



Fourtowns Primary School
Special Educational Needs Policy
2023/24

Rationale/Vision

Fourtowns 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 endeavor to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

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 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; Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Medical Needs. It also links with our policies for pupils with Additional Needs such as Gifted and Talented or English as a Second Language. *For example*

- A pupil may be Gifted or Talented in one area yet have communication difficulties/ASD
- A pupil may have English as an Additional Language but also have a Specific Literacy Difficulty.
- A pupil may have a medical need which has an impact on their learning.

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/Disability:

- 1. Cognitive and Learning - Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Numeracy**
 - a) Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulty (Language/Literacy)
 - b) Dyscalculia or Specific Learning Difficulty (Mathematics/Numeracy)
 - c) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
 - e) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
 - g) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- 2. Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Wellbeing**
 - a) Social, Behavioural Difficulties (SBD)
 - b) Emotional Wellbeing Difficulties (EWD)
 - c) Severe Challenging Behaviour associated with SLD &/or PMLD
- 3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs**
 - a) Developmental Language Disorder - SEN (DLD)

- b) Language Disorder associated with a differentiating/ biomedical condition
- c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties
- 4. Sensory**
 - a) Blind
 - b) Partially Sighted
 - c) Severe/ Profound Hearing Impairment
 - d) Mild/Moderate Hearing Impairment
 - e) Multi-sensory impairment
- 5. Physical Needs**
 - a) Physical
- 6. Under Assessment**

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

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.
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 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.
4. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs.
5. To educate pupils with SEN/Disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
6. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
7. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
8. 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.
9. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy.
10. 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

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

Ms Joanne Kincaid (SENCO)

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.

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 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; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

(See - 'Every School a Good School' (DE) - The Governor Role (2010) Chapter 12 and the SEN Resource File (2011))

Principal (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 SMT are 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 SEN 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.

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, manage and review EPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team

Special Needs Teacher/Learning Support Teacher

The Special Needs teacher will work under the direction of the SENCo.

He/she 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 programmes for all identified pupils with SEN/Disability which promote progression within an inclusive setting
- Contribute to EPs which inform learning and teaching
- Monitor and review progress
- Be involved in the Annual Review process and
- Attend professional development training

SEN Support Staff

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

(See - 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School' (DE))

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 - para 1.19)

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- Contributing to the assessment
- Working towards achieving agreed targets and
- Contributing to the review of EPs, 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 relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible.

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 to a higher or lesser stage of need. Parents 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 EPs

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 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

(See - school Accessibility Plan).

- At present pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building.
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users; and/or
- There is a well-equipped SEN teaching/resource base and facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disabilities.
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and attainments.

Special Facilities, Resources and Accommodation

SEN classroom (Group Room) with Activ table/ Staffroom and Resource Area for withdrawal of individuals and small groups.

Annual Report

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

'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 Fourtowns 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 and
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews
- Annual School Reports

The Management of SENs

In Fourtowns Primary School, we follow the **NEW** 3 stage model as guided by EA CYPS SEND Team (April 2021)

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with SEN lie at **NEW** Stage 1. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of classroom assistance or withdrawal in small groups by SENCo.

Preparation for Stage 1

Preparation before starting at 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 should:

- 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
- Monitor and review progress and report concerns to parents and SENCo.

The SENCo will:

- Help the class teacher gather information and assess the child's needs.
- Advise and support the class teacher.
- With parents and class teacher, decide whether to continue or move to Stage 1

Stage 1

Parents should always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes the SENCo will decide whether to move the pupil onto SEN register at Stage 1 - with classroom support or move the child to regular withdrawal groups with SENCo.

The SENCo will:

- 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 should 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 1 Review

Normally the Stage 1 review should be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and, where possible, child and parents. It should focus on the child's progress.

If progress has been satisfactory the SENCo may decide that the child should continue at Stage 1 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 1 and may decide to move the child to Stage 0 on SEN register (no provision needed).

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 2

Following a decision at either at Stage 1 review or following discussions between the SENCo, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intervention with external support is necessary, a referral will be made. Once this referral to an outside service has been accepted and provision is being provided, the child will move to stage 2 once the support commences.

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, should ensure that a Stage 2 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. The SENCo 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.

At Stages 1 and 2 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; 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 2 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 2 Education Plan should normally be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and where possible, parents and child. 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 2 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 2 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 1 and action appropriate to that stage will be taken.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 2 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 3

'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 EA from school's principal or the parent, the Board will consider the need for transition to Stage 3. 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.

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 3 Education Plan is drawn up, implemented, monitored and reviewed
- 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 EA guidance for this process is available from Special Education

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the **NEW** 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.

Record Keeping

The following are some of the records that the SENCo should consider keeping:

- 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

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.

- 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

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school in consultation with the SENCo. The SENCo 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 should disseminate the training with colleagues.

Partnerships

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

EA Support Services

AAIS (Autism Service)

Behaviour Support

Literacy Service (EALS)

RISE NI (MASTS)

Sensory Service (Visual)

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 have 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 and schools/Boards of Governors or EAs 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 and the ELB 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 parents' appeals against decisions of EAs and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.