

St. Mary's Infant School

Sharing, caring, learning and loving with God

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

May 2012

Definition of SEND

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

Children have a **learning difficulty** if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- 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 in schools within the area of the local education authority.

Aims

The continuing development of this policy by the governors and staff is a result of our concern that we should acknowledge the special educational needs and disabilities of our children, monitor those needs and employ strategies to meet them.

We believe that all children have individual and unique needs and that each child should be valued and has a right to learn regardless of their age, ability, gender and social or ethnic background. However, we are aware that some children require more support than others to achieve the five outcomes of Every Child Matters.

We aim to meet the special educational needs and disabilities of pupils so that their experience in school is positive.

If a child is experiencing difficulties with their education, we believe that parents and the school should work together as a partnership in the best interest of the child.

We aim to fulfill all children's entitlement to learn by supporting them in

school, enabling them to participate in the life and work of the school to the best of their abilities, whatever their need or disability.

We believe that a child's special needs and disabilities should be met in the classroom and we strive towards full participation of children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. We are aware that for a variety of reasons, any child may prefer, or need, to be supported for a limited period outside the classroom environment. The child's individual needs will be assessed and the appropriate support provided.

We believe that children should not be regarded as having a learning difficulty or disability solely because their language at home is different from that spoken at school.

Staffing

Mrs Claire Gunn, Head and Inclusion Coordinator (INCo) is responsible for taking an overview of the day to day operation of this policy.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) at St. Mary's Infant School is Mrs Clare Jablonski. She works part-time (0.8). She is a trained Reading Recovery, and Tracks Literacy Programme, teacher.

Mrs Maxine Fish is a full-time SEND teaching assistant supporting children's learning outside the classroom. She uses the Fischer Family Trust (1-1) and Tracks Literacy Programmes (1-2). She also implements the Speech and Language Therapy Plans devised by the Speech and Language Therapist.

Mrs Janet Hammond is the governor taking a particular interest in special educational needs and disabilities.

Other people involved in the support of children with special educational needs and disabilities include all class teachers, 8 full-time and 5 part-time teaching assistants. We also value the interest and support of parents and governors working alongside children and staff in school. The SEND governor visits school twice a week to hear all Year 2 children targeted level 2c and below read.

Arrangements for Coordinating SEN provision

The SENCo and SEND teaching assistant discuss children's progress with each other, and with class teachers, on a regular basis. There is time allotted at staff meetings each month to discuss SEND issues. Information is shared with the Head on an ongoing basis to keep her informed of children's progress. If advice from external professionals is required the SENCo will arrange and coordinate this.

Admissions arrangements

Admissions criteria and arrangements do not differ for pupils identified as having special educational needs and disabilities, excepting where they have a statement of special educational needs specifying St. Mary's Infant School as being the most appropriate school for them, when the school will follow County guidance. All children are assessed within the first 6 weeks in school.

Building Adaptations/Special Facilities

St. Mary's Infant School has a chair lift fitted from ground level to the Year 2 classrooms to allow wheelchair access throughout the school. There is a disabled toilet, and a bed, in the medical room. There is also a disabled toilet in the Children's Centre adjoining the school. There is a soundfield system in 3 classrooms. There are hand rails fitted in the boys toilets. Should circumstances arise in the future requiring additional adaptations or special facilities, the school would consider what reasonable adjustments could be made given the constraints of finance and efficiency of use of resources. An Action Plan is in place for future development regarding building adaptation.

Collaboration with other agencies

St. Mary's Infant School has close links with our feeder nursery school. Class teachers visit Weston Way Nursery School to meet the children prior to their entry to school and children are invited to visit our school on two occasions during the term before they start school. Children who attend other nursery schools, or who do not attend nursery school, are also invited to visit.

External agencies are accessed either through the Single Service Request form; through the East and North Hertfordshire PCT (Speech and Language Therapy); through the School Health Advisor (medical practitioners); through the Protective Behaviours One to One Referral Form; through the Extended School Consortium Request for Support Sheet or through the Holly Blue Children's Centre Referral Form. If a child has more than one unmet need, the SENCo will suggest to parents that a Common Assessment Form (CAF) is completed.

The Educational Psychologist visits the school 6-8 times per year to offer strategies and advice on the provision needed by children experiencing learning or behavioural difficulties. Additional support may be sought through the Behaviour and Attendance Team (including the Education Support Centre (ESC) and Extended Roll from the Primary Support Base). We receive regular visits from the School Health Advisor, who meets with individual parents when necessary. We also receive regular visits from a Speech and Language

Therapist and Speech and Language Therapy Plans are implemented by the SEND teaching assistant. The SENCo makes referrals to all other external agencies as the need arises. Staff use the Resource Area at Woolgrove School to supplement our own bank of resources. We also have strong links with the Grange SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties) Base. Staff attend courses arranged at both Woolgrove School and the Grange School.

Staff from our receiver Junior School visit children in Year 2 prior to their transition. Our aim is for them to have the opportunity to see the children working alongside their peers and to take the first steps in forming a relationship with them. Teachers from Year 2, and the SENCo, meet the Year 3 teachers, and the SENCo at the Junior School, to discuss children's SEND and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and the nature and level of support they have been receiving at the Infant School. The children each have a Year 3 buddy who visits them at the Infant School. The children have the opportunity to meet the Head at the Junior School, view the school, and participate in activity sessions with their Year 3 buddies. The SENCo accompanies any vulnerable children on extra visits to the Junior School in the second half of the summer term.

Curriculum and Equal Opportunities

All pupils are entitled to equality of educational opportunity, regardless of special educational need or disability. They have a right to a broad and balanced curriculum, relevant and differentiated, which demonstrates progression and coherence.

Class teachers employ a variety of teaching styles to enable all children to access the curriculum. These are matched to the needs of the children and to the subject being taught. Work is planned and differentiated according to individual needs. Evidence of differentiation may be seen in teachers' daily planning.

At St. Mary's Infant school children work in a positive classroom climate where praise and encouragement are important strategies in developing their self esteem. Additional provision is made for children identified as having low self esteem, e.g. Wave 2 SEAL and Protective Behaviours.

To promote an inclusive atmosphere within the school children receive support in the classroom alongside their peer group. However, some children may require specific teaching outside the classroom, either individually or in a small group, to address their special need or disability, be it learning, emotional, behavioural, physical, sensory or any combination of these. It is felt that individual or small group provision is extremely valuable in enabling us to

meet specific SEND, and to provide the child with an extra confidence boost. Any class work missed during this specific teaching time is accessed later, if felt appropriate to the child by the class teacher. When a teaching assistant is assigned to work 1-1 with a child with additional needs they work under the direction of the class teacher. All teaching assistants are guided by the class teacher when working with children with IEPs at School Action (SA), School Action Plus (SA+) or with a statement of special educational needs. This support is identified in the class teacher's planning or communication book.

On rare occasions it may be felt necessary for a child to be given a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) with specific behaviour targets. They may be placed on a short term part-time timetable. Parents will be actively involved in this process. All children will be included in school trips and visits, following completion of a comprehensive risk assessment.

Identification and screening

Early identification of a child's SEND is of paramount importance in initiating a rapid and appropriate response to those needs. If a teacher, parent or other professional expresses concern about a child's progress, at any time, the child's difficulties will be discussed and appropriate action taken, including support and/or referrals as necessary. Class teachers inform the SENCo of any concerns they may have relating to a child's SEND via a 'Referral to SENCo for early identification of SEND' form. The Educational Psychologist will conduct a full cognitive assessment or screening assessment, depending on the age of the child, if requested to do so. Parents are offered a copy of the booklet entitled 'SEN Provision at St Mary's Infant School – A Guide for Parents/Carers' if they would like extra information.

A close liaison has developed with the feeder nursery school and the needs of the children are discussed by the respective Heads, teachers and SENCo during the term before the child starts school.

Entry assessments for the Foundation Stage Profile are completed within the first six weeks after the child's entry to school. Children are assessed within the Ages and Stages development bands on entry and then ongoing throughout the Foundation Stage.

Children who are identified as having special educational needs in any area will be closely monitored by the class teacher. If specific SEND support is felt to be necessary, the child will be placed on the SEND provision map at School Action, and an IEP will be written and shared with the parents. Should a child need to move from School Action (SA) to School Action Plus (SA+), parents will be informed and external professional advice will be sought, identified in the IEP, and implemented.

Assessment arrangements

The Foundation Stage Profile will provide a benchmark of the children's levels of attainment on joining our school and enable us to evaluate the progress and achievements of individual children, identified groups and cohorts. Class teachers undertake ongoing formative assessment of all children, with summative assessment termly. This assessment is curriculum based and used to inform current teaching and future planning. The progress of all children with an IEP is reviewed termly. One staff meeting per term is set aside for IEP writing. Teaching assistants are also involved in implementation of, and assessment for, IEPs. Children who are following the Tracks Literacy Programme have their targets recorded on a separate sheet. Children in Year 2 targeted level 2C or below in reading and/or writing will be assessed using the Salford Sentence Reading Test and the Schonell Spelling Test in September, January and July.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities in Year 2 will only undertake such tasks and tests as the class teacher feels are appropriate to inform their assessments of the children. NB. SATs test/task materials for all Year 2 children are only used to inform teacher assessments for the children's end of Year 2 levels. Year 2 teachers have good links with Year 3 teachers at our receiver Junior School to pass on information about SATs results prior to the children's transfer.

The Graduated Intervention Approach

The SENCo maintains a SEND provision map (for learning and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties). All children at SA, SA+, or with a statement of special educational needs, are identified on the SEND provision map. The provision map is updated on an ongoing basis by the SENCo, following meetings between the class teachers and/or parents and the involvement of external professionals. A child may be added to the SEND provision map at any time should a concern or learning difficulty/disability be identified by a teacher, parent or other professional. If a child has made good progress and met all the targets on the IEP a decision may be made, in consultation with parents, to take them off the SEND provision map and monitor their progress.

Targets are set by the class teachers and SENCo to address the needs of children at School Action. The school uses its own revised format for IEPs and Reviews. The class teachers and SENCo work together to plan the IEPs, which are discussed with the parents and the child. The child's progress and IEP targets are discussed with parents and children termly. Should a child need to move from SA to SA+, external professional advice will be sought, identified in the IEP, and implemented. Children at SA+ who have been supported by the school and an external professional for a period of time (the duration of at least two IEP's at SA+ and reviews) may be considered for a

request for statutory assessment, if it is felt by all concerned that they meet the criteria for this. If the child has a statement of special educational needs, targets will be linked with the provision section on the statement of special educational needs. They will be reviewed at a termly review meeting to which parents will be invited. In addition to this there will also be an annual review meeting to discuss progress and decide whether the statement should continue or cease. It may be decided that a change of provision is required if the child's needs are not being met in the current setting. Parents, class teacher, Head, SENCo, LEA, and external professionals involved with the child, will all be invited to the annual review meeting.

Involvement of Children

Children are encouraged, in small groups or individually, to talk about their work and feelings. Opportunities are provided for them to reflect on, and review, their progress. Children will be involved in the target setting process by discussion with the class teacher and SENCo. Pupils may be invited to talk about their feelings regarding any areas of their school life during interventions (e.g. Wave 2 SEAL and Protective Behaviours) and during conferencing following interventions.

At St. Mary's Infant School there is a positive effort to sustain children's self esteem. Reward systems are in place to praise effort and good work using stickers etc. A special assembly is held weekly and Star Awards are presented to children in recognition of achievement or effort. These may be awarded for good behaviour or good work in any area of the curriculum. Each class teacher also nominates one child to be Star of the Week. All children are included in the Good to be Green behaviour programme used in school.

All children in Year 2 who have received support from the SENCo and/or SEND teaching assistant will complete a questionnaire, with the support of the SEND governor, in the summer term.

Allocation of Funding

Funding for special educational needs within the school is identified in the yearly budget. The school receives a budget based upon data drawn from the School Census. At the beginning of the financial year the requirements of children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities are assessed and managerial decisions are made to determine how best to meet those needs with the funding available. These decisions are made by the Head and SENCo, in consultation with the governing body, and in line with the School's Development Plan. During the course of the year additional support is provided for children, according to budgetary restrictions, if it is felt that this will best meet their individual needs.

In extreme circumstances the school may apply for Exceptional Needs Funding. Submissions for Exceptional Needs Funding will be made, in the first instance, at the SENCo Cluster meetings held in the first half of every term. If it is agreed at the Cluster meeting that the child is likely to have an exceptional need, the child will then be put forward to the Exceptional Needs Panel, which meets in the second half of each term. If it is agreed by the panel that the child has an exceptional need, the child will then be awarded funding for a fixed period, usually to the end of a key stage.

Staff Development

We aim to provide opportunities for all staff to develop their expertise in meeting children's individual needs. All staff are encouraged to identify areas for study during Performance Management meetings and to attend courses arranged by County at Hertfordshire Development Centre. They also attend courses arranged by the Outreach Service at Woolgrove Special School and the Grange SpLD Base. Teaching assistants are invited to work with teaching staff for SEND INSET sessions. External professionals work regularly with the school to develop our provision for children's SEND.

The SENCo will support TAs to respond to children's SEND, and ensure that TAs are aware of, and are using, IEPs and reports from external professionals. The SENCo will undertake classroom observation to gain first hand knowledge of children's performance, and TAs support of them. Following the monitoring of TAs practice in the classroom when working with children with SEND, the SENCo will offer strategies and advice and identify possible training needs. The SENCo will monitor the SEND teaching assistant termly.

The SENCo regularly attends SENCo Cluster meetings and Exceptional Needs Panels.

Partnership with Parents

We aim to develop a close working relationship with all parents, beginning during the term before the child starts school. Parents are invited to attend a short meeting to discuss their child starting school. This is a first step towards fostering the partnership with parents.

A Parent's Evening, or Open Evening, is held once a term when parents can discuss social, emotional and educational issues regarding their child. The SENCo is available for consultation at least once per term on a formal basis, and meets with parents at other times as necessary. Parents of Year 2 children who have received support from the SENCo and/or SEND teaching assistant are asked to complete a questionnaire in the summer term. The school has an 'open door' policy. Parents are encouraged to feel

comfortable with the school and able to discuss any issues relating to their child with the teachers or Head, as they arise.

If a special educational need or disability is identified, parents will be informed by the SENCo, Head or class teacher as soon as possible and the child's name will be added to the SEND register. If parents identify a problem, the school will listen and discuss ways in which the difficulty may be addressed. The partnership with parents will be further developed if the school feels it would be beneficial to involve other professionals in providing for the child's needs. Should a child need to be referred to an external agency the SENCo or Head will discuss the procedure and implications of the referral with the parents. Advice and support will be given to parents if it is thought appropriate to make a request for statutory assessment. The SENCo holds a Tracks information session for parents in the autumn term. Parents are encouraged to use home/school record books if their child has literacy work to complete at home.

Complaints Procedures

The school aims to work closely with parents and we hope that parents who have any concerns or anxieties will, in the first instance, raise these with the class teacher, SENCo or Head. We find that most concerns or potential complaints can be resolved happily through discussion.

The governors of the school do have arrangements in place for considering complaints formally. For matters to do with special educational needs and disabilities they have adopted a procedure which follows guidelines recommended by Hertfordshire County Council. Parents may obtain a copy of this from the school.

Evaluation

1. We recognise the importance of evaluating this policy to ensure it is both manageable and efficient.
2. A record of all children having an IEP, being formally assessed or having a statement will be kept by the SENCo. SEND is an agenda item at the twice termly governing body meetings.
3. The movement of children from SA to SA+ or monitor, or from SA+ to statement, will be carefully monitored by the SENCo on a termly basis. IEPs and reviews will be used to assess progress and children's self esteem and confidence will also be considered.

4. The SENCo will arrange meetings with class teachers once a term, or more frequently if required, to discuss IEPs etc.

5. IEPs will be used as part of the evidence supplied for any requests for statutory assessment.

6. The SENCo will use a range of data to inform, review and evaluate school developments and interventions. Data will be studied to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies employed to support the children since the identification of their SEND.

Our view of adequate progress is in line with the definition listed in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001)

Adequate progress

- closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers
- matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress
- ensures access to the full curriculum
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour