



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Rasharkin Primary School



SECTION ONE

Rationale

“All children and young people are entitled to education of the highest quality which enables them to develop as individuals and gain skills, knowledge and understanding.” (Vulnerable Children and Young Adults Survey 2008 ETI)

This policy is written to ensure that the needs of all pupils within Rasharkin Primary School who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or a disability, either throughout or at any time during their school careers will be acknowledged and addressed. These pupils will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including maximum possible access to the Northern Ireland curriculum.

Areas of SEN/Disability

1. Cognitive and learning
2. Social, Emotional and Behavioural
3. Communication and Interaction
4. Sensory Difficulties
5. Physical
6. Medical conditions/Syndromes
7. Other

Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with Special Educational Needs – (Department of Education)

Definitions

“**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 has been defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) as

“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.”

Inclusion is a process by which schools, Boards and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include pupils. The school will take reasonable steps to ensure a SEN child’s inclusion is compatible with the efficient education of others. What is reasonable will depend on each particular child’s circumstances.

Aims for SEN provision

The aims of the school in relation to SEN provision reflect the overall aims of Rasharkin Primary School. These aims are:

1. To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated education as a right for all.
2. To enable pupils to fulfil their own potential and to enhance the self-esteem, confidence and independence of each child.
3. To provide opportunities for learning in a happy, sensitive and secure environment.
4. To identify as early as possible those children with special educational needs, including those who are low achievers and those who are under achievers.
5. To assess and diagnose the nature and cause of children's individual difficulties.
6. To ensure that when a child's needs are diagnosed, appropriate provision is made to meet those needs.
7. To develop appropriate teaching strategies in order to address the different needs of individual children.
8. To carefully monitor and record the child's needs, the action taken, and the outcomes of this action.
9. To encourage the support and involvement of the parents of children with special educational needs.
10. To encourage the involvement and co-operation of outside agencies and specialised help in the diagnosis and treatment of special need pupils.
11. To assist teachers in their professional development with reference to special needs.
12. To promote the integration of all pupils with special educational needs as far as is reasonably practical into the life and work of the school.
13. To develop and utilise all available resources in support of pupils with special needs.

Purpose

The teachers of Rasharkin Primary School are at present working with individuals and groups of children with special needs within the everyday classroom situation. The purpose of the policy therefore is to build upon and further develop this current good practice, in providing a standard for evaluating performance and a framework for action.

SECTION TWO

The Management of Special Educational Need

The Three Stages of Special Education Provision

In Rasharkin Primary School, we adhere to the three stages of the Code of Practice. These stages focus on the level of intensity of the special educational provision required for a child to make adequate progress commensurate with their abilities and improve their outcomes. Responsibility for pupils with SEN at each stage lies with the school, given the day-to-day role of the school in a pupil's teaching and learning, with increasing EA involvement when required. A summary of the three stages of special education provision is set out below:

Stage 1 includes:

- School delivered special educational provision;
- A PLP is required (currently IEP);
- The majority of special educational needs will be met at this stage;
- The responsibility lies with the school;
- Operates in mainstream schools and classes; and
- Reasonable adjustments and additional strategies and approaches are implemented, aimed at meeting, and addressing the child's SEN.

In Rasharkin Primary School there is no provision for the withdrawal of children by a specialised teacher at this stage. The children will be taught in the normal classroom setting alongside his/her peers.

A classroom assistant may be used to provide 1:1 support for the child for a short period each day. This support will only be available when the school budget can afford to release a classroom assistant for this purpose. All children would benefit from 1-1 support however this would not be financially viable. Therefore, access to this 1:1 support with a classroom assistant will be prioritised and decided upon by the principal, SENCO and class teacher. Various factors will be taken into consideration in this decision to determine who will benefit most from this form of intervention. These are:

- Needs of the pupil
- Screening test scores
- Teachers' professional judgement
- Availability of resources (time/staff)

The PLP (currently IEP) should contain the core information/evidence of the school action to inform a request, if considered necessary, for access to EA SEN services at Stage 2. The child will only move to Stage 2 once any external special educational provision is being implemented.

Stage 2 includes:

- School-delivered special educational provision plus external provision, for example, the EA or the HSC Trust;
- A PLP is required (currently IEP). A smaller number of children will need this provision;
- The responsibility lies with the school plus external provision from EA;
- Reasonable adjustments, additional strategies and approaches are implemented plus resources, advice, guidance, support, and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child's SEN.

In the event of a child not making progress, despite the external support from the EA, the child may require consideration for a statutory assessment. A new online form designed to guide the user through the process is used to make a request for statutory assessment. The PLP (currently IEP) contains the core school information the EA will use to consider and if appropriate make, a statutory assessment. The pupil will remain at Stage 2 when a request for a statutory assessment is being considered, is being made and, if appropriate until a Statement is made.

Stage 3 includes:

- Pupils with a statement of SEN;
- School and EA delivered special educational provision plus any relevant treatment or service identified by the HSC Trust;
- A PLP is required (currently IEP);
- A smaller number of children will need this provision;
- The responsibility lies with the school and the EA –with input from the HSC Trust where relevant;
- Operates in mainstream schools, LS Centres attached to mainstream schools or special schools (as determined within the child’s statement);
- Reasonable adjustments, the school delivered special educational provision are implemented plus EA provision as set out in the Statement.

At Stage 3, the child has a statement and is receiving special educational provision (as set out in the Statement).

The pupil’s PLP (IEP) should be revised, to reflect the content of the statement (as it relates to the PLP (IEP) including the SEN category (or categories); setting intended outcomes based on the objectives of the special educational provision and the nature and extent of the EA’s provision including any relevant service and treatment the HSC Trust are to provide; and any additional school provision or modifications to the curriculum, as itemised in the statement; the pupil's PLP (IEP) will be subject to regular monitoring, review and evaluation and will form the key basis of educational information to inform the annual review of the statement.

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the three-staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

Annual Review

The annual review takes place once per school year for pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The SENCO, principal, parents, EA representatives and any other involved agencies are all invited to take part in this annual review. The child will also be consulted on their opinions at this stage. For children transferring to post primary schools the annual review will take place in the first term of their P7 year.

Screening and assessment

A variety of assessment tools will be used to aid the identification of children with special educational needs. These will include:

- Standardised tests in English and Mathematics
- Reading age test
- Teacher observations.

Screening tests will take place annually for all children from Primary Two to Primary Seven. In Primary One teacher observations will be the main assessment tool. The screening process acts as a safety net to try to ensure that all the children with special educational needs are identified as soon as possible.

On some occasions it may be appropriate to consider information from social workers, health visitors, doctors and therapists. This information may also be used when writing IEPs.

Children who are identified, as having special needs will be further assessed to try and identify the specific nature and cause of the need. Such assessment will therefore be more diagnostic in nature.

Teaching strategies

Teaching strategies will allow where possible, access to the whole curriculum for each child. Teachers will use a variety of teaching strategies designed to take account of the differing abilities, interests and experiences of pupils and to meet specific individual needs. Children will be allowed to work and progress at their own rate. Realistic targets and appropriate tasks will be set for children so that a certain measure of success is achieved, thereby enhancing the total self-confidence and esteem of each child.

SMARTER targets will be used:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time bound
Evidence

Children with special needs will be taught alongside their peers in the normal classroom setting. Where possible, work will be differentiated to meet different standards and as much individual help as is practically possible will be given.

Education plans will as far as possible be built upon the curriculum that the child is following alongside other pupils.

Partnership with parents

The school recognises the valuable contribution that parents can make to their child's progress and seeks to promote a close working relationship with them. Parents of children with special needs will be kept informed of particular help being given and of their child's progress. Parents of such children or parents of those children who seem likely to require extra help sooner or later will be brought into any discussion right from the beginning in order to enlist their support and understanding. IEP targets and reviews will be agreed together with parents, the pupil and the class teacher.

Record keeping

The SENCO is responsible for the maintaining and updating of all records of children who are identified as having special educational needs. The SENCO will maintain and update a register, on which the names of all children brought to their attention will be entered, the date on which the child's name was entered and the stage of intervention.

In addition, the SENCO will keep a record of all relevant information pertaining to each child on the register; education plans and written reviews and a record of communication with parents or outside agencies.

The role of the SENCO

The designated teacher should be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs and Learning support policy;
- Responding to requests for advice from other teachers;
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- Maintain the school's SEN register and oversee all the records on pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- Liaison with parents of children with Special Educational Needs;
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training;
- Liaison with external agencies; and
- Co-ordinating and managing the annual review process alongside the Principal.

The role of the Board of Governors

In 'Every School a Good School' (DE) – The Governor's Role (2010) chapter 12 of the document relates specifically to the Governor role for pupils with special educational needs. The following section provides an overview of Governor's responsibilities from this document as highlighted in the SEN Resource File (2011):

The role of the Board of Governors of a mainstream school is to exercise its functions in relation to the school with a view to ensuring that provision is made for registered pupils with special educational needs. The Board of Governors has a statutory duty to:

- Take account of the provisions in the DE code of practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs;

- Use their best endeavours to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents/carers are notified of their child's special needs;
- Maintain and operate a policy on SEN;
- Ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;
- Ensure that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying those registered pupils with SEN and providing appropriate teaching;
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

Role of the principal (Code of Practice 1998)

The Principal should:

- Keep the B.o.G. informed about SEN/Disability issues
- Work in close partnership with the SENCO
- Where necessary liaise with parents and external agencies
- Delegate and monitor the SEN budget
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs

Role of the class teacher

The class teacher should:

- Be aware of current legislation;
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN register;
- Gather information through formal and informal assessment/observation;
- Develop an inclusive classroom;
- Write and review education plans in consultation with the SENCO;
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching;
- Contribute to, manage and review Education Plans in consultation with the SENCO; and
- Involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team, particularly in regards to the planning, monitoring and reviewing of IEPs.

Role of the Learning Support Assistant

If there is a learning support assistant assigned to a child with SEN/Disability their role and responsibilities should be agreed with the principal, SENCO, class teacher and LSA.

Learning support Assistants should:

- Work under the direction of the SENCO and class teacher;
- Be involved in planning, monitoring and reviewing of IEPs;
- Be involved in planning, monitoring and reviewing of IEPs;
- Be involved in planning or target related activities to meet the objectives as stated in IEPs or stage 5 statements;
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths;
- Provide practical support to the child and the teacher;
- Listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf;
- Explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- Keep records and attend meetings; and
- Share good practice.

Role of the pupil

‘The child 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 – pars 1.19)

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- Contributing to the assessment;
- Contributing to education plans through target setting
- Working towards achieving agreed targets; and
- Contributing to the review of EPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in year 7

Role of the parent

‘The relationship between the parents of a child with SEN and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and effectiveness of any school based action.... Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parental involvement and provides reassurance that account is taken of what parents say and that their views and anxieties are treated as intrinsically important.’ (Code of practice 2.21)

It is essential that parents/carers inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent/carer upon a child’s entry to the school.

It is the school’s responsibility to inform parents/carers when staff are considering placing the pupil’s name on the SEN register or moving the child to a higher or lesser stage of need. Parents/carers should be invited as necessary to:

- Meet with staff to discuss their child’s needs;
- Attend review meetings;
- Inform staff of changes in circumstances;
- Support targets on IEPs; and
- Provide the school with relevant documentation relating to the needs of their child.

Outside Agencies

The school will where necessary work in partnership with outside agencies for the benefit of children with special educational needs. Such agencies will include the Educational Psychologist, Support Teachers, the Educational Welfare Officer, Health and Social Services, Speech and Language Therapists.

Professional Development

Staff will be encouraged where possible to attend INSET or other training to assist in their development of the teaching of children with special educational needs.

Accessibility

The school is fully accessible for all pupils currently attending.

Complaints

Complaints about SEN/Disability issues will be dealt with in line with the school's existing complaints procedures. Complaints should be directed to the principal.

Advice and Information Service (see Appendix 1)

An advice and information service has been set up by the EA to support parents of children with Special Educational Needs. This can be accessed by telephoning 028 2561313.

Dispute Avoidance and Reconciliation Service (DARS)

DARS aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/ Boards of Governors or EAs for pupils who are on 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.

The Dispute Avoidance and Reconciliation Service has been transferred to Global Mediation, an independent organisation, in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016.

If you wish to contact DARS please contact Global Mediation at:

Global Mediation
55-59 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FE
E: DARS@globalmediation.co.uk
W: www.globalmediation.co.uk/DARS.

SENDIST


Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the SEN and Disability tribunal (SENDIST)

Further information regarding SENDIST can be obtained from SENDIST.

Telephone number: 028 90 724 887

This policy has been formulated in consultation with staff, pupil, parents and governors, through discussion and the use of questionnaires or surveys.

Implementation of this policy will be monitored by the principal and SENCO. A report on implementation will be provided annually to the Board of Governors. This policy will be formally evaluated and reviewed at least every three years.

Signed (Chair, Board of Governors):  _____

Date: 30/5/2022 _____

What if the EA decides not to issue a Statement or if you disagree with what we say?

We will always be willing to hear and consider your views. If we cannot agree, you have a right to go to mediation and/or to appeal.

If you need help or advice at any stage, you can speak to your named person in Special Education or you may wish to contact the following agencies.

The SEN Advice and Information Service :

helps parents of children with special educational needs access support, guidance and advice in relation to the needs of their children.

The Dispute Avoidance & Resolution Service :

is an independent service which works towards avoiding and resolving disagreements between parents and the Authority, or parents and a school, in regard to children with SEN. The service provides a forum for exploring differences, identifying points of agreement and finding a way forward which is acceptable to all involved.

More details of both of these services can be found on the Authority's website www.eani.org.uk

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal is an independent body which hears parents' appeals against the Authority's decisions on Statutory Assessments and Statements of Special Educational Needs.

SENDIST Tel: 028 9072 4887

VERSION 1

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Armagh Office Tel: 028 37512200

Ballymena Office Tel: 028 25661313

Belfast Office Tel: 028 90564000

Dundonald Office Tel: 028 90566200

Omagh Office Tel: 028 82411411

SEN ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE

Armagh Office Tel: 028 37415355

Ballymena Office Tel: 028 25661319

Belfast Office Tel: 028 90564273

Dundonald Office Tel: 028 90566200

Omagh Office Tel: 028 8241 1286

DISPUTE AVOIDANCE & RESOLUTION SERVICE (DARS)

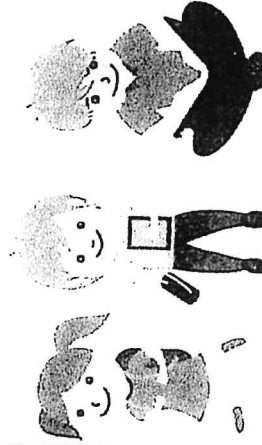
Tel: 028 37512383

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

DE, The Code of Practice on the Identification & Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998) and the Supplement to the Code (2005)



Special Educational Needs
The Statutory Assessment Process
Guidance for Parents and Guardians



2017 - 2018
www.eani.org.uk



What is a Statutory Assessment ?

A Statutory Assessment is a formal and detailed process to find out what your child's special needs are, and what additional help they may need in school.

When will a child get a Statutory Assessment ?

A child may need a statutory assessment before going to nursery school if they have very severe and complex needs or, for children and young people already at school, if the extra support they have been getting for their special educational needs is not helping.

How long does a Statutory Assessment take?

If the Education Authority (EA) agree that your child needs a statutory assessment, we will aim to complete it within 26 weeks. We will give you a named person with whom you will be able to discuss any questions or concerns regarding the assessment. This person must also gather any information available from:

- You , to get your views about your child
- Where appropriate, your child
- Teachers at your child's school
- An educational psychologist
- Medical professionals
- Specialist teachers from the EA's specialist services if they are involved
- Social services if they know your child
- Anyone else working with your child that you think we need to talk to.

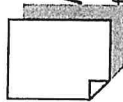
This information is called **advice** and should let us know what your child can and cannot do and what special help they may need.

What happens when the Education Authority has collected all the necessary information/advice?

At this point we must decide whether your child needs a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is a legally enforceable document which describes your child's special needs and the additional support that is required in school.

Does a Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement being issued?

The information gathered during the assessment may indicate ways in which the education setting can meet your child's needs without the need for a Statement. If this is the case the EA will tell you of this decision within 18 weeks. Sometimes there can be a little delay if we are waiting for important advice to come in, or if schools are on holiday.



What is a Proposed Statement?

If we decide that a Statement is needed we will write a first version called a "Proposed Statement." This will describe your child's special educational needs and the additional support proposed for your child. A copy of the Proposed Statement will be sent to you along with copies of the advice so that you can read it all.

At this time we will also ask you which school you would prefer your child to go to - this may be the same school that they are already attending. You can contact us if you think we need to make changes. You have 15 days to make comments, to ask us for a meeting or to accept the Proposed Statement.

Time line from the beginning of the Statutory Assessment to the issue of a Statement.

1. The EA receives a request for a Statutory Assessment. The EA must tell parents about this request.	This is the start date
2. The EA decides whether a Statutory Assessment is needed and must tell parents about its decision. If the EA is not proceeding, we must tell you how to appeal.	Within six weeks of the start date
3. The statutory assessment takes place – advice sought from parents and professionals.	Submitted within 6 weeks
4. The EA informs parents of its decision to either issue a Proposed Statement or, to issue a Note in Lieu and details of the appeal process.	Within 2 weeks
5. Parents must respond to the Proposed Statement. You can : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree that the draft is accurate • ask for changes • ask for a meeting. You should also state a preference for a school for your child.	Within 15 days of receiving the Proposed Statement
6. The EA consults with the school.	The school has 15 days to respond
7. The EA issues the final Statement.	Within 26 weeks of the start date