



MALLUSK INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

Context

Our school's ethos is based on our Mission Statement:

We nurture our children in a secure, friendly, caring community where everyone is valued for their important contribution. We are staff, parents and children working in positive partnership.

We believe if children are happy they will achieve.

We encourage busy minds and busy hands, aiming to engage, inspire, challenge and support our children. We show respect for ourselves and each other and value all our cultures and beliefs equally.

With open hearts and open minds, we enjoy learning and achieving together.

Mallusk Integrated Primary School seeks to encourage each child to reach his or her potential through providing a broad and balanced education in line with the Northern Ireland Curriculum, which promotes the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, physical, cultural and aesthetic development of the individual child. To promote this, we work to create an atmosphere which helps to enhance pupils' self-esteem and encourages mutual respect so that children may live happily and securely within the school and wider community. The school prides itself on the positive relationships within and between groups comprising the school community.

The school is situated on the outskirts of Glengormley. Many of the pupils are drawn from the surrounding housing developments and a small number from Templepatrick and further away.

There are 2 full-time teachers, including the Principal, and a teacher who provides Principal Release. The classroom assistant works closely with the staff in all aspects of school life.

The secretary and caretaker also work closely with the other staff to provide a secure and happy atmosphere for the children.

There are two composite classes. Appropriate differentiation is provided. Approximately 22% of the children have been identified as having some degree of special educational need.

Rationale

Mallusk Integrated Primary School is committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum which offers equal access for all children. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability which may affect their learning. We will make every possible arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

This SEN policy links with our other policies for supporting pupils- Teaching and Learning Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, Pastoral Care Policy, Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Safe Handling Policy.

Definitions

Learning Difficulty

“Learning difficulty” means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children his or her age, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities. “Special education provision” means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age.

Code of practice (1998), paragraph 1.4

Disability

“Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

SEN Provisions of SENDO

“The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of parents or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others.”

“Children who have Special Educational Needs but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school.”

Article 3 (1) SENDO 2005

Key Principles of Inclusion

“Inclusion is about the quality of children’s experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school.”

Removing Barriers to Achievement, 2004

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/disability:

Cognitive & Learning

- Dyslexia/ Specific Learning Difficulty
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia/ Developmental Coordination Difficulties
- Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- Unspecified Learning Difficulties

Social, Emotional and Behavioural

- Social, Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties
- Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

Communication & Interaction

- Speech & Language Difficulties (SL)
- Autism (AUT)
- Asperger’s Syndrome (ASP)

Physical

- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina Bifida/ Hydrocephalus
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Significant Accidental Injury
- Other

Sensory Difficulties

- Severe/ profound hearing loss
- Mild/ moderate hearing loss
- Blind
- Partially sighted
- Multi-sensory impairment

Medical conditions

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Down's Syndrome
- Mental Health Issues
- Other medical conditions/ syndromes

Our Aims

1. To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum as a right for all children.
2. To identify children with SEN/disability as early as possible, through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate agencies.
3. To ensure that all children with SEN/disability feel valued and have a positive self-image by enabling them to work with their peers, by providing them with work which is appropriate to their level of ability and maturity in order to experience success, by praising and encouraging them, by displaying and celebrating their work, and by providing a caring and supportive atmosphere.

4. To monitor and evaluate the children's performance in order to ensure progression.
5. To encourage parental and, where appropriate, pupil involvement in the development and implementation of an Action Plan/ Individual Education Plan (IEP)
6. To work closely with and develop co-operation between various external services and agencies in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN/disability.
7. To offer experiences and opportunities which allow pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills which ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence.
8. To promote the inclusion of all pupils with SEN/disability into the mainstream classroom.
9. To encourage the use of a range of teaching strategies which incorporate different learning styles and ensure effective learning for all pupils and to develop resources to support pupils with SEN/disability.
10. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
11. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Action Plans/ IEPs and pupil progress.

Accommodation and Accessibility

The school building incorporates a purpose-built classroom to facilitate one-to-one sessions or small group work. A Literacy Support Teacher may work in this room. The school is built on one storey. There are entrance ramps at the side door, front and back doors. There are two toilets adapted for the use of people with disabilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

The pupil:

Depending on age, understanding and ability, the pupil will be encouraged to set targets and be involved in a self-reviewing process.

The parent/ carer:

- informs school of any significant needs their child may have as early as possible
- informs staff of changes in circumstances
- attends meetings to discuss their child's progress/ needs
- supports targets on IEPs

The Governors:

- ensure that all pupils' special educational needs are addressed
- take account of the provisions in the Code of Practice
- maintain and operate the SEN and Inclusion Policy
- ensure that pupils on the SEN register have their needs provided for and parents are notified
- take part in relevant training, as provided by NEELB.

The Principal/ SENCo:

- informs the Governors about SEN/disability issues
- delegates and monitors the SEN budget
- provides a secure facility for the storage of records relating to SEN
- co-ordinates the day-to-day provision of the school's SEN and Inclusion Policy
- liaises with colleagues, parents and external agencies
- maintains and updates records
- oversees and contributes to the in-service training of staff
- contributes to, reviews and oversees Action Plans/ IEPs

The class teachers:

- are aware of the staged approach to Special Needs as outlined in the Code of Practice
- gather information through formal and informal assessment and observation
- develop inclusive classrooms
- differentiate class teaching to suit the child's requirements
- inform parents of their child's special educational needs when the child's name is placed on the SEN/disability register
- compile and review IEPs, in consultation with the SENCo, pupil and parents
- inform parents of their child's progress and any changes in the IEP

- review IEPs twice per year and meet with parents to discuss these reviews and IEPs
- liaise with outside agencies involved, such as EANI, LTSS, Educational Psychology, Behaviour Support Service, MASTS, ASD support service
- manage Stages One and Two of the Code of Practice.

The Learning Support Assistant:

- works individually with a child
- liaises with teacher
- contributes to discussions on progress.

We aim to encourage a positive relationship between staff and parents of all pupils. We will facilitate this by providing relevant information and support to help parents in their role as contributors to the educational process and we will involve them in the review and evaluation of this process. Parents will be encouraged to contact staff if they have any concerns.

Admissions

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN is consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in school at the request of the NEELB, taking into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in class or in school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement. This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

Arrangements for the Co-ordination of SEN Provision

The Governors of Mallusk Integrated Primary School have delegated responsibility for pupils with special educational needs to the Principal, as SENCO.

The Structure of SEN Provision in Mallusk Integrated Primary School

The Code of Practice sets out a five-stage approach which we follow when identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN. Responsibility for pupils within Stages 1-3 lies at school level (with relevant involvement of external agencies at Stage Three) and in consultation with NEELB at Stage Five.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.

Code of Practice (1998), paragraph 2.14

When identifying a pupil's needs, the class teacher will gather information. This information used will include teacher observations, results of formative/ summative assessments, information obtained from the child's parents and/or external agencies, information provided by a previous school/ Nursery, any professional reports or care plans and any IEP reviews. The parents will be informed. *It must be noted that Teachers are not qualified to diagnose Specific Learning Difficulties e.g. Dyslexia. This can only be done by an Educational Psychologist.*

Stage 1

When a teacher initially has a concern that a child may have special educational needs, he/ she will begin to gather evidence and information (as above). He/ she may keep relevant notes. The SENCo/ Principal will be informed of these concerns. The parent will be informed. After a period of observation, the SENCo/ Principal will be consulted and with parental agreement, the child's name will be placed on Stage One of the Code of Practice and on the Special Needs Register.

The parent will be consulted on the development of an Action Plan, which will be written by the class teacher, with the SENCo/ Principal co-ordinating the process.

The teacher may use some of the above mentioned information in the development and implementation of the Action Plan. The help provided at this stage will be within the normal curriculum framework, providing differentiation and any alternative teaching/ classroom management strategies needed to meet the child's needs. It may involve the implementation of strategies resulting from the class teacher's own research. The pupil will be involved in setting personal targets and reviewing these targets.

The Action Plan will be reviewed twice a year in consultation with SENCo/ Principal, pupil and parents. Having considered the review outcomes, the SENCo/ Principal and class teacher will decide whether to remove the child from the SEN Register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the pupil to Stage 2.

Stage 2

The SENCo/ Principal will work with the class teacher and parents to implement more intensive action. Following the gathering of information, in consultation with parents and the pupil, a Stage 2 IEP will be written by the class teacher and SENCo/ Principal.

The help provided at this stage will be within the normal curriculum framework, providing increased differentiation and any alternative teaching/ classroom management strategies needed to meet the child's needs. It may involve the implementation of strategies resulting from class teacher's own research, him/ her seeking advice from the SENCo/ Principal or external agencies and/ or seeking extra training.

This IEP will be reviewed twice a year in consultation with SENCo/ Principal, pupil and parents. If the child is making satisfactory progress, the SENCo/ Principal and class teacher may decide to keep the child at Stage 2, move the child to Stage 1 or remove the child from the SEN Register.

If the child has not made adequate progress, the SENCo/ Principal may decide that early intervention with external support is necessary. The child will move forward to Stage 3 and a referral may be made to external support services/ agencies.

Stage 3

At this Stage, the SENCo/ Principal will take the lead role, working with the class teacher and parents, liaising with external support services. A Stage 3 IEP will be drawn up in consultation with the parents and pupil. It will be implemented, where possible, in the child's current classroom setting. It will involve the implementation of any provision/ strategies as a result of external advice, support and training. It may include withdrawal for more intensive support.

The IEP will be reviewed twice a year in consultation with SENCo/ Principal, pupil and parents. If the child is making satisfactory progress, the SENCo/ Principal and class teacher may decide to keep the child at Stage 3 or that the child no longer needs external support and should move to Stage 2.

If the progress has not been adequate, in consultation with the parent, pupil, class teacher and external agencies involved, the SENCo/ Principal may then request a Statutory Assessment.

Stage 4

Following an application to the NEELB from the SENCo/ Principal or the parent, the board will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that this request may not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a statement of SENs.

If Statutory Assessment is carried out, the Board will either:

- make and maintain a Statement of SENs and arrange, monitor and review provision, OR
- provide a note in lieu of a Statement

Stage 5

Once a Statement of SENs is made, provision and/ or support will be arranged to meet the pupil's needs. The SENCo/ Principal will ensure that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up, is implemented, monitored and reviewed annually.

The Annual Review will gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement, review the special provision made, including placement, and consider the appropriateness of maintaining the Statement of SENs.

The review will take place in school will be undertaken by the SENCo/ Principal and the class teacher in consultation with external agencies involved, parents and pupil.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

We believe that Gifted and Talented children are those who have the potential to develop significantly beyond what is expected for their age. This may be academic, creative, sporting or expressive. If a child has a consistently high PIE/ PIM score (i.e. at or over 130 for two years in a row, or a Reading Age which is at least three years above their Chronological Age for two years in a row), he/ she will be provided with differentiated work which provides opportunities to challenge them and extend their learning. He/ she will be placed on the SEN register and may be given an Individual Education Plan.

Teaching Strategies

Strategies which allow access to the whole curriculum will be employed. These will include:

- differentiated work, allowing progress and success
- small group/individual work
- a variety of tasks which will be challenging and stimulating
- use of ICT to support and extend progress
- the setting of realistic targets with pupil involvement
- the displaying of children's work and positive feedback to their work
- paired reading with peers and adults
- monitoring of progress.

External Agencies

The school will liaise with various outside agencies. These will include:

- Education Welfare Services
- Behaviour Support Service
- LTSS
- Educational Psychology Service
- Health & Social Services
- MASTS
- Voluntary bodies
- EANI

Recording and Reviewing Pupil Progress

Pupil progress will be recorded in line with school policy on assessment and through reviews of IEPs, which will take place twice a year. Teachers will keep the pupil under review through classroom observation and assessment activities. Significant changes will be reported to the Principal/SENCo and parents will be kept informed.

Professional development

The SENCo/ Principal will oversee the professional development of all staff and will seek and record training to meet these needs. Any staff attending training will disseminate information to colleagues.

Annual Report

The Governors will report each year on SEN/disability provision in school.

Complaints

Any complaints with regard to SEN/disability will be dealt with in line with existing complaints procedures.

Advice and Information Service

An Advice and Information Service has been set up by NEELB to support parents of children with Special Educational Needs. This can be accessed by telephoning 2566 2407.

Dispute Avoidance and Reconciliation Service (DARS)

This service was established and came into effect on 1st September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO).

DARS aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/Boards of Governors or ELBs for pupils who are listed under the Code of Practice in relation to special educational provision.

Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to DARS.

Members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a neutral venue) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute. Agreement can only be reached with the approval of interested parties.

From referral to conclusion is approximately 40 working days. DARS is separate and independent from Special Education Branch of NEELB.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

Parents/Guardians may contact this service directly. Details are:

DARS NEELB
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
Ballymena
BT42 1HN
Tel 2566 2391 or 2566 2387
Email: Dars.enquiry@neelb.org.uk
DARS Officers: Frances McKinney (AAO Nursery & Primary)
Inter-board DARS Manager: Oliver Sherry

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the ELB with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST).

SENDIST considers parents' appeals against decisions of ELBs and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

There is a two month time limit from the notified date of 'disputed decision' to appeal to the tribunal. Various time limits apply for:

- ELB compliance with Orders of the Tribunal
- ELB compliance in Unopposed Appeals.

Further information is available from www.education-support.org.uk

Further information regarding the appeals procedure can be obtained from:

Special Educational Needs & Disability Tribunal Secretariat
2nd Floor, Albany House
73-75 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7AF
Tel 9032 2894
Email: secretary@sentribunal.co.uk

Last reviewed: May 2017

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in light of changes in legislation or practice. This will happen in consultation with all staff members.