

St Mary's Primary School



Special Needs Policy

Date Ratified by Board of Governors:

Signed: *Gerard Smyth*

School Address: 191 Derrytrasna Road
Derrytrasna
BT66 6NR

Special Educational Needs Policy

Rationale/Vision

In St Mary's Primary School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum including the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. In the interests of these children we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to promote their individual needs.

In St Mary's we use the following definitions

Learning Difficulty

"Learning difficulty" means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children his or her age, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities. 'Special education provision' means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age." Code of Practice 1998 (paragraph: 1.4)

Disability

'Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a 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 the parents, or is incompatible with the 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

In St Mary's we abide by the 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; Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Medical Needs

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/Disability:

1. Cognitive and Learning

- a) Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulty (DYL)
- b) Dyscalculia (DYC)
- c) Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Difficulties (DCD)
- d) Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- e) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- f) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- g) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- h) Unspecified learning difficulties (U)

2. Social, Emotional and Behavioural

- a) Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)
- b) Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

3. Communication and Interaction

- a) Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)
- b) Autism (AUT)

c) Asperger's Syndrome (ASP)

4. Sensory Difficulties

a) Severe/profound hearing loss (SPHL)

b) Mild/moderate hearing loss (MMHL)

c) Blind (BL)

d) Partially sighted (PS)

e) Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)

5. Physical

a) Cerebral Palsy (CP)

b) Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus (SBH)

c) Muscular Dystrophy (MD)

d) Significant Accidental Injury (SAI)

e) Other (OPN)

6. Medical Conditions/Syndromes

a) Epilepsy (EPIL)

b) Asthma (ASTH)

c) Diabetes (DIAB)

d) Anaphylaxis (ANXS)

e) Down's Syndrome (DOWN)

f) Other medical conditions/syndromes (OMCS)

g) Interaction of Complex Medical Needs (ICMN)

h) Mental Health Issues (MHI)

7. Other

a) Other (OTH)

Policy Aims

1. To identify pupils with SEN/Disability as early and thoroughly as possible using a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel. As a whole staff we begin the school year by considering the progress of each individual child enrolled in the school, looking at assessment performance, teacher's opinions, parental concerns and the outcomes of IEP's

2. To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/Disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.

3. To ensure that all pupils with SEN/Disability feel valued. 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.

4. To offer a broad curriculum which will promote intellectual, emotional, social and physical progress in order that pupils can develop as valuable members of society both now and in the future.

5. To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEN provision including the writing of IEPs

6. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs needs.

7. To develop a recording system, using assessment manager, so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately.

8. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.

9. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.

10. To meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN/Disability by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources.

11. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy and to ensure that classroom assistants are aware of targets set in IEP's

12. 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.

13. To have effective communication with parents in relation to IEP targets and Outcomes, through meetings or written feedback.

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 **Mrs Una McAlinden (SENCO)**

Board of Governors

The role of the Board of Governors in our 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 endeavors to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents 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;
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability.

Mrs McAlinden will report to the BOG each term

Principal (Code of Practice 1998)

Mrs McAlinden will:

- Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues
- Work in close partnership with the members of staff
- Liaise with parents and external agencies
- Delegate and monitor the SEN budget
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational needs
- Establish the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training

SENCO

Mrs McAlinden will be involved in:

- 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.

- Offering advice on IEP'S and discussing the reviews of these with the teacher.
- Maintaining the school's SEN register and oversee all the records on pupils with Special educational needs.
- Completion of referral documentation.
- Organising annual reviews.
- Informing teachers of the key recommendations of Psychological Reviews/ Statements of Educational need.
- Liaison with parents of children with special educational needs.
- Liaison with external agencies.

Class Teacher

The class teacher should:

- Be aware of current legislation
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Gather information through observation and assessment
- Develop an inclusive classroom
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching
- Contribute to, implement, manage and review EPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Manage and work with classroom assistants as part of the learning team
- Liaise with parents.

SEN Classroom assistants

Support Staff should:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher
- Be involved in planning
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths
- Provide practical support
- 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
- Work with external agencies where necessary to meet the needs of the child.

Pupil

Where possible the pupils will be involved in talking about their targets, giving a written contribution for annual or transfer reviews, or in contributing samples of their work for reviews.

Parents

We encourage parents to work closely with the school to support their child's needs. Parents will provide relevant information, in relation to any concerns they might have about their child's progress and will provide written submissions, for referral documentation, reviews or transfer documentation. Additionally, they will inform the school of any significant changes in family circumstances and attend review meetings.

Admissions

The admissions arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN, is consistent with the school's general arrangements for all pupils.

Children with statements of SEN are placed in the school at the request of the Education Authority. The board will take into account parental wishes and the provision of efficient education for all children in the class/ school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement. This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

Annual Report

The BOG will report annually on the schools SEN provision having received a report from the SENCo and Principal.

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)

In St Mary's Primary school, the following is used to identify pupils' needs:

- Parental information
- Information from Derrytrasna Playgroup, nursery setting or other transferring school
- Baseline assessment
- Cognitive ability tests
- Attainment tests
- Summative and formative assessment
- Key Stage Assessments
- Teacher observation
- Professional Reports
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children and
- IEP Reviews
- Annual reviews

This list is not exhaustive

The Management of SENs

In St Mary's 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. 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 SEN co-ordinator and the Principal and consult the child's parents. In addition, the class teacher will:

- Collect and record information about the child and make an initial assessment of SEN.

- 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 will:

- 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 write an IEP
- Advise and support the class teacher.

Stage 1 Review

Parents will always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes, the SENCo will decide whether to remove pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2.

Stage 2

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

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.
- Again, working with the class teacher, the SENCo will ensure that an Education Plan is drawn up for the pupil.
- All these operations should take into account, as far as possible, the child's own views and the parents' views.

Stage 2 Review

Normally the Stage 2 review will be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and, parent. It will focus on the child's progress.

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.

- 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.

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

The SENCo, working with the class teacher, and with the help of the external support services, will ensure that a Stage 3 Education Plan is drawn up. Together they will 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. The SENCo should ensure close liaison with the child's teacher. Parents will always be kept informed.

At Stages 2 and 3 of the Code of Practice the SENCo and class teacher will 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; support programmes, ICT, etc.
- Available staff skills which support pupils with SEN.
- Implementation of any provision/strategies as a result of external advice, support and training provided by relevant EA/other services.

Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan will be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the principal, class teacher and where possible, parents. Relevant external support services may also be present, 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, 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, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

Stage 4

'In some cases it may be necessary to 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 EA from school's principal or the parent, 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, implemented, monitored and reviewed. (New SEND Act will move from 5 stages to 3 Stages)
- 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 other person as delegated).
- Relevant forms and 5EA guidance for this process is available from Special Education

Record Keeping

In St. Mary's Mrs McAlinden keeps the following records

- SEN Register
- 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
- Staffs' Support, Advice and Training Records

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with SENs

The progress of all pupil's progress on the Code of Practice is monitored through

- EPs monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis.
- Evidence that the pupil is making progress.

- Quality reviews of EPs 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

Mrs McAlinden oversees the professional development of all staff in her school in consultation with the SENCo. It is essential that all staff keep up to date in all training in the area of special needs. If staff attend a training course they disseminate all the information at staff meetings. A record is kept of all staff training.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated in light of changes in legislation or practice following full implementation of the SEND Act 2016 following the Commencement Orders issued by the Department of Education.

Policy Date December 2021

Signature of Principal Una McAlinden

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors Gerard Smyth

Appendix

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This policy takes account of the following documentation:

Code of Practice 1998 (DE) http://www.deni.gov.uk/the_code_of_practice.pdf

Supplement to the Code of Practice 2005 (DE)

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/supplement.pdf>

Every School A Good School 2009 (DE) http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/03schools_impvt_prog_pg/03-every-school-a-good-school-a-policy-for-school-improvement.htm

Good Practice Guidelines 2009 (Inter-Board)

<http://www.neelb.org.uk/parents/specialeducation/publications/>

Disability Discrimination Code of Practice (2005)

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/disabilitydiscrimination.pdf>

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Classroom Assistants

Mrs A McAlinden

Ms A Howie

Mrs C McAlinden

Mr J Jackson

Mrs K McCallion