



PORTORA ROYAL SCHOOL
SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY

1. Introduction

The school follows the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001) and uses the same definition of special educational needs i.e; “Pupils have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.”

Pupils have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- Have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

The school recognises that provision for pupils with special educational needs is the responsibility of the whole school and that all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.

2. Aims

The Special Educational Needs Policy of the school reflects the Fundamental Principles of the Code of Practice. The aims of the special educational needs policy are:

- To enable pupils to take into account the views of the pupils with special educational needs
- To encourage good communication with parents of children with special educational needs
- To facilitate full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the foundation stage and the Northern Ireland Curriculum, for pupils with special educational needs.

3. Implementation

The implementation of the special needs policy is the responsibility of the whole school. The SEN coordinator has responsibility for the day to day operation of the policy.

3.1.1. The role of the SEN Coordinator is to:

- Oversee the day to day operation of the school’s SEN policy
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy
- Liaise with and advise fellow teachers
- Manage the learning support team
- Co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Oversee the records on all pupils with special educational needs
- Contribute to the in-service training of staff
- Liaise with external agencies
- Administer diagnostic tests as required
- Represent the interests of pupils with special educational needs at relevant committees in the school.

3.1.2. The role of the Head of Department is to:

- Ensure the staff in their department are aware of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs
- Ensure their subject is delivered using differentiation and a variety of approaches in order to maximise the achievement of all pupils including those with special educational needs
- Liaise with the SENCO in order to develop strategies to help pupils learn as effectively as possible.
- Ensure information about pupils with special educational needs is passed on to all members of the department, particularly when pupils have a change of subject teacher

3.1.3 The role of the subject teacher is to:

- Have a knowledge of the pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and refer to their IEPs as necessary and appropriate
- Use differentiation and a variety of strategies and approaches in order to maximise the achievement of all pupils including those with special educational needs
- Monitor the progress of individual pupils in order to identify areas where a pupil is not progressing even when the teaching style has been differentiated
- Support the planning of individual educational plans by advising the SENCO on strategies and appropriate methods of access to the curriculum for their subject
- Contribute to the reviews of pupils with special educational needs by providing information of pupil progress for their subject

3.2 Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs prior to their entry or as quickly as possible after their entry. This is carried out in the following ways:

- Through information forwarded to the school and the SENCO and pastoral staff from the primary feeder schools in the summer term
- Through information from parents
- Through information from Cognitive Abilities Tests taken at the beginning of Year 8
- In the case of pupils who enter the school after the beginning of Year 7, through previous school records and the results of Cognitive Abilities Tests taken after entry
- Through diagnostic tests administered by the SENCO or specialist advisers
- Through departmental assessments against National Curriculum level descriptions.

Information on pupils with special educational needs is disseminated to staff and departments by the SENCO.

Records of pupils with special educational needs are kept in the Learning Support Base and are available to school staff on request.

Departments keep their own records of the pupils with special educational needs

3.3. Organisation

- The Senior Management Team ensures that the learning of all pupils is given equal priority and that available resources are used to the maximum effect
- Departments ensure classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation such that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can learn effectively
- Pupils may receive additional support from a GAP student or other assistant in the classroom
- Pupils may be withdrawn for individual or small group work in order to improve literacy or numeracy skills
- Pupils may have a modified curriculum

3.4 Evaluation

The Special Educational Needs Policy is evaluated:

- 1 Through reviews of IEPs and through Annual Reviews of pupils with a statement
- 2 Through monitoring the success of strategies devised to achieve the targets set by departments for pupils they have identified as having special educational needs
- 3 Through the school policy for Maximising Pupil Achievement
- 4 Through assessing the value added to the achievement of pupils with identified special educational needs

3.5 Monitoring

The progress of pupils identified as having special educational needs is monitored in the following ways:

- The SENCO monitors the effectiveness of SEN provision
- Departments monitor the progress of pupils in relation to their predicted learning outcomes
- Pupils with statements have annual reviews
- Pupils with IEPs have regular reviews
- Through school reports
- Through monthly grade card system
- Through the analysis of value added data

3.6. Partnership with Parents

The school recognises that parents play an active and valued role in their children's education and that they have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of their child's needs.

- Parents who have concerns about the learning needs of their children can contact the school at any time.
- The Senco is available at Parents' Evenings and Tutor Evenings to review and discuss the progress of pupils with special educational needs
- Parents wishing to see the SENCO to discuss their child may make an appointment to do so at any mutually convenient time during the school year
- The SENCO will ensure that parents are informed if their child is identified as needing School Action

- Parents will be invited to contribute to the development of their child's Individual Education Plan
- Parents are given copies of the Individual Education Plan for their child
- Agreement from parents is sought before a pupil is referred to an outside agency for referral at the School Action Plus level
- Information and feedback resulting from a referral to an outside agency at the School Action Plus level is shared with the parents
- Parents are invited to Review Meetings including Annual Reviews for pupils with a statement.

3.7. Outside Agencies

These include the educational psychologist service, the WELB behavioural support team, WELB specialist advisory teachers.

- Advice may be sought from outside agencies in the early stages of identification of special educational needs in order to prevent the development of more significant needs.
- Pupils with statements may be monitored by outside agencies as appropriate
- The SENCO will request a statutory assessment by the WELB if appropriate

3.8 In Service Training for Special Educational Needs

- It is the school policy that all in-service needs are addressed
- The SENCO will contribute to INSET courses for other members of the school as required.