)
- Global Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Complex Healthcare Needs
- Anxiety Disorder (includes social anxiety, phobia, school refusal, obsessive compulsive disorder)
- Depression
- Eating Disorder

- Psychosis
- Other Medical Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina Bifida - with Hydrocephalus
- Spina Bifida - without Hydrocephalus
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Other Medical Condition/ Syndrome

(Source: Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) *Recording SEN and Medical Categories - Guidance for Schools*, Bangor: DENI - Appendix 2)

Pupils with a diagnosis of ASD but whose needs are currently met through Quality First Teaching and Reasonable Adjustments may also have a One Page Profile known as a Pupil Passport.

Our Learning Support Policy encompasses all aspects of learning to include children with Additional Needs who may also have Special Educational Needs E.g. Gifted and Talented (G&T) or Newcomer Children. That is to say that is possible that a child may be gifted or talented in one area yet have communication or other co-existing difficulties. Guidance for schools' states,

The term 'Gifted and Talented' is used to describe those students who are achieving or who have the potential to achieve a level substantially beyond the rest of their peer group inside their particular school. Gifted and Talented pupils may also present with a learning difficulty.' (Guidelines for Teachers NCCA/CEA 2007)

AIMS:

- To identify children with SEN/disability as early and as thoroughly as possible through a variety of strategies and in consultation with appropriate personnel;
- To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/Disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum;
- To ensure that all children with SEN/Disability feel valued and have a positive self-image;
- To offer curricular, pastoral and extra curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence;
- To provide a broad curriculum which will promote intellectual, emotional, social and physical progress in order that pupils can achieve success, both now and in the future;

- To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEN provision;
- To consider the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding in planning for SEN provision.
- To educate pupils with SEN/Disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers;
- To maintain and keep under review whole school recording systems so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately;
- To encourage and/or maintain interest of pupils with SENs in their education;
- To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning for all pupils with SEN;
- To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils with SEN can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs;
- To meet the needs of all pupils with SEN/Disability by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources;
- To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN Policy;
- To work closely with all EA departments and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENs.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CO-ORDINATING SEN PROVISION IN OUR SCHOOL:

Roles and Responsibility

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. However, in order to facilitate the day to day running of the provision, the Board of Governors has delegated responsibility for pupils with Special Educational needs to Mrs Hannah Halliday (Learning Support Coordinator - LSC) under the line management of the Vice Principal Miss Sonia Kidd. Our Learning Support Teacher is Mrs Esther Blacoe.

All teachers are teachers of SEN. SEN is therefore a whole school responsibility, requiring a whole school response.

DE Code of Practice

BOARD OF GOVERNORS:

The role of the Board of Governors of a mainstream school is to exercise its functions in relation to the school with a view to ensuring that provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The Board of Governors has a statutory duty to:

- Take account of the provisions in the DENI Code of Practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs;
- Use their best endeavours to provide for pupils identified with SEN and ensure that parents are notified of their child's special educational needs;
- Maintain and operate a Policy on SEN;
- Ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;

- Ensure that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying those registered pupils with SEN and providing appropriate teaching;
- Designate a Governor with responsibility for overseeing and staying in regular contact with the LSC and Principal. The Governor with responsibility for overseeing SEN in Whiteabbey Primary is identified on our school website.
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

The SEND Act (2016) also sets out new requirements for the Board of Governors, including:

- Prepare and keep under review, a programme of SEN provision in respect of each pupil with SEN;
- Designate a teacher within the school as the Learning Support Coordinator to coordinate Learning Support Provision, ensuring the appointed person has the necessary qualifications and experience to carry out the role;
- With parental consent, ensure that education plans are shared with receiving schools in the case of pupil transfer;
- Notify the Education Authority of any changes involving statemented pupils

PRINCIPAL & VICE PRINCIPAL:

The Principal & Vice Principal should:

- Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues;
- Work in close partnership with the LSC;
- Liaise with parents and external agencies as required;
- Delegate and monitor SEN budget;
- Ensure the Senior Management Team (SMT) are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school. Vice Principal and SMT members should ensure consistency of practice and contribute to the realisation of the School Development Plan;
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs.

LEARNING SUPPORT COORDINATOR:

The LSC should be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's Learning Support policy;
- Liaison with and support for teachers and classroom assistants;
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs including leading the SEN Curriculum Team and timetabling in School (Stage 2) provision alongside our staff and Volunteer Coordinator;
- Be involved in testing and recording attainment data for the SEN Register;

- Maintaining the school's SEN, Medical & English as an Additional Language (EAL)/Newcomer Registers and oversee all the records on pupils with SEN, medical or EAL needs and any related returns;
- Liaison with parents of children with SEN, medical or EAL needs;
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff (through an audit of training needs at the beginning of each academic year) and contributing as appropriate to their training;
- Liaison with external agencies;
- Organising SEN reviews and referrals.
- Attend professional development training as and when required.

LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER:

The Learning Support teacher will work under the direction of the Learning Support coordinator. They should:

- Be aware of current legislation;
- Be familiar with the administrative process within the school;
- Be involved in testing and recording data for the SEN Register;
- Work closely with all members of staff to identify pupils' needs;
- Implement the delivery of suitable Literacy and Numeracy support programmes for some pupils at Stage 2 of the Code of Practice , promoting progression within an inclusive setting;
- Contribute to Individual Education Plans which inform learning and teaching;
- Monitor and review progress;
- Be involved in the Annual Review process where appropriate;
- Attend professional development training.

CLASS TEACHER:

The Class Teacher should:

- Be aware of current legislation;
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register;
- Be involved in planning evaluating, monitoring and recording information;
- Gather information through observation and assessment;
- Develop an inclusive classroom;
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching of our SEN pupils;
- Willingly prepare and review Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in consultation with our LSC;
- Involve SEN classroom assistants as part of the learning team for our SEN pupils;
- Be involved in the Annual Review Process for children with a Statement of Special Need;
- Attend professional development training as and when required.

LEARNING SUPPORT STAFF/ CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS/VOLUNTEERS:

Support staff (& adult volunteers where appropriate) should:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher;
- Be involved in planning evaluating, monitoring and recording information;
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths;
- Provide practical support;
- Listen to the child and speak to staff on child's behalf;
- Explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- Keep records and attend meetings;
- Share good practice;
- Attend professional development training as required.

In working with Classroom Assistants, reference will be made to the document, 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School'.

PUPILS:

"The child should, where possible, according to age, maturity and capability, participate in all the decision making processes which occur in education."

Supplement to the Code of Practice - para. 1.19)

This may involve:

- contributing to the assessment of their needs e.g. through use of 'Assessment for Learning' strategies;
- contributing to target setting in education plans;
- working towards achieving agreed targets;
- contributing to the review of Individual Education Plans as appropriate;
- contributing to Annual Reviews and the transition process in Year 7.

PARENT/CARER:

'The relationship between the parents of a child with SEN and their child's school has a crucial bearing on the child's educational progress and effectiveness of any school based action... Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parental involvement and provides reassurance that account is taken of what parents say and that their views and anxieties are treated as intrinsically important.'

(Code of Practice 2.21)

It is essential that parents inform the school of any specific identified needs as early as possible on entry to the school. It is the school's responsibility to inform parents when

considering the placement or removal of the child's name on the SEN register and invite them to meet with staff to discuss their child's needs.

For example to:

- Meet with the class teacher in the first instance to discuss results of assessments
- Discuss their child's needs with staff in school
- Inform staff of changes in circumstances that may affect school life
- Support targets on IEPS
- Meet with the Learning Support teacher or coordinator to discuss concerns
- Attend parent/teacher or Annual Review consultations

Our staff have a duty of candour regarding the child to their parent. While this can at times be difficult, with professional and mutual respect and courtesy, it is often the starting point for our children to receive the supporting Home : School partnership with which they will blossom.

As a school, we recognise the associated stress and anxieties that may be involved in matters of SEN. In attending meetings with school staff, parents can expect to have their concerns and views listened to and fully considered in all matters. It is our constant aim to offer the best possible educational provision and service for your child while utilising all available resources and information in a fair and equitable manner. We hope to work in partnership with our parents in order to create a positive and supportive framework to meet their child's needs. We can do this by having open and honest conversations with parents from an early stage, when concerns first become apparent, so that all those involved in the child's education have a good understanding of their areas of relative strength and difficulty. We will take into account parents' concerns. Through doing so we will aim to ensure that everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child and that everyone is clear on what the next steps are. Notes of these early meetings and discussions will be kept securely and a copy given to parents as well. It will always be the parents right to withdraw their child from SEN support although for records this will need to be articulated in writing.

The EANI has produced a leaflet for parents outlining how children's learning is supported in primary schools. A copy is available as Appendix 3.

ADMISSIONS:

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN/Disability are consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN may be placed in schools at the request of the Education Authority. When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the EA will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement. This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

ACCESSIBILITY:

In Whiteabbey Primary School, all students have equal access to the N. Ireland curriculum. Pupils with SEN/Disability are assured of the following:

- Equal access to all areas of the main school building including a toilet adapted for use by pupils with disabilities;
- The main building is accessible for wheelchair users;
- There is a well-equipped Learning Support mobile accessed from the main building, with a ramp entrance and private toilet facilities;
- The SEN mobile is equipped with computers, a library and a sensory space;
- Accessibility arrangements are reviewed annually and contact made with the Education Authority as necessary.

ANNUAL REPORT:

The Board of Governors should report each year on SEN provision in school. Information on Learning Support for this report should be collated by the Learning Support Coordinator and the Vice Principal. The Board of Governors' Annual Report will be available on the school website.

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

In accordance with the Code of Practice, Whiteabbey Primary School acknowledges that:

'It is vitally important that children with Special Educational Needs are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated among all the professionals involved with their development.'

(Code of Practice 1998 para. 2.14)

'Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness.'

(Supplementary Guide to the Code of Practice Para. 5.12)

In line with principles and best practice guidance, Whiteabbey Primary School places a strong emphasis on early assessment, identification and intervention that begins at the point of each child's entry to the school.

STRATEGIES USED FOR IDENTIFICATION:

Where applicable:

- Parental information
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school
- Summative and formative assessment

- Key Stage Assessments
- Assessment against the Levels of Progression in Communication and Using Mathematics
- Teacher observation
- Professional Reports
- Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Care Plans
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews

THE MANAGEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In Whiteabbey Primary School, we follow the five stage approach as set out in the Code of Practice (1998).

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils lie at Stages 1, 2 and 3. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

STAGE 1:

Stage 1 begins with a concern that a child is not making expected progress. Normally, such a view is expressed either to or by the class teacher. The class teacher maintains day-to-day responsibility for meeting pupils' SENs and should inform the Learning Support Coordinator and the Principal and consult with the child's parents. In addition, the class teacher should:

- Collect and record information about the child and make an initial assessment of the pupil's additional learning needs.
- Provide or arrange special help within the normal curriculum framework, such as: increased differentiation of class work, alternative teaching and learning strategies to help meet the child's needs. The nature and aims of such provision should be recorded in an Action Plan, together with the targets, monitoring arrangements and review date.
- Monitor and review progress and report back to the LSC.

The LSC should:

- Ensure that parents are consulted regarding the inclusion of their child's name on the school's SEN Register.
- Help the class teacher gather information and assess the child's needs
- Advise and support the class teacher

STAGE 1 REVIEW

- Parents will always be informed of review dates and any proposed action. Having considered review outcomes the class teacher and LSC consult on whether to remove

the pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2.

- If sufficient progress has been made the pupil may be removed from the SEN register.
- If adequate progress is not being made after a reasonable period of time, a decision may be made to move the pupil to Stage 2.
- Usually it is felt that two review periods (each review period is either October to February or February to October) is a suitable length of time within which to make this judgement.

STAGE 2

Stage 2 usually begins with a decision at Stage 1 Review, but may begin sooner following a decision between teachers and parents, to proceed with early and more intensive action.

The Learning Support Coordinator and Learning Support teacher take increased responsibility for the pupil's SEN provision. This includes planning, monitoring and reviewing the special educational provision alongside the child's class teacher. The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child in the classroom.

- Working with the class teacher, the LSC should ensure that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is drawn up for the pupil
- All these operations should take into account, as far as possible, the child's own views and the views of the parent.

STAGE 2 REVIEW

Normally the Stage 2 review should be conducted by the class teacher, with prior consultation with additional adults involved in supporting the child, the Learning Support Teacher and Learning Support Coordinator. It should focus on the child's progress towards IEP targets.

If progress has been satisfactory, the LSC may decide that the child should continue at Stage 2 in order to consolidate gains. If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the LSC may decide that the child no longer needs special educational provision at Stage 2 and may decide to move the child to Stage 1.

The child's name should be kept on the SEN register until there is no longer any significant concern about progress.

If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stages 1 and 2 do not result in adequate progress, the LSC should move the child forward to Stage 3 with parental consent, and referral will then be made to special support services/agencies outside the school.

STAGE 3

Stage 3 usually begins with a decision either at Stage 2 review, but may begin sooner following discussions between the LSC, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intervention with external support is necessary. A child may be moved to Stage 3 of Code of Practice if the school has implemented all possible knowledge and expertise from within school and used strategies and advice recommended from the Good Practice Guidelines and SEN Resource File and the difficulty has not been resolved.

At this Stage, the LSC takes a lead role, working closely with the child's teacher and parents and drawing on the expertise of relevant external support services.

The EA Children and Young Peoples' Services (CYPS) are:

- Early Years Service
- Autism Advisory and Intervention Service
- Language and Communication Service
- Behaviour Support Service
- Literacy Service
- SEN Inclusion Service
- Sensory Support Service

The Regional Integrated Support for Education NI (RISENI) also accept P1-P2 pupil referrals at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. RISENI have their own criteria for referrals.

In order to access the EA CYPS Support Services, it is necessary to discuss a child with the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) to ensure that the school's assessment of need is correct and to ensure that school-based intervention has been appropriate. It is usually necessary to gather significant evidence at Stages 1 and 2 of the Code of Practice in order to make a referral to Educational Psychology.

Referral to Educational Psychology Services (EPS)

A pupil will require referral to EPS if:

- the school requires a clearer picture of the pupil's needs;
and
- the pupil requires individual support from an EA Stage 3 service
and
- all school-based resources, reasonable adjustments and relevant and purposeful measures have been implemented for the pupil and their needs continue to remain significant (evidence of at least two unsuccessful Stage 2 IEP reviews is usually required).

The school will make a request for Stage 3 Educational Psychology consultation. Each primary school has been allocated a set amount of time each school year for EPS support. For Whiteabbey Primary School that equates currently to the time required to evaluate, assess

and report on four children. At the consultation meeting, the school will discuss all pupils for whom they feel EPS referral may be appropriate. This will only be done with parental consent in writing prior to the meeting. Together with the Educational Psychologist, the school will make a decision as to whether to proceed with an EPS referral. This decision is largely dependent on the needs of other children in our school and whether the pupil meets criteria to access Stage 3 support services or provisional criteria for initiating statutory assessments of SEN (Appendix 4).

The LSC, working with the class teacher, and with the help of the external support service(s), should ensure that a Stage 3 Education Plan is drawn up. Together they should consider a range of teaching approaches and appropriate support materials, including the use of ICT. The Education Plan should set out revised strategies for supporting the child's progress and arrangements for monitoring and review. It should be implemented, as far as possible, in the everyday classroom setting. The LSC should ensure close liaison with the child's teacher. Parents should always be kept informed and the child should be involved as far as possible depending on the age of the child and level of understanding.

At Stages 2 and 3 of the Code of Practice, the LSC and class teacher should consider potential benefits of:

- The Good Practice Guidelines (Appendix 5)
 - The SEN Resource File for Mainstream Schools
 - Encouraging inclusive activities to ensure integration of the pupil with SEN with others in the class
 - Toolkit for Inclusion and Diversity
 - Differentiated teaching
 - Withdrawal for more intensive support
 - SEN resources available within school: support programmes, ICT etc
 - Available staff skills that support pupils with SEN
 - Implementation of any provision/strategies as a result of external advice, support and training
 - General advice and support requested from relevant EA support services
- For P1/P2 pupils:
- RISENI advice and support for classroom teachers
 - RISENI small group and whole-class programmes
 - RISE NI individual referrals

REVIEW OF STAGE 3

The Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan should normally be conducted by the LSC, in consultation with the class teacher, relevant outside agencies and where possible, parents and child. The review should focus on the child's progress and whether this has been adequate.

If progress has been satisfactory, the LSC, in consultation with the teacher will decide that the child should continue at Stage 3.

If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the LSC or external support service may decide that the child no longer needs external support at Stage 3 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 2, with appropriate action taken at that stage of the Code of Practice.

If relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 3 have not resulted in adequate progress and following consultation with the LSC, teacher, external support service and parents, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

STAGE 4

"In some cases, schools will conclude that the pupil's needs remain so substantial that they cannot effectively be met within the resources normally available to the school."

(Supplement to the Code of Practice - 4.64)

Following an application to the EA from the Principal or the parent, the EA will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that a request of this kind will not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Stage 4 is a transitory stage of the Code of Practice following referral for Statutory Assessment and pupils will continue to receive school-based or Stage 3 external provision during this period. The EA has produced an information leaflet for parents which explains the statutory assessment process (Appendix 6).

In reaching a suitable decision, the EA will:

- Consider whether the pupil's needs are significant and/or complex
- Ensure reasonable adjustments and relevant and purposeful measures have been taken by the school at Stages 1-3 of the Code of Practice
- Consider whether there is evidence that the school has made full use of the range of special educational provision available to it, including EA support services
- Consider the nature of the provision required
- Consider whether the child's needs can reasonably be met by the resources normally available to the school
- Use the EA Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of SEN and for Making Statements of SEN (Appendix 4)

Statutory Assessment Flowchart

1. The Authority receives a request for a Statutory Assessment. The Authority must tell parents about this request.	This is the start date
2. The Authority decides whether a Statutory Assessment is needed and must tell parents about its decision. If the Authority is not proceeding, we must tell you how to appeal.	Within six weeks of the start date
3. The Statutory Assessment takes place – advice sought from parents and professionals.	Submitted within 6 weeks
4. The Authority informs parents of its decision to either issue a Proposed Statement or , to issue a Note in Lieu and details of the appeal process.	Within 2 weeks
5. Parents must respond to the Proposed Statement. You can : <input type="checkbox"/> agree that the draft is accurate <input type="checkbox"/> ask for changes <input type="checkbox"/> ask for a meeting. You should also state a preference for a school for your child.	Within 15 days of receiving the Proposed Statement
6. The Authority consults with the school.	The school has 15 days to respond
7. The Authority issues the final Statement.	Within 26 weeks of the start date

The Authority will gather any information available from:

- You , to get your views about your child
- Where appropriate, your child
- Teachers at your child's school
- An educational psychologist
- Medical professionals
- Specialist teachers from the Authority's specialist services if they are involved
- Social services if they know your child
- Anyone else working with your child that you think we need to talk to.

This information is called **advice** and should let us know what your child can and cannot do and what special help they may need.

How Do I Know the Statutory Assessment is Progressing?

You can telephone the Authority and speak to a member of staff in the Special Education Section. S/he should be able to tell you what advices still have to be returned and how matters are progressing.

What Should I Do When the Proposed Statement Arrives?

When the Proposed Statement is sent to you there will be a covering letter which will tell you what to do. You should read the Statement to see if you agree with it and you will also be invited to tell us which school you would like your child to attend. You will have 3 weeks (15 working days) to reply and during this time you are welcome to telephone or meet with the 'named officer' to discuss the content. If you need more time, you can ask for it.

Source: EANI (<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen/questions-you-may-have-about-statutory-assessment>)

FOLLOWING STATUTORY ASSESSMENT

The Board will either:

- Make and maintain a Statement of Special Educational Needs

- Arrange, monitor and review provision; or
- Provide a Note in Lieu of a Statement

A Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and the arrangements for monitoring and review.

A Note in Lieu of a Statement sets out the reasons for the Board's decision not to make a Statement of Special Educational Needs and includes supporting evidence from the Statutory Assessment.

A more detailed outline of the statementing process can be found in sections 3 and 4 of the Code of Practice (Appendix 1).

STAGE 5

Once the Statement of Special Educational Needs has been made final:

- Provision and/or support will be arranged to meet the pupil's needs
- The LSC ensures that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up and implemented, monitored and reviewed
- The Annual Review and Transition process will take place

THE ANNUAL REVIEW:

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs, whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews should be seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress.

The Annual Review will:

- Gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the Statement
- Review the special provision made for the child, including placement
- Consider the appropriateness of maintaining the Statement of Special Educational Needs.

During the Annual Review meeting, the child's progress towards targets will be discussed and new targets will be set for the year ahead. The views of the child are greatly valued throughout the Annual Review process and the school endeavours to involve statemented pupils in the Annual Review process, whilst paying heed to their age and level of understanding.

The school will undertake the Review on behalf of the EA. The Review meeting takes place in school with parents and relevant staff in attendance and is chaired by the Principal. The Learning Support Coordinator will arrange and attend the meeting. The EA provide relevant forms for this process.

EXCEPTIONAL CASES:

In most cases, transition through the five staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that, with multi-professional and parental agreement, a move to a higher stage of need is immediately necessary.

RECORD KEEPING:

The following are records that the Learning Support Coordinator at Whiteabbey PS keeps on record and increasingly on secure digital form, in line with General Data Protection Regulation (2016):

- SEN, Medical and EAL Registers
- SEN timetables for withdrawal groups
- Records of Concern (in red files, passed to the receiving teacher)
- Education Plans and reviews
- Statements and Annual Reviews
- Assessment results/data
- Individual records of progress in personal target books
- Outside agencies reports
- Staff training records
- Minutes of meetings with parents/ staff outside agencies
- Communication logs of emails and/or telephone calls

MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF PUPILS WITH SEN:

It is the responsibility of the LSC to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN Register is monitored.

The LSC will:

- Ensure IEP targets are monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meetings with teachers on a regular basis;
- Ensure appropriate assessment is used in order to inform IEP planning;
- Record that the pupil's class work and/or social skills are progressing, and that targets are being monitored by viewing evidence or class visits;
- Carry out quality reviews of IEPs and other relevant and purposeful measures that focus on educational outcomes and inform future planning and inform movement between stages of the Code of Practice;

- Work closely with the Assessment Coordinator and SMT when identifying pupils for Learning Support provision.
- Work in partnership with support services, other external agencies and other educational establishments;

In our school, we have links with the following:

- Educational Psychology (EA and private services)
- Health and Social Care Services E.g. Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and RISENI
- The EA Children and Young Peoples' Services (CYPS):
 - Early Years Service
 - Autism Advisory and Intervention Service
 - Language and Communication Service
 - Behaviour Support Service
 - Literacy Service
 - SEN Inclusion Service
 - Sensory Support Service

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in this school. The LSC will keep a record of all staff training undertaken relating to SEN.

It is essential that all staff keep up-to-date with developments in the SEN field in order to provide effectively for pupils. A record of all training attended by or delivered to staff in relation to SEN is updated by the SENCo. Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members should be encouraged to disseminate the information provided in order to build the capacity of their colleagues.

COMPLAINTS:

Any complaints regarding SEN in our school will be dealt with in line with the school's existing complaints procedures. Parents, at the earliest possible stage, should firstly make contact through the child's class teacher and then Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) if unhappy about any aspect of provision or process.

SEN ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE:

The EA SEN website contains information which may help to support and inform schools and parents.

It can be found at:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen>

DISPUTE AVOIDANCE AND RESOLUTION SERVICE (DARS):

DARS was established in September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO). It aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools, Boards of Governors or the Education Authority for pupils who are on the Code of Practice, in relation to special educational provision. Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to DARS.

Members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a separate venue from home or school) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute. DARS is separate and independent from the EA.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). Parents/guardians may contact this service directly.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY TRIBUNAL (SENDIST):

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. This body considers parents' appeals against decisions of the EA and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY:

This Policy will be under biannual review and subject to amendment in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members and the Board of Governors. The most up-to-date version of this policy will be available for download from the school website.

The SEND Act 2016, is the first building block in a new SEN Framework for Northern Ireland. This Learning Support policy encompasses the changes required from the SEND Act 2016, but we acknowledge that further changes are anticipated in Northern Ireland's SEN Framework, including new SEN Regulations and a new SEN Code of Practice. This policy will be updated when these changes come into effect.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1a. Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

Appendix 1b. Supplement to the Code of Practice

Appendix 2 Recording SEN and Medical Categories Guidance for Schools

Appendix 3 How Children's Learning is Supported in Primary Schools (EA)

Appendix 4 Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of SEN and for Making Statements of SEN

Appendix 5 Good Practice Guidelines

Appendix 6 The Statutory Assessment Process (EA)