

***OUR LADY'S PRIMARY
SCHOOL***

***SPECIAL EDUCATION
NEEDS POLICY***

MARCH 2016

Introduction

Following on from our vision and core values we, at Our Lady's, aim to develop each child's full potential in a climate of joy, freedom, respect, challenge, co-operation and celebration. We aim to create a secure environment where every child has a sense of belonging in a caring community, and can grow in confidence and has equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Children may have special educational need and /or a disability either throughout, or at any time during, their school career at Our Lady's. In the interests of these children we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to meet their individual needs. 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. Teachers will make provision for these children so that they can access a broad balanced and relevant curriculum.

Our policy takes account of the following documentation:

Code of Practice 1998 (DENI)

http://www.deni.gov.uk/the_code_of_practice.pdf

Supplement to the Code of Practice 2005 (DENI)

<http://www.deni.gov.uk/supplement.pdf>

Disability Discrimination Code of Practice (2005)

http://www.deni.gov.uk/disability_discrimination.pdf

Every School A Good School 2009 (DENI)

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/03-schools_impvt_prog_pg/03-every-school-a-good-school-a-policy-for-school-improvement.htm

Good Practice Guidelines 2009 (Inter-EA)

<http://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-education/publications/>

Definitions

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 generally for children of comparable age.” Code of Practice 1998 (paragraph:1.4)

Disability

”Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

Key Principles of Inclusion

'Inclusion is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school'.

Achievement (2004)

Removing Barriers to

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, Health and Safety and Medical Needs.

The areas outlining the aspects of SEN/disability are outlined in Appendix 1

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified early, and intervention reviewed regularly.
- To create an environment that enhances the child's self esteem and meets the special educational needs of each child, ensuring that all pupils with SEN/Disability feel valued and are educated, where possible, alongside their peers.
- 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.
- The support of parents and pupils is crucial if an Education Plan (EP) is to be effectively implemented. 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.
- To make clear the importance of working in partnership (parents and special education professionals) in the process;
- 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 identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs and encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
- To enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum and ensure that where appropriate the wishes of the children and views of individual parents are taken into account.
- To develop each child's social skills to enable the child to work and live successfully with other people and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- Teachers should identify the pupil's needs and using diagnostic procedures assess the nature of these needs as soon as possible.
- Teachers and SENCO plan remediation programmes based on this assessment.
- Teacher, Classroom Assistant, Child, Parent and other relevant agencies should collaborate and communicate regularly so that good communication is fostered.
- To develop our systems of record keeping and passing on of information so that our provision for the child is effective
- Ensure that no child with a disability/ SEN is treated less favourably or disadvantaged in anyway in comparison to those who have no disability/SEN.
- Develop and make use of all resources in support of pupils with SEN/disability.
- All staff are responsible for early identification of children with SEN through professional judgement, testing, information gleaned from parents, previous teachers, external agencies etc
- To work closely with all EA departments and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENs.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision

Roles and Responsibilities

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. However in order to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision, the Board of Governors have delegated responsibility for pupils with special educational needs to Mrs K Comiskey (**SENCO**)

The Role of the Board of Governors

In 'Every School a Good School' (DE) – The Governor Role (2010) Chapter 12 of the document relates specifically to the Governor role for pupils with special educational needs.

The role of the Board of Governors of Our Lady's PS 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;
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- 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.

It is important that the Governors establish a mechanism to monitor the school's work in the area of SEN

The Role of the Principal

The role of the principal is to:

- Meet with SENCO;
- Report to the Board of Governors about children with SEN;
- 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 and ensure that provision of SEN has a prominent position in the School Development plan.
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs
- Monitor the overall implementation of the SEN policy;
- Attend and chair annual reviews.

The Role of the Special Needs Co-ordinator

In Our Lady's the Special Needs Co-ordinator is **Mrs K Comiskey**. She is responsible for:

- Drawing up, implementing and monitoring an Action Plan annually in response to the requirements of the SDP.
- Responding to requests for advice from other teachers
- Managing the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- Co-ordinating the provision for and managing the response to children's special educational needs;
- Managing support and advising colleagues;
- Maintaining the school's SEN register;
- Contributing to and managing the records of all children with special educational needs;
- Completing the documentation required by outside agencies.
- Being aware of the school-based assessment relationship to the children with special educational needs
- Acting as the link with parents and pupils.
- Ensuring there are resources and a range of teaching materials to enable appropriate provision to be made.
- Acting as a link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- Monitoring and evaluating the special needs provision;
- Managing a range of resources, human and material, linked to children with special educational needs.
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training.
- Organising and coordinating withdrawal timetable.

The role of the Class Teacher

The responsibility for the day-to-day teaching of SEN pupils rests with the class teacher. Their role involves:

- Being aware of current legislation
- Keeping up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Retaining overall responsibility for the children in their class who have special educational needs thus developing an inclusive classroom.
- Working in conjunction with the SENCO to identify difficulties that impact on learning;
- Ensuring that in planning and delivering the curriculum, adequate provision is made for children with differing levels of need and ability;
- Being involved in testing and recording data for the SEN Register
- Contributing to, managing and reviewing EPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Keeping in close contact with parents to ensure continuity in learning between home and school.
- Involving classroom assistants as part of the learning team

The role of the Classroom Assistant

The role of the classroom assistant is to:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher and collaborate with class teacher to help fulfil targets set out in IEP'S;
- Be involved in planning and record keeping (eg: Behaviour Journal)
- Work closely with and report back to class teacher of any development in child's progress;
- Ensure an atmosphere of inclusion for the child.
- Try to encourage independence in the child
- 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
- Attend meetings and training and share good practice, eg demonstrate Sensory Motor Circuits to other school staff)

The document titled 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School' (DE) will be consulted for relevant guidance and information.

The role of the individual 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 – pars 1.19)

Children in Our Lady's who are capable of forming views are involved and encouraged to express their opinions and receive information about their learning and matters affecting them. We are aware that their views however should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capabilities.

Key areas where a particular pupil might be involved include:

- Contributing to the assessment
- Contributing to education plans through discussing targets
- Working towards achieving agreed targets and
- Contributing to the review of EPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 7

The Role of the Parents/carers

'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.

The active support and participation of parents is a vital component in the shared task of providing for the needs of all pupils in our care. Parents will always be an important link in the education of children and more so with pupils with Special Educational Needs. When there are concerns about a child's needs, parents are informed by the SENCO and invited to the school to discuss the situation with the Class Teacher.

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 EPs

All concerns are shared with parents and the child's IEP's are discussed. Copies are given to parents so they are aware how they can help and support their child. The IEP review is shared with parents and they are informed about their child's progress. If they wish they may approach the Class Teacher or SENCO at any time throughout the year if they have any concerns. We encourage parents to make an active contribution to their child's education.

Admissions

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN must be consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the EA.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the EA 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

Our school provides accessible arrangements for children with SEN/disabilities in the following ways:

- At present pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building.
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users
- There are facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disabilities.
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and attainments.

Annual Report

The BOG reports each year on SEN provision in Our Lady's Primary School. Information for this report is collated by the SENCo and the Principal.

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)

'Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness'
(Supplementary Guide of the Code of Practice paragraph 5.12 - page 44)

Selection of Children with Special Needs

In Our Lady's Primary School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Parental information
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school
- Cognitive ability tests
- Attainment tests
- Summative and formative assessment
- Key Stage Assessments * subject to review*
- Teacher observation
- Professional Reports
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Care Plans
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children and
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews

Current Procedures for assessment in our school are described in Appendix 2

A summary of procedures to be followed through the year groups is outlined in Appendix 3

The Management of SENs

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

In Our Lady's Primary School, we follow the five stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice (1998) for the identification of children with learning difficulties, the assessment of their special educational needs and the making of whatever special educational provision is necessary to meet those needs.

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with SEN lie at Stages 1, 2 or 3. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

Stage 1

Stage 1 begins with a concern that a child may have special educational needs. Normally such a view is expressed either to or by the class teacher. The class teacher maintains day-to-day responsibility for meeting the pupil's SENs and should inform the SEN co-ordinator and the Principal and consult the child's parents. In addition, the class teacher should:

- Collect and record information about the child and make an initial assessment of SEN.
- Provide or arrange special help within the normal curriculum framework, such as: increased differentiation of class work, alternative teaching and learning strategies to help meet the child's needs. The nature and aims of such provision should be recorded, together with the targets, monitoring arrangements and review date.
- Monitor and review progress and report back to SENCo.

Stage 1 Review

Parents should always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes the SENCo will decide whether to remove pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins with a decision either at the Stage 1 Review, or following discussions between teachers and parents, to proceed with early and more intensive action.

The SENCo:

- Takes the lead in assessing and identifying the child's learning difficulty. This includes planning, monitoring and reviewing the special educational provision working with the child's teacher. The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child in the classroom.
- Again, working with the class teacher, the SENCo should ensure that an Education Plan is drawn up for the pupil.
- All these operations should take into account, as far as possible, the child's own views and the parents' views.

Stage 2 Review

Normally the Stage 2 review should be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and, where possible, child and parents. It should focus on the child's progress.

- If progress has been satisfactory the SENCo may decide that the child should continue at Stage 2 in order to consolidate gains. If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the SENCo may decide that the child no longer needs special educational provision at Stage 2 and may decide to move the child to Stage 1.
- The child's name should be kept on the SEN register until there is no longer any significant concern about progress.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stages 1 and 2 do not result in adequate progress the SENCo should move the child forward to Stage 3 and referral may be made to specialist support services/agencies outside the school.

Stage 3

Stage 3 begins with a decision either at Stage 2 review or following discussions between the SENCo, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intervention with external support is necessary.

At this Stage the SENCO takes a lead role, working closely with the child's teacher and drawing on the expertise of relevant external support services.

The SENCo, working with the class teacher, and with the help of the external support services, should ensure that a Stage 3 Education Plan is drawn up. Together they should consider a range of teaching approaches and appropriate support materials, including the use of ICT. The Education Plan should set out revised strategies for supporting the child's progress and arrangements for monitoring and review. It should be implemented, as far as possible, within the everyday classroom setting. The SENCo should ensure close liaison with the child's teacher. Parents should always be kept informed and the child should be involved as far as possible.

At Stages 2 and 3 of the Code of Practice the SENCo and class teacher should consider potential benefits of:

- The Good Practice Guidelines.
- SEN Resource File
- Early years Learner support handbook (BEELB)
- Encouraging inclusive activities to ensure integration of the pupil.
- Differentiated teaching.
- Withdrawal for more intensive support.
- SEN resources available within school; support programmes, ICT, etc.
- Available staff skills which support pupils with SEN.
- Implementation of any provision/strategies as a result of external advice, support and training provided by relevant EA/other services.

Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan should normally be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and where possible, parents and child. Relevant external support services may also be present, particularly if the child's progress has not been satisfactory. The review should focus on the child's progress and whether this has been adequate.

- If intervention remains appropriate the child will remain at Stage 3 for a further period of time.
If the progress has been satisfactory and intervention is no longer required, the SENCo, following consultation, may agree that the child no
- longer needs external support at Stage 3 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 2 and action appropriate to that stage will be taken.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 3 have not resulted in adequate progress, following consultation with the SENCo, teacher, external support services and parents, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

Stage 4

'In some cases schools will conclude that the pupil's needs remain so substantial that they cannot be effectively met within the resources normally available to the school.' (Supplement to the Code of Practice – 4.64)

Following an application to the EA from school's principal or the parent, the EA will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that a request of this kind will not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement of SENs.

Following Statutory Assessment

The EA will either:

Make and maintain a Statement of Special Educational Needs and arrange, monitor and review provision.

or

Provide a Note in Lieu of a Statement.

A Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and the arrangements for monitoring and review.

A Note in Lieu of a Statement sets out the reasons for the EA's decision not to make a Statement of Special Educational Needs and includes supporting evidence from the Statutory Assessment.

Stage 5

Once the statement has been made final:

- Provision and /or support will be arranged to meet the child's needs.
- The SENCo ensures that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up, implemented, monitored and reviewed
- The Annual Review and Transition processes will take place.

The Annual Review

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs, whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews should be seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress.

The Annual Review will

- Gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement.
 - Review the special provision made for the child, including placement.
 - Consider the appropriateness of maintaining the Statement of SENs.
- Relevant school staff will undertake the Review on behalf of the EA.
 - The Review will take place in school, chaired by the Principal (or other person as delegated).
 - Relevant forms and 5EA guidance for this process is available from Special Education

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the five staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

Record Keeping

The SENCo maintains the following records:

- SEN Register
- Records of Concern
- Education plans/Reviews
- Statements/Annual Reviews
- Assessment results/data
- Individual Pupil Files
- Record of liaison/meetings with EA/Health Services
- Record of meetings with parents
- Staff Support, Advice and Training Records

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with SENs

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is monitored.

- EPs monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis.
- Evidence that the pupil is making progress.
- Quality reviews of EPs and other relevant and purposeful measures that focus on educational outcomes to inform future planning and inform movement either up or down through the Code of Practice Stages.

Professional Development

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school in consultation with the SENCo.

The SENCo should keep a record of all training relating to SEN.

It is essential that all staff keep up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effectively for pupils.

Any staff attending INSET should disseminate the training with colleagues.

Partnerships

In Our Lady's Primary School we have developed partnerships with the following:

EA Support Services

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Behaviour Support

Language & Communication

Specific Literacy Difficulties (SPLD)

Interdisciplinary Services -: Multi Agency Support Teams for Schools (MASTS)

OT;

ACE team;

Other Support Services

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Barnardos

NSPCC

PSNI

Pupil Personal Development Services

Paediatrics

Complaints

All concerns regarding SENs in OLPS school will be dealt with in line with school's existing complaints procedures.

SEN Advice and Information Service

EA have set up an SEN Advice and Information Service to provide support in relation to children with Special Educational Needs.

Details of this service can be found on EA website.

Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)

DARS was established in September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO). It aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/Boards of Governors for pupils who are on the Code of Practice, in relation to special educational provision. Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to DARS.

Members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a separate venue from home or school) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute. DARS is separate and independent from Special Education Section.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). Parents/Guardians may contact this service directly.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). This body considers parents' appeals against decisions of EAs and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

Policy Date (Draft Feb 2016) Drawn up by Principal and SENCo in consultation with staff)

Signature of Principal _____

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors _____

Review Date by June 2017

Introduction

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- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs
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- Managing support and advising colleagues;
- Maintaining the school's SEN register;
- Contributing to and managing the records of all children with special educational needs;
- Completing the documentation required by outside agencies.
- Being aware of the school-based assessment relationship to the children with special educational needs
- Acting as the link with parents and pupils.
- Ensuring there are resources and a range of teaching materials to enable appropriate provision to be made.
- Acting as a link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- Monitoring and evaluating the special needs provision;
- Managing a range of resources, human and material, linked to children with special educational needs.

- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training.
- Organising and coordinating withdrawal timetable.

The role of the Class Teacher

The responsibility for the day-to-day teaching of SEN pupils rests with the class teacher. Their role involves:

- Being aware of current legislation
- Keeping up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Retaining overall responsibility for the children in their class who have special educational needs thus developing an inclusive classroom.
- Working in conjunction with the SENCO to identify difficulties that impact on learning;
- Ensuring that in planning and delivering the curriculum, adequate provision is made for children with differing levels of need and ability;
- Being involved in testing and recording data for the SEN Register
- Contributing to, managing and reviewing EPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Keeping in close contact with parents to ensure continuity in learning between home and school.
- Involving classroom assistants as part of the learning team

The role of the Classroom Assistant

The role of the classroom assistant is to:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher and collaborate with class teacher to help fulfil targets set out in IEP'S;
- Be involved in planning and record keeping (eg: Behaviour Journal)
- Work closely with and report back to class teacher of any development in child's progress;
- Ensure an atmosphere of inclusion for the child.
- Try to encourage independence in the child
- 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
- Attend meetings and training and share good practice, eg demonstrate Sensory Motor Circuits to other school staff)

The document titled 'Guidance on the Management, Deployment and Development of Assistants in School' (DE) will be consulted for relevant guidance and information.

The role of the individual 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 – pars 1.19)

Children in Our Lady’s who are capable of forming views are involved and encouraged to express their opinions and receive information about their learning and matters affecting them. We are aware that their views however should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capabilities.

Key areas where a particular pupil might be involved include:

- Contributing to the assessment
- Contributing to education plans through discussing targets
- Working towards achieving agreed targets and
- Contributing to the review of EPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 7

The Role of the Parents/carers

‘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.

The active support and participation of parents is a vital component in the shared task of providing for the needs of all pupils in our care. Parents will always be an important link in the education of children and more so with pupils with Special Educational Needs. When there are concerns about a child’s needs, parents are informed by the SENCO and invited to the school to discuss the situation with the Class Teacher.

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 EPs

All concerns are shared with parents and the child's IEP's are discussed. Copies are given to parents so they are aware how they can help and support their child. The IEP review is shared with parents and they are informed about their child's progress. If they wish they may approach the Class Teacher or SENCO at any time throughout the year if they have any concerns. We encourage parents to make an active contribution to their child's education.

Admissions

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN must be consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the EA.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the EA 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

Our school provides accessible arrangements for children with SEN/disabilities in the following ways:

- At present pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building.
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users
- There are facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disabilities.
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and attainments.

Annual Report

The BOG reports each year on SEN provision in Our Lady's Primary School. Information for this report is collated by the SENCo and the Principal.

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)

'Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness'
(Supplementary Guide of the Code of Practice paragraph 5.12 - page 44)

Selection of Children with Special Needs

In Our Lady's Primary School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Parental information
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school
- Cognitive ability tests
- Attainment tests
- Summative and formative assessment
- Key Stage Assessments * subject to review*
- Teacher observation
- Professional Reports
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Care Plans
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children and
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews

Current Procedures for assessment in our school are described in Appendix 2
A summary of procedures to be followed through the year groups is outlined in Appendix 3

The Management of SENs

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

In Our Lady's Primary School, we follow the five stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice (1998) for the identification of children with learning difficulties, the assessment of their special educational needs and the making of whatever special educational provision is necessary to meet those needs.

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with SEN lie at Stages 1, 2 or 3. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

Stage 1

Stage 1 begins with a concern that a child may have special educational needs. Normally such a view is expressed either to or by the class teacher. The class teacher maintains day-to-day responsibility for meeting the pupil's SENs and should inform the SEN co-ordinator and the Principal and consult the child's parents. In addition, the class teacher should:

- Collect and record information about the child and make an initial assessment of SEN.
- Provide or arrange special help within the normal curriculum framework, such as: increased differentiation of class work, alternative teaching and learning strategies to help meet the

child's needs. The nature and aims of such provision should be recorded, together with the targets, monitoring arrangements and review date.

- Monitor and review progress and report back to SENCo.

Stage 1 Review

Parents should always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes the SENCo will decide whether to remove pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins with a decision either at the Stage 1 Review, or following discussions between teachers and parents, to proceed with early and more intensive action.

The SENCo:

- Takes the lead in assessing and identifying the child's learning difficulty. This includes planning, monitoring and reviewing the special educational provision working with the child's teacher. The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child in the classroom.
- Again, working with the class teacher, the SENCo should ensure that an Education Plan is drawn up for the pupil.
- All these operations should take into account, as far as possible, the child's own views and the parents' views.

Stage 2 Review

Normally the Stage 2 review should be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and, where possible, child and parents. It should focus on the child's progress.

- If progress has been satisfactory the SENCo may decide that the child should continue at Stage 2 in order to consolidate gains. If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the SENCo may decide that the child no longer needs special educational provision at Stage 2 and may decide to move the child to Stage 1.
- The child's name should be kept on the SEN register until there is no longer any significant concern about progress.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stages 1 and 2 do not result in adequate progress the SENCo should move the child forward to Stage 3 and referral may be made to specialist support services/agencies outside the school.

Stage 3

Stage 3 begins with a decision either at Stage 2 review or following discussions between the SENCo, Principal, teachers and parents, that early intervention with external support is necessary.

At this Stage the SENCO takes a lead role, working closely with the child's teacher and drawing on the expertise of relevant external support services.

The SENCo, working with the class teacher, and with the help of the external support services, should ensure that a Stage 3 Education Plan is drawn up. Together they should consider a range of teaching approaches and appropriate support materials, including the use of ICT. The Education Plan should set out revised strategies for supporting the child's progress and arrangements for monitoring and review. It should be implemented, as far as possible, within the everyday classroom setting. The SENCo should ensure close liaison with the child's teacher. Parents should always be kept informed and the child should be involved as far as possible.

At Stages 2 and 3 of the Code of Practice the SENCo and class teacher should consider potential benefits of:

- The Good Practice Guidelines.
- SEN Resource File
- Early years Learner support handbook (BEELB)
- Encouraging inclusive activities to ensure integration of the pupil.
- Differentiated teaching.
- Withdrawal for more intensive support.
- SEN resources available within school; support programmes, ICT, etc.
- Available staff skills which support pupils with SEN.
- Implementation of any provision/strategies as a result of external advice, support and training provided by relevant EA/other services.

Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan should normally be conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and where possible, parents and child. Relevant external support services may also be present, particularly if the child's progress has not been satisfactory. The review should focus on the child's progress and whether this has been adequate.

- If intervention remains appropriate the child will remain at Stage 3 for a further period of time.
If the progress has been satisfactory and intervention is no longer required, the SENCo, following consultation, may agree that the child no
- longer needs external support at Stage 3 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 2 and action appropriate to that stage will be taken.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 3 have not resulted in adequate progress, following consultation with the SENCo, teacher, external support services and parents, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

Stage 4

'In some cases schools will conclude that the pupil's needs remain so substantial that they cannot be effectively met within the resources normally available to the school.' (Supplement to the Code of Practice – 4.64)

Following an application to the EA from school's principal or the parent, the EA will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that a request of this kind will not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement of SENs.

Following Statutory Assessment

The EA will either:

Make and maintain a Statement of Special Educational Needs and arrange, monitor and review provision.

or

Provide a Note in Lieu of a Statement.

A Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and the arrangements for monitoring and review.

A Note in Lieu of a Statement sets out the reasons for the EA's decision not to make a Statement of Special Educational Needs and includes supporting evidence from the Statutory Assessment.

Stage 5

Once the statement has been made final:

- Provision and /or support will be arranged to meet the child's needs.
- The SENCo ensures that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up, implemented, monitored and reviewed
- The Annual Review and Transition processes will take place.

The Annual Review

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs, whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews should be seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress.

The Annual Review will

- Gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement.
 - Review the special provision made for the child, including placement.
 - Consider the appropriateness of maintaining the Statement of SENs.
- Relevant school staff will undertake the Review on behalf of the EA.
 - The Review will take place in school, chaired by the Principal (or other person as delegated).
 - Relevant forms and 5EA guidance for this process is available from Special Education

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the five staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

Record Keeping

The SENCo maintains the following records:

- SEN Register
- Records of Concern
- Education plans/Reviews
- Statements/Annual Reviews
- Assessment results/data
- Individual Pupil Files
- Record of liaison/meetings with EA/Health Services
- Record of meetings with parents
- Staff Support, Advice and Training Records

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with SENs

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is monitored.

- EPs monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis.
- Evidence that the pupil is making progress.
- Quality reviews of EPs and other relevant and purposeful measures that focus on educational outcomes to inform future planning and inform movement either up or down through the Code of Practice Stages.

Professional Development

The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school in consultation with the SENCo.

The SENCo should keep a record of all training relating to SEN.

It is essential that all staff keep up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effectively for pupils.

Any staff attending INSET should disseminate the training with colleagues.

Partnerships

In Our Lady's Primary School we have developed partnerships with the following:

EA Support Services

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Behaviour Support

Language & Communication

Specific Literacy Difficulties (SPLD)

Interdisciplinary Services -: Multi Agency Support Teams for Schools (MASTS)

OT;

ACE team;

Other Support Services

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Barnardos

NSPCC

PSNI

Pupil Personal Development Services

Paediatrics

Complaints

All concerns regarding SENs in OLPS school will be dealt with in line with school's existing complaints procedures.

SEN Advice and Information Service

EA have set up an SEN Advice and Information Service to provide support in relation to children with Special Educational Needs.

Details of this service can be found on EA website.

Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)

DARS was established in September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO). It aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/Boards of Governors for pupils who are on the Code of Practice, in relation to special educational provision. Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to DARS.

Members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a separate venue from home or school) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute. DARS is separate and independent from Special Education Section.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). Parents/Guardians may contact this service directly.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). This body considers parents' appeals against decisions of EAs and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

Policy Date (Draft Feb 2016) Drawn up by Principal and SENCo in consultation with staff)

Signature of Principal _____

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors _____

Review Date by June 2017