

Ashgrove Primary School

# Special Educational Needs Policy

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VERSION 2:1

# Special Needs Policy

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to reflect and build on existing good practice relating to special educational needs within Ashgrove Primary School. It is also to clarify thinking; to ensure a consistency of approach; and to provide a positive direction and a framework for action. It will provide a standard for evaluation of performance.

Central to the ethos of Ashgrove Primary School is the determination to provide an environment and experiences in which learning and the growth of expertise can take place, all within a supportive, pleasant and co-operative community.

Respecting each child's unique personality, experiences, interests, strengths and weaknesses, we aim to maximise the development of our children and to work towards realising their individual potential. To this end teachers will monitor children's progress and provide appropriate experiences and tasks to challenge and reinforce learning. In doing so teachers will identify children of exceptional ability and children who display significantly greater difficulties in learning than their peers. The provision for the special educational needs of these children will be in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996) and the application of these requirements to Ashgrove Primary School and its aims as outlined in this policy.

It is anticipated that about 20% of children will be considered to have special educational needs. On occasions children will be enrolled with information in existence about their needs. More often these needs will become apparent as a child progresses through the school. Whenever possible, provision for these children will be made by class teachers to ensure that those with special educational needs have access to the whole curriculum.

At Ashgrove Primary School, we strive to ensure that there is an equality of entitlement for pupils with special educational needs. Taking into account the needs of the other children in the school these children are fully integrated as far as is practicable with all activities. Resources are used efficiently and lists of the resources available are regularly updated.

## Definitions Relating to Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs may include those with learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems, medical conditions, speech and language difficulties, visual and aural impairments and physical disabilities.

In this context a learning difficulty is apparent when a child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or when a child's disability limits or denies the child's use of educational facilities. Where learning difficulties are most serious additional teaching support will be provided. Generally priority support will be provided in English.

An emotional or behavioural' difficulty is apparent when a child:

- is unusually withdrawn, lacks confidence and/or is unable to form purposeful and lasting relationships with peers or adults;
- displays unpredictable, bizarre, obsessive, violent or severely disruptive behaviour;
- clearly demonstrates obsessional eating habits or the misuse of any substance;

- has participated in or been subjected to bullying, neglect or abuse at home or has faced major difficulties at home;
- may have a significant mental or physical health problem.

Special educational needs provision means educational provision, which is different from, or additional to the provision already made generally for children of comparable age.

SENCO is the term used when referring to the special educational needs co-ordinator.

IEP is sometimes used as an abbreviation for individual education plan.

## Aims

In identifying and addressing special educational needs Ashgrove aims to:

- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated education as a right for all;
- identify children with special educational needs as early as possible through a variety of means and in consultations with appropriate personnel;
- ensure that all children with special needs feel valued and have a positive self-image
- encourage parental involvement and co-operation between various professionals/agencies in the diagnosis and treatment of special needs pupils
- offer experiences and opportunities that allow pupils to gain the knowledge, understand, skills and attitudes that ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence;
- maintain records of assessment that enable each pupil's performance to be monitored;
- promote the integration of all pupils with special needs as far as is reasonably practical into the life and work of the school;
- encourage the use of teaching strategies that are responsive to different learning styles and which ensure effective learning;
- create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their learning needs; and
- develop and utilise all available resources in support of pupils with special needs.

## Identification, Assessment and Provision within the Code of Practice

The Board of Governors carries out responsibilities under open enrolment legislation. Parents are invited to an induction meeting prior to the summer break in the year before entry to school.

Within Ashgrove Primary School children are assessed early in their first term and through a parental interview, information is exchanged. Progress of each child is carefully monitored and relevant information passes on to the next teacher. Examples of work and current levels of achievement are assessed and stored in each child's individual folder, along with reports from any external agencies eg an educational psychologist.

In recognising that there is a continuum of needs, the SENCO and principal prioritise school provision. The Code of Practice sets out a five-stage approach to the identification of children have learning difficulties, the assessment of their special educational needs and making use of whatever special educational provision is necessary to meet those needs. The first three stages are school based, calling as necessary on external specialists. At stages 4 and 5 NEELB shares responsibility with schools. While individual children's needs vary greatly and the provision may range from temporary and minor to permanent and major it is hoped that many children will have their needs addressed in the short term

and return to stage 0 where they are no longer considered to have special educational needs.

#### Stage 1:

- The class teacher informs the SENCO about concerns and manages the situation within class.
- The SENCO adds the child's name to SEN register.
- The teacher draws up an individual education plan, implements it and monitors progress.
- Reviews are completed in January and June.
- Parents are consulted and informed by the class teacher.

#### Stage 2:

- The SENCO takes on the main responsibility for special educational provision in addressing the needs of children with persistent learning difficulties.
- The class teacher remains responsible on a day-to-day basis.
- The SENCO provides advice, support and training as appropriate and available.
- The teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and special needs teacher (if appropriate), implements it and monitors progress.
- If appropriate, the special needs teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and class teacher, implements it and monitors progress.
- Parents are kept informed and consulted by the class teacher and SENCO.

#### Stage 3:

- Where a child's learning difficulties persist, the school makes a referral to NNELB and seeks the advice and help of outside agencies in assessment and provision.
- Recommendations are noted by teachers and form the basis of IEPs.
- The teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and special needs teacher (if appropriate), implements it and monitors progress.
- If appropriate, the special needs teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and class teacher, implements it and monitors progress.
- Parents are kept informed and consulted by the SENCO.

#### Stage 4:

- Where a child fails to make progress at stage 3 a request for statutory assessment is made to the NEELB's Special Education Branch.
- Advice and evidence are submitted relating to the assessment, planning and provision at stages 1, 2 and 3 and to the review meetings.
- The special education department of NEELB carries out assessment in liaison with parents, school (the principal, SENCO and class teacher) and other agencies.
- The school continues to be responsible during this process.
- The teacher maintains an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and special needs teacher (if appropriate), implements it and monitors progress.
- If appropriate, the special needs teacher maintains an IEP in consultation with the SENCO and class teacher, implements it and monitors progress.

#### Stage 5:

- A statement is written by NEELB containing:

- the background details of the child;
  - an outline of the child's special educational needs (abilities and difficulties);
  - educational and developmental objectives (timescale, provision required, arrangements for setting of short-term targets, etc);
  - details of any provision to enable the school to address educational needs (eg classroom assistant);
  - type and name of recommended school (after consultation with parents);
  - details of non-educational needs;
  - details of any provision to enable the school to address non-educational needs.
- The teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCo and special needs teacher (if appropriate), implements it and monitors progress.
  - If appropriate, the special needs teacher draws up an IEP in consultation with the SENCo and class teacher, implements it and monitors progress. A copy is forwarded to NEELB.
  - Parents are kept informed and consulted by the SENCO and by NEELB.

In Ashgrove we believe that children with special educational needs should be identified and supported as early as possible. Effective assessment will include a combination of testing, teacher observation and parent interviews. The nature of a pupil's special educational needs will be described using the information currently available in school. This information will include:

#### Pre-school Assessment:

- use of pre-school reports, eg nursery school or playgroup
- reports from any outside agencies already involved with the child, eg speech and language therapists or health visitors
- information supplied by the parents

#### General Assessment:

The role of the class teacher is crucial to 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 her peers that is sufficient to cause concerns, the class teacher will begin to gather information to establish whether a child has a special educational need. Information collected may include:

- notes based on the teacher's observations of the child working in the normal classroom context;
- information relating to the child's level of concentration and communication;
- information relating to emotional, social and physical development;
- information regarding and recording the child's progress in class;
- analysis of the child's written and oral work;
- relevant records from all teachers who have taught the child, including any from previous schools
- information from the parents - views on the child's health and development; perceptions of the child's performance, progress and behaviour at school and at home; and factors contributing to any difficulty. (This information will be accessed by the SENCo when the child's parents come for stage 2 consultation); and
- information from the child (where appropriate).

We recognise that positive aspects of a child's performance should always be included. This is essential if reliable starting points are to be identified and used as the firm foundation on which future learning targets may be based.

## General Screening and Diagnostic Tests:

Screening may be used to identify pupils who are failing aspects of literacy and numeracy. Following the screening programme, those children who are demonstrating difficulties will be tested further through the use of appropriate diagnostic tests as well as by reference to additional background information from the class teacher, parents, principal or outside agencies.

General screening may include:

- the child's phonic knowledge;
- sight vocabulary (first 200 key words)
- word discrimination
- NFER Nelson (6-12) English and Maths tests
- Bury Infant Check (P1, 2<sup>nd</sup> term)
- MIST test (Middle Infant Screening Test) (P2, 2<sup>nd</sup> term)

Diagnostic tests available include:

- Neale Analysis
- Macmillan Graded Word Test
- D Young Group Reading Test
- Use of a NFER dyslexia screening disc

When a learning difficulty has been confirmed the child's placement on the special needs register will be discussed by the principal and SENCo. The register is maintained by the SENCo in the principal's office and in the SENCo module of the school's computer network. The register is updated after each review, or as needed, by recording the stage each child is currently on and any relevant notes.

## Teaching Strategies

Class work for children with special educational needs is differentiated through group and individual work. Differentiation may include:

- small steps with skills broken down into small steps to make success at each step more certain, whilst allowing concepts to develop gradually.
- over learning: allowing adequate repetition and practice to ensure that concepts have been grasped.
- increased time being spent with a child: maximising the use of time to allow one-to-one tuition on a regular basis.
- aiming to increase self-esteem through circle time and appropriate rewards and praise, this building self –confidence and willingness to work.
- providing positive feedback: celebrating and praising any improvement.
- setting clear and realistic goals.

## Individual Education Plans:

In Ashgrove, children with learning difficulties and who are at stage 2 or above are withdrawn from class in groups numbering no more than four to work with the special needs teacher. Groups are determined by ability and age. Where necessary, a child may work with the special needs teacher on a one-to-one basis.

At stage 1 the class teacher writes the education plan. At Stages 2, 3, 4 and 5 IEPs are drawn up by the class teacher with help from the SENCo. Where appropriate, the special needs teacher also writes education plans for the pupils in her care and these are reviewed by the SENCO detailing the work to be covered during a set period of time and incorporating, where possible, how differentiation is to be carried out within the normal classroom structure. IEPs are written at the end of September and January and reviewed in January and June respectively. If necessary, IEPs are reviewed on an 8-weekly basis, e.g. for children with behavioural difficulties.

For those already on the register education plans are written in September and February with reviews being carried out in January and June.

### Recording and Reviewing Pupil Progress:

The SEN register is updated as needed by the SENCO. Details of test results and notes about progress made are stored on computer. IEPs and reviews are stored in each child's folder in the library store, the SENCO's filing cabinet and in the principal's office.

### Parental Involvement:

At Ashgrove Primary School we recognise the unique contribution parents can make to a child's progress and, as far as possible, involve the parents in their child's education.

At Stage 1 the class teacher meets the parents to discuss the child's progress and difficulties, explaining their child's placement on the SEN register and what that entails. Parents are invited to attend parent/teacher interviews in October and February where the contents of the individual education plan and any review are discussed. The class teacher will advise the parents of any help they can provide at home and will arrange to send home appropriate work if deemed necessary. A special educational needs report is sent home in June with the class teacher's annual report. The SEN report outlines the progress made in relation to the child's special needs during that school year. Parents may request and arrange additional interviews with the class teacher at any time during the school year.

When a child is put on the SEN register at stage 2 or above, the parents are invited to meet with their child's class teacher and/or the SENCO.

For children at stages 2, 3, 4 and 5 the process of parent/teacher/SENCo interviews to discuss progress and education plans, and the procedures for reporting is the same as with children at stage 1.

In the case of a complaint, the parents should firstly approach the SENCO (or the class teacher if the child is at Stage 1 on the SEN register). If the parents are still not satisfied, they should contact the principal and if a satisfactory resolution is not obtained they should then approach the Board of Governors of the school.

### Forward Together:

In the Easter term the special needs teacher works with every Primary 2 child and uses the Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) to assess individual progress. Those children are then identified who may benefit from early intervention through the Forward Together

programme. This successful programme involves eight weekly training sessions for parents who then follow up the special needs teacher's classwork with support at home.

## Management & Organisation:

### Role of the Board of Governors:

- To determine and keep under review the SEN policy of the school
- To publish information about the school's SEN policy, including admission and funding arrangements e.g. in the school prospectus
- To report annually to parents on SEN provision available within the school and the steps taken to implement the SEN policy
- To have regard to the school's SEN policy in carrying out its functions

### Role of the principal:

- To manage SEN provision in the school
- To keep the Board of Governors fully informed
- To work closely with the SENCO
- To liaise with outside agencies

### Role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator:

- To develop of a whole-school policy and responsibility for operating the SEN policy
- The day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- To provide in-service training, support and advice for the teaching staff with respect to special needs education.
- To maintain a register of pupils with SEN and liaise with those with parental responsibility of such pupils
- To establish and maintain contact with other professionals involved with children requiring additional attention
- To report regularly to the principal regarding the special needs programme within the school
- The formulation, development, implementation and reviewing of IEPs in conjunction with the class teachers
- The compilation of appropriate resources
- Keeping abreast of current trends in SEN

### Role of the Class Teacher:

- To retain the overall responsibility for pupils in his/her class with special needs.
- To work in conjunction with the SENCo to identify learning difficulties
- To write, maintain, implement and review appropriate individual education plans in conjunction with the SENCO
- To ensure that work within the curriculum is appropriately differentiated
- To participate and contribute in the writing and review of pupils' IEPs at stages 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- To maintain close contact with parents to ensure maximum provision

## Resources:

The report of the Board of Governors, published annually, includes information about the school's policy for special educational needs, including details about the yearly allocation of resources.

Other resources include:

1. Human resources: SEN teacher (Mrs L Doherty)  
P1 classroom assistants  
Secretary (Mrs Y McDonald)
2. Access facilities: Single level building  
Medical room  
Library  
Staffroom
3. Admission arrangements: The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with special educational needs are consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with statements of special educational needs are placed in schools at the request of the North Eastern Education and Library Board. When seeking to place a pupil with a statement, the NEELB will take into account the ability of the school to meet the child's special educational needs, the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources.

4. Materials: Photocopiable Easylearn Phonic books 1, 2, 4 – 9  
What's it About?  
Read back, Read on  
Stop it!  
Reading for Meaning books 1, 3  
Folens Sounds OK book 4  
Find the missing words  
LDA Comprehension books 1, 2  
Phonographix Folder and worksheets  
Wolf Hill teacher's guide (levels 1 – 5)

## Workbooks

Learn how to spell book 2  
Reading Quest book 5  
Digraph Sound & Comprehension Stories book 2  
Guidelines  
Fuzzbuzz letters book 2  
Pictures writing books 1, 4, 5  
The Gibb Family Introductory book A, Book 3  
Sound Sense books 3 – 8  
The Laughing Speller books 1 – 4  
Super Spell books 1 – 4  
Stile phonic books 1, 2 (and 3 stile trays)

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Reading books | <p>New Way: levels red – orange<br/> Story Chest: Get Ready Books sets A, B<br/> Skyways: levels 1 – 7<br/> PM books: levels red –<br/> LDA Adventure books: 4 different titles</p>  |
| Games         | <p>Sentence Completion Reading Games A, B<br/> Sentence Building Word Cards<br/> Sound Stories<br/> What’s Wrong? Sounds<br/> Linkaword Endings<br/> What Would You Do?<br/> What’s Wrong? Posters<br/> LDA Sound Lotto<br/> Dealing With Vowels<br/> Drawing Conclusions<br/> Finding Cause And Effect<br/> Alphabet Jigsaw<br/> Win-a-word<br/> Easylearn Match It 2, 6<br/> First Letter Lines<br/> Linkaword<br/> CVC Word Spin<br/> Ladybug, Ladybug<br/> I Owe You<br/> Paperchains sets 1 – 4<br/> Funkey Double Trouble<br/> ELC Sentence Making Tiles</p> |
| Textbooks     | <p>Reading Reflex<br/> 101 Games for Self Esteem<br/> Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom</p>   |
| Other         | <p>Magnetic Letters<br/> Magnetic Boards<br/> Wooden Letters<br/> Letterland Story Book<br/> Tape Recorder<br/> NEELB Wordsort</p>   |
| Tests         | <p>Neale Analysis<br/> Macmillan Graded Word Test<br/> D Young Group Reading Test<br/> LDA Dyslexia Test<br/> Dyslexia Screener</p>  |
| ICT           | <p>Computer<br/> Laptop<br/> IEP Writer 1 and 2</p> <p>In Sound CD Rom<br/> Wellington Square<br/> PM On-line</p>  |

## Liason with External Agencies

The principal and SENCO initiate, develop and maintain contact with all external agencies with regard to SEN. These external agencies include:

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| NEELB Support Services: | Education Officers<br>Education Welfare Service<br>Educational Psychologist (Mrs L McAleenan)<br>LTSS  |
| Other Schools           | Feeder Nursery Schools<br>Post Primary Schools<br>Any school to which a SEN pupils may change during their primary education<br>Hospital Schools |
| Other Agencies          | Paediatricians<br>Social Services<br>Speech and Language Therapy<br>Occupational Therapy<br>Physiotherapy<br>Health Visitors                     |

## Child Protection

The SENCO regularly reports to both the class teacher and parents as regard to the nature of external support available and relevant to the child with SEN.

## Evaluation of Policy and Practice

The special educational needs policy will be reviewed every year, but may also be done on the decision of the principal, management team or at the request of members of the teaching staff.

This review will assess the effectiveness of the school's procedures in the key areas of:

- identification
- assessment
- provision
- monitoring and record keeping
- the use of external support