

# **Belfast High School**

## **Special Educational Needs POLICY**

## **BELFAST HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: POLICY**

### **RATIONALE**

Belfast High School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum including maximum possible access to the National Curriculum. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and /or a disability. In the interest of these children we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs. Effective assessment and provision will best be secured where there is partnership between parents, schools, boards and other agencies (Code of Practice 1:6)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/342440/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_approved\\_by\\_Parliament\\_29.07.14.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342440/SEND_Code_of_Practice_approved_by_Parliament_29.07.14.pdf)

### **DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The term special educational needs is defined in the Code of Practice as a learning difficulty.

“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 general for children of comparable age” (Code of Practice 1:4).

In order to make sure that we meet our pupils’ needs and include them in all aspects of school life, this SEN policy links closely with all our other policies in supporting pupils such as; Positive Behaviour, Child Protection and Health and Safety.

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/Disability:

#### **1. Cognitive and Learning**

- a) Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulty (DYL)

- b) Dyscalculia (DYC)
- c) Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Difficulties (DCD)
- d) Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- e) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- f) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- g) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- h) Unspecified learning difficulties (U)

## **2. Social, Emotional and Behavioural**

- a) Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)
- b) Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

## **3. Communication and Interaction**

- a) Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)
- b) Autism (AUT)
- c) Asperger's Syndrome (ASP)

## **4. Sensory Difficulties**

- a) Severe/profound hearing loss (SPHL)
- b) Mild/moderate hearing loss (MMHL)
- c) Blind (BL)
- d) Partially sighted (PS)
- e) Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)

## **5. Physical**

- a) Cerebral Palsy (CP)
- b) Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus (SBH)
- c) Muscular Dystrophy (MD)
- d) Significant Accidental Injury (SAI)
- e) Other (OPN)

## **6. Medical Conditions/Syndromes**

- a) Epilepsy (EPIL)
- b) Asthma (ASTH)
- c) Diabetes (DIAB)
- d) Anaphylaxis (ANXS)
- e) Down's Syndrome (DOWN)
- f) Other medical conditions/syndromes (OMCS)
- g) Interaction of Complex Medical Needs (ICMN)
- h) Mental Health Issues (MHI)

## 7. Other

[http://www.deni.gov.uk/sen\\_categories.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/sen_categories.pdf)

### Aims

1. To identify pupils with SEN/disability as early as possible using a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum and ensure there is full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/disability to high quality education.
3. To ensure that all children with SEN/disability feel valued. To offer curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence.
4. To offer a broad curriculum which will promote intellectual, emotional, social and physical progress in order that pupils can develop as valuable members of society both now and in the future. To encourage and/or maintain interest of pupils with SENs in their education.
5. To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEN provision. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding must be taken into account.
6. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs. To work closely with all ELB departments and other

outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENs.

7. To educate pupils with SEN/Disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
8. To develop a recording system so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately.
9. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy.
10. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
11. To meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN/Disability by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources.

### **Arrangements for Coordinating SEN provision.**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. Mrs A Lowry is the **SENCo**.

#### **Board of Governors**

The role of the Board of Governors in Belfast High 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 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 of providing appropriate teaching;
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

### **Principal (Code of Practice 1998)**

The Principal should:

- Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues
- Work in close partnership with the SENCo
- Liaise with parents and external agencies as required
- Delegate and monitor the SEN budget
- Ensure the SMT are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school. SMT members should ensure consistency of practice and contribute to the realisation of the SDP
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs

### **SENCo**

In Belfast High , Mrs Lowry is responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's special educational needs 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. (DENI, 1998, p7)

## **Class Teacher**

The class teacher should

- Be aware of current legislation
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Gather information through observation and assessment
- Develop an inclusive classroom
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching
- Contribute to, manage and review IEPs in consultation with the SENCO and
- Involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team

## **Head of Year**

Head of Year should:

- Be aware of current legislation
- Liaise with Form teachers /Teachers regarding pupils on the SEN register who are experiencing difficulty
- Keep up to date with the SEN Register
- Work closely with the SENCO
- Update records as appropriate

## **Head of Department**

- Head of Department should:
- Be aware of current legislation, keep up to date with the SEN Register and ensure new members of department are familiar with the SEN (and Inclusion) Policy
- Ensure that practice and procedures within the department promote learning and teaching which is relevant and accessible to all pupils
- Support subject teachers to enable them to provide an appropriate and differentiated curriculum
- Ensure appropriate resources are available
- Discuss issues with subject teachers through departmental meetings and forward appropriate minutes to the SENCO

## **SEN Support Staff**

Support Staff should

- Work under the direction of the class teacher
- Be involved in planning
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths
- Provide practical support
- 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

See Appendix 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School' (DE)

### **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 - para 1.19)*

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- Contributing to the assessment
- Contributing to education plans through setting targets
- Working towards achieving agreed targets and
- Contributing to the review of IEPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 10

### **Parent/Carer**

'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 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 upon a child's entry to the school.

It is the school's responsibility to inform parents 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 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

### **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN must be consistent with Belfast High School's criteria for admissions appropriate to their age and level

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the relevant Education and Library Board. When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the NEELB will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement.

This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

### **Accessibility**

All schools must have an accessibility plan (see Five Board Guidance).

Within this document it is important that you provide details of the point that your school has reached in terms of ensuring accessibility. For example,

- At present pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building.
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users; and/or

- There is a well-equipped SEN teaching/resource base and facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disabilities.

### **Annual Report**

- The Board Of Governors reports each year on SEN provision in school.

### **Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs**

"It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development."

*(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph 2.14)*

In Belfast High School, the following will be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Whole school assessment (eg: CATS/ALIS)
- Information from transferring school
- Parental information
- Teacher observation
- Class tests/school exams
- Standardised tests
- Diagnostic assessments
- Professional Reports
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Care Plans
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews

### **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.

### **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, form 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.

### **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.

### **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) 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 the appropriate Year Teacher. 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 school nurse, through pastoral counselling or contact with outside agencies.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.