

2016

Special Educational Needs Policy



Implemented: March 2014

To be reviewed: October 2016

Review frequency: Annually

Consultation process

Signed (HT)

(COG)

“In everything we do today, we’re following Jesus and his way.”

Special Educational Needs Policy

“The purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same. But help that individual children need in progressing towards them will be different. Whereas for some, the road they travel towards the goal is smooth and easy; for others it is fraught with obstacles.”
(Warnock Report, 1.4)

1. Definition

Section 312 of the 1996 Education Act defines Special Education Needs as follows: --

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- (a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- (b) Have a disability, which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
- (c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for the child

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

2. Mission Statement

Our intention is to provide a broad and balanced education within a secure and caring Catholic environment, in which each child is enabled to realise his or her full potential and is valued as a member of the community.

We believe that school life must be a partnership between home, school and parish. Children need to be aware of their parents and teachers working together. It gives them security and confidence which they need if they are to develop good attitudes to learning.

3. General Objective

At St George's School the emphasis is on a whole school approach. All staff accept responsibility for providing all children with realistic learning goals in a broad-based, appropriate curriculum. We believe in nurturing and developing the educational, social, emotional, cultural and spiritual aspects by curriculum design and teaching approaches.

We intend . . .

- To have regard to the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs.
- To work in partnership with the child, parent/carers, all staff, governors and outside agencies.
- That class teachers will use a range of differentiation to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils.
- Where a child is identified as not making adequate progress provision that is additional to or different from that provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum will be given.
- To recognise the importance of early identification and if the child's difficulties prove less responsive to the provision made by the school, then an early start can be made in considering the additional help the child may need.
- Where a child is identified as having special educational needs an Individual Education Plan will be drawn up tailored to each individual child's needs. Realistic targets will be set and the plans will be reviewed/evaluated regularly and involve the child, parent, teacher and all support services.

- To use a variety of complementary approaches to support the class teacher and child – differentiation, 1-1, group, whole class, within the class or withdrawal when appropriate.
- To include the child within the class, wherever and whenever practicable.
- Make full use of all the support agencies that have been made available through the LEA.

4. Code of Practice

The Code of Practice offers guidance designed to help schools make provision for pupils with special educational needs following Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

The following pages set out the model of Assessment and Provision that St George's School will provide in line with the new Code of Practice.

5. Areas of Need

Children will have needs and requirements which may fall into one or more areas, many children will have inter-related needs. The areas of need are:-

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and/or physical
- medical

6. Identification and Assessment

“The law says that a child has special educational needs if he or she has:

a learning difficulty (ie a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or a disability which makes it difficult to use the educational facilities generally provided); and if that learning difficulty calls for

special educational provision (ie provision additional to, or different from, that made generally for children of the same age in school).

Therefore early identification, assessment and provision for any child who may have special educational needs is very important. The earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be, and the more readily can intervention be made without undue disruption to the organisation of the school, including the delivery of the curriculum for that particular child. If a difficulty proves transient the child will subsequently be able to learn and progress normally. If the child’s difficulties prove less responsive to provision made by the school, then an early start can be made in considering the additional provision that may be needed to support the child’s progress.

Any of the following may trigger a concern. The child and parent/carer are involved throughout.

- Parents/carer
- Child
- Class teacher assessment
- Response/ length of time on SEN register
- Any of the support services mentioned later
- Records – transferred from another school
- Base line assessments
- SAT results

- In-house testing and assessment
- Special needs register
- Pupil tracking

In identifying children who may have special educational needs we can measure children's progress by referring to:

their performance monitored by the teacher as part of ongoing observation and assessment

the outcomes from baseline assessment results

their progress against the objectives specified in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks

their performance against the level descriptions within the National Curriculum at the end of a key stage

standardised screening or assessment tools.

7. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English, requires particular care. Lack of competence in English must not be equated with learning difficulties as understood in the Code of Practice. We would look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the language that is used there or arise from special educational needs.

8. School Model of Assessment and Provision

Where progress is not adequate, it will be necessary to take some additional or different action to enable the pupil to learn more effectively. Whatever the level of pupils' difficulties the key test of how far their learning needs are being met is whether they are making adequate progress.

If a child's progress is inadequate the class teacher will provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the usual differentiated curriculum offer and strategies. This is known as School Action.

School Action

The triggers for intervention could be the teacher's or others' concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified areas of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the positive behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

Following a meeting to review a child's progress and in consultation with parents a decision may be taken to request help from external support services, both those provided by the LEA and by outside agencies. This is known as School Action Plus.

School Action Plus

The triggers for School Action Plus could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support under School Action, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematical skills
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

The above is a graduated response of action and intervention when a child is identified as having special educational needs, but must not be regarded as steps on the way to statutory assessment, as some children will require less rather than more help if the interventions work successfully.

In order for this to happen a CAF form must be completed by the SENCO, in consultation with the parents. This is submitted to the LEA, and then advice and support may be requested from the Educational Psychology Service.

Following consultation, advice would be taken as to future and further action. This may or may not be to request a statutory assessment.

9. Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs

A child will be brought to the LEA's attention as possibly requiring an assessment through:-

- a request for an assessment by the school
- a request for an assessment by the parent or
- a referral by another agency eg health authority, social services.

If, after action has been taken to meet the learning difficulties of a child, the child's needs remain so substantial that they cannot be met effectively within the resources normally available to the school then we would make a request to the LEA for Statutory assessment.

Following a request for a statutory assessment, the LEA must decide within six weeks whether to carry out such an assessment.

In considering whether a statutory assessment is necessary, the LEA will pay particular attention to:

- evidence that the school has responded appropriately to the requirements of the National Curriculum, especially the section entitled "Inclusion: Providing effective learning opportunities for all children"
- evidence provided by the child's school, parents and other professionals where they have been involved with the child, as to the nature, extent and cause of the child's learning difficulties
- evidence of action already taken by the child's school to meet and overcome these difficulties
- evidence of the rate and style of the child's progress
- evidence that where some progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional effort and instruction at a sustained level not unusually commensurate with provision through Action Plus.

If the Panel agrees to proceed with Statutory Assessment the SENCO prepares further documentation about the child, which is sent to the Special Needs Section where, in consideration with similar documents from other involved professionals, a Statement of Special Educational Needs is completed.

The class teacher, in conjunction with the SENCO is then responsible for drawing up an IEP to meet the objectives set out in the Statement.

The Statement must be formally reviewed at least annually, but if a child's special educational needs change, a review is held as soon as possible to ensure that the provision specified in the statement is still appropriate.

The Annual Review is chaired by the SENCO.

10. Identifying pupils with Special Educational Needs

Early identification is very important as the earlier action is taken the more responsive the child is likely to be. During the Reception Year, if a child is not making expected progress, interventions will be discussed and advice sought where appropriate.

From Year 1 upwards, discussions between Teaching Staff and SENCO, may lead to specific interventions or extra support from TAs and Teaching Staff.

Individual Education Plan

An IEP should be used to plan the interventions for individual pupils made through: School Action Plus and for pupils with statements of SEN.

It is the structured planning documentation of the differentiated steps and teaching requirements needed to help the student achieve identified targets.

An IEP should focus on up to three or four key individual targets and should include information about:

- the short term targets set for or by the pupil
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- success and/or exit criteria
- outcomes (to be recorded when IEP is reviewed)

Monitoring and Reviewing IEPs

Ideally IEPs should be continually kept under review. One copy should be kept in the Class SEN folder, and another kept & amended as necessary, on the School Server. The success of all IEPs will be evaluated regularly, at Parents Consultations.

Statements will be reviewed annually, close to the anniversary that the statement was issued.

11. Class Special Needs Folder

This is kept by the class teacher in the classroom and highlights children who need additional support/help over and above what the class teacher would normally be doing in meeting the needs within her class. It contains Individual Educational Plans and any other relevant information on individual children. At the front of the file there is a list of children causing concern or with medical needs.

Children with Statements have their own folders.

A copy of all relevant paperwork/files is kept in a filing cabinet by the SENCO.

12. Key Individuals

12.1 The role of the SENCO-Mrs. Joanne Burke

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- coordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- liaising with and advising teachers
- managing learning support assistants
- overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs
- liaising with parents of children with special educational needs
- contributing to the in-service training of staff
- liaising with external agencies including the LEA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies
- attend appropriate training to support the role, to disseminate to staff and to use the school development plan to implement new developments
- work closely with the nominated Special Needs Governor
- monitor, evaluate and review the special needs budget in relation to provision for individual needs and deployment of support staff.

12.2 The role of the governing body SEN Governor –Mrs P. McCaffrey

The SEN Governor ensures that all Governors are aware of the school's SEN provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

13. Child Protection

Mr. P. O'Rourke and **Miss. S. Small** are the designated leads responsible for Child Protection issues. All confidential paperwork is kept in the Deputy Head's office.

14. Planning the Curriculum

It is vital that children with special needs do not have a narrow curriculum, particularly with the demands of the National Curriculum. Effective management, school ethos and the learning environment, curricular, pastoral and behaviour management arrangements can help prevent some special educational needs arising, and minimise others. Differentiation of learning activities within the curriculum framework will help us meet the learning needs of all children. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks provide guidance on including children with SEN in the Literacy Hour and the daily mathematics lesson.

The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement emphasises the importance of providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils and offers three key principles for inclusion:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

15. Classroom Organisation

It is important to ensure that this facilitates learning for all children, but particularly for those with special educational needs.

This can be achieved by:-

- Flexible grouping arrangements, to allow children variety and the stimulus of working with different children. Children with learning difficulties benefit from mixing with their peers and must be encouraged to do so.
- Peer support and in some cases peer group tutoring can be valuable, although its implications need to be carefully considered.

- Children with special needs should be encouraged to be active not passive learners, and given as much responsibility as possible for their own learning and classroom environment. It may mean that the class teacher needs to re-assess the physical classroom organisation depending on size and make up of the class.

16. Managing Children

Behavioural difficulties are usually complex. Poor work attitudes and under-achievement, poor concentration levels, miss-match of work to child, personal and home problems, lack of appropriate resources, movement around the room/school, unstructured days, constant change are some of the factors that need to be addressed.

17. Whole School Staffing

The class teacher accepts responsibility within their day to day management of their class for meeting the needs of all their children. If a trainee teacher is working within the body of the class, then it is beneficial for the class teacher to spend a greater proportion of their time assisting with the special needs within. We have Teaching Assistant support within all classes within the school who contribute greatly to the support of all children within the classes. They excel at helping develop skills in all areas. We must also not forget the invaluable role parents play within our school listening/talking to children, supporting groups and individual children under the direction of the teacher. Also the invaluable support most of our parents give to their own child.

18. Partnership with Parents (all those with parental responsibility)

“Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children’s education. They have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child’s needs and the best ways of supporting them.”

(Special Educational Needs Code of Practice January 2002 p.16)

We actively encourage all of our parents to support their child through positive attitudes, giving user-friendly information and effective communication. However all staff should be aware of the pressures a parent may be under because of the child’s needs.

To make communications effective professionals should:

- acknowledge and draw on parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child
- focus on the children’s strengths as well as areas of additional need
- recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their feelings
- ensure that parents understand procedures, are aware of how to access support in preparing their contributions, and are given documents to be discussed well before meetings
- respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints
- respect the differing needs parents themselves may have, such as a disability, or communication and linguistic barriers
- recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings.

We aim to inform parents as soon as a child is “flagged” as a cause for concern, so that they are fully involved in the school based response for their child, and understand the purpose of any intervention or programme of action.

SENCO/Head, class teachers and SEN support talk both informally/formally to parents in school, may write, telephone or home visit if appropriate.

Parents also have a responsibility to communicate effectively with professionals to support their children's education. They should:

- communicate regularly with their child's school and alert them to any concerns they have about their child's learning or provision
- fulfil their obligations under home-school agreements which set out expectations of both sides.

We will ensure that parents are fully involved in any discussions leading up to a school's decision to request a statutory assessment.

19. Complaints Procedure

Parents/carers are asked to speak to the class teacher, SENCO or the Headteacher in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved then parents should contact the SEN Governor or the Chair of Governors in writing.