



St. Patrick's Primary School Mullanaska

Special Educational Needs Policy

Policy Reviewed & Ratified by Board of Governors Date: November 2022

Principal's Signature

Chairperson of Board of Governors Signature

Review Date: November 2023



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Special Educational Needs Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (S.E.N.D.O.)

The law dealing with Special Education in Northern Ireland is contained in The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and amended by The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

St. Patrick's Primary School Mullanaska's Special Educational Needs Policy is derived from S.E.N.D.O. (2005) and accounts for its essential elements. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (S.E.N.D.O.) came into effect on 1st September 2006. S.E.N.D.O. (2005) prohibits discrimination against disabled students and prospective students by schools and institutions of further and higher education.

"The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of the 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 special circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school".
(Article 3:1 S.E.N.D.O. 2005)

Prior to the publication of S.E.N.D.O. (2005), the Government's strategy for S.E.N. was outlined in a document entitled Removing Barriers to Achievement 2004. Within this document, the concept of inclusion was clearly outlined.

'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)

In order to make sure that we meet our pupils' needs and include them in all aspects of school life, this S.E.N. Policy links closely with all the other policies in supporting pupils such as Child Protection, Health and Safety and Positive Behaviour.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Code of Practice and with E.A. C.A.S.S. guidelines. It has been approved and agreed by our staff and Board of Governors.

Vision

St. Patrick's Primary School staff is committed to providing equal access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum for all its pupils. We recognise that some pupils, during their school career, may have special educational needs in the form of a learning difficulty and /or a disability. In the interests of these children, we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

Definitions

Learning Difficulty

'Learning difficulty' means that the pupil has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of his or her peers 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)

The following Areas Encompass All Aspects of S.E.N. Learning Difficulty /Disability (The following list is in compliance with DENI Circular 2019/03).

1. Cognition and Learning
 - (a) Dyslexia /Specific Learning Difficulty
 - (b) Dyscalculia
 - (c) Moderate Learning Difficulties
 - (d) Severe Learning Difficulties
 - (e) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties

2. Social, Behavioural Emotional and Wellbeing
 - (a) Social, Behavioural Difficulties
 - (b) Emotional and Wellbeing Difficulties
 - (c) Severe Challenging Behaviour with SLD and /or PMLD

3. Speech, Language and Communication
 - (a) Developmental Language Disorder
 - (b) Language Disorder associated with a differing/biomedical condition
 - (c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties

4. Sensory

- (a) Blind
- (b) Partially Sighted
- (c) Severe /Profound /Hearing Impairment
- (d) Mild / Moderate Hearing Impairment
- (e) Multi – Sensory Impairment

5. Physical Needs

- a. Physical

Medical Conditions/Syndromes (Confined to Medical Register)

- a. Epilepsy
- b. Asthma
- c. Diabetes
- d. Anaphylaxis
- e. Downs Syndrome
- f. Other Medical Conditions/ Syndromes
- g. Interaction of Complex Medical Needs
- h. Mental Health Issues**
- i. Dyspraxia / Developmental Co-ordination Difficulties**
- j. Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- k. Asperger's Syndrome
- l. Cerebral Palsy
- m. Spina Bifida and /or Hydrocephalus
- n. Spina Bifida without Hydrocephalus
- o. Muscular Dystrophy
- p. Significant Accidental Injury
- q. Acquired Brain Injury
- r. Visual Impairment
- s. Hearing Impairment
- t. Physical Disability
- u. ADD/ADHD
- v. Developmental Language Disorder (Medical)
- w. Global Developmental Delay
- x. Complex Healthcare Needs
- y. Anxiety Disorder
- z. Depression
- aa. Eating Disorder
- bb. Psychosis
- cc. Other Mental Disorder
- dd. Other Medical Condition or Syndrome

Policy Aims

1. To identify pupils with S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability as early as possible using teacher professional judgement, formative and summative tests, parental and or paediatrician concerns.
2. To ensure provision for S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability and encourage inclusive practices and procedures within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum across all areas of school life.
3. To ensure that all pupils with S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability in St. Patrick's feel valued.
4. To offer a broad curriculum 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.
5. To ensure no child with a disability in St. Patrick's is discriminated against or in any way disadvantaged, victimised or treated less favourably in comparison to those without disability.
6. To provide a range of S.E.N. provision and resources to match the range of S.E.N./Disability in St. Patrick's.
7. To provide classroom environments conducive to learning.
8. To encourage parental and pupil involvement as partners in all aspects of S.E.N. provision.
9. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
10. To set learning challenges and provide appropriate learning strategies.
11. To ensure effective monitoring and recording.
12. To work closely with all E.A. departments and other outside agencies, in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with S.E.N.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating S.E.N. Provision

Roles and Responsibilities

S.E.N. provision in St Patrick's will be 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 Principal's role has been extended to that of the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (S.E.N.C.O.).

A Board of Governor has been appointed with overall responsibility for Special Needs provision within the school. The Governor is Mrs. Jenny McManus.

The Principal/ S.E.N.C.O. will:

- keep the Board of Governors informed on issues pertaining to S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability.
- monitor teachers' planners for differentiation.
- examine evidence of pupils' work.
- talk to pupils.
- talk to classroom assistants.
- ensure all teaching staff and classroom assistants have adequate training.
- ensure that those attending courses disseminate and share their knowledge with other staff in school.
- offer INSET courses where appropriate to all staff.
- devote staff meetings and Staff Development Days to reflect on and evaluate on current practices and plan for improvement.

In her role as S.E.N.C.O., the Principal will be responsible for:

- the day-to-day implementation of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.
- appropriate identification.
- maintaining the school's S.E.N. registers (both the Educational Register and the Health Register).
- liaising with external agencies.
- monitoring Education Plans.
- assisting class teachers in completing referrals for the different stages on the Code of Practice (C.O.P.).

In St Patrick's, the S.E.N.C.O. meets the class teachers twice termly to monitor the progress of pupils on the S.E.N. Register and/ or discuss pupils who may be highlighted for possible inclusion on the Register.

Annually, (Staff Development Day at the end of May) the Principal/ S.E.N.C.O. and class teachers monitor class screens (SIMS) and pupil profiles to identify pupils for inclusion on the register and to monitor the progress of those who are already on the register.

Provision for statemented pupils is reviewed annually in the statutory Annual Review (November) and provision is amended if required. The pupils who are transferring to post primary school also get their reviews completed.

In order to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils on the Register to other schools, copies of appropriate records are sent, and where possible, the S.E.N.C.O. will communicate with the S.E.N.C.O. of the receiving school.

The Class Teacher is responsible for:

- gathering information through observation and assessment of all pupils in his/her class including the pupils on the S.E.N. register. (checklists, formative assessments, class tests, end of year tests and pupil profiles).
- developing an inclusive classroom.
- working closely with the Learning Support Teacher to plan for teaching and learning.
- managing and reviewing Education Plans in consultation with the S.E.N.C.O.
- involving classroom assistants as part of the learning team.
- providing differentiated work at Stages 1-3 (depending on the nature of the reason for being on the Code of Practice and E.P.s at Stages 1-3).

Education Plans (E.P.)

Two E.P.s per year are compiled in consultation with the pupil and parents. The E.P. identifies the pupil's strengths as well as a focus for development and specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound (S.M.A.R.T.) targets are set. Where appropriate, recommendations from Educational Psychology reports and statements of educational needs and reports from other agencies are used to guide target setting. E.P.s are evaluated with parents and pupils, and if appropriate, new or refined targets are set. Copies of E.P.s and evidence of targets where appropriate are sent to the S.E.N.C.O. to be kept in a central file.

Learning Support Teacher (L.S.T.):

- works closely with all members of staff to identify pupils' needs.
- is involved in testing and recording data of S.E.N. pupils.
- implements the delivery of suitable programmes of work for all identified pupils with S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability which promotes progression within an inclusive setting.
- contributes to the E.P.s which inform teaching and learning.
- monitors and reviews progress.
- is involved in the Annual Review process.
- attends professional development training.

Pupils:

'The pupil should, where possible, according to age, maturity and capability participate in all the decision making processes which occur in education.'

Supplement to the Code of Practice –paragraphs 1.19

The pupils will therefore,

- contribute to the E.P. through setting targets.
- work towards achieving agreed targets.
- contribute to the assessment.

- contribute to the review of E.P.s, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 7

Parents/ Carers:

‘The relationship between the parents of a child with S.E.N. and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and effectiveness of any school-based action.’ (Code of Practice 2-21)

Therefore, parents:

- inform school of any significant needs their child may possess.
- are informed when staff are considering placing the pupil’s name on the S.E.N. Register or moving the child to a higher/lower stage of the C.O.P.
- should attend review meetings.
- should inform staff of changes in circumstances.
- support targets on E.P.s.
- will be involved when the school is required to undertake a risk assessment for their child and will be required to sign the appropriate documentation.

Accessibility

- In St Patrick’s P.S., all pupils with S.E.N. Learning Difficulties /Disability have equal access to all areas of the school building.
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users.
- There is a well-equipped S.E.N. room with facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with disabilities.
- There is access to a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and attainment.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

“It is vitally important that children with S.E.N. are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development”. Code of Practice 1998 par 2-14

All staff in St Patrick’s P.S. is responsible for the early identification of children with S.E.N. using:

- Teacher observations, experience and professional judgement
- Cognitive ability tests (C.A.T.S.)
- Summative and Formative assessment (P.T.E., P.T.M., N.F.E.R. Mental Maths, Suffolk Reading, Young Spelling, S.W.S.T., N.G.R.T.)
- Attainment tests
- Parental information
- Information gathered from previous teachers, pre-school reports and external agencies (Psychologist, Paediatricians, etc.)
- Statements of Special Educational Needs
- E.P. Reviews
- Annual Reviews

Test results are collated annually onto class screens. The results and pupil profiles are analysed annually (at the end of May) by the Principal and class teachers to identify

children whose performance may be inconsistent or showing gaps. There are follow up 'Monitoring Meetings' conducted by the teachers to review each child on the Special Needs Register, to review any child with emerging gaps or concerns and to review targeted children from assessment profiles.

Children are then placed on the S.E.N. Register, if appropriate, after thorough analysis, consultation with parents and the L.S.T. As soon as a child is identified as having an S.E.N., the parents are invited into the school to discuss the child's needs, and provision is then offered. Other children whose performance is marginal are identified as a 'targeted' group and their progress is also monitored and reviewed at every six weeks as part of the school's monitoring system. *Children are only placed on the Special Needs Registers when their needs are beyond what the school can manage.*

The S.E.N. register is regularly reviewed by the S.E.N.C.O/ Principal and class teachers. Children can move between the stages and on/off the Register as appropriate.

The Management of Special Educational Needs

In St. Patrick's P.S. we follow the three stage approach as set out in the Code of Practice.

Stage 1

Stage 1 begins with a concern that a child may have a special need. This concern is expressed either to or by the class teacher. In turn, the class teacher will inform the S.E.N.C.O. and the Principal and consult with the child's parents. The S.E.N.C.O. will ensure that the parents have been consulted and agree that the child's name should go on the S.E.N. Register. The S.E.N.C.O. will also advise and support the class teacher. The S.E.N.C.O., with the class teacher and (L.S.T., where appropriate), will draw up an Education Plan taking into account the child's strengths and focus for development, as well as the child's and parents' views.

Stage 1 Review

The Stage 1 Review is usually conducted by the class teacher, the S.E.N.C.O. and (L.S.T., where appropriate), with the child's parents and child. It will focus on the specific targets which were set and their success or not. If the progress has been satisfactory, the S.E.N.C.O. may decide that the child no longer requires help at Stage 1 and remove the child off the Code of Practice, again in consultation with the child's parents. The child's name will be removed from the Register.

If the measures at Stage 1 do not result in adequate progress, the S.E.N.C.O. will recommend that the child should move to Stage 2 and a referral will be made to specialist support services: Educational Psychologist, Literacy Service for Literacy screening, Behavioural Support Team, etc.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins with the decision either at the Stage 1 Review or following discussions between the S.E.N.C.O., Principal, class teacher, and parents that early intervention with external support is necessary.

The S.E.N.C.O., working with the class teacher, and with the help or advice of the external support services will formulate an Educational Plan. They will consider a range of different teaching approaches and appropriate materials including the use of ICT. Parents will be kept informed and the child will be involved in drawing up the Educational Plan as far as possible.

At Stages 1 and 2 of the Code of Practice the S.E.N.C.O. and class teacher will consider the benefits of:

- The S.E.N. Resource File
- Differentiated Teaching
- Withdrawal for Extra Support
- S.E.N. resources available within school: support programmes, ICT packages
- Implementing the provision or strategies as a result of external advice support and training provided by E.A. or other services.

Review of Stage 2

The Review of Stage 2 will be conducted by the S.E.N.C.O. with the class teacher, parents and where possible the child. The external support agencies will be asked to give a report if they cannot meet with the parents at the end of the intervention.

If the intervention is appropriate the child may be removed from the Registrar. However, if the intervention has not been satisfactory, the school may request a Statutory Assessment.

Stage 3

Following a referral to the local E.A. from the school, the Board will consider the need for transition to Statutory Assessment. They will consider the degree of the child's difficulty, the nature of the provision required and whether the child's needs can be met by the resources within the school before making a Statement of Special Needs.

This Statement will set out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and the arrangements for monitoring and review.

Once the Statement has been made final:

- Provision and /or support will be arranged to meet the child's needs.
- A Stage 3 Education Plan is put in place.
- The S.E.N.C.O. will monitor and review the plan.
- An Annual Review and Transition process begins.

The Annual Review

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a statement of Special Educational Needs, whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. The staff of St Patrick's P.S. regards the Annual Review as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress.

In St Patrick's P.S., the Review takes place in school, chaired by the S.E.N.C.O., the Principal, the class teacher, the L.S.T., the parents and invitations are, also, sent out to all professionals who have worked/ are working with the child to attend the meeting. The Special Needs Officer (E.A.) is also invited to attend. If some personnel cannot attend the Annual Review, a written report is requested to support the provision offered.

Record Keeping

The S.E.N.C.O.'s Records Contain:

- S.E.N. Register
- S.E.N. Timetable
- S.E.N. Policy
- S.E.N. Action Plan
- Individual Pupil Profiles
- Statements of Special Educational Needs
- Records of consultations with Educational Psychologists
- Referral forms for Stages 2 & 3, Literacy Screening, Behaviour Support, A.A.I.S. Autism Intervention Service etc.

(Education Plans are kept in another file as well as in child's own Folder).

Additional Support Within School

In line with S.E.N.D.O., St Patrick's ensures that every child will access all aspects of school life and provision. The school offers a continuum of provision to meet the diversity of pupils needs. In practical terms, this includes in-class support and sometimes withdrawal for special support.

Criteria for Withdrawal to the Learning Support Teacher (L.S.T.)

The pupils who have been identified:

- Have general and persistent underachievement for children with average and below average Verbal C.A.T. I.Q. scores.

- Where teacher Professional Judgement must inform any qualitative data (which can be unreliable and inconsistent).

The L.S.T. works with children who have a range of Literacy challenges such as decoding reading difficulties, comprehension difficulties, spelling difficulties etc.

Criteria for Catch Up Literacy Support

- The L.S.T. / Catch Up Literacy teacher will work with pupils who are not progressing at an expected rate in their reading.
- Reading scores will be accounted for as well as qualitative data from class teachers. If reading scores show general and persistent significant gaps the child may be offered this service.

Criteria for Reading Partnership Programme

- Children who receive Reading Partnership are perceived as requiring a 'boost' in their reading.
- These children emerge in Key Stage 1.
- The teachers will have examined their B.P.V.S. scores, their Foundation Stage tests/checks.
- After an initial 'settling in' stage in P.3., the class teacher will identify children whose reading is lacking fluency and whose work attack skills continue to be at a very emergent stage.
- In P.4., children who are placed on this programme are children whose reading is still experiencing a lack of fluency. This is often because these early skills are still at an emergent stage and require more time and focus to develop.

*Children who are perceived as significantly struggling to develop the skills of reading (look and say, phonics, a whole meaning approach) would not qualify for this support. We try to confine Reading Partnership to P.3. and P.4. However, this can also be flexible depending on needs and provision.

All withdrawal programmes require written parental permission which will be issued by the S.E.N.C.O. to each parent concerned.

Parental Concerns About Provision

If parents have a concern about provision, in the first instance, they are encouraged to work in partnership with the school to try to resolve the issue. Where no resolution can be reached, parents will be advised of the D.A.R.S. (Dispute, Avoidance, and Reconciliation Service, 2005) which was established as part of the implementation of S.E.N.D.O. (2005). A record of all concerns will be kept by the S.E.N.C.O. and the Principal.

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the local E.A., with regard to a child's educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. This body will consider parents' appeals against decisions of E.A.s and also deals with claims of disability and discrimination in schools.

Mental Health

St. Patrick's Mullanaskea understands that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as those that may lead to the need to self-isolate at home and school closures, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. The school can provide additional wellbeing resources to parents.

For children returning to school after a period of absence, staff will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, you help identify where support may be needed.

Where possible, St. Patrick's Mullanaskea will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. At St. Patrick's Mullanaskea, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents & carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our lives physical health.

At St. Patrick's Mullanaskea, we endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress. We aim to ensure that the children are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support. At St. Patrick's Mullanaskea, we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a proactive way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Promoting self-esteem, and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.

- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Promoting opportunities to reflect.

Supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. At St. Patrick's Mullanaskea we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work/ life balance. Staff are supported pastorally and have access to enriched opportunities. We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the protective and risk factors for mental health

Review

This policy is reviewed annually by all staff. Policy evaluation focuses on how far the aims and objectives of our policy has been met and how effective inclusive provision has been in St. Patrick's P.S. Mullanaskea.

In light of the findings, the policy is amended accordingly.

Policy Date: November 2022
Policy Review November 2023

Principal's Signature

Chairperson of Board of Governor's Signature