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## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

September 2021

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<b>Title</b>	Special Educational Needs Policy
<b>Summary</b>	Guidance for all stakeholders regarding: definitions of Special Educational Needs; measures the School has in place to meet the educational needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs; roles and responsibilities of governors and School staff.
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure an effective response to meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs.
<b>Operational Date</b>	August 2021
<b>Next Review Date</b>	August 2022
<b>Author</b>	Vice Principal and SENCo (LSC)
<b>To be posted on School website</b>	Yes
<b>Date and version posted</b>	September 2021

Special Educational Needs are circumstances which reduce a pupil's access to learning whether through physical, emotional, learning or behavioural difficulties. The purpose of this policy is to ensure an effective response by the School in providing support and in promoting inclusion for pupils with Special Educational Needs. It should be viewed in the context of the School's wider Pastoral Care Policy.

The School recognises that the needs of all pupils who have Special Educational Needs should be addressed, if at all possible, within the resources of the School. Their right to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including maximum possible access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum, are acknowledged.

## **Aims**

1. To identify pupils with Special Educational Needs as early and accurately as possible using a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To follow the procedures and stages laid down by the Code of Practice (see below) on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998) as required by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.
3. To ensure access for pupils with Special Educational Needs to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.
4. To offer curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence.
5. To provide a broad education which will promote intellectual, emotional, social and physical progress in order that pupils can develop as valuable members of society both now and in the future.
6. To encourage parental involvement in the S.E.N. provision for their child.
7. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing their S.E.N. provision. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and understanding should be taken into account.
8. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting Special Educational Needs.
9. To educate pupils with Special Educational Needs, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
10. To maintain a system of assessment, planning, recording, action and review to cater for the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs. This may require the drawing up of Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s)/ Personalised Learning Plans (P.L.P.s).
11. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
12. To encourage all pupils with Special Educational Needs to maintain interest in their education, to have a positive self-image and to develop his/her full potential.
13. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodates different learning styles and promotes effective learning.
14. To provide regular training opportunities for all staff to develop their expertise in supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs.
15. To provide for the needs of all pupils who have Special Educational Needs through the most efficient use of available resources, including Classroom Assistants.

16. To promote collaboration amongst teachers and Classroom Assistants in meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs. This may include contributing to the targets set within I.E.P.s. (P.L.P.s).
17. To implement Guidance on the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings (Circular Number: 2021/13).
18. To liaise closely with the school's Careers Department and outside agencies to ensure pupils with Special Educational Needs make a smooth transition to further/higher education or employment.

## **Code of Practice**

The Code sets out a 3 stage approach:

- Stage 1: Teachers identify and register a child's Special Educational Needs and, consulting the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo/LSC), take initial action. School delivered provision. This may include reasonable adjustments and additional strategies to meet and address the child's S.E.N. An I.E.P (P.L.P.) is required.
- Stage 2: The SENCo (LSC) takes lead responsibility for collecting and recording information and for co-ordinating the child's special educational provision in conjunction with the child's teachers. Teachers and the SENCo (LSC) are supported by specialists from external agencies e.g. EA or a HSC Trust. This may include additional strategies and approaches plus resources, advice, guidance, support and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child's S.E.N. An I.E.P. (P.L.P.) must be produced.
- Stage 3: 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. This may include reasonable adjustments, school delivered special educational provision plus EA provision as set out in the Statement. An I.E.P. (P.L.P.) must be produced.

## **Admissions**

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with Special Educational Needs must be 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 Education Authority NI.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, Education Authority NI 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.

## **Identification and Assessment of SEN**

Identification of need will take place through a variety of means:

- information from parents and/or primary school;
- concerns expressed by class teachers or Heads of Year;
- the use of standardised assessments as deemed necessary;
- assessment by specialist personnel where required.

## **Provision**

Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs will most often be within the normal classroom situation. Class teachers will be made aware of relevant needs, and advice will be given about appropriate strategies.

In the case of specific learning difficulties, pupils may receive some specialist teaching in small withdrawal groups, particularly in the junior years.

## **Facilities**

The school had an accessibility plan carried out by a firm of architects some years ago. Subsequent to this, the school put in place an implementation plan.

Lifts have been installed in the Crombie, Bruce, Jackson, Darbyshire and Jackson Buildings and an external ramped access has been constructed to cover the Louis Lord and Pollin Buildings. All buildings in the school site are now accessible to people with disabilities.

Accessible toilets are available in the Crombie, Jackson and the Technology Buildings. Changing facilities in both the Sports Hall and Swimming Pool have been converted to cater for wheelchair access, and a specially adapted chair allows access to the swimming pool for pupils with mobility difficulties.

As part of a major capital project, a Learning Support Suite has been created, specifically for pupils with special educational needs. This incorporates a Resource Room, with study carrels, offices for interviews and one to one sessions with pupils, as well as a Classroom area and locker provision for pupils and Classroom Assistants. This has significantly improved facilities for pupils with Special Educational needs within the school.

## **Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision**

Special Educational Needs provision is the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and the 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 the SENCo (LSC), in consultation with the Vice Principal.

## **The SENCo. (LSC)**

The SENCo. (LSC) will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day tasks of the school's Special Educational Needs policy;
- respond to requests for advice from other teachers;
- co-ordinate provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- maintain the school's S.E.N. register and records on pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- liaise with parents of children with Special Educational Needs;
- monitor the S.E.N. in-service training requirements of staff, and contribute as appropriate to their training;
- liaise with external agencies;
- co-ordinate the daily activities of Classroom Assistants;
- develop and manage appropriate resources.

## **Class Teacher**

The class teacher should:

- keep up to date with information on the S.E.N. Register;
- gather supporting information through observation and assessment;
- develop and promote an inclusive classroom;
- actively engage Classroom Assistants, where appropriate, in the provision of additional learning support.

## **Classroom Assistants**

Classroom Assistants should:

- work under the direction of the SENCo. (LSC) and class teacher\*;
- be given clear guidance on their specific role in supporting named children;
- provide practical support and guidance for those in their care.

\*Classroom Assistants should support the work of the class teacher by:

- carrying out teacher planned activities/work on targets;
- implementing targeted programmes of work e.g. speech and language/ OT/physio/sensory;
- organising and maintaining resources;
- reinforcing class rules;
- assisting with the supervision of the class;
- monitoring and recording information on pupil progress.

Our policy will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect changes in legislation and practice. The views of staff, parents, pupils, governors and external agencies may be sought as part of the consultation process.