

Ballylifford Primary School



Special Needs Policy

To be ratified by Board of Governors:

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY.

We in Ballylifford Primary School recognise that there is a continuum of Special Education Needs, which we aim to address. We strive towards minimising barriers to learning and promote an inclusive ethos reflective of our intention to ensure full entitlement and access for SEN pupils to high, quality education within a broad and balanced curriculum, so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self-esteem.

Definitions

Learning Difficulty

A child has a *learning difficulty* if he has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age and/or has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of his age in ordinary schools. '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 adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities." (Part 1 of 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

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff will follow our Code of Conduct whereby:

“Ballylifford Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”, irrespective of gender, age, ability, ethnic origin or disability.

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; Behaviour, Child Protection and Pastoral Care.

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)

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

Policy Aims

We will:-

- Use a variety of assessment procedures aimed at identifying learning difficulties as early as possible. (Ref: Good Practice Guidelines)
- To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/Disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum
- Develop knowledge, skills and understanding which ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence. (Ref: Good Practice Guidelines.)
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that a child's inclusion is compatible with efficient education of other children. (Ref: SENDO)
- Strive to ensure that no child with a disability/SEN is treated less favourably or disadvantaged in anyway in comparison to those who have no disability/SEN. (Ref: SENDO)
- Develop a range of teaching approaches appropriate to meet the range of needs of the pupils. (Ref: Good Practice Guidelines.)
- Develop and employ an appropriate range of resources in support of pupils with SEN/disability.
- Strive to ensure that all children with SEN/disability have a positive self-image.
- The support of parents and pupils is crucial if an Education Plan (EP) is to be effectively implemented. To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEN provision. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding must be taken into account.
- Work closely with outside agencies to meet the needs of the child.
- Implement effective monitoring, evaluation and review procedures of current practice and promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the policy.
- Implement an effective record keeping system within the school.

Management of SEN within the policy.

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 Dolores Muldoon.**(SENCO)**

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 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.

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
- 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.

SEN Support Staff

Support Staff should

- Work under the direction of the class teacher
- Work with confidentiality at all times
- 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
- Access training through SENCo/Principal appropriate to needs of the child.

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
- 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. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child's entry to the school.

Ensure their child attends school regularly and keeps any related appointments with support agencies eg Speech & Language, Occupational Therapy.)

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 Special Educational Needs will be consistent with Ballylifford P.S'(see Admissions Policy) general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the relevant Education Authority.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the Education Authority 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

- 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.
- See Accessibilty Plan

Annual Report to Board of Governors

The SENCO/Principal will report annually to the Board of Governors.

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 Ballylifford P.S, the following will be used to identify pupils needs:

- Parental information
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school
- Cognitive ability tests CAT 4 NRIT
- Baseline Progress Assessment
- Attainment tests PTE,PTM,NINA,NILA
- New Group Reading Test (NGRT)
- Single Word Spelling Test (SWST)
- 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

The Management of Special Educational Needs

In Ballylifford P.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 Special Educational Needs and should inform the SEN co-ordinator and the Principal and consult the child's parents.

Teacher at Stage 1:-

- Responsible for meeting the needs of children in their class through differentiation on a day-to-day basis.
- Present materials appropriate to pupil's age, maturity, learning need/disability.
- Identify barriers to learning gathering data to clarify needs of child.
- Consult with SENCo and parents and establish appropriate, achievable and time-bound targets for child.

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.
- Advise and support the class teacher.

Stage 1 Review

Parents should 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.

At Stage 2:-

- Involve parents/guardians and in consultation with them - implement appropriate programme/Education Plan to address the needs of child.
- Monitor progress and report to parent/guardian for review procedures ensuring all copies of IEP's/Reviews are signed, dated and submitted to SENCo.
- Liaise with SENCo and other support services as necessary to ensure continuity of provision.
- Involve the pupil (as appropriate) in setting targets and celebrate success.

Stage 2 Review

- Normally the Stage 2 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 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, 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. 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 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; 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.
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Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 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 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 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 EA will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that a request of this kind will not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement of SENs.

In reaching a suitable decision, the EA 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 EA Provisional Criteria for Statutory Assessment

Following Statutory Assessment

The Educational Authority 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 EA'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
- 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 EA.
- 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

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.

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.

- SEN register is up-dated internally by SENCo at the start of each Term and on-line to Board through C2K system. Teachers hold a copy of all their IEP's and reviews, submitting a signed copy to SENCo each half term for filing in confidential individualised pupil folders. Parents are provided with a copy, on request, when they attend Review meetings.
- Evidence of work samples/observation records/incident reports or summaries relevant to an IEP are attached to reviews and submitted to the SENCo for filing.
- SENCo maintains record of all IEP/Reviews submitted.
- A single copy of the last IEP and Review for each child on the register is supplied to subsequent teachers each year to ensure continuity and progression of provision.
- All reports from outside agencies including Statements, are treated as confidential and are filed by SENCo as part of individual SEN pupil records in a locked filing cabinet. Access to these is on a 'need-to-know' basis with class teacher given a copy of recommendations and identified individual needs of a child only.
- All child protection documentation is held in a locked filing cabinet.
- All Medical 'Care Plans' are held in Principal's office.
- Details of all support services available to the school are available in SENCO file.

Partnerships

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

- **EA Support Services** (for example)
- Audiology
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Behaviour Support
- Language & Communication
- Specific Literacy Difficulties (SPLD)
- Down Syndrome Support
- Interdisciplinary Services - eg: Multi Agency Support Teams for Schools (MASTS)

Partnership with Parents.

- Parental involvement is regarded as important to help a child work towards achieving his/her full potential. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher regarding any concerns they have by making an appointment to meet through the school office. They will be

regularly informed of their child's progress, by invitation each term, to meet with their child's class teacher to review each IEP and set new targets.

- Meeting with the class teacher, SENCo and the parent will be on-going so that all possible support will be given both at home and at school.
- Parents are encouraged to share all relevant information regarding their child's needs with the school so we can work together to provide for their child's needs. Their involvement at all Stages of the Code of Practice is fully encouraged.

Pupil Participation.

- Positive relationships are promoted with all children with SEN. Through fostering positive self-esteem, setting SMART targets, inclusion and opportunities to experience and celebrate successes, good relationships are promoted. These encourage SEN children to take a growing responsibility for their learning and to contribute to sharing the target setting and review processes at an age appropriate level.

Complaints Procedures.

Internal School Procedures:-

- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they feel their child's needs are not being met. They are invited to attend termly review meetings with their child's class teacher, and encouraged to share concerns regarding provision for/progress of their child.
- may contact the SEN Co-ordinator
- may contact the Principal, and, if necessary, the Board of Governors

External Procedures:

- Advice and Information Service Leaflet distributed to parents at Annual Parent's meeting.
- Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service Leaflet available on request or if a complaint is made. (DARS)
- Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Tribunal (SENDIST).

Professional Development.

- Through regular consultation with the staff, the Principal will highlight areas to be developed each school year. The Principal/SENCO and staff will call upon expertise within and beyond the school to address designated areas of concern. Principal ensures necessary training eg Medical
- Those who attend courses disseminate and share knowledge with other staff.
- Record kept of all relevant Inset courses attended.
- 2 members of classroom assistants trained in Reading Partnership Programme.

- Meetings between Principal/SENCo are ongoing throughout the year with regard to termly updates on register; referrals at Stage 3 to Educational Psychology Stage 4 requests for Statutory assessment and Stage 5 Statements are shared.
- Meetings between Principal/SENCo and other staff are on-going during directed time as needed by class teachers, and when required by Principal/SENCo to complete referral forms.

This policy will be reviewed in light of changes in legislation or practice which are due to take place in Sept 2016. This will happen in consultation with all staff.

Approved by Governors date:

Signed:

_____ **Chairperson**

_____ **Vice- Chairperson**

_____ **Principal**