



"Together we learn"

Special Educational Needs Policy

AIMS

Banbridge Nursery School believes that all children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant Early Years curriculum. We welcome all children regardless of their individual needs and believe that every pupil has an entitlement to develop to their full potential while being educated alongside their peers. We aim to provide educational experiences which celebrate all achievements and recognise individuality.

Banbridge Nursery School promotes an inclusive ethos where all children are offered access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum suitable to their individual needs. We work diligently to minimize barriers to learning so that all children may develop to their full potential.

In order to achieve our aims, we work closely with the children, their parents or carers and other agencies, as and when necessary. The progress of each child will be monitored throughout the year through liaison with parents and outside agencies. The school will seek to provide support and guidance to parents.

SECTION 1 **OBJECTIVES**

- ◆ To integrate children with special needs into the daily routine of the school as far as is practicable in line with the Good Practice Guidelines.
- ◆ To provide a broad, balanced and relevant programme suitable to the needs of each child.
- ◆ To provide a range of special educational needs provision.
- ◆ To work closely with the children to enable them to be active partners in their learning.
- ◆ To work in partnership with parents in order to provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children in our school.
- ◆ To work in partnership with external agencies, as appropriate, to meet the needs of our children.
- ◆ Through individual assessment and record-keeping, the needs of other children, not previously recognised, will be identified.
- ◆ To implement an effective record-keeping system within the school which will be used to monitor the progress of each child.

DEFINITIONS OF SEN AND DISABILITY

Definition of SEN

“Special Educational Need” is defined as “an early learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made” (Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs, September 1998).

A child has a learning difficulty if he/she has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age and/or has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of his age in ordinary schools.

Definition of Disability

“Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.” (part 1 of Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

MANAGEMENT OF S.E.N. IN THE SCHOOL

The **Board of Governors** of Banbridge Nursery School is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the SEN policy. The Governors establish

appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work in relation to SEN. The Governor with responsibility for this is **Mrs Maeve Kelly**.

The **principal, Mrs Kerry Porter**, is also the school's **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)**.

As **principal**, she has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all of the school's work including its SEN provision, and keeps the Governors informed of SEN matters in the school.

As **SENCo**, Mrs Porter works closely with the other teachers and assistants to manage the day-to-day implementation of the school's SEN policy and to coordinate the SEN provision.

She will identify, in conjunction with the assistant teachers, any difficulties a child may have and ...

- ◆ Will assess and make provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- ◆ Will maintain the SEN register.
- ◆ Is responsible for drawing up and reviewing action plans and IEPs.
- ◆ Will keep parents or carers in touch with their child's progress.
- ◆ Will advise and assist the governors to review this SEN policy annually.
- ◆ Will liaise with outside agencies who can provide support for the school / child.

The **teachers** have been involved in the development of the school's SEN policy and are familiar with the procedures. They are responsible for the identification of children who have a particular educational need and work closely with the SENCo /principal and nursery/classroom assistants to develop, implement and monitor action plans / IEPs for individual children with special educational needs.

The **nursery / classroom assistants** work in partnership with teaching staff to deliver, implement and monitor the Records of Concern / IEPs and are responsible for keeping up-to-date records of the child's progress which will inform future planning.

The **child** is allowed, through appropriate target setting, to experience success.

Parents are kept informed and are encouraged to be fully involved in supporting their child's learning, working in partnership with the school.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Children with special educational needs will be admitted to the school using the admissions criteria and sub-criteria as laid down by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland and the Board of Governors of the school. On admission to the school parents are asked to complete an information sheet on which they may identify any concerns they may have regarding their child. The principal will arrange to visit the child/ren who have a special educational need in their home environment, as and when possible/appropriate.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

The following policies are also relevant and in line with SENDO legislation:

- ◆ Admissions Policy
- ◆ Behaviour Policy
- ◆ Health and Safety Policy
- ◆ Pastoral Care Policy
- ◆ Child Protection Policy
- ◆ Confidentiality Policy
- ◆ Curriculum Policy

PROVISION

SPECIAL FACILITIES / RESOURCES

The school provides

- ◆ Wheelchair access to all areas of the school
- ◆ A disabled toilet and changing area

We plan approaches for children with special educational needs by:

- ◆ Differentiating our activities so that all children can achieve them and all children can experience success and gain confidence
- ◆ Allocating a classroom assistant to each child with SEN (as appropriate) to support and monitor the child's progress and learning
- ◆ Ensuring that our planning for all children contains approaches and activities which help those children who have SEN to make progress
- ◆ Adapting our materials and teaching styles to help children with different individual needs to learn.
- ◆ Providing small group and/or individual activities as appropriate to the needs of the child. These activities will be undertaken by the teachers, nursery and classroom assistants.

SECTION 2

IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

Through individual assessment and record keeping, the needs of individual children will be identified and met. To support our concerns, we will be using, where applicable, the British Picture Vocabulary Scale: Second Edition (NFER Nelson), Speech and Language Speech checklist, WELLCOMM (GL Assessment) and the Pre-School Behaviour Checklist (NFER Nelson).

All staff are responsible for early identification of children with special educational needs through professional judgment, information gleaned from parents/carers, previous childcare workers, external agencies and through observation, checklists and record keeping.

When a child is identified as requiring additional support...

- ◆ The principal/S.E.N. Co-ordinator will inform the parent and then place the child's name on the S.E.N. register.
- ◆ Records of Concern / IEPs are drawn up and reviewed each month by the teacher, the parents and the SENco together.

- ◆ Parents will be invited to the school to discuss their child's IEP each month or as soon as possible thereafter. We discuss with parents how they can support their child's progress at home and their help and encouragement will be actively sought. They will be kept informed as to the child's progress and are asked to keep the school informed of any significant changes to a child's behavior or circumstances as these may have an impact on the strategies we employ to support future learning and development.
- ◆ All school staff will be informed of the programme set out for the child so that they too may encourage and support the child/children.
- ◆ Reviews of Records of Concern and IEPs inform future planning and inform movement either up or down through the Code of Practice stages.
- ◆ After review, children may progress through stages 1-5 as outlined in the Code of Practice. Responsibility for pupils within stages 1-3 lies with the school with support from outside agencies and with the SELB and school at stages 4 and 5.

RECORD KEEPING AND REVIEW

The teacher and SENco records are held in the office in the SEN file along with any information received from outside agencies. These records are kept in a secure filing drawer and are available only to staff working with the child/ren, parents/carers and relevant outside agencies.

The following criteria will be used to place children on the SEN Register:

- ◆ Statemented children.
- ◆ Children for whom a statement is in process.
- ◆ A child who has significantly greater learning difficulty than the majority of his/her peers.
- ◆ A child who has a disability or difficulty which prevents or hinders him/her from full access to the nursery curriculum.

IEPs and records will be reviewed on a monthly basis and, in consultation with parents, required outside agencies etc., the relevant information will be passed to the child's next school.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRESS

SEN REGISTER

The SEN register is updated at least termly or as required (whichever is most frequent)

PRINCIPAL

The principal reports on the progress of the SEN provision to the Board of Governors and is responsible for the effectiveness of current provision through regular meetings with the teachers and other staff, monitoring teachers' planners and ensuring that all staff have adequate and appropriate training.

SENco's MONITORING SYSTEM

- ◆ Meeting with teaching staff (every 4 weeks) to monitor progress
- ◆ Through classroom observation, to ensure appropriate teaching and learning strategies are being used

- ◆ Monitor targets set for IEPs for progression and evidence of improvement
- ◆ Involvement of pupils and parents is monitored
- ◆ Monitor the deployment of SEN / nursery assistants in relation to the SEN children
- ◆ To ensure the inclusion of SEN children in all areas of school life eg school trips, performances etc

Provision for statemented children in the school is reviewed annually in accordance with the Code of Practice and provision amended to assist and advise 'feeder' primary schools.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR SEN PROVISION

The school's provision for children with SEN is reviewed annually and a report submitted to the Board of Governors detailing the numbers of children and where they are on the register, their progress and attendance during the year. The impact of SEN training on strategies and provision within the school will also be recorded and any outstanding training needs identified.

CURRICULAR ACCESS AND ENTITLEMENTS

The school will ensure that every child can access all aspects of school life and provision, in line with Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 and reasonable adjustments made to ensure that no child is at a disadvantage.

SECTION 3

The principal /SENco reports to the Board of Governors and is responsible for the effectiveness of current provision through meetings with the teachers, monitoring planning and ensuring all staff have adequate training in respect of the needs of our children with special educational needs.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The principal / SENco

- ◆ oversees the professional development of all staff
- ◆ ensures necessary training as required eg. moving and handling, autism awareness raising
- ◆ ensures that those who attend courses disseminate and share their knowledge with other staff
- ◆ keeps a record of staff training

The SENco has attended all relevant training in relation to Special Educational Needs, including training to attend case conferences. Teachers, nursery and classroom assistants have completed further training in writing action plans and IEPs, autism awareness raising, the administration of rectal diazepam, EPI pen training and moving and handling.

Regular meetings are held with all staff to discuss the progress of the children and to inform future planning.

LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Close links are maintained with appropriate external support services, to include Advisory & Support Services, Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Services and Health and Social Services.

Contact will be maintained with any other agencies working with the child, e.g.. speech/occupational therapy.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It is the intention of the school to foster positive links with parents and so create an effective relationship through which the child's needs may be addressed. The school recognises that the parents' involvement in assessment and decision-making is of the utmost importance and that their contributions will be valued. This will be achieved in the following ways:

Information

- ◆ Parents of SEN children will receive a copy of the SELB's Advice and Information leaflet on the Code Of Practice
- ◆ A copy of the school's S.E.N. policy will be available
- ◆ The parents/carers will be informed of the support available within the school and from S.E.L.B..
- ◆ Parents will have access to information on assessment and decision-making.

Partnership

- ◆ Parents' concerns will be recorded and the relevant action taken.
- ◆ Initial concerns identified in school will be discussed with the parent/s and careful records kept over a period of time. If further action is required, parental permission will be sought, and parents kept informed and involved at all stages.
- ◆ Parents' views will be included in subsequent reviews.
- ◆ Programmes set up within IEPs and which could be reinforced at home, will be discussed with parents and their involvement encouraged.

Procedures for addressing concerns

If any parents or carers have a complaint about the way we are working with their child who has SEN, they should speak initially to the class teacher and, if they are still unhappy, they should approach the SENco. She will investigate the problem and report back to the parents/carers within a week. If parents or carers continue to be dissatisfied, the SENco will refer the matter to the Board of Governors to take further action as appropriate.

Parents may also, at any time, contact the SELB's Special Education department for information, advice and support.

A cross- Board independent Dispute Avoidance and Resolutions Service (DARS) is available to deal with any disputes in relation to special educational provision.

The DARS provides an informal forum for exploring differences, identifying points of agreement and finding a way forward that all parties accept.

LINKS WITH OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

The SENco will share the child's progress reports, plans and assessments and records of reviews to the next setting or school when the child leaves Banbridge Nursery School.

Where appropriate, the SENco will organize a multi-disciplinary meeting to discuss the achievements and requirements for future support from all agencies involved with a specific child on the SEN register. The parents will be present and actively participant in sharing their views, concerns, hopes and requirements for the future support.

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