

SEN POLICY CONTENTS

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Introduction

As a staff we, at St. Joseph's, aim to promote the creation of a secure environment where every child has a sense of belonging in a caring community, and can grow in confidence and develop in character regardless of ability or disability.

Children may have special education needs either throughout, or at any time during, their school career at St. Joseph's. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child. Teachers will make provision for these children so that they can access the full range of the curriculum.

Special Educational needs is defined as 'a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made'. 'Learning difficulty' means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his or her age, and/or has a disability, which hinders his or her use of everyday educational facilities. 'Special educational provision' means educational provision that is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age.

In September 2005 the 'Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order' came into effect. This new law (SENDO) relates to disability discrimination in education. SENDO strengthens the rights of children with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities to be educated in mainstream education. To obtain rights under the disability aspects of SENDO a pupil/ prospective pupil must meet the **definition of being disabled**. A person is regarded as being disabled for the purposes of SENDO if he/she 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**'. This is the same definition as that used in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Aims

These aims are related to the general aims of the school, with emphasis on those areas concerning children with Special Educational Needs. They have been formed and agreed upon by all the teaching staff and the Board of Governors.

- To ensure that the special educational needs and/or disabilities of children are identified early, and intervention reviewed regularly;
- To introduce assessment procedures which are aimed at identifying learning difficulties as early as possible;
- To create an environment that enhances the child's self esteem and meets the special educational needs of each child;
- To make clear the importance of working in partnership (parents and special education professionals) in the process;
- To communicate with parents, at all stages, in order to encourage their involvement and foster a relationship based on partnership.
- To liaise with outside agencies regarding the needs of children identified as having learning difficulties.
- To enable all children to have full access to every element of the school curriculum;
- To ensure that where appropriate the wishes of the children and views of individual parents are taken into account.
- To develop each child's social skills to enable the child to work and live successfully with other people.
- To employ a range of teaching strategies, methods and resources appropriate to the child's age, ability and needs.
- To monitor, record and review the child's achievements and progress.
- To encourage teachers to continue professional development in SEN.

The Role of the Board of Governors

In keeping with the Education (NI) Order 1996 and the Code of Practice on the identification and Assessment of Special Needs 1998 the Board of Governors will give permission to the Principal and SENCO in St Joseph's PS (Madden) to:

- Determine and keep under review, its policy in relation to the provision of education for children with special educational needs/disability. In doing so, when it seems necessary or desirable for co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs/disability, they should consult the Board and other Board of Governors and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.
- Report annually to parents on any special arrangements for the admission of pupils who have special educational needs/disability but for whom no statement is maintained.
- Take the steps to prevent pupils with special educational needs/disability from being treated less favourably than other pupils.
- Provide facilities to assist access to the school by pupils with special educational needs/disability.
- Endeavour to secure that the necessary special educational provision is made for them.
- Secure that their needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- Secure that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying their special educational needs/disability and providing for them.
- Ensure that they join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, in so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with their receiving the necessary special educational provision, the efficient education of other children in the school and the efficient use of resources.

The Role of the Principal

- Will have responsibility for the day to day management of all the schools work including its SEN provision.
- Will keep the Board of Governors informed of practice in the school.
- Will work closely with the SENCO to ensure full staff participation in delivery of policy.
- Will set aside time for the SENCO to carry out administration duties.
- Will manage financial resources with governors to enhance our special needs provision.
- Will ensure policy and practice are monitored, evaluated and reviewed.
- Will ensure that parents are made aware of their child's special educational need and are aware of the SELB advice and information service.

The Role of the Special Needs Co-ordinator

In St. Joseph's the Special Needs Co-ordinator is **Mrs. G. Burke**. She is responsible for:

- Managing the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- Co-ordinating the provision for, and managing the response to, children's special needs;
- Managing support and advising colleagues;
- Maintaining the school's SEN register;
- Contributing to and managing the records of all children with special educational needs;
- Managing the school-based assessment and documentation required by outside agencies;
- Acting as the link with parents;
- Acting as a link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- Managing a range of resources, human and material, to ensure that appropriate provision is made for children with special educational needs.
- Liaise with the special needs teacher and principal.
- Attend and disseminate current practice from appropriate courses.

The Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Retaining overall responsibility for the children in their class who have special educational needs;
- The gathering of information about the child and for making an initial assessment of the child's SEN.
- Providing special help within the normal curriculum framework.
- Meeting the needs of the child through differentiated activities.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the child's progress in conjunction with the SENCO.
- Keeping in close contact with parents to ensure continuity between home and school.
- Managing the Classroom Assistants in their classroom.
- Drawing up, implement and evaluate Education Plans in liaison with CA and Special Needs Teacher.
- Meeting with parents at Annual Review.
- Liaising with other support services.

The Role of the Classroom Assistant

The role of the classroom assistant is to:

- Ensure a more effective use of class teacher's time;
- Work closely with and collaborate with class teacher to help fulfil targets set out in IEPs;
- Report back to class teacher of any development in child's progress;
- Ensure an atmosphere of inclusion for the child.
- Access any available training.

Classroom assistants have been trained in the 'Reading Partnership' programme. Approximately 8 children (who are just slightly under-achieving) are chosen each term from Primary 3-5 to receive extra reading tuition.

The Role of the Parents

The active support and participation of parents is a vital component in the shared task of providing for the needs of all pupils in our care. Parents will always be an important link in the education of pupils with Special Education Needs. When a pupil is causing concern, parents are informed by the SENCO and invited to the school to discuss the situation with the class teacher and SEN support teacher. All concerns are shared with parents and the child's IEPs are discussed. Copies are given to parents so they are aware how they can help and support their child. The IEP review is shared with parents and they are informed about their child's progress. If they wish they may approach the Class Teacher or SENCO at any time throughout the year if they have any concerns. We encourage parents to make an active contribution to their child's education.

The Role of the Individual Pupil

Children in St. Joseph's school who are capable of forming views are involved and encouraged to express their opinions and receive information about their learning and matters affecting them. We are aware that their views however should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capabilities. In St. Joseph's pupils are aware of their learning targets and some are involved in the setting and evaluation of them.

Admission arrangements

The admission arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are set out in our admissions policy and are in line with CCMS guidelines. When seeking to place a pupil with a statement, the SELB will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement (in line with SENDO legislation).

S.E.N. Specialism

The school has access to support from outside agencies in the form of:

- (a) a peripatetic teacher

Accommodation

All areas both internally and externally are accessible by wheelchair. Small groups of pupils can be accommodated for specialised teaching within a separate group room. This room is equipped with an inter-active whiteboard and library facilities.

Allocation of Resources

The SEN budget goes towards paying for a number of support programmes for example Accelerated Reading and Numicon. Money from the school budget is also available for the purchase of materials to support children with SEN. Additional support (Board allocation) is sometimes given to children with statements in the form of classroom assistants.

Identification, Assessment and Provision for Special Educational Needs

It is important that children's special education needs are identified at an early stage. If a difficulty proves transient, the child will subsequently be able to learn and progress normally, if the difficulties are less responsive to provision made by the school, an early start can be made in considering any necessary additional provision that may be needed to support the child's progress.

Pupils with SEN can be identified through:

- liaison with previous schools and settings;
- screening procedures and diagnostic testing (see appendix);
- teachers' observations;
- any concerns expressed by parents or others who know the child;

The SELB has adopted the 5-stage approach cited in the Code of Practice for the identification of children with learning difficulties, the assessment of their special educational needs and the making of whatever special educational provision is necessary to meet those needs. In St Joseph's PS, the staff are encouraged to consult and use the Good Practice Guidelines for those on Stage 1 - 3 of the Code of Practice.

Stage 1

- Class teacher identifies child's special educational needs. (Can be triggered by parental concerns).
- Consultation with SENCO.
- Consultation with Parents
- Child is listed on the SEN Register
- With the help of the SENCO, the class teacher sets up a programme of work to meet the individual needs of the child.

Stage 2

- Child still causing concern, class teacher consults with SENCO.
- SENCO and class teacher draws up an individual educational plan to be reviewed termly.
- Parents/child consulted.

Stage 3

- After parental consent the child is referred to either the Educational Psychology Service or the Literacy Screening Programme depending on the nature of concern.
- The child is consulted.
- The child may receive help from the peripatetic teacher.
- Educational plans are drawn up based on advice from professionals external to the school.

Stage 4

- On the advice of the Educational Psychologist the Board initiates needs for a statutory assessment.
- The School fills in form (Request for Stage 4 Statutory Assessment) with parental permission. In this form the school provides evidence that the child's special educational needs cannot be met in the normal school environment (resources).
- Outside agencies make available information to the Board.

Stage 5

- Board considers need for a statement
- With parent's permission the appropriate form is completed by the school.
- Formal Statement of Special Educational Needs may be made.
- Special Educational Provision will be arranged.
- A Statement is a legal document, which is reviewed annually by the Board. The school, parents and possibly outside agencies contribute to these annual reviews. This helps the Board to monitor that the Special Education Provision for the statemented child.

As indicated in the Code of Practice, statutory assessments are only carried out for the very small minority of cases where the child's needs: -

- May be significant and/or complex:
- Have not responded to relevant and purposeful measures taken by the school and any external specialists involved; and
- May call for special educational provision which cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to our school.

In a very small minority of cases, children may demonstrate such significant difficulties that a school may consider it advisable to refer to the board for a statutory assessment without going through all the school-based stages. These will be extremely rare situations where there is very significant change in a child's functioning or where, for example there is discovery of a major sensory or other impairment. This may require immediate specialist intervention beyond the capacity of the school and those services normally available to it at Stage 3. In such circumstances an emergency placement may be appropriate in an alternative, more specialised setting.

Annual Review of a Statement of Special Educational Needs

All statements must be reviewed at least annually by the S.E.L.B. The parents, the school and other professionals are invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's needs or to the special educational provision specified in the statement. The annual review should focus on

what the child has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved. When a review takes place of a pupil in P7, the aim should be to give clear recommendations as to the type of provision the child will require at the secondary stage. It will then be possible for the parents to visit secondary schools and to consider appropriate options within the similar timescales as other parents. The new schedule 2 of the 1996 Education Order revises the procedures that must be followed by Boards when making, maintaining and amending a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Parents now have the right to meet with the Board when it proposes to amend a statement and they can now express a preference for a grant-aided school at this meeting. If necessary, the Board must also inform the parents of the availability of DARS (Dispute Avoidance Resolution Services).

Curriculum Entitlement for SEN Pupils

In drawing up I.E.P.s the SENCO and class teacher will ensure that the planned work is directly related to the activities being carried out within the classroom for all pupils. Class teachers will ensure that work is planned to cater for pupils of varying levels of ability and that each child, particularly those who have been identified as having Special Educational Needs are presented with work that is within their ability range. The I.E.P. targets drawn up for these children will be delivered in class by the class teacher and help of classroom assistant if appropriate. It is our school's policy to include all pupils (taking into consideration their physical and mental capabilities) in all aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities, clubs, school trips and sporting events.

Reporting to the Board of Governors

The Principal will report once a year on the provision of Special Educational Needs in our school to the Board of Governors. He will discuss the number of pupils on the register, the number of children with statements and the number of pupils making good progress in relation to their targets.

Arrangements for Responding to Complaints

The school has a clear policy procedure for dealing with concerns or complaints regarding the content or implementation of the school curriculum. This procedure, outlined in the annually published School Prospectus, will also be used in curriculum matters related to Special Educational Needs.

- In the first instance parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities should take up concerns with class teachers.
- If this is unsuccessful the parent may wish to discuss the matter with the SENCO.
- The SENCO may refer the matter to the Principal.
- If the difficulty is still unresolved the parents may contact the Board of Governors.
- If parents' concerns are not resolved by the usual school procedures, they can request an independent disagreement resolution by way of the Dispute Avoidance Resolution Service (DARS). The school will make further information about this process available on request.
- Parents can also contact the SENAIS 'Special Educational Needs Advice and Information Service' for independent support and advice. The school will provide information about this service to all parents of children on the register.

Arrangements for In-service Training

The school's SEN Co-ordinator is responsible for establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training. Where a need has been identified, or it is felt further training is necessary the SEN Co-ordinator will raise the matter with the Principal.

It is the school's policy that all its staff, including non-teaching staff, are familiar with current thinking in SEN and as such the school will endeavour to encourage the professional development of staff by making them aware of in-service training courses. Where finance allows resources will be made available for in-service training in SEN to enable staff to work effectively with SEN pupils.

The school recognises the particular importance of the training needs of SEN Co-ordinators and will afford every opportunity to provide them with the necessary assistance.

Experience and Special Interests of Staff in relation to SEN

- Mrs G. Burke (SEN Co-Ordinator) has held this post from 1998.
- Peripatetic teacher.
- Classroom assistants have completed training in the Reading Partnership and Maths Catch Up programmes.

Links with Support Services

External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and /or disabilities.

As identified in the Code of Practice there are a number of specialist support services available for SEN support. These are frequently accessed through referral at stage 3 of the Code of Practice (for example educational psychology). Support from Health and Social Services may also be obtained in this manner or earlier as the situation demands. In all cases the parent has a veto on these services and every effort should be made to ensure full co-operation between all concerned for the betterment of the pupil. (See appendix for list of support services)

Links with Other School

On leaving the school at the end of Key Stage 2, SEN information will be forwarded, on request from secondary schools, and parents will be advised of this during the last year in primary school.

Record Keeping, Monitoring and Evaluation

No policy or education provision remains unchanged with time and to ensure that effectiveness and efficiency of practice is maintained a regular review and evaluation of all aspects of SEN will take place.

- Detailed records on all children with Special Needs are kept and regularly updated. These include a summative profile, pupil Record of Achievement, I.E.P.s, results from various standardized tests, end of KS1 and 2 results, samples of work, class reports and Medical/Psychological reports. Confidential reports are kept in a locked filing cabinet (in a secure central store) which can only be accessed by the Principal and SEN teacher.
- The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in school and provides staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practise of the school.
- Children's progress will be measured and recorded against the targets set out in their I.E.P.s. SENCO and class teacher will set targets together. These will be discussed with parents who will receive a copy. When appropriate, the I.E.P. targets will be discussed with the classroom assistant and pupil.
- Frequent discussions are held between teacher and SENCO. Classroom assistants are involved in the making and delivering of I.E.P. targets.
- Special Educational Needs are prioritised in the school development plan.
- Special Educational Needs is regularly included as an agenda item at Staff meetings.
- Special Educational Needs is monitored closely by the Special Needs Team which consists of the SENCO and Principal. (See appendix - Yearly Procedures for Special Needs)
- This policy will be reviewed every three years by the SENCO and Staff.

APPENDICES

ASSESSMENT

Standardised tests are used as screening and diagnostic tools and are linked to a planned Programme of Remediation. Current Procedures in our school are described below:

TEST ADMINISTERED	PURPOSE OF TEST	RESPONSE
P1-P3 BPVS	To assess children's hearing or receptive vocabulary	
P1 (Sept.) Baseline Assessment	To assess pupil's skills on point of entry	Remediation programme linked to test findings. (Class based)
P2 (Jan) Middle Infant Screening Test MIST	A screening and diagnostic procedure to detect early indication of reading and writing difficulties.	'Forward Together' Reading Programme. Parents instructed how to assist children with this programme.
P3 YOUNG Reading Test	General screening for reading difficulties.	Pupils 1 or more years behind avail of a structured programme of reading provided by the Remedial teacher in small group situations.
CAT (P4, P6)	Cognitive Ability Test	
Star Reading Test (P3-P7)	Accelerated Reading Baseline Assessment	Children are assigned a level reading range for their accelerated reading and given a Z.P.D. and a target to achieve.
PIE & PIM (May) (P3 - P7)	Assessment in English and Maths	Children chosen for Reading Partnership programme
Assessment Tasks. End of key stage 1 and 2 results.	National Assessment	Consult SENCO or selected secondary school.
P4/5/6 Literacy NFER Nelson (6 - 12) NFER Nelson (6 - 12) P7 NFER Nelson (9 - 14) NFER Nelson (9 - 14)	Group Reading Test A Group Reading Test B Group Reading Test X Group Reading Test Y	Consult SENCO
MATHS P7 (May)	Benchmark assessment	

Agencies

Southern Education and Library 3 Charlemont Place The Mall Armagh BT61 7BR	Education Officer (Special Needs)	028 37523811
Mrs. Attracta McKeown Psychology Office Bann House Bridge Street Portadown BT63 5AE	Educational Psychologist	028 38351480
S.E.L.B 3 Charlemont Place The Mall Co Armagh	Chief Education Welfare Officer	028 37523811
Duty Social Worker Armagh/Dungannon Trust Gosford Place Co Armagh	Social Worker	028 37522262
Mr Eamon Quinn Railway Street Armagh Co Armagh	Educational Welfare Officer	028 37525780
S.E.L.B. 3 Charlemont Place The Mall Co Armagh	Pupils' Personal Development Services	028 37523811
Lough Road Learning Centre Lurgan	Behavioural Management Team	028 38349421

Agencies

<p>Armagh Community Centre Victoria House Tower Hill Co Armagh</p>	<p>Consultant Paediatrician</p>	<p>028 37522341</p>
<p>Armagh Community Centre Victoria House Tower Hill Co Armagh</p>	<p>School Nurse</p>	<p>028 37522341</p>
<p>Armagh Reading Centre Armstrong Primary School College Hill Co Armagh BT61 9DF</p>	<p>Peripatetic Services</p>	<p>028 3756828</p>
<p>Psychology Office Bann House Bridge Street Portadown BT63 5AE</p>	<p>Assistant Educational Psychologist</p>	<p>028 38351480</p>

