



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Date Ratified by Board of Governors: 11/9/23

Date of Review: 11/9/24

DEFINITIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) AND DISABILITY

Definition of SEN

“Special Educational Need” is defined as “*a learning difficulty* which calls for special educational provision to be made”

A child has a *learning difficulty* if he/she has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age and/or has a disability which either prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of his/her age in ordinary schools (Code Of practices Par. 1.4)

Definition of 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)

AIMS & VALUES

St John’s Primary School believes in promoting the spiritual, personal, social and academic goals desirable for all our pupils, including those with a disability or special educational needs. We wish to promote in all our pupils such values that will help them to become caring responsible citizens of the future. These Catholic values are inherent in all areas of the school’s life. At St John’s, we aim:

1. To develop a strong Catholic ethos underpinning our pastoral care systems incorporating fairness, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness, whilst setting standards of respect for others and ourselves irrespective of differences.
2. To develop interpersonal relationships fostering mutual respect with and between all members of the school community.
3. To promote close links between home, school, the parish and the wider community.
4. To facilitate and develop the spiritual, personal, cultural, intellectual and physical needs of each and every child at the school and enhance their contribution to society.
5. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, for the children of all ages including those with Special Educational Needs, within a friendly, supportive and caring learning environment.
6. To identify, assess and make provision for all pupils with special educational needs in line with the Code of Practice.
7. To provide opportunities to enhance teaching and enrich children’s learning experiences across the curriculum using communication, mathematics and I.C.T.
8. To integrate thinking skills and personal capabilities in our planning and practice so that children develop skills for life.
9. To foster qualities and values such as personal responsibility, commitment, determination, resourcefulness, openness to new ideas, self confidence, curiosity, flexibility, tolerance, integrity, community spirit and self discipline enabling our pupils to become caring, responsible citizens of the future.
10. To present a variety of learning experiences to our pupils and staff tapping into and developing talents and interests so that they can progress to the best of their ability.
11. To develop in our pupils a sense of appreciation and preservation of their environment, both at a local and global scale.

12. For pupils to be happy at St John's, to do their best and to be recognised and valued for themselves. Staff will help to build children's confidence and self-esteem, including those with Special Needs.

OBJECTIVES

The staff of St John's Primary School have collectively agreed the following objectives:

- To ensure that all children with SEN/disability have a positive self image.
- To ensure through policy and practice that no child with a disability/SEN is treated less favourable or disadvantaged in any way in comparison to those who have no disability/SEN.
- To develop assessment procedures aimed at identifying the learning needs of children as early as possible.
- To formulate remediation programmes in response.
- Facilitate this programme of assessment, diagnosis, and remediation by establishing and maintaining an effective system of record keeping.
- To enlist, wherever possible, the active support and participation of parents as a means of addressing the needs of a child in a holistic way.
- To employ a flexible approach to providing for children with learning difficulties/disability but one which is consistent with our ultimate objective of catering for the needs of all children within the context of a mainstream class.
- To continually monitor and evaluate existing practices and procedures to ensure that provision is effective.
- To employ the necessary resources (both human and material) and to ensure that these are used efficiently.
- To promote a partnership with specialist support services e.g. Educational Psychology, Health & Social Services.
- To monitor, evaluate and review our policy.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The admission arrangements for pupils to St John's Primary School are in accordance with EA and CCMS guidelines. The admission of a pupil with a "Statement of Special Educational Needs" is co-ordinated through the EA and measured against:

- The suitability of the placement for the pupil.
- The suitability of the placement for other pupils in the same setting.
- The efficient use of EA resources.

Appropriate placement is vitally important and there are consultation mechanisms built into these processes.

In St John's Primary School our special facilities include:

- Ramp access
- Accessible toilets
- No steps to classrooms
- Fire Exits appropriate for all

CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION ON SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTER

1. Any pupil scoring 85 or below in Literacy or Numeracy where:
 - a. based on professional judgement, this is deemed a true reflection of performance.
 - b. there is a significant mismatch between ability and performance using GL standardised tests and teacher assessment.
- Any pupil who does not meet the above criteria and where the class teacher, in consultation with the parent or guardian, feels there is cause for concern.
- Any pupil on a Behaviour IEP
- All pupils with a "Statement of Special Educational Need".
- Response to information from or referral to external agencies.

IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In line with the Code of Practice and the breadth of SEN/disability we identify pupil difficulty through a range of methods:

- Information from parents
- Information from external agencies
- Informal Assessment
- Formal Assessment
- Standardised Scores
- Diagnostic tests
- The professional judgements of the staff
- Information from feeder pre schools and previous schools attended.

PROVISION

Stage 1

Teachers identify a child's special educational need/ disability and consults with the SENCo. A Record of Concern is completed, and provision made in class to suit the child's needs.

The SENCo takes lead responsibility for co-ordinating the child's special educational /disability provision, working with the child's teacher.

- Education Plans (IEPs) are devised, implemented, monitored and reviewed termly.
- **Good Practice Guidelines** and other relevant documents are consulted in determining provision.
- Appropriate withdrawal or in class support if available.
- External advice, support and training sought if necessary.

Stage 2

Teachers and the SENCo are supported by specialists from outside the school. The school may refer the child to Psychology Service who will assess the child and make recommendations.

Psychology may refer to other external agencies for additional support. School based provision continues with:

- Additional expertise sought to improve progress
- External specialist intervention working with the pupil as appropriate
- The external support service may contribute to an Education Plan in partnership with the school.

Stage 3

Following an application(SAR1) to the EA (the Board) from the school or parent, the Board considers the need for statutory assessment and, if appropriate, makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.

In school provision continues as before while waiting for the outcome of SAR1 application.

The Board considers the need for a statement of special educational needs/disability. If appropriate a statement is agreed and the EA changes, monitors and reviews provision.

The school implements the recommendations of the statement and continues to devise, implement, monitor and review Education Plans.

An EA Annual Review is also completed.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Governors

St John's P.S. Board of Governors:

- Determine and keep under review the school's SEN policy.
- Consult the EA and/or Council for Catholic Maintained Schools when necessary.
- Ensure that children with SEN/disability have access to all aspects of school life in so far as this is reasonably practical and compatible with their receiving the necessary special educational provision, the efficient education of all children and efficient use of available resources.
- Provide facilities, to assist access to the school for pupils with special educational needs/disability.
- Report annually to parents on the implementation of SEN provision.

The Board of Governors Representative for SEN/disability is Miss McGeown.

Principal

The principal (Mr Morgan) in co-operation with the Board of Governors:

- Determines, implements and reviews school policy.
- Establishes appropriate staffing and funding.
- Facilitates the professional development of all staff in consultation with the SENCO.
- Ensures the necessary training is provided e.g. medical, moving and handling.
- Manages, monitors and evaluates all the school's work including its SEN/disability provision.
- Consults with all external agencies when necessary.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO (Miss McGeown):

- Takes responsibility for the day-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Co-ordinates SEN/disability provision.
- Maintains the SEN Register.
- Liaises with parents of children with special educational needs/disability.
- Advises and supports staff on all matters relating to SEN/disability.
- Establishes effective links with external specialist agencies e.g. psychology service, speech therapy, behaviour support team.

- Liaises with feeder pre- schools, post primary schools and other schools attended by SEN pupils.
- Assists with the SEN in-service training of staff.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of all children in their class. They:

- May identify pupils with SEN/disability
- Present materials appropriate to pupil's age, maturity, learning need/disability.
- Devise, implement, monitor and review appropriate Education Plans
- Meet with parents of SEN pupils termly.
- Liaise with SENCO/SEN teacher, classroom assistants and other colleagues.
- Engage in necessary In-Service training.

Classroom Assistants

Each Classroom at St John's P.S.:

- Works in partnership with the class teacher.
- Is fully involved in children's provision, monitoring and reviews, as directed by the teacher.
- Relates any difficulties/concerns, in relation to a child's learning, to the class teacher.
- Encourages and supports pupils with SEN/disability.
- Engages in necessary In-Service training.

Pupils and Parents

Pupils are encouraged to be involved in their learning through sharing of targets, celebrating success and taking responsibility for their learning in an age-appropriate manner.

Parents are encouraged to become fully involved in supporting their child's learning through assisting with homework activities and attending parent teacher meetings.

Education Plans and Reviews are shared with parents each term.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The achievements and progress of all pupils are constantly monitored through:

- Written and oral responses as part of class work
- Weekly and termly tests
- Reading records
- GL Standardised tests
- Class and individual targets

All appropriate data is analysed to help determine progress made and inform future planning.

Pupil performance is tracked using SIMS manager. Teacher and classroom assistant input inform all decisions. This analysis is completed by Principal, SENCO, Literacy and Numeracy co-ordinators.

SEN SPECIFIC

- Targets on IEPs are monitored by the SENCO for those children on the SEN register who are at Stages 2-3 of the Code of Practice to determine individual pupil achievement and progression.
- Annual reviews completed for all pupils who have a 'Statement' of Special Educational Needs.
- SEN Action Plan (for whole school improvement), when applicable, is reviewed/evaluated in June.
- Teachers' planners monitored by Principal and subject co-ordinators to ensure differentiation.

- The help of external agencies is sought when appropriate, especially for medical and behavioural problems.

RECORD KEEPING

All staff are aware of the need for confidentiality and the necessity to keep data related to a child's learning/performance and other relevant information in a secure place.

The SENCO holds a file for each pupil containing (passed on to relevant class teacher):

- IEPs, Reviews and evidence of targets achieved.
- Reports from external agencies, e.g. Statements of Special Education, Medical Reports.
- Copies of referrals to external agencies.

General Records held by the SENCo include:

- SEN Register- updated termly
- Pupil Profile sheets with test scores and relevant notes
- Analysis of data for pupils on SEN Register
- Copy of audit
- SEN yearly planner
- Timetables
- Feedback from meetings with teachers and classroom assistants
- Record of staff training

Records held by teachers include:

- Informal records such as reading records and class tests.
- Results of standardised tests with relevant analysis
- Copies of statements, psychologist's reports and/or feedback from other external agencies.
- Current IEPs together with Reviews and necessary evidence.

PARTNERSHIPS

The children at St John's P.S. are central to all partnerships. Their dignity and self-esteem are paramount and all pupils experience and celebrate success. At St John's P.S. we strive to involve children in decision making related to their own learning and, if appropriate, encourage them to generate/acquire knowledge of their own personal targets.

Parents

To involve parents fully in the education of their children is a key aim of our SEN/disability policy. To achieve this, parents are:

- Asked to identify any special educational need their child may have upon entry into school.
- Informed of progress through discussions with class teachers, comments in workbooks and involvement with homework.
- Made to feel welcome in school, encouraged to highlight concerns and celebrate success.
- Informed that their child may have special educational needs.
- Made aware of Education Plans and Reviews.
- Fully informed and agreement sought if external specialist support is required.
- Welcome to discuss progress with SENCo and /or principal.

Specialist/External Agencies

These are frequently accessed at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice and include:

- Educational Psychology
- H&SS
- SpLD
- Behaviour Support team
- Autism Support
- Dyslexia Support
- Occupational Therapy
- Visual and Auditory Impairment Support

Parental consent is sought before making a referral to any of the above agencies.

Other Educational Establishments

Meetings are arranged with the SENCOs of post primary schools and copies of relevant Education Plans are made available if required.

Primary One teacher to visit feeder pre-schools and obtain appropriate records.

Advice sought when pupils transfer from other schools

Wider Community

In offering a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils will be involved in a range of community visits which may include places:

- Of local interest
- Of religious significance
- Of topical interest
- Of national importance/interest
- And in relation to aspects of study

ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

We aim to ensure that all of our pupils and staff receive the best possible experience, and we will constantly strive to improve this. We welcome the input of all members of our school community and consider ourselves to be flexible enough to make changes in what we do for the better. We attempt to deal with complaints or concerns in a totally professional manner and would urge parents to do the following if they have a concern:

- In the first instance, the child's class teacher should be contacted through Dojo or a phone call to the office to arrange a meeting. This formality must be observed because teachers may be on duty in the morning and after school and they will arrange an appropriate time to meet.
- If parents are not satisfied that the matter has been resolved, they should telephone the school or use Dojo to arrange a meeting with the principal, Mr Morgan. If possible, the school aims to resolve any issues immediately so this meeting will occur as soon as possible.
- If a parent is still not satisfied that the matter has been resolved, the Chair of Governors can then be contacted. Concerns should be specifically detailed in writing and given to the principal/secretary of the Board of Governors to enable the matter to be examined and a reply made.

- Parents can seek advice from the EA Advice & Information Service. Parents also have access to the EA Dispute Avoidance Resolution Service (DARS). Information relating to these, including a leaflet detailing the role of this service can be accessed from the EA website. If a parent considers a matter to remain unresolved, a request can be made that the concern is considered by the Special Educational Needs Tribunal or SENDIST.

All queries/concerns are dealt with professionally and confidentially. Parents are informed of any necessary action before it is taken.