



Policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Policy to promote the successful inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and requirements at Abercorn School.

At Abercorn School, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities. Not all pupils with disabilities have special educational needs and not all pupils with SEN meet the definition of disability but this policy covers all of these pupils.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy was reviewed and updated in 2008 in line with the revised Code of Practice.
- 1.2 This school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the school.
- 1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional help or help of a different kind from that given to other children of the same age.
- 1.4 Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.
- 1.5 The Disability Discrimination Act identifies the fact that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act. We will assess each child as required, and make the appropriate provision, based on their identified needs.
- 1.6 This school also provides for and recognises that at any time, a number of gifted or talented children may inhabit our classrooms. (see additional policy on Gifted and Talented)

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are:
 - to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child;
 - to ensure that the special educational needs of children of all abilities are identified, assessed and provided for;
 - to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;

- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs;
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process.

3 Educational inclusion

3.1 In our school, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of them all. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

3.2 Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

4 Special educational needs

4.1 Children with special educational needs have learning requirements that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children have a learning difficulty if:

- they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for other children of the same age.

4.2 Many of the children who join us have already been in early education. In some cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed throughout their school career with us. We use this information to assist in the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

4.3 If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This level of support is called School Action. The child's class teacher will offer interventions that are

different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The class teacher will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. The Learning Support coordinator, if not already involved, will become so if the teacher and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support. The Learning Support Coordinator will provide assistance in carrying out further assessments of the child's needs if necessary.

- 4.4 We will record, in an Individual Education Plan (IEP), the strategies used to support the child. The IEP will show the short-term target set for the child, and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term.
- 4.5 If the IEP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will meet with parents to recommend further action. This may lead to additional strategies or strategies that are different from those used in School Action. This enhanced level of support is called School Action Plus. External support services will provide information for the child's new IEP. The new strategies in the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented within the child's normal classroom setting.
- 4.6 In our school, the Learning Support Coordinator:
 - manages the day-to-day operation of the policy;
 - supports and advises colleagues;
 - oversees the records of all children with special educational needs;
 - acts as the link with parents if necessary
 - acts as the link with external agencies and other support agencies if necessary
 - monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision, and reports to the SMT and through them to the Board of Directors.
 - manages a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs;
 - contributes to the professional development of all staff.

5 The role of the Board of Directors

- 5.1 The Board of Directors has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.
- 5.2 The Directors does its best to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children.
- 5.3 The Board of Directors has identified the High Mistress as having specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. The 'responsible person' in this school is the High Mistress. She ensures that all those who teach a pupil with a statement of special educational needs are aware of those needs.
- 5.4 The High Mistress ensures that all Directors are aware of the school's SEN provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

6 Allocation of resources

- 6.1 The Learning Support Coordinator is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with statements of special educational needs.

7 Assessment

- 7.1 Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.
- 7.2 The class teacher and the Learning Support Coordinator discuss and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.
- 7.3 The Learning Support Coordinator works closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of support.
- 7.4 The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the Learning Support Coordinator can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

8 Access to the curriculum

- 8.1 All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable them to:
- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
 - experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.
- 8.2 Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.
- 8.3 Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success.
- 8.4 We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation inside or outside the classroom.

9 Partnership with parents

- 9.1 The school works closely with parents in the support of those children with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.
- 9.2 The Learning Support Coordinator and individual teachers are always available to meet with parents to discuss this policy and its application to a pupil with SEN.

- 9.3 We have a meeting each term to share the progress of special needs children with their parents. This may or may not be during Parent Teacher evenings. We share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

10 Pupil participation

- 10.1 In our school, we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. The work in the Early Years Foundation Stage recognises the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills.

11 Monitoring and review

- 11.1 The Learning Support Coordinator monitors the movement of children within the Learning Support system in school. The Learning Support Coordinator provides staff and governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.
- 11.2 The Learning Support Coordinator may support teachers involved in drawing up Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children.

Signed: Learning Support Coordinator

Date: May 2008