

ST MARY'S CONVENT SCHOOL
Policy for Children with Special Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is in keeping with the school's aims and other documentation regarding teaching, learning and the quality of opportunity including gifted and talented children. The term SEN (Special Education Needs) refers to pupils aged 5-16 who have statements. Otherwise the correct term is "pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities" or "learners with difficulties and/or disabilities".

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age;
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition of 1 or 2 above, or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

It is important to note that a child whose difficulty in learning is due to the fact that their home language is different from the language in which they are being taught is NOT regarded as having a learning difficulty.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities may need extra help because of a range of needs, such as thinking and understanding, physical or sensory difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or difficulties with speech and language or how they relate to and behave with other people.

AIMS

We aim to enable children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to reach their full potential and be fully included in the school community.

We will do this by:

- Assessing and addressing children's individual needs;
- Liaising with parent/carers and seeking support from outside agencies if appropriate to support children's individual needs;
- Ongoing monitoring of individual's progress;
- Use of IEPs to target set, communicate clearly with the child's teachers and parents and to evaluate progress;
- Ensuring appropriate differentiation and the necessary support in all lessons;
- Adopting an inclusive approach to the individual's learning needs and all other aspects of school life;
- Ensuring the preservation and enhancement of the individual's self-esteem;
- Offering a broad, well-balanced and relevant education, including the Early Years' Foundation Stage Curriculum (for children up to 5) or the National Curriculum (for children aged 5 – 16)

- Adopting a holistic approach to the child's education by encouraging involvement in extra-curricular activities;

Critical Success Factors

- The culture, practice, management and deployment of resources in the school or setting should be designed to ensure **all children's needs are met**
- **Early identification** of any child's learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Exploitation of **good and best practice** when devising interventions
- Consideration of **the wishes of the child** concerned, in the light of their age and understanding
- Special education professionals should work in **partnership with parents** and take into account the view of individual parents in respect of their child's particular needs
- Interventions for each child are **reviewed regularly** to assess their impact, the child's progress and the views of the child, their teachers and their parents
- There is close co-operation between all the agencies concerned and a **multi-disciplinary approach** to the resolution of issues
- Where and LEA determines a child's special education needs, statements must be **clear and thorough**, made within **prescribed time limits, specify monitoring arrangements**, and be **reviewed annually**

The Role of the SENCO

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's policy for pupils with special needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN / learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- Managing learning support assistants
- Overseeing the records on all children with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- 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
- Ensure IEPs are written and SMART targets are set at School Action and School Action Plus
- Liaising between pupil, parent(s) and learning support teacher to complete the necessary tests to apply for extra time in public examinations and to ensure that all necessary documentation is provided to the Examinations Officer.

It is good practice for the costs of the SENCO (or those parts of the post holder's work devoted to SENCO duties) to be set against the core or base budget of the school. To help special educational needs to become a central part of a schools strategic, curriculum and financial development, the SENCO could be a member of the SMT.

The SENCO in collaboration with the class teacher/subject teacher will:

- Use information arising from the pupil's previous educational experiences to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for the pupil
- Identify and focus attention on the pupil's skills and highlight areas for early action to support the pupil in class

- Ensure ongoing observation and assessment to provide regular feedback to teachers and parents
- Invite parents to develop and implement a joint learning approach at home and at school
- Adopt a style of teaching that is flexible in the delivery of the curriculum so that the teaching style and learning matches the pupils learning profile.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION

All teachers are teachers of children with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities and, therefore, provision is a whole school issue. There will be a need to differentiate activities to meet the specific needs of children with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in addition to the normal classroom expectation of differentiation. Staff will be required to contribute to the creation and support of IEPs.

In devising an IEP the following procedure is followed:

- Observe the child's learning
- Analyse the child's behaviour and responses to learning
- Assess and diagnose areas of difficulty
- Plan the learning and/or behaviour target, breaking this down into small steps
- Create opportunities for the child to consolidate his/her new learning or demonstrate improved behaviour
- Plan for skill transfer into other areas of the curriculum

An IEP should indicate:

- What special help is being given
- How often the pupil will receive help
- Who will provide the help
- What the pupil's targets are
- How and when the pupil's progress will be checked
- What help can be given by the parent

Children should be identified as early as possible, directly or indirectly through:

- the outcomes of baseline assessment and teacher observation
- Key Stage 1, 2, 3 & 4 tests and tasks
- Screening by use of PIPS (Prep) and Midyis (Senior) as well as specific screening tests administered by the Learning Support teacher
- Monitoring their performance as part of the ongoing observation and assessment
- Any concern expressed by the teacher, parent, pupil, health authority
- Assessment against NC level descriptors in core and foundation subjects
- Pupil progress set against objectives specified in the National Literacy and National Numeracy strategy framework

PROVISION

The child's learning difficulties and/or disabilities can be met through a staged approach of assessment at **"School Action"** or **"Early Years Action"**. Children at these stages will have an Individual Education Plan, in which the targets will be **additional to** or **different from** the normal differentiated curriculum. The IEP will be reviewed at least once a term with parent/child involvement.

The IEP will include:

- Long term targets
- Short term targets set for or by the child
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Provision to be put into place
- When the plan will be renewed
- Success and / or exit criteria

THE ROLE OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees' responsibilities are as follows:

- To do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- To ensure that the "responsible person", the Head Teacher, has been informed and these needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them
- To ensure that the teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for these pupils who have SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- To ensure that a pupil with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities joins in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities as far as is reasonably practical and is compatible with those children who do not have SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- To report to parents on the implementation of the school policy for pupils with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- To have regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- To ensure that parent/carers are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child
- To report at least on an annual basis the effectiveness of the schools work on SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities issues, Policy on pupils with SEN / with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and any changes made to that policy during the year

THE ROLE OF NON-TEACHING ASSISTANTS

- to work with class teachers to oversee the carrying out of tasks by their designated pupils
- to attend training when offered
- to attend planning meetings and give thought to how best they might motivate their pupils

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS

All parents/carers of children with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be treated as partners and will be supported, so as to be empowered to:

- recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their children's education
- help to set targets
- have knowledge of their children's entitlement within the Special Needs, Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities framework

in addition parent/carers will have the opportunity to:

- make their views known about how the child is educated
- have access to information and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special educational provision
- to be actively involved at the "school action stage"

CRITERIA FOR MONITORING THE SUCCESS OF THE POLICY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES

At a review of the policy the following questions need to be considered:

- Are the identification procedures working (are the staff able to identify children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities?)
- Are children identified as having SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities making progress?
- Are children making progress in all areas of learning?
- Are children moving through the NC levels?

TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TEACHERS WILL:

- Acknowledge and draw on parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child
- Focus on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need
- Recognise the personal and educational investment of parents and be aware of their feelings
- Ensure parents understand procedures
- Respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of resolving different view points
- Recognise that parents themselves have different needs
- Recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings

PUPIL PARTICIPATION

Children who are capable of forming views will be able to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. The views of the child, including helping to set targets, will be given due weighting according to the age, maturity and capability of the child.

WORKING WITH PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SEN

Pupils with a statement of SEN will have their targets reviewed annually, to which parents will be invited. In addition to any agencies who have had an impact into the educational provision for that child. The procedures for the Annual Review will be followed as set out in the Code of Practice.

WORKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

There will be close liaison between all agencies with regard to pupil support. Consultative responsibilities regarding effective communication systems at management and practitioner levels will be clearly identified. Joint planning will:

- Take account of good practice
- Ensure consultation with all relevant services
- Agree priorities
- Publicise decisions to parents and professionals
- Regularly review policies and objectives

RESOURCES

The annual budget for resources is taken from capitation

The use on on-statemented budget is reviewed each year

The budget from statemented pupils is used to fund teaching support

ACCOMMODATION

A comfortable, attractive and well-resourced area will be provided for the use of the Learning Support teachers and pupils with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A computer, up-to-date software and other appropriate resources will be available.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Children with SEN / learning difficulties and/or disabilities should have their needs identified and met irrespective of race, gender or disability. All children including those with SEN / Learning difficulties and/or disabilities should be expected to reach their full potential.

DATE AND REVIEW

This policy was reviewed in 2009 and will thereafter be reviewed annually.

Reviewed by	Susan Cookson – January 2009
Adopted by Trustees Meeting	26 th February 2009