

# **DRUMAHOE P.S.**



## **Policy for Additional Educational Needs And Inclusion**

## **POLICY FOR ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

### **General Aims and Objectives of the School**

It is the policy of Drumahoe P.S. actively to encourage the involvement of staff, pupils and parents in the education of children with Additional Educational Needs (AEN). The learning differences which children have are identified early, assessed and intervention provided for in a variety of ways, ensuring that provision is always child centred and accessible. Children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential with the guidance and support of their class teacher, the AEN Coordinator, Classroom Assistants and when appropriate Advisory and Support services and/or health professionals. The school aims to provide for all the needs of a child whilst facilitating the process of inclusion and integration in class and school activities. This policy describes in detail the procedures and systems which have been established for meeting the objectives of providing an integrated education for all children with additional educational needs, whilst aiming to provide the entitlement of access to a full and balanced N.I. curriculum.

We are committed to the guiding set of principles identified by the Inspectorate :

- all children matter
- barriers to learning are identified
- positive action is taken to remove them
- a sense of community prevails

### **General Philosophy**

The 1981 Education Act states that 'A child has SEN if he/she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.' A child has a learning difficulty if:

- He/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age
- He/she has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities available for children of his/her age

The Northern Ireland Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998) and the Supplement to the Code of Practice (2005) guide all our practices and policies in providing for children with Special educational Needs and/or disabilities.

The term "Special Educational Needs" is defined in the Code as "a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made." "Learning Difficulty" means that the child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his or her age, and/or has a disability, which hinders his or her use of everyday educational facilities. "Special educational provision" means educational provision, which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age. (Code of Practice, 1.4)

All class teachers are responsible for the initial identification and assessment of AEN; they also have responsibility for its provision within the classroom and have the SENCo for support, guidance and advice.

At some time in their school careers all children may have SEN, for example social and domestic problems, medical problems, undue pressure from home or school. All of these can lead to temporary or longer term learning difficulties, which need to be identified at an early stage.

Provision is made for gifted and talented children, both in terms of identification and supplying a suitable curriculum. It is recognised that some children will be gifted and a separate policy has been written to detail identification and support. These children may be able to work at a much higher level than most of us are aware, and we recognise that they will not be stimulated by the provision of extra quantities of work pitched at the same intellectual level of their peers. Gifted children receive a radical improvement in the quality of their work rather than the pure quantity.

‘All pupils share the right to a broad and balanced curriculum, included within the N.I. Curriculum. The right extends to every registered pupil of compulsory school age whether or not he or she has a Statement of SEN.’

Amongst the general population of children in ordinary schools, about one in six children have AEN of one kind or another. In some circumstances, for example for some physical disabilities in PE, the N.I. Curriculum may need to be modified. In Drumahoe we have adapted and provided practices for pupils to include reasonable adjustments and relevant and purposeful measures comparable to the recommendations set out in the Good Practice Guidelines 2009 and in line with the consultation documents Every School a Good School DENI 2009. We are committed to dissemination of good practice throughout our staff and have developed whole school planning to include specialist training which promotes best practice in the classroom, and fosters collaborative working and improves quality of teaching and learning. Staff regularly take part in training within school by outside agencies and attend WELB and NASEN courses for Continued Professional Development. Online training such as the SEN CPD in Understanding Literacy Difficulties supports the teaching skills of teachers and LSAs.

Parents need to be consulted as part of the identification process so that the curriculum can be planned for their child. This should take place in consultation with other teachers, external support agencies and governors.

Translating the principles of the N.I. Curriculum into daily provision for pupils with AEN begins with existing good practice.

In order that children do indeed have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, three basic elements need to be addressed:

- The teaching needs of pupils with SEN
- School strategies for meeting SEN
- The learning environment

The teaching needs of all pupils, particularly children with AEN require:

- Positive attitudes from staff
- Partnerships with teachers which encourage them to become active learners, helping to plan, build and evaluate their own learning programme wherever possible
- A climate of warmth and support in which self-confidence and self-esteem can grow and in which pupils with SEN can experiment without fear of criticism or failure
- Partnerships between home and school
- Extra support at times in order to access the N.I. Curriculum, whether through the SEN Coordinator, Board Support and Advisory Services and Health professionals.

The Guidance for Schools Recording Children with Special Educational Needs DE 2006, have identified categories into which pupils with AEN are assigned and recorded on the SEN register. The categories are :

- Cognitive and Learning
- Social , Emotional and Behavioural
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory
- Physical
- Medical Conditions/Syndromes
- Other

Some children may be assigned to more than one category of AEN. Some children's needs may warrant a Statement. Some children will exhibit one or more such characteristics and yet not present learning difficulties. It is the teacher's professional judgement, in consultation with colleagues, and his/her understanding and awareness of the individual, which is central to the additional educational needs provision offered at Drumahoe.

## **Facilities**

Children with SEN are admitted into school in accordance with our whole-school admissions policy.

## **Resources**

Funding for SEN is received through the LMS budget. This funding is used to provide teaching support for children with AEN and the provision of appropriate learning and teaching materials. We use a variety of resources for assessment and identification purposes. Resources are generally available to all staff, non-teaching staff and support staff. A variety of standardised and diagnostic tests are also available. A range of

differentiated work is prepared and structured by class teachers and support assistants. Children can avail of small group support, in class support and one to one tuition from the LSC and / or LSAs. Strategies and resources are used by teachers in class to remove barriers to learning and children's metacognition skills are developed so they can become effect independent learners despite and learning difference or difficulty. Increasingly we are using assistive technology and ICT to support and develop our children's potentials. Many children avail of the online Lexia programme tailored at each child's literacy level and which can be accessed on a rota basis at home. iPads are also instrumental in providing additional means of learning and recoding for children within the classroom.

## **Collaborative Practices**

In Drumahoe we strongly believe in collaborative practices to provide the highest level of intervention for children. The SENCo, LS teacher and LSAs work alongside outside agencies to develop strategies and learning styles to remove learning barriers. Good practices is shared amongst staff and constantly staff self evaluate their teaching and inclusive methods, auditing practices and outcomes of learning to raise standards for all.

## **Identification, Assessment and Provision**

A clear and defined system for identification of AEN is set out in the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs; this establishes a five stage approach. We have adopted the approach set out in the code.

### **Stage One**

The class teacher has the initial responsibility for this – the most important and effective method of assessment in all areas of the curriculum is teacher observation. The AEN Coordinator updates the SEN register on a termly basis. Parents must be informed once a child has been placed on Stage One. Parents must be kept up-to-date through a twice yearly review, conducted at Parental Interviews. In normal circumstances, it will not be necessary for the AEN Coordinator to be present at the review meeting, the class teacher will hold a review and present findings to the AENco.

### **Stage Two**

It is proposed that all pupils with suspected AEN, whose needs are not easily met through normal classroom differentiation and support from the class teacher, will initially undergo in-house assessment. An Individual Education Plan or target sheet with needs specific targets is drawn up between the class , pupil and the AEN Coordinator with parental input. Class teachers follow this plan with support from the SEN Coordinator. In normal circumstances, it will not be necessary for parents to be present at the review meeting but they will always be informed and asked for a contribution if they wish to make one. The AEN Coordinator and class teacher meet termly or more frequently to discuss the progress of the child and to decide on which stage assignment.

### **Stage Three**

Where procedures at Stage Two have not precipitated satisfactory progress, the AEN Co-ordinator will initiate further support and advice from outside agencies. In Drumahoe we work hard at developing partnerships with educational, health and charitable organisations. The review of a child on Stage Three will take place termly, and will take the form of a meeting between the SENCO and the class teacher. Parents' views will be sought for this review, and they may well be asked to attend a formal meeting. Other agencies/professionals who have had an involvement with the child will also have their views sought; they too, may well be asked by the SENCO to attend a formal meeting to discuss progress and/or next steps. We benefit in school from support from many agencies, including S&L; WEST; SEBD; Reading Centre; MLD; Educational Psychology and Services for Children. Often forms are required to be completed to access services and these are discussed and filled out with consultations between school and home.

### **Stages Four and Five**

These stages, as identified by the code, are where the WELB takes the lead in assessing pupils and providing/reviewing Statements of Special Educational Needs. We use the Provisional Criteria for initiating assessments of Special Educational Needs 2009, to ensure a consistent approach and practice in initiating statutory assessments and completion of SAR1 pro-formas. If appropriate the Board will make a statement of special educational needs and arranges, monitors and reviews provision annually. Parents and outside agencies are invited to the Annual Review meeting along with the Principal, class teacher, LSA and AEN co-ordinator.

Children are placed on the register and assignment of stages is reviewed at the termly meetings between the AENco, class teacher and when appropriate, LSA. Individual Education Plans and target sheets are written in collaboration with the child and parents and reviewed at the meetings and targets set are needs specific.

The AEN Coordinator will be responsible for the completion of all relevant paperwork at all stages.

### **Access to the Curriculum and Integration**

It is recognised that support within the classroom has its place, as does withdrawal in certain circumstances. We aim for integration in all areas as far as is reasonably practicable, as regular withdrawal will affect access to the curriculum. Class teachers are responsible for their own organisation and teaching styles but it is recognised that differentiation of work will be a necessary tool for the accommodating of children with AEN in the classroom. To further integrate children with physical AEN in particular, support staff are employed at lunchtimes and break times for specific children where those concerned feel it to be appropriate. Staff work in collaboration with outside agencies and good practices are shared to upskill school staff.

## **Evaluation**

This policy will be the subject of ongoing review by the AENcO and the teaching and non-teaching staff. It will annually be an agenda item on the full governors' meeting , from which the annual report to parents on AEN will be written. The school may, from time to time, set specific targets against which the success of particular aspects of the policy can be measured.

## **Complaints Procedures**

Complaints about the provision or organisation of AEN will be dealt with through the procedures outlined in the whole school complaints policy.

## **Partnerships with Parents**

Parents are informed of any concerns a teacher may have. Parents are also informed through a consultation meeting when a child is placed on Stage One of the AEN register. Parents are involved as far as possible with the work which teachers set for children with AEN and are often asked to support this at home. Each child in KS2 keep their work in files and periodically a newsletter is send home to inform parents of activities, outings etc. and feedback requested. Parents are informed of changes arising from reviews at Stages One and Two and their own views will have been sought where this is possible. Parents will be asked to contribute more formally to a stage three review at least once a year.

## **Links with Other Schools**

Currently we make use of expertise from Belmont, Woodlands and Outreach teams for training and direct support purposes.

## **Links with Health Services, Social Services and Voluntary Organisations**

We have fostered strong links with the health service which include our :

- School nurse,
- WEST,
- Speech and Language Therapists,
- Community Paediatricians,
- Child and Family Team,
- Action for Children,
- Chance for Change, NW counselling
- CRUSE, NI Child Bereavement Network
- Epilepsy Nurse,
- WESTCARE

.....many of which are within the Waterside Family Support organisation.

At Drumahoe the Learning Environment exhibits the following characteristics:

- A fair and whole school approach to discipline
- A stimulating, sensitive and flexible approach to classroom layout and display
- An atmosphere of acceptance, encouragement, respect and sensitivity
- Communication and cooperation between all staff
- A structured and needs based approach to in-service training
- Effective management to support from the SEN Coordinator, staff, parents and volunteers through clear definitions of roles
- Access to specialist advice through all available support services
- Continuous and constructive communication with parents
- The school has excellent facilities for non-ambulant children, including disabled toilets, widened doorways and general wheelchair access throughout - push button doors

## **English**

English is perhaps the most cross-curricular of all subjects and as such, competence in this field is central to a pupil's accessing of the N.I. Curriculum. We recognise that many pupils with AEN have difficulties or strengths with writing, spelling and reading. It is our policy to address these areas to aid the pupil's progress across the whole curriculum. It is also recognised that some pupils with AEN will be better able to express themselves verbally and through word processing technology; opportunities to develop these areas will be provided.

## **Mathematics**

Mathematics is taught in a variety of ways. The policy at Drumahoe is for practical work to be given the highest priority. Opportunities are provided to enable pupils with AEN to participate in a range of practical mathematical experiences. This, it is hoped, presents the subject as enjoyable and offers many avenues for success.

## **Science and Tecnology**

Every pupil should have the opportunity to learn science. Activities in Science have characteristics which will help pupils with AEN achieve success.

- They are about first hand experience



- Knowledge and skills can be developed in small steps through practical activity, so helping concentration
- Science activities can capture the imagination and may help reduce behavioural problems
- Working in groups can encourage participation and interpersonal communication
- Working on a variety of activities allows pupils to share their strengths and help each other

### **Record Keeping and Assessment (Refer also to document Procedures for Monitoring and Evaluating AEN children)**

Assessment and record keeping procedures aim to ensure that pupils with AEN are working at the appropriate levels. Information about the progress of individual pupils is passed on from teacher to teacher, and to parents. CATS, INCAS & Standardised Test scores are monitored by the AEN coordinator and class teacher to ensure progress and quantitatively measure success. A pupil profile is maintained for each child in school and information made available for outside support at referral stages. Increasingly information and communication technology is being used to support learning record.

- All pupils at Drumahoe have a Record of Achievement File. The contents of this file are varied. The class teachers select work which they feel to be of value on a regular basis and store it in the pupil's RoA. Pupils are also given the opportunity to select items of work for this purpose. Personal achievements are also recorded within this file. This provides children with a continual record of their successes during their time at Drumahoe and fosters an atmosphere of caring and support which many children with AEN particularly need.
- We strive to develop knowledge and skills in children with AEN, and emphasis is placed on the generalisation of learning so each individual will have broad skills and capabilities, which will advantageously inform their post primary school experiences.