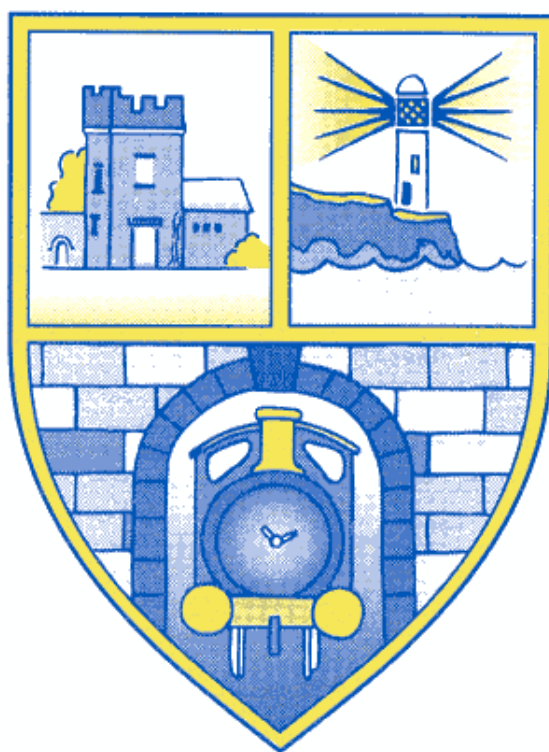


Whitehead Primary School & Nursery Unit

Valued, Inspired, Prepared



Special Educational Needs & Inclusion

Last Review	February 2024	L Parkes
Next Review	February 2027	L Parkes

Ethos, Vision & Mission

Ethos

A nurturing, inclusive environment, where everyone is valued, inspired and prepared; in order to thrive and contribute to the world.

Vision

Empowering everyone to SHINE

Mission Statements

Share

We will foster a culture of collaboration where everyone is encouraged to share ideas, time, resources and successes to build a strong, connected community.

Help

To show kindness and empathy while supporting one another, offering help when it's needed and knowing that asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

Include

To welcome and respect everyone and, through our daily interactions, promote a sense of belonging, ensuring that every voice is heard and everyone is valued.

Nurture

To provide a happy, safe and supportive environment, where every child is nurtured emotionally, socially and academically so that they can grow into confident, resilient learners.

Excel

Through engaging high quality, meaningful learning opportunities and by setting high expectations, challenging each pupil at their level and providing constructive feedback, we will inspire every child to reach their full potential.

Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced educational experience based on 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 provide for their individual needs.

The legislation that currently governs practice regarding children and young people (C&YP) with special educational needs (SEN) is the Education Order (1996). The current Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of SEN provides guidance on how the legislation is to be delivered in schools and was published in 1998.

SENDO (2005) increased the rights of C&YP with SEN and/or disabilities to be educated in mainstream schools and aimed to ensure that children with disabilities were not disadvantaged compared to their peers in school. This included the school being proactive in areas such as ensuring that the school is prepared with an adapted environment and differentiated curricula for all children who may wish to attend, including those with SEN/disabilities.

The Supplement to the CoP was published in 2005 and updated parts of the 1998 CoP to reflect the changes following SENDO (2005).

The most recent legislation, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016, strengthens and builds upon the duties contained within the Education Order (NI) 1996 and SENDO (NI) 2005. It places new duties on the schools Board of Governors, the Education Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts. It provides new rights for parents and children over compulsory school age. It is one element of the new SEN and Inclusion Framework which include new SEN Regulations and a new statutory Code of Practice as of 2021, awaiting ministerial approval.

In the interim, schools have been advised that they must continue to adhere to all aspects of the Code of Practice (1998) and the Supplement to the Code of Practice (2005), except for recording children under the new three stages of the Code of Practice.

Definitions

For all involved in a child's education it is important that there is a clear understanding of the terms 'special educational needs,' 'learning difficulty' and 'special educational provision', as defined in Article 3 of the 1996 Order.

Special Educational Needs

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.

Learning Difficulty

A child has a learning difficulty if:

- (a) they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than **the majority of** children of the same age;
- (b) they have a disability which either prevents or hinders them making use of everyday educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in ordinary schools; or
- (c) they have not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age and is or would be if special educational provision were not made, likely to fall within (a) or (b) when of compulsory school age.

Special Educational Provision

Special educational provision (SpEP) is educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in ordinary schools.

Disability

The following definition of disability is taken from the Disability Discrimination Act (1995):

A disability is when someone has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

(Paragraph 2.3)

Key Principles of Inclusion

The Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools (ECNI, 2006), states: *“...all pupils have a right to the same opportunities in the whole of their educational life.”*

All schools should have an inclusive ethos and actively seek to promote the inclusion of all children. Schools should approach inclusion as an integral part of all school policies including the school’s SEN policy, school development plan, the school’s accessibility plan and policies relating to e.g., discipline, bullying and pastoral care.

SEN and Medical Categories

The following is the list of the five overarching SEN categories and sub-categories taken from: Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools, Bangor: DENI.

- 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)

Children with a medical condition

Children who have an identified medical condition will be recorded on the school's medical register. Those who do not require special educational provision will be recorded on the Medical register only and will not be placed on the SEN register.

A pupil with a medical diagnosis or disability may or may not have a SEN but what is key is "does the pupil have a requirement for special educational provision to access the curriculum."

A pupil can be recorded on both the SEN register and medical register if they have both a medical need and require special educational provision to be made for them.

The Medical Register is the responsibility of Mrs N Williamson.

The following is the list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population taken from [Department of Education Northern Ireland \(2019\) Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools, Bangor: DENI](#).

- 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

Policy Aims

1. To identify pupils with SEN/disability as early as possible using a variety of measures and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To ensure full 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.
4. To offer curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence.
5. 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.
6. To encourage parental partnerships in all aspects of SEN provision.
7. To consider the views of the child when planning, implementing and reviewing SEN provision taking into account their age and capacity.
8. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
9. To meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN by most efficient use of available resources.
10. To work closely with EA services and other outside agencies as appropriate to support each pupil with SEN.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision

Although meeting the needs of pupils with SEN is a whole school issue the overall responsibility for managing SEN provision resides with the Board of Governors and the principal of the school. However, to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision the Board of Governors has delegated responsibility to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs to Mrs Lois Parkes (SENCo).

Roles and Responsibilities

The following section highlights the key roles and responsibilities of all those involved in SEN provision:

Role of the 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 registered pupils with special educational needs.

Chapter 12 of the document '*Every School a Good School*' (DENI, 2010) relates specifically to the role of the governor in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Based on this information, The *SEN Resource File* (DENI, 2011) outlines that 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 efforts 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;
- check 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;
- prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

Role of the Principal

Principal – Mr J Loughins

According to the Code of Practice (1998) the principal should:

- keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues;
- work in close partnership with the SENCo;
- liaise with parents and external agencies as required;
- delegate and monitor the SEN budget;
- ensure the senior leadership team (SLT) are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school;

- SLT members should ensure consistency of practice and contribute to the realisation of the school development plan;
- provide a secure place for the storage of records relating to special educational needs.

Role of the SENCo (soon to be Learning Support Co-ordinator/LSC)

The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) is 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 SEN register in partnership with the school secretary and oversee all records on pupils with special educational needs;
- working in partnership 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;
- liaising with external agencies.

Role of the Class Teacher

Class teachers endeavour to:

- 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, manage, and review PLPs (Personal Learning Plans) in consultation with the SENCo;
- liaise with the SENCo in regards to any training needs.
- involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team;
- Liaise with parents through Parent Teacher Consultations and PLP meetings;

SEN Support Staff/Additional Adult Assistants

Support Staff/ Additional Adult Assistants should:

- work under the direction of the class teacher to meet the needs of the child;
- strive to help the pupil achieve their PLP targets;
- fill out the teaching assistant observation record as appropriate, to be used by teacher in reviewing each PLP phase;
- 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 when necessary;
- explain boundaries to the child and operate these consistently and fairly;
- liaise with the SENCo in regards to any training needs.

Pupil views

In Whitehead PS&NU, as far as reasonably practicable, we seek and have regard to the child's views about their strengths, learning difficulties and education, taking into account their age and maturity. We seek and listen to their views about how they learn effectively and then focus on the strategies that work for them.

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- contributing to the review of PLPs, Annual Reviews, and Transfer Reviews;
- involving and supporting the pupils to participate in making decisions about matters affecting them.

We believe that seeking pupil views and supporting pupils to participate in making decisions about their learning is good practice and we endeavour to do this through the review of PLP phases, Annual and Transfer Reviews as well as through conversations with teachers and adult assistants.

Parent/person with parental responsibility

At Whitehead PS&NU, we acknowledge that successful partnerships between parents, pupils and school play a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation, openness and transparency and have a crucial impact on the effectiveness of special educational provision. Seeking the views of the child or young person also plays a key role in helping us understand individual needs.

Teachers, the LSC, and other school staff all have a significant role in developing positive and constructive relationships with parents and pupils. We encourage this participation and value its contribution.

It is the school's responsibility to inform parents when staff are considering placing the pupil's name on the SEN register or moving the child between stages. It is essential that parents inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. For example, essential information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child's entry to the school.

Parents are given opportunity to:

- meet with staff to discuss their child's needs;
- attend review meetings;
- inform staff of changes in circumstances;
- support targets on PLPs.

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.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SEND O) (2005) legislation strengthened the right for children with a Statement to an ordinary school place 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).

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in the school at the request of the Education Authority (EA). 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 Whitehead PS&NU we aim to:

- meet the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum. Including teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs and trips;
- ensure the physical environment of the school allows disabled pupils to participate in education and associated services provided or offered by the school;

Due to the stairways that are part of the physical structure of the main building at Whitehead PS, provision for learning and teaching may need to be facilitated by moving a class to a room that is easily accessed. The installation of lifts by the Education Authority does not allow access to four classrooms in the senior corridor.

At present:

- A lift has been installed at Foundation Stage to ensure pupils with disability have access to the toilet/cloakroom area and to room 3.
- the school is mostly accessible to wheelchair users, apart from the lower part of the senior corridor;
- there are well-equipped facilities for personal care;
- access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude, and attainments.

Annual Report

The Board of Governors are reported to annually on SEN provision in school. The SEN Annual Report contains information on: the number of statemented pupils; pupils that received provision from EA Pupil Support Services or Health and Social Care Trust; and those that accessed school-delivered special educational provision. This report is made available by Mrs Lois Parkes at the end of each academic year.

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 Whitehead PS&NU, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- information from transferring school;
- teacher/additional assistant observation;
- standardised tests for Y3-Y7 (CAT4,PTE, PTM);
- formative, summative and diagnostic assessments;
- class tests;
- Personal Learning Plans;
- care plans;
- personal education plans for children who are looked after;
- statements of special educational need;
- annual reviews;
- professional reports (eg Educational Psychology, OT, RISENI);
- parental contributions;
- pupil contributions;

The Management of Special Educational Needs

The Three Stages of Special Education Provision

In Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit, we adhere to the three stages of the Code of Practice. These stages focus on the level of intensity of the special educational provision required for a child to make adequate progress commensurate with their abilities and improve their outcomes. Responsibility for pupils with SEN at each stage lies with the school, given the day-to-day role of the school in a pupil's teaching and learning, with increasing EA involvement when required.

A summary of the three stages of special education provision is set out below:

Stage 1 includes:

- School delivered special educational provision;
- A PLP is required
- The majority of special educational needs will be met at this stage;
- The responsibility lies with the school;
- Reasonable adjustments and additional strategies and approaches are implemented, aimed at meeting, and addressing the child's SEN.

The PLP should contain the core information/evidence of the school action to inform a request, if considered necessary, for access to EA SEN services at Stage 2. The child will only move to Stage 2 once any external special educational provision is being implemented.

Stage 2 includes:

- A smaller number of children will need this provision;
- School-delivered special educational provision plus external provision, for example, the EA or the HSC Trust;
- A PLP is required.
- The responsibility lies with the school plus external provision from EA;
- Reasonable adjustments, additional strategies and approaches are implemented along with resources, advice, guidance, support, and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child's SEN.

In the event of a child not making progress, despite the external support from the EA, the child may require consideration for a statutory assessment. An online form is used to make a request for statutory assessment. The PLP contains the core school information the EA will use to consider and if appropriate make, a statutory assessment.

The pupil will remain at Stage 2 when a request for a statutory assessment is being considered, is being made and, if appropriate until a Statement is made.

Stage 3 includes:

- A smaller number of children will need this provision;
- Pupils with a statement of SEN;
- School and EA delivered special educational provision plus any relevant treatment or service identified by the HSC Trust;
- A PLP is required;
- The responsibility lies with the school and the EA –with input from the HSC Trust where relevant;
- Reasonable adjustments and the school delivered special educational provision are implemented along with EA provision as set out in the Statement.

At Stage 3, the child has a statement and is receiving special educational provision (as set out in the Statement).

The pupil's PLP should be revised, to reflect the content of the statement (as it relates to the PLP) including the SEN category (or categories); setting intended outcomes based on the objectives of the special educational provision and the nature and extent of the EA's provision including any relevant service and treatment the HSC Trust are to provide; and any additional school provision or modifications to the curriculum, as itemised in the statement; the pupil's PLP is subject to regular monitoring, review and evaluation and forms the key basis of educational information to inform the annual review of the statement.

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the three-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.

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 procedure is designed to:

- 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.

The annual review is carried out by the school on behalf of the EA.

The Review will take place in school and is chaired by the SENCo.

Relevant forms and the EA's guidance for this process are available by contacting Statutory Assessment and Review Service (SARS) of the school's local EA office or they can be downloaded from the [EA website](#).

Record Keeping

The following records are kept in school (within classes and with SENCo):

- SEN Register;
- Developmental concerns records;
- Personal Learning Plans and reviews;
- statements/annual reviews/transition reviews;
- assessment results/data;
- individual pupil PLP files;
- record of liaison/meetings with staff from the Education Authority's SEN Support Services/Health and Social Care Trust
- records of consultations with parents;
- support, advice, and training provided to staff.

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The SENCo monitors the progress of the pupils on the SEN register in the following ways:

- PLPs are monitored and reviewed for quality, progression, and appropriateness three times throughout the school year.
- evidence is collated to demonstrate whether the pupil is making progress;
- information gathered is used in future planning for intervention and to inform movement within the stages of the Code of Practice.

Professional Development

The principal in consultation with the SENCo oversees the professional development of all staff in the school. It is essential that all staff keep up to date with SEN developments to provide effective teaching and support for pupils through training sessions by SENCo or training provided through outside agencies such as Middletown or RISENI.

Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members should be encouraged to disseminate the information provided when possible and necessary, to build the capacity of their colleagues. Every effort is made to provide relevant training to temporary members of staff in Whitehead PS&NU.

Partnership working

In school we work with a range of EA Pupil Support Services, where appropriate, to receive training and guidance to support the school and parents in meeting the needs of children with special educational and medical needs. EA Pupil Support Services may include:

- Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS)
- Special Educational Needs Inclusion Service (SENIS)
- Literacy Service
- SEN Early Years Inclusion Service (SENEYIS)
- Language and Communication Service
- Behaviour Support Service

Other services may include:

- Behaviour Support and Provisions
- Education Psychology Service
- RISE RISE NI
- Barnardo's
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Child Development Clinic (CDC)

Legislation:

- The Education (NI) Order 1996
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016

Documentation:

- Department of Education Northern Ireland (1998) Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Bangor: DENI (PDF, 644KB)
- Department of Education Northern Ireland (2005) Supplement to the Code of Practice. Bangor: DENI (PDF, 801KB)
- Equality Commission, Northern Ireland (2006) Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools (SENDO). (PDF, 761 KB)
- Department of Education Northern Ireland (2009) *Every School a Good School – a policy for school improvement*, Bangor: DENI. (PDF, 706KB)

Complaints

All complaints regarding SEN in school will be dealt with in line with the existing complaints procedures.

If you have any queries in relation to special educational needs of a child with a Statement or who is currently being assessed for a statement of special educational needs, you can contact your local [EA Office](#). Please contact your SEN Link Officer in the first instance. Contact details should be on the EA documentation issued to you alongside your child's statement.

Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)

The [Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service \(DARS\)](#) provides an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the disagreement, in relation to special educational provision, between parents and school/Boards of Governors or the EA for pupils who are on the Code of Practice where previous attempts to do so have been unsuccessful.

Parents can contact the service which is provided by [Global Mediation](#).

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right to appeal to the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal \(SENDIST\)](#) considers parents' right to appeal against the decisions made by the Education Authority about their child's special educational needs whenever an agreement cannot be reached.

This service also addresses claims of disability discrimination in school.

Monitoring and evaluating the SEN Policy

The SEN policy will be reviewed annually. It will be amended as appropriate in light of changes in legislation or practice following targeted consultation with staff members, parents, and external agencies. This policy will be brought to the Board of Governors for final approval.