



FRIENDS' SCHOOL LISBURN

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

This policy has due regard for the school's Mission Statement and for the DENI Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. In general, the policy aims to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are not treated less favourably than other pupils.

2. DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The policy accepts that there are a wide variety of difficulties which may lead to special educational needs. Needs arising from such difficulties may be both short and long term. Special educational needs may arise from: general learning difficulties; specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia; emotional/behavioural difficulties; hearing/visual difficulties; physical difficulties; speech/language difficulties; medical conditions e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, allergies.

3. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Pupils with special educational needs will be admitted provided that:

- a) they meet the criteria for admission appropriate to their age and level;
- b) their attendance would not be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other pupils;
- c) their attendance would not be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

4. ACCESS TO CURRICULUM

Pupils with special educational needs will have access to the N.I. Curriculum at a level appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude and attainment. Special educational needs will be met within the normal classroom setting, as far as resources, accommodation, etc. permit. In consultation with parents, guidance will be given on appropriate choice of subjects, tiers of examination entry, etc.

In addition, pupils with identified special educational needs will be encouraged to participate as fully as is feasible in the extra-curricular activities of the school.

5. IDENTIFYING SPECIAL NEEDS

The importance of early identification of difficulties is emphasised. Pupils requiring special needs provision may be identified in several ways:

- a) through information provided by previous school;
- b) through parental concerns expressed to a teacher;
- c) through observation of pupil's work, behaviour, attitude, social interaction, etc. by subject teacher, collect teacher, Year Teacher, etc.

In all cases appropriate evidence must be obtained and documented. Such information should be communicated to the Principal and school SENCO.

6. ASSESSING SPECIAL NEEDS

Pupils' difficulties will be assessed within the 5 Stage framework stipulated in the DENI Code of Practice. Assessment will involve the child, class teacher(s), SENCO, parent(s) and outside agencies as appropriate. The means of assessment will depend upon the nature of pupil's difficulty. However, a number of procedures are likely to be used, e.g. observation by teacher, diagnostic tests, interviews, medical and psychological evidence.

7. ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN SCHOOL

Overall responsibility for SEN provision within school resides with the Principal. Responsibility for the operation of SEN policy resides with the teacher designated as SENCO.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- a) helping to identify pupils with special needs;
- b) liaising with teachers, classroom assistants, school nurse, etc;
- c) disseminating information;
- d) maintaining a register and keeping records of pupils with special educational needs;
- e) liaising with parents and outside agencies;
- f) drawing up Education Plans for pupils;
- g) monitoring the effectiveness of SEN provision;
- h) reporting to Principal and SMT.

Arrangements for pupils whose special needs are met through the provision of home tuition will be the responsibility of Senior Teacher (Pastoral).

In meeting the special educational needs of individual pupils, the procedures outlined in the 5 Stages of the Code of Practice will be followed. It is envisaged that most needs will be met within the normal classroom setting e.g. through the use of differentiated classwork, through the production of appropriate teaching materials, etc. Other needs will be met through the support of classroom assistants, through the staff of the school medical centre, through pastoral counselling or contact with outside agencies.

8. ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The allocation of resources to SEN provision in a given year will depend upon the nature of needs identified. The Annual Report will provide details. Examples of the possible deployment of resources for SEN provision are: employment of classroom assistants; employment of part-time remedial teachers; purchase of diagnostic tests or learning packages; production of learning materials e.g. cost of photocopying; adaptations to building to improve wheelchair access.

9. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The involvement of parents will be sought at an early stage in the process of identifying, assessing and providing for special needs. Contact between school and parents will be the responsibility of the school SENCO. The assistance and support of parents in implementing Education Plans will be encouraged and welcomed.

10. REVIEW

The content of this policy will be reviewed each year in the light of its appropriateness to provide for the special needs of pupils and to meet the requirements of legislation.