



STRATHEARN SCHOOL

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
and INCLUSION POLICY**

Revised May 2007

Strathearn School

Policy on Special Educational Needs and Inclusion

Strathearn puts the needs of its pupils first, striving to encourage the development of each girl's talents and abilities and to provide the best possible learning experiences. Its aim is to become an increasingly more educationally inclusive school in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every pupil matters.

Definitions

1 Special Educational Needs

A pupil is regarded as having special educational needs if she has a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for her.

A pupil may be said to have a learning difficulty if she:-

- a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age and / or
- b) has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of education facilities generally provided for children of the same age in ordinary (mainstream) schools.

2 Disability

A pupil is regarded as having a disability if she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial or long-term (more than a year) adverse effect on her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

3 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision

Special educational needs provision means that which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in ordinary (mainstream) schools.

Legislative Framework

In accordance with the *Education (NI) Order 1996: Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1996 Order)* and the *Education (NI) Order 1996* as amended by the *Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO)* (*Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*), operative date September 2005,

Strathearn's objectives in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs are as follows:

- to develop partnerships between parents, children and outside agencies to improve the quality of support provided
- to familiarise all staff with the statutory requirements concerning special educational needs and inclusion and where necessary provide in-service training
- to identify cases of special educational need as early as possible
- to decide on and provide the appropriate support for the individual pupil so identified
- to devise effective monitoring systems to ensure the success of the programmes set up
- to plan strategically for improving the physical environment of the school to increase the participation of pupils with disabilities and potential pupils with disabilities who may attend the school in the future.

Signed	_____	_____	_____
	Chairman	Principal	Date

Roles and Responsibilities

a) **The Board of Governors:**

The Board of Governors accepts and will carry out the Roles and Responsibilities as laid out in the *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1996 Order)* and the *Supplement to the Code of Practice (2005 Order)* and will determine the School's general approach. It will report each year on the SEN provision in the school.

b) **The Principal** has responsibility for the day to day management of the SEN provision.

c) **The SEN co-ordinator** (responsible to the Vice-Principal (Pastoral) and through her to the Principal) has responsibility for the day to day operation of the policy.

This involves:

- co-ordinating the provision for children with SEN
- liaising with and advising staff on appropriate strategies to support pupils with SEN
- maintaining the SEN Register and other records on pupils included on the Register
- drawing up Individual Education Plans for pupils with SEN
- liaising with the parents of children who have SEN, including the organization of and reporting on Annual Review meetings
- liaising with external agencies
- establishing SEN in-service training needs of staff and organizing and contributing, as appropriate, to training

d) **All teaching staff** should be involved in the development and implementation of the policy and should be familiar with its procedures. In line with departmental policies, teachers as a matter of form, monitor the progress of all pupils in their care.

e) **All members of the school community** have a responsibility to act in accordance with the Supplement to the Code of Practice (SENDO).

Identification, Assessment and Provision

A pupil can be identified as having SEN from any one or more of the following:

1. Admissions information
2. Parental notification or concern
3. Information from Primary or another Secondary school
4. Undergoing Statutory Assessment on arrival in school
5. Having a Statement of Special Educational Needs
6. Teacher concern

If a pupil already has been determined to have SEN on arrival in school, the SENCO will be informed. The SENCO will then liaise with the pupil, parents and external agencies, as required, to establish or confirm the stage of the Code of Practice at which the pupil is and to determine the nature of support to be provided. Teachers will then be advised and supported to assist the individual pupil in achieving her full potential. The SENCO, in liaison with teachers will review, and if appropriate, modify the provisions made.

A pupil may also be identified during the course of her education at Strathearn as having SEN as a result of teacher or parental concern. In this case there are clear procedures in place for determining the need for additional support. Frequent open communication between staff concerned is most important at all stages.

The steps in the determining if a pupil has a special educational need are as follows:

- i. A concern is raised that a pupil is having a difficulty (academic, behavioural, emotional, organizational, communication, etc.)
- ii. The pupil is interviewed by her subject teacher or Form Tutor to ascertain the nature of and / or the reason for the difficulty. Written records are kept.
- iii. Advice, remedial strategies and reassurance are provided in liaison with the Head of Department / Year Head / Head of Key Stage, as appropriate. Parents may also be contacted, if appropriate. Written records are kept of the action taken.
- iv. If the above support is unsuccessful, the difficulty persists and it becomes apparent that a pupil fulfils the criteria laid down in the definition of Special Educational Needs the school would proceed to implementing the first of the five stages laid out in the Code of Practice.

Stages in the Code of Practice.

Stage 1	Subject teacher, in conjunction with the Form Tutor, has identified and reported a girl's special educational need, and sets appropriate support and targets.
Stage 2	The SENCO assesses the girl's learning difficulty and plans, monitors and reviews the special educational provision working with the subject teacher and Form Tutor.
Stage 3	The ELB considers the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate, makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.
Stage 4	Teachers and the SENCO are supported by specialists from outside the school and the Education and Library Board is informed. Report of Educational Need is used to devise an Individual Education Plan.
Stage 5	The ELB considers the need for a statement of special educational needs and, if appropriate, makes a statement and arranges, monitors and reviews provision.

At each stage the pupil will be registered on the SEN Register and recorded according to her specific educational needs as required by the DE Guidance for Schools on SEN categories (2006). Parents will be consulted and kept informed of the provisions put in place.

Implementation of School-based provision at Stages 1, 2 and 3

Stage 1	Subject teacher completes a Stage 1 Referral Form and in conjunction with Form Tutor and SENCO, will set suitable targets and monitoring arrangements. These will be reviewed at agreed intervals when the SENCO will decide if the girl remains at Stage 1, progresses to Stage 2, or is removed from the register.
Stage 2	SENCO will assess the girl's learning difficulties and with all available information, will in conjunction with the class teacher and Form Tutor, draw up an Individual Education Plan. Parents contribute to the IEP, and are advised how best to help their daughter. The IEP will be reviewed at agreed intervals when the SENCO will decide if the girl remains at Stage 2, progresses to Stage 3, returns to Stage 1 or is removed from the register.
Stage 3	SENCO will consult with outside specialists on the need for assessment by them of the pupil. If appropriate a referral form will be completed by the SENCO requesting an assessment. Following an assessment by specialists, a report on the educational need and the support required is sent to the school and a copy forwarded to parents. The SENCO uses this advice to revise or draw up an IEP and to make special examination provision, if appropriate. The SENCO takes advice from outside agencies as to whether the pupil should remain at Stage 3 or progress to Stage 4.

Progression through Stages 4 and 5 is determined by the ELB.

Liaison with Outside Agencies

Links between the SENCO and certain outside agencies and support services include:

- a) Social Services
- b) School Psychology Service (BELB & SEELB)
- c) Special Educational Needs Advisors (BELB & SEELB)
- d) Health Trusts
- e) Clinical Medical Officer
- f) And all other appropriate services

Allocation of Resources

Where money has been allocated by DE for pupils who are on the SEN Register, including those who are statemented, the school will ensure that these resources will be made available to meet the needs of the pupils under the terms of the SEN legislation.

Curriculum Access for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

All pupils, including those with special educational needs will be given access to the full statutory curriculum and to the full range of extra curricular activities. A risk assessment will be undertaken, where deemed necessary to ensure pupil safety. The need for reasonable adjustments will be assessed and implemented in accordance with SENDO legislation.

INSED

The school recognises its responsibility to provide the necessary INSED for all members of staff. On an annual basis the Senior Management Team will consider and review INSED needs with direct reference to the needs of the SEN pupils in the school.

Partnership with Parents

It is the policy of the school to work closely with parents. Opportunities are provided for parents to meet their daughters' teachers when the need arises or routinely on an annual basis. Arrangements with regard to parental consultation and record keeping are laid out clearly in the school's pastoral policy.

The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy is available to all parents on request.

Arrangements for Making and Dealing with Complaints

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) came into effect on 1 September 2005 as a result of SENDO and exists to:

1. resolve disagreements between ELBs / Boards of Governors of schools and parents about the way in which they carry out their responsibilities towards children with special educational needs

and

2. resolve disagreements between parents and schools about the provision being made for children with special educational needs

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right of appeal to the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)**.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal considers parents' appeals against the decisions of Education and Library Boards about children's special educational needs, where parents cannot reach agreement with the Board. Should a parent wish to take a case to tribunal the steps are laid out clearly in the booklet "Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal - How to Appeal", which is obtainable from the Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19 7PR.

Further information on DARS and SENDIST may also be obtained from www.education-support.org.uk/parents/special-education.