

St. Mary's Primary School

Rathlin Island



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Opening Statement

The policy of Saint Mary's Primary school acknowledges that the needs of all our pupils who have SEN either throughout or at any time during their time in our school, must be recognised or met. These pupils have rights to access a broad and balanced curriculum as laid down by the National Curriculum

DEFINITIONS

The term "SEN" is defined in the legislation as a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made.

Learning difficulty means;

[A] if he /she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age

[B] has a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of everyday educational facilities

[C] is under five and falls within the definition of A or B

Special Educational Provision;

Means educational provision, which is different from or additional to the provision, made for children of a comparable age.

AIMS

1. To provide a broad, balanced and relevant and differentiated education as a right for all
2. To identify children with special educational needs as early as possible through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel
3. To ensure that all children with special needs feel valued and have a positive self-image
4. To encourage parental involvement and co-operation between various professionals/agencies in the diagnosis and treatment of special needs pupils
5. To offer experiences and opportunities which allow the pupil to develop knowledge, understanding and skills which ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence
6. To develop a system for recording continued assessment so that each pupil's performance can be monitored
7. To promote the integration of all pupils with SEN as far as possible in reasonably practical into the life and work of the school
8. To encourage the use of teaching strategies which are responsive to different learning styles and which ensure effective learning
9. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their learning needs
10. To develop and utilise all available resources in support of pupils with special needs

THE FIVE STAGE APPROACH

In recognising that there is a continuum of needs, the code sets a 5- stage approach to the identification of children having learning difficulties, the assessment of their special educational needs and the making of whatever special educational provision is necessary to meet those needs.

The first 3 stages are based in the school, calling as necessary on external specialists;

At stage 4 and 5 the Board shares responsibility with schools.

STAGE 1; Teachers identify and register a child's special needs and, consulting the school's SEN co-ordinator, take initial action.

STAGE 2: The SEN co-ordinator takes lead responsibility for collecting and recording information and for co-ordinating the child's special educational provision, working with the child's teachers. Parents are informed.

STAGE 3: Further intervention is needed. Teachers and the SEN co-ordinator are supported by specialists from outside the school.

STAGE 4: The Education Authority NI considers the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.

STAGE 5: The Education Authority NI considers the need for a statement of special educational needs; if appropriate, it makes a statement and arranges, monitors and reviews provision

Teaching Methodology

Teaching and learning strategies should allow access to whole curriculum for each child. This should involve teachers in utilising a range of teaching strategies and classroom management styles designed to take account of the differing ability interest and experiences of pupils.

Work should be stimulating, allowing pupils to progress at their own level and rate and designed in such a way as to ensure that all pupils experience some measures of success.

Effort should be made to involve the child in decisions affecting their own learning so that they have greater responsibility for their own progress

Pupils should be praised and encouraged with each achievement. Teachers should be sensitive to the language and numeracy difficulties of SEN children in terms of how they communicate both verbally and in writing and in how they give specific instructions.

Teachers should seek to ensure that learning takes place in a classroom environment, which is stimulating and attractive, involving as far as possible, where appropriate, the displays of the pupil's work

Where Education plans are necessary they should build on the curriculum the child is following alongside other pupils. They should set clear, realistic targets with stated review dates and indicates the special educational provision required addressing pupil needs.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We recognise the unique contribution parents can make to their child's progress and we strive to promote a close partnership.

Parents will be provided with relevant information on the schools SEN Policy, the support available for their children and how they can effectively contribute by participating at all stages in their child's learning. Parents will be consulted at the second stage of the plan if there are concerns regarding a child's progress.

EVALUATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE

As our policy needs to be successful, it will be under review by the Principal and staff at the end of each year. We will evaluate the effectiveness of our system of identification, assessment, monitoring and record keeping and the use of outside support services. Any amendments to both policy and or practice will be implemented.

RECORD KEEPING AND REVIEW

A register of SEN pupils will be kept, recording action taken to meet the needs of the pupils and the progress made.

The SENCO will be responsible for ensuring that these records are properly kept and available when needed. Records at each stage will be kept and where a stage 4 referral is necessary the records will be made available to the Board. Parents will be involved in the review and will be informed of the outcome.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Board of Governors shall keep under review the schools SEN policy and comment on its overall effectiveness as part of its annual report to parents. The school Principal shall have responsibility for the day to day management of SEN provision and shall keep the governors informed.

The SENCO shall initiate, develop and maintain contact with the teachers and outside agencies.

The SENCO shall have responsibility for the day to day operation of the policy and for co-ordinating SEN provision and familiarising staff with SEN procedures.

The SENCO in this case is also the Principal/teacher

LIASION WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

The principal and SENCO will have responsibility for initiating, developing and maintaining links with Board Support Services and outside agencies for e.g.

Educational Psychology Service Educational Welfare Service School Health Service

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The school will seek to build on the experience of staff in meeting children's special educational needs

The SENCO will continue to attend training days and cluster meetings organised by Education Authority NI. The SENCO along with other staff will seek to build on the resources for SEN provision.

INTEGRATION ARRANGEMENTS

In St. Mary's we strive to ensure that all children's needs are met and that they have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum matched to their needs and abilities.

We prioritise the use of our resources to ensure inclusion for all where it is practical and compatible within the curriculum

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF SEN

The role of the class teacher is crucial in the early identification of children with special educational needs if it becomes apparent through normal classroom

Work and activity, that a child is performing at a level below that of his/her peers, sufficient to cause concern the class teacher will begin to gather information designed to establish whether or not a child has a learning difficulty.

This information should include notes based on observations of the child working in the normal classroom context, results from both formative and summative assessments as well as information obtained from other teachers, the parents of the child and the child him/herself.

Once a learning difficulty is confirmed the Principal /SENCO will be informed and the child will be registered on the SEN register. Thereafter the SENCO and outside agencies will be involved with the class teacher, in accordance with the procedures for the school-based stages.