
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY



Engage, Empower, Excel

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Hollybank Primary School

Special Educational Needs Policy

Introduction

Hollybank Primary School has an inclusive ethos and acknowledges that the needs of all children must be considered. All children have a right to access a broad and balanced curriculum. We work to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment which fosters equality of opportunity for all children and their families. We work in partnership with parents to minimise barriers to learning, celebrate achievement and promote positive self-worth and self-esteem. We strive to ensure that no child with a disability/Special Educational Need (SEN) is treated less favourably or disadvantaged in any way in comparison to those who have no disability/SEN.

Definitions of SEN and Disability

Definition of SEN

"Special Educational Need is defined as "a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made". A child has a learning difficulty if s/he 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/her from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children on his/her age in ordinary schools (CoP 1998 para.1.4)

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)

SEN Provision 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 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)

In order to make sure that we meet our pupils' needs and include them in all aspects of school life, this SEN policy links closely with all our other policies in supporting pupils such as; Assessment, Teaching and Learning, Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Medical Needs.

Categories of SEN/Disability

1. Cognitive and Learning

- 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)
- c) Severe Challenging Behaviour (SCB) associated with SLD or PMLD

3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

- a) Developmental Language Disorder (SEN) (DLD)
- b) Language disorder (LD) associated with a differentiating biomedical condition
- c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties (CSID)

4. Sensory Difficulties (SE)

- a) Blind (BL)
- b) Partially sighted (PS)
- c) Severe/Profound Hearing Impairment (SPHI)
- d) Mild/Moderate Hearing Impairment (MMHI)
- e) Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)

5. Physical

- a) Physical (P)

Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with Special Educational Needs – SEN Categories (Department of Education)

In addition, as a school, we include the following areas of need on our Learning Support Register:

6. Additional Needs

- a) English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- b) Gifted and Talented pupils (G&T)

Hollybank Primary School SEN policy operate in line with legislation (Disability Discrimination Act, Special Educational Needs Discrimination Order and Code of Practice)

Medical Diagnosis (Including Physical Conditions) Categories (not necessarily an SEN need)

1. Epilepsy
2. Asthma
3. Diabetes
4. Anaphylaxis
5. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
6. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
7. Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
8. Developmental Language Disorder (Medical) (DLD)
9. Global Developmental Delay
10. Down's Syndrome
11. Complex Healthcare Needs
12. Anxiety Disorder (includes social anxiety, phobia, school refusal, obsessive compulsive disorder)
13. Depression
14. Eating Disorder
15. Psychosis
16. Other Medical Disorder
17. Cerebral Palsy
18. Spina Bifida – with Hydrocephalus
19. Spina Bifida – without Hydrocephalus
20. Muscular Dystrophy
21. Acquired Brain Injury
22. Visual Impairment
23. Physical Disability
24. Other Medical Condition/Syndrome
- 25.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision

Roles and Responsibilities

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 have delegated responsibility for pupils with special educational needs to Miss Nora McIlwain (SEN Co-ordinator)

Board of Governors

In 'Every School a Good School' (DE) – The Governor Role (2010) Chapter 12 of the document relates specifically to the Governor role for pupils with special educational needs.

The following section provides an overview of Governor's responsibilities from this document as highlighted in the ***SEN Resource File (2011)***:

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 registered pupils with special educational needs. The Board of Governors has a statutory duty to:

- Take account of the provisions in the DE Code of Practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs;
- Use their best endeavours to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents/guardians are notified of their child's special 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 of providing appropriate teaching; and
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

Principal (Code of Practice 1998)

The Principal should:

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

SENCo

In all mainstream schools, a designated teacher should be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs' Policy
- Responding to requests for advice from other teachers;
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- Maintain the school's Learning Support Register and oversee all the records on pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- Liaison with parents of children with special educational needs;
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training;
- Liaison with external agencies; and
- Co-ordinating and managing the annual review process alongside the Principal.

Teachers

- Responsible for meeting the needs of children in their class by developing and promoting inclusion.
- Work closely with all staff supporting the child with SEN to ensure a consistent approach in meeting the child's needs.
- Present materials appropriate to children's age, maturity, learning need/disability.
- Identify barriers to learning. (observation and assessment)
- Implement appropriate program/IEP to address the needs of children.
- Monitor progress on an ongoing basis.
- Review IEPs regularly.
- Liaise with SENCo and other support services.
- Be sensitive to the needs of a parent/guardian in understanding the process and plans designed to support their child.
- Involve parent/guardian(s) in the child's IEP and review process.
- Keep records of all meetings with parent/guardian(s)
- Support smooth transition by the sharing of all relevant information throughout the child's school career.
- Be aware of current legislation.
- Attend Annual Review when appropriate

Classroom Assistants

- Work in partnership with the teacher.
- Support the implementation of the child's IEP.
- Complete observations.

SEN Support Staff

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) should:

- Work under the direction of the SEN Co-ordinator and class teacher;
- Be involved in planning, monitoring and reviewing of IEPs;
- Be involved in planning or target related activities to meet the objectives as stated in IEPs or Stage 5 statements;
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths;
- Provide practical support to the child and teacher;
- Listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf;
- Explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- Keep records and attend meetings; and
- Share good practice.

NB: As a term of reference, classroom assistants designated to children at stage 5 on the code of practice are referred to as Learning Support Assistants.

Pupil

'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 – pars 1.19)

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- Contributing to the assessment;
- Contributing to education plans through setting targets;
- Working towards achieving agreed targets; and
- Contributing to the review of EPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 7.

Parent/Guardian

'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/guardians inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent/career upon a child's entry to the school.

It is the school's responsibility to inform parents/guardians when staff is considering placing the pupil's name on the SEN register or moving the child to a higher or lesser stage of need. Parents/guardians should be invited as necessary to:

- Meet with staff to discuss their child's needs;
- Attend review meetings;
- Inform staff of changes in circumstances;
- Support targets on IEPs; and
- Provide the school with relevant documentation relating to the needs of their child.

Others

- All visitors to Hollybank Primary School will be expected to have regard for the SEN policy
- Copies of the SEN policy are available on request

Admissions

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

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the relevant Education and Library Board.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the Board will take into account the wishes of the child's parents/guardians 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.

Special Facilities/Resources

- Accessible play areas
 - Quiet areas
 - Sensory resources
 - Visual schedules
 - Sensory Room
 - Learning Support Unit (P3-P7)
-
- Meeting room for consultation with parent/guardian(s) and other professionals
 - ICT resources – computers , ipads
 - SEN Resource file/ diagnostic tools
 - Interactive Whiteboards
 - School website (links to support learning)
 - Parent worker
 - Parents' room

Annual Board of Governors' Report

The BOG report each year on SEN provision in school. Information for this report is collated by the Principal.

Examples of other policies relevant to SEN

- Admissions
- Positive Behaviour and Discipline
- Health and Safety
- Pastoral Care
- Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Curriculum
- Intimate Care
- Transition Policy
- Toileting Policy

Complaints Procedure

All complaints are responded to in accordance with the school's complaints procedure.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

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

(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph 2.14)

'Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness' ***(Supplementary Guide of the Code of Practice paragraph 5.12 - page 44)***

In Hollybank Primary School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Parental information;
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school;
- Cognitive ability tests;
- Attainment tests;
- Summative and formative assessment;
- Key Stage Assessments;
- Teacher observation;
- Professional Reports;
- Statements of Special Educational Need;

- Care Plans;
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children ;
- IEP Reviews; and
- Annual Reviews.

The Management of Special Educational Needs

In Hollybank 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 with SEN lie at Stages 1, 2 or 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 may have special educational needs or additional needs. Normally such a view is expressed either to or by the class teacher. The class teacher maintains day-to-day responsibility for meeting the pupil's SENs and should inform the SENCo and the Principal and consult with the child's parents/guardians. In addition, the class teacher should:

- Collect and record information about the child and make an initial assessment of SEN;
- Draw up a Stage 1 Action Plan based on initial assessments and formulate clear targets and activities based on the needs of the pupil. *(The Action Plan will be shared with parents/guardians and consent for their child's name to be placed on the school's SEN Register will be requested. The parent /guardian will also be asked to sign the proposed Action Plan in agreement with the targets);*
- 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, together with the targets, monitoring arrangements and review date);* and

- Monitor and review progress and report back to SENCo.

The SENCo should:

- Ensure that parents are consulted and together agree that the child's name is included in the school's SEN register;
- Help the class teacher gather information and assess the child's needs; and
- Advise and support the class teacher.

Stage 1 Review

Parents/Guardians should always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes the SENCO, alongside the class teacher will decide whether to remove pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2 for additional withdrawal support. The Stage 1 Action Plan review will be shared with the parent/guardian and a signature will be requested.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins with a decision either at the Stage 1 Review, or following discussions between teachers and parents/guardians, to proceed with early and more intensive action.

This intervention will include some type of withdrawal from the classroom support (*e.g. Literacy or Numeracy Support, Social and Emotional Literacy, Speech and Language Support etc.*)

The SENCo:

- takes the lead in assessing and identifying the child's learning difficulty. This includes planning, monitoring and reviewing the special educational provision working with the child's teacher. The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child in the classroom.
- working with the class teacher, the SENCo should ensure that an Education Plan is drawn up for the pupil. (The IEP will be shared with the pupil and parent/guardian and their signature of agreement will be requested on the IEP);

- take into account, as far as possible, the child's own views and the views of the parent/guardian;
- organize and provide some individualized support from a Classroom Assistant, whether on a one-to-one basis, or as part of a group (This provision will either be met in the classroom, or through withdrawal in a small group area.

Stage 2 Review

The Stage 2 review should be conducted through liaison between the class teacher and the Classroom Assistant, in consultation with the child and parents/guardians. It should focus on the child's progress. The Stage 2 IEP review will be shared with the parent/guardian and should be countersigned by both teacher and parent/guardian.

- If progress has been satisfactory the SENCo may decide that the child should continue at Stage 2 in order to consolidate gains. If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the SENCo may decide that the child no longer needs special educational provision at Stage 2 and may decide to move the child to Stage 1.
In any case, the parent/guardian will be contacted and made aware of any change of stage in accordance with the Code of Practice.
- 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 SENCO should move the child forward to Stage 3 and referral may be made to specialist support services/agencies outside the school.

Stage 3

Stage 3 begins with a decision either at Stage 2 review or following discussions between the SENCo, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intervention with external support is necessary. In most cases, a referral to the Educational Psychologist will be made in order to assess the child's needs and provide access to further external support. If recommendations are made for external agencies to support the pupil (i.e. ASD service, LTSS, Behavioural Support from Lea Green Primary Unit), the child will be referred to the relevant agencies.

If a child is identified with specific needs that require immediate, targeted intervention or assessment from external agencies (for example, a child

undergoing an ASD diagnosis, counseling service involvement, or speech and language therapy reports to be used by the class teacher to inform teaching and learning), the child may be immediately placed on the SEN Register at Stage 3.

At this Stage the SENCo and the child's teacher will work closely together to draw on the expertise of relevant external support services.

The SENCo, working with the class teacher, and with the help of the external support services, 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, within the everyday classroom setting. There should be close liaison with the child's teacher from any external support agencies. Parents/Guardians should always be kept informed and the child should be involved as far as possible.

The Stage 3 IEP will be shared with the child and parents/guardians and a signature of agreement will be requested.

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

- The Good Practice Guidelines;
- SEN Resource File;
- encouraging inclusive activities to ensure integration of the pupil;
- differentiated teaching;
- withdrawal for more intensive support;
- SEN resources available within school;
- available staff skills which support pupils with SEN; and
- implementation of any provision/strategies as a result of external advice, support and training provided by relevant ELB/other services.

Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan should normally be conducted by the class teacher in liaison with the SENCO and, where possible the parents/guardians and the child. Relevant external support services may also be asked to contribute, in the form of written reports, or verbal feedback, particularly if the child's progress

has not been satisfactory. The review should focus on the child's progress and whether this has been adequate.

- If intervention remains appropriate the child will remain at Stage 3 for a further period of time.
- If the progress has been satisfactory and intervention is no longer required, the SENCO, following consultation with external agencies, class teacher and parents/guardians, may agree that the child no longer needs external support at Stage 3 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 2 and action appropriate to that stage will be taken.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 3 have not resulted in adequate progress, following consultation with the SENCO, teacher, external support services and parents/guardians, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

This stage 3 review will be shared with the parent/guardian and a signature of agreement will be requested.

Stage 4

'In some cases schools will conclude that the pupil's needs remain so substantial that they cannot be effectively met within the resources normally available to the school.' **(Supplement to the Code of Practice – 4.64)**

Following an application to the ELB from school's principal or the parent/guardian, the Board 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 SENs.

In reaching a suitable decision, the Board will consider:

- The degree of the child's difficulty;
- The nature of the provision required;
- Whether the child's needs can reasonably be met by the resources normally;
- available to the school; and
- Use the 5 Board Provisional Criteria for Statutory Assessment.

Following Statutory Assessment *The EA will either:*

Make and maintain a Statement of Special Educational Needs and 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.

Stage 5

Once the statement has been made final:

- Provision and /or support will be arranged to meet the child's needs;
- The SENCo ensures that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up by the class teacher, in liaison with the Learning Support Assistant designated to work alongside the pupil, implemented, monitored and reviewed; and
- The Annual Review and Transition processes 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 SENs;
- Relevant school staff will undertake the Review on behalf of the Board;
- The Review will take place in school, chaired by the Principal or SENCo.
- Relevant forms and ELB guidance for this process is available from Special Education.

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 necessary immediately.

At each stage, as aforementioned, an IEP will be drawn up and should be countersigned by the parent/guardian and reviewed thrice yearly.

Record Keeping

The following are some of the records that the SENCo will keep:

- SEN Register;
- Reports from external agencies;
- Education plans/Reviews;
- Statements/Annual Reviews;
- Assessment results/data;
- Individual Pupil Files;
- Record of liaison/meetings with Board/Health Services;
- Minutes of meetings with parents/guardians;
- Staffs' Support, Advice and Training Records;
- Observation records from LSAs.

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with SENs

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is monitored.

IEPs are monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis.

Evidence of pupil progress is documented through testing of pupils by the LSA or class teacher (if a child is withdrawn, or in some cases to inform teachers of academic progress)

Quality reviews of IEPs and other relevant and purposeful measures that focus on educational outcomes to inform future planning and inform movement either up or down through the Code of Practice Stages.

Professional Development

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school in consultation with the SENCo and ensures necessary training, if required.

The Principal should keep a record of all training relating to SEN.

It is essential that all staff keep up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effectively for pupils.

Any staff attending INSET will disseminate the training with colleagues, through staff discussion and / or a written evaluation.

Partnerships

In Hollybank Primary School we have developed partnerships with each of the following:

EA Support Services

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Behaviour Support / Lea Green Behavioural Unit
- The Vulnerable Pupil's Project
- Educational Psychology
- Literacy Support Service (LTSS)
- Visual Impairment
- Interdisciplinary Services - e.g.: Multi Agency Support Teams for Schools (MASTS)

Other Support Services

- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Occupational Therapy Child Services, Antrim

- Thornfield Speech and Language Support
- Barnardo's
- Family Hub
- Parents' worker.
- Monkstown Village Centre

Complaints

All complaints regarding SENs in your school will be dealt with in line with school's existing complaints procedures.

SEN Advice and Information Service

EA has set up an SEN Advice and Information Service to provide support in relation to children with Special Educational Needs. Details of this service can be found on EA website.

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/guardians and schools/Boards of Governors or the EA 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 Special Education Section.

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/guardian 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 (SENDIST). This body considers appeals from parents/guardians against decisions of the EA and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, in line with current or new legislation.

SIGNED BY CHAIR:	DATE:
SIGNED BY PRINCIPAL:	DATE: