



Dormston School

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy

Date	Review date	SEND Leads	Nominated Governor
January 2023	January 2024	Kate Beer	George Craig
			Ratified: Chairs Action Date: 30 March 2023

Key people relating to this policy:

Headteacher: Caroline Sutton

Assistant Headteacher of Inclusion / SENDCO: Kate Beer

Statement of Intent

This policy outlines the framework for Dormston School to meet its duties and obligations to provide a high quality education to all of its pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities.

Dormston School therefore intends to work with the LA, outside agencies and external providers to ensure it acts on and reflects recommendations made in the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) and applies the following principles which underpin this policy.

- The involvement of children, parents and young people in decision making.
- The identification of children and young people's needs.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide effective support.
- High quality provision and an inclusive practice removing barriers to learning to support the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over their support.
- Successful preparation for adult life, equipping the pupils with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to become self-motivated, independent and lifelong learners.
- Provide the pupils with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to live fulfilling and productive lives when they leave school.

At Dormston School we recognise that every pupil is unique and has individual needs and abilities. In order to achieve this, we recognise that every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person including those with SEND and it is the responsibility of all staff to provide an inclusive, relevant and stimulating educational experience for all pupils. Our aim is to enable all pupils with SEND to access all learning experiences and opportunities for them to achieve their very best.

Legal Framework

- This policy will have due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to:
- Children and Families Act 2014 (and related regulations).
- Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Children's Act 1989.

It will also take into account statutory and non-statutory related guidance, including but not limited to:

- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

Definitions

The law states that a child or young person has a special educational need if he/she has a:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.

- Disability or health condition which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Areas of Special Educational Need

In line with SEND Code of Practice, Dormston School identifies SEND needs under the following four categories.

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Physical and sensory

Inclusion

Alongside the Equality Act (2010), the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0-25 years (2015) provides a framework for schools to support students and to prevent discrimination against pupils with SEND and disabilities when accessing education. Staff at Dormston School have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils with a disability are not treated less favourably than their peers nor disadvantaged in any aspect of school life.

The inclusion and needs of all stake holders in the school community are supported. For example, parents and carers who need modified versions of correspondence from school (e.g. Braille, enlarged print) are invited to contact the school with their requests. Interpreters can be contacted by school staff to support parents and carers with a hearing impairment, at meetings and parent's evening.

Access and Facilities

Dormston School has increased accessibility and improved facilities for people with physical disabilities. These include:

- Ramps that give improved access to certain areas of the school
- Three disabled toilets with hygiene facilities
- A lift
- Single storey purpose built additional classrooms and facilities in newly extended area of school (F Block)
- Handrails on staircases in and around the school
- Stair grips on staircases around the school
- The school has an Accessibility Plan which is published on the school website

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Board

The Governing board has a responsibility to ensure the school:

- Makes necessary provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Has a suitable policy for pupils with SEND needs and disabilities.
- Has regard to the Code of Practice (2015) and Equality Act (2010) when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Fully engages parents and / or young people with SEND when drawing up policies that affect them.
- Identifies, assesses and makes effective and suitable SEND provision for all children and young people with SEND.

- Monitors and evaluates SEND provision at relevant Governing Board Committees and the full Governing Board.
- Designates an appropriate member of staff as having responsibility for co-ordinating provision for pupils with additional needs.
- Makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to help alleviate any substantial disadvantage they experience because of their disability.
- Takes necessary steps to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not discriminated against, harassed or victimised.
- Publishes annual information on the schools SEND Policy, setting out the measures and facilities to assist access for pupils with additional needs.
- Publishes annual information about the arrangements for the admission of pupils with disabilities, the steps taken to prevent children with being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist pupils with disabilities, and the school's accessibility plan.
- Publishes accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access for pupils with disabilities to the curriculum, the physical environment and reviews this information every three years.
- Develops complaints procedures that can be accessed via the school website or obtained directly from the school office.
- Has a named person responsible for Special Needs and this is reviewed annually. (For 2022-2023, the named Governor for Special Needs is George Craig).

In addition to these, the Governing Board also recognises that it has a responsibility to monitor the balance of curriculum, the quality and effectiveness of teaching and to ensure that all pupils' needs (special or otherwise) are being met.

To fulfil these responsibilities the governors, meet regularly with the Headteacher and teacher representatives to review all aspects of the above.

The Governing Board also admits children with SEND into the school in line with the school's agreed admissions policy. The Governing Board reviews this policy annually and is published on the school website.

The Governing Board is aware of the need to be flexible in considering the long-term future of the school and the possible changes in its pupil's needs.

The Governing Board strives to ensure that the organisational practices, the facilities and staffing resources are of the highest standard and are fully available to all pupils.

The Role of the Headteacher

- Manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Keeps the governors informed of all issues relating to special educational needs and disabilities.
- Promotes inclusion at all levels
- Ensures that teachers monitor and review pupils progress during the course of the academic year.
- Ensures that the class teachers and intervention lead have sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.

- Regularly and carefully reviews the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's self-review arrangements.

The Role of the SENDCO / Assistant Headteacher

- Works alongside Local Authorities during annual EHC plan reviews and adhere to individual Local Authority guidance.
- Ensures that those teaching or working with the pupils are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them.
- Ensures that teachers understand the strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils.
- Advises, plans and reviews support through a graduated approach to ensure SEND support and need is fully met.
- Advises on resources needed to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Is responsible for the day to day operation of the Special Education Needs & Disability Policy.
- Co-ordinates provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Delivers special educational provision and oversee and manage creation of individual pupil profiles.
- Co-ordinates and hold annual review meetings.
- Liaises with and advise colleagues on all aspects of SEND.
- Maintains the schools Special Educational Needs Register and other SEND records.
- Supports the parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs.
- Contributes to the in-service training of staff.
- Is aware of the provision available within Dudley SEND offer.
- Liaises with staff, parents, carers, external agencies and from other educational establishments to support all aspects of SEND provision and transition to and from Dormston.
- Liaises with potential future providers of education to ensure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Prepares and shares with governors and staff the school's SEND information report and for this to be published on the school website.
- Works with the Headteacher and Governors to ensure the school fulfils the Equality Act (2010) regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Promotes inclusion at all levels.

The Role of the Teacher

- Ensures that they deliver high quality teaching which is differentiated for individuals who have, or may have SEND.
- Has high aspirations and expectations for students who have SEND.
- Modifies teaching strategies and resources so that pupils with special educational needs are given the opportunity to experience success and make progress.
- Acts upon prior attainment data, any other assessment information and key points within pupil profiles to facilitate access to the national curriculum for pupils with special educational needs.
- Plans and delivers lessons that address potential areas of difficulty to narrow attainment gap and to minimise and remove any barriers to learning.
- Ensures as far as possible, that pupils with specific additional needs take part in activities of the school together with those who do not have similar needs.
- Promotes inclusion at all levels.

The role of the Educational Teaching Assistant

- Carries out specific targeted intervention for small groups and individual pupils.
- Works under the guidance of the SENDCO and subject specialists.
- Helps pupils participate in the academic and social life of school.
- Assists in the collection and modification of resources.
- Liaises with staff and external agencies as appropriate.

The Role of Parents/Carers

- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies towards the achievement of the agreed aims for the pupil.
- Is involved in the decision making process.

The Role of Young People

- Are involved in the decision making process.

Code of Practice 2015

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEND.

Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEND definition. Within school, pupils with SEND are identified on the school SEND overview so that provision to meet their needs can be routinely planned for.

As children move through the school, they may be taken off SEND support when their needs no longer require special educational provision. Other factors other than SEND which could impact upon progress and attainment include:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- Being in receipt of pupil premium grant
- Being a looked after child
- Being a child of serviceman/woman
- Disability (the Code of Practice outlines that ‘reasonable adjustment’ duty for all schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation – these alone do not constitute SEND).

These need to be considered and taken into account when identifying pupils with SEND.

Identification

Pupils with special educational needs may be identified by:

- Liaison with primary schools and transfer documentation
- Year 6 review meetings
- Information from parents/carers/pupils

- Referrals from parents, pupils and outside agencies
- Admission documentation/information for pupils new to the school
- Assessment procedures within the school including:
 - Literacy assessments on entry into Year 7
 - Individual assessments of the needs of identified pupils

Teachers should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life.

Members of the Inclusion Hub department will administer individual assessments in response to the nature of the need. The services of external agencies may be enlisted to help school assess individual needs and identify next steps.

Recording

- Pupils with special educational needs will be identified on the school SEND register and will include primary (and secondary) areas of need, together with any outside agencies working with them. All relevant staff will have access to this together with their individualised pupil profiles to support them with meeting their needs on a daily basis.
- Information regarding the special educational needs of pupils on the register will be accessed via sims and go4schools.
- Pupil profiles containing information about the special needs of individual students will be available electronically to relevant staff.
- Parent/Carers will be informed as and when support is being provided, whether that be by school staff or by external agencies.

A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

Quality First Teaching

At Dormston School, all teachers are expected to deliver high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to meet the individual needs of children.

The learning and attainment of all pupils is carefully monitored on a regular basis by the class teacher, curriculum leaders and senior leadership team. Any pupils who are falling significantly outside of the range expected academic achievement will be identified as a cause for concern and they will be more closely monitored by staff in order to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties and/or barriers for learning.

The child's subject teacher will take steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities that will aid the pupil's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied. This will be identified and shared on the pupil's individual pupil profile.

SEND Support

Some children need educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children.

Where it is determined that a pupil does have SEND, parents will be formally advised of this and the pupil will be added to the SEND overview. The aim of formally identifying a pupil with SEND is to help school ensure that effective provision is put in place to remove barriers to learning and facilitate progress from individual starting points.

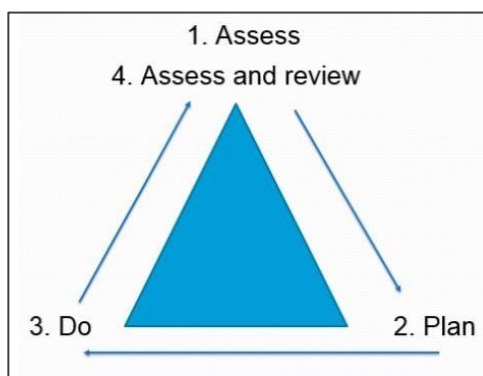
Special educational provision is determined according to the specific needs of individual pupils.

Provision can take a variety of forms and may include one or more of the following:

- Literacy or numeracy intervention during form time, after school and within the school day.
- In-class support
- Target setting and Counselling
- Modification of learning materials
- Support from external agencies
- Class or homework support during lunchtimes
- Social provision at break and lunch time
- Examination access arrangements
- Behaviour support
- Peer support
- Subject teacher strategies/teaching styles
- Differentiation to meet individual needs
- Personalised timetables
- Escorts between lessons and lunchtime
- Subject /department interventions.

The support provided by the school consists of a four-part cycle:

Assess → Plan → Do → Review



This is an ongoing cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of the needs if the pupil grows/changes. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions and strategies which are the most effective in supporting the pupil to achieve. This cycle will be implemented in consultation with parents/carers and pupils on a termly basis.

Assess

This involves clearly analysing the pupil's needs using subject specific assessments completed and evidence provided by staff when working with the pupil, details of previous progress and attainment comparisons with peers and national data, as well as the views and experience of parents. The pupil's views and advice from external support services will also be considered.

Where external support services are already involved their work will help inform the assessment of need. Where they are not involved they may be contacted, if this is felt to be appropriate, following discussion and agreement from parents/carers.

Plan

Planning will involve consultation between teachers and parents to agree the provision, adjustments, interventions and support that is required; the impact on progress and development that is expected and a clear date for review. Parental involvement within this is vital to reinforce learning and contribute to progress.

All those working with the pupil, including support staff will be informed of their individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies/approaches that are being employed and the outcomes that are being sought.

Do

The subject teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a day to day basis. They will retain responsibility even where the interventions may involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main subject teacher. They will work closely with the Inclusion Hub staff to help plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and make links with classroom teaching. Support with further assessment of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses, problem solving and advising on the implementation of effective support will be provided by the SENDCO.

Review

Reviews of a child's progress will be completed on a regular basis. The review process will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. It will also take account of the views of the pupil and their parents. The subject teacher, in consultation with the parents/carers and pupil will revise the targets and provision based on the pupil's previous progress and development.

Referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

If a child has lifelong or significant difficulties they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process which can be requested by the school or parent. This will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the child are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning provision and identifying resources, is requested.

The application for an Education, Health and Care Plans will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents
- Teachers
- SENDCO
- Social Care
- Health professionals
- Any other external agencies working with the child

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made by the Local Authority SEN Team as to whether or not they feel a Statutory Assessment is required. Parents/carers have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment which may lead to an EHC Plan.

Further information about EHCP can found via the SEND Local Offer:

<https://dudleyci.co.uk/send-local-offer>

or by contacting Dudley Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SEND IASS) on:

Dudley SENDIASS Helpline: 01384 817373

Email: dudley.sendiass@dudley.gov.uk

<https://dudleyci.co.uk/services/dudley-sendiass>

Following Statutory Assessment, an EHCP will be provided by the relevant local authority if it is decided that the child's needs are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available. The school and the child's parents/carers will be involved in developing and producing the plan but the EHCP is created by the local authority.

Parents/carers have the right to appeal against the content of the EHCP to the local authority. They may also appeal against the school named in the plan if it differs to their preferred choice.

Once the EHCP has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the pupil's formal record and reviewed at least annually.

Annual Reviews

The annual review enables provision for the pupil to be evaluated and, where appropriate for changes to be put in place, for example, reducing or increasing levels of support. Annual reviews are carried out in accordance with the Code of Practice. At Dormston School, we use this time to bring together all the professionals involved, to consider the progress the pupil has made over the previous 12 months and whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's needs or the provision within the EHCP. The pupil's view is taken into account prior to the meeting wherever possible. A review meeting might recommend amendments to the EHCP if:

- Significant new evidence has emerged which is not recorded on the EHCP.
- Significant needs recorded on the EHCP that are no longer present.
- The provision should be amended to meet the child's changing needs and the targets specified at the review meeting.
- The child should change schools, either at the point of transfer between phases or when a child's needs would be appropriately met in a different setting.

For pupil's in Year 11 the annual review is used as a means of identifying their Post 16 provision. Subsequently these will be carried out in the Autumn and Spring term.

During the annual review we record the views of any people involved with the child. The evidence received and comments on it together with a review of all targets and if appropriate creation of new targets, form the basis of this review.

Admission and Inclusion Arrangements Mission Statement

The School's admission criteria does not discriminate against pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and its admissions policy has due regard for the guidance in the Code of Practice which accompanies the SEN and Disability Act.

The school follows the current admissions criteria as laid down in the Dudley Local Authority admissions team, which is available to all parents. Provided there is a place available within the appropriate year group, all children will be admitted whatever their learning ability.

Parents or carers seeking the admission of a pupil in receipt of an EHCP must do so through the local authority SEN team, who will arrange the appropriate consultation with Dormston regarding admission.

Liaising with External Agencies

External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make appropriate provision for pupils with SEND. To help meet the needs of pupils with SEND the school works collaboratively with a number of external agencies, these include:

- School Nurse
- Speech & Language
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Education Psychologist
- Dudley Learning Support Services
- PIMIS (including Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Team)
- Autism Outreach
- Paediatricians
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Special Education Needs Advisory Team

Referrals to these services will be made by the SENDCO in discussion with subject teachers and will always be shared and agreed with parents/carers. Medical services however such as Occupational Therapy/CAMHS/Paediatricians can only be accessed via a referral from a medical professional e.g. school nurse or GP.

Links with other Educational Establishments

To help in the transfer process for pupils with special educational needs Dormston School maintains close links with both feeder schools and Post 16 provisions. When invited and wherever possible the SENCO and the Year 7 Strategy Leader meets with the Year 6 class teacher and SENDCO to discuss individual needs/strategies and current provision. In addition to these meetings pupils attend Year 6 induction days and some pupils with special educational needs may have additional visits during the summer term to help support with the change of environment and staff. Where appropriate meetings will be held in advance of transition days with parents/carers to ensure best outcomes for all and building positive relationships with parents/carers and pupils prior to commencing their time at Dormston School.

Contact is made with Post 16 establishments to discuss the needs of Year 11 pupils intending to take up places and they are invited to attend Year 11 EHCP annual reviews.

All records are passed on to college SENDCOs and further meetings between school and the new provision may take place and an enhanced transition may be arranged if deemed appropriate.

The SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion aims to meet regularly with special needs colleagues from a variety of feeder and Post 16 schools to continually improve communication between schools to ensure a smooth transition for all pupils and to enable needs to be met asap.

Supporting pupils with medical conditions

The School recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be fully supported so that have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have SEND and/or EHCP which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision SEND Code of Practice (2015) is followed.

These pupils' needs are incorporated into a detailed medical care plan and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if necessary.

Whilst Dormston is not adapted to meet severely complex medical needs, every effort is made to overcome constraints imposed by the limitation of the school buildings and environment.

Examination arrangements

Dependent upon examining body guidelines and individual pupil needs, some pupils may be eligible to access various access arrangements in exams. These may include, additional time, use of a scribe, a reader and rest breaks. This however must be approved and be in line with latest exam board guidance so may be subject to change at any time. The Headteacher, subject teachers, SENDCO and Assistant Headteacher for inclusion work collaboratively to ensure that pupils are given every opportunity to demonstrate their true ability in all tests and exams.

Training and Resources

SEND funds from the school budget and Pupil Premium are used to support SEND by:

- Purchasing resources
- Training teaching staff
- Paying salaries to support staff

We aim to keep all school staff up to date with relevant training and developments in teaching practice in relation to the individual needs of pupils.

Our school operates the following training programmes:

- Individual training in response to need.
- Whole staff training and INSET.
- Networking with other local schools.
- Access training through external agencies and online learning platform.
- SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion attends relevant SEND courses, SEND meetings and facilitate and signpost relevant SEND focused external training opportunities for all staff.

We recognise the need to train all our staff on SEND issues and we have funding available to support this professional development. The Headteacher with the senior leadership team, ensures that training opportunities are matched to school improvement priorities and those identified through the use of provision management.

Teachers are expected to keep abreast their knowledge and understanding of SEND which is supported by in house training led by SENDCO / Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion.

Storing and Managing Information

The following records are kept:

- Individual Pupil Profiles – these are updated as required and include strategies and provision for SEND pupils.

- Annual Reviews – These are completed at the review meetings with parents and the SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion. They are a record of the impact of provision and teaching approaches on pupil learning and progress.
- Education and Health Care Plans – These plans must be reviewed annually with the child and parent/carer at the heart of the meeting. Everything that is discussed at the review meetings is summarised and sent to parents. If the review recommends any changes to the plan, the local authority SEND team will issue the school and parents with the updated documents.
- External agency reports/notes – these are used to support recommendations for support and may contain recommendations to be used in updating Individual Pupil Profiles.

Confidentiality

All current EHCPs and Annual Reviews are kept electronically and in the school, SENDCO's office. The files are only available to professionals within the LA working with the pupils and to the legal guardians of the pupils.

Dormston will not disclose any EHC plan without the consent of the pupil's parents/carers with the exception of disclosure:

- To the SEND and Disability Tribunal with parents appeals and to the Secretary of State if a complaint is made under the Education Act 1996.
- On the order of any court for the purpose of any criminal proceedings.
- For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986 or from the Children Act relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and local authorities.
- To any person in connection with the pupil's application for disabled students allowance in advance of taking up a place in Post 16 education.
- To the principal (or equivalent position) of the institution at which the pupil is intending to start Post 16 education.

The school's policy on Data Protection is available to view on the school website.

Resolving Disagreements / Complaints

It is hoped that parental concerns can be discussed and resolved at informal or review meetings. Any parent with a complaint concerning the special needs provision at the school should first address the issue with the SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion. Parents are encouraged to come in to school at any time if they have a specific concern. Should the SENDCO not be able to resolve the matter the Schools complaints procedure should be followed.

Bullying

Dormston School takes many steps to ensure and mitigate the risk of bullying of vulnerable learners. The school has a comprehensive Anti-bullying policy available to staff and parents and is adhered to at all times.

Review of the SEND Policy

The SEND policy will be reviewed and revised through day to day delivery and minor amendments will be made where necessary.

The Governing Board will monitor and review the Special Educational Needs and Disability policy every year or sooner if required. If the policy appears to need modification, then the Headteacher will report its findings and recommendations to the full Governing Board.

Date of Review: January 2023
Date of Next Review: January 2024

Appendix A:

Classroom Organisation and Planning for Special Needs

This section is concerned with organising classrooms and teaching to prevent and/or overcome learning difficulties or other problems connected with learning.

Factors to Consider

Classroom layout:

- Easy access to materials without congestion
- Defined routes for movement
- Defined working areas
- Easy access to teacher
- Appropriate and clearly labelled furniture and storage
- Established systems known by children for storage/retrieval of resources
- Clear view of, and for, the children

Effective grouping:

Grouping can be helpful as a way of individualising the curriculum and in managing a variety of levels of learning (differentiation) but it can be counter-productive if pupils feel labelled or left out of activities. Here are some positive reasons for grouping:

- Simultaneous teaching
- Practicing a new skill
- Providing good models
- Co-operative learning
- Contributing to a group task
- Social skill development
- Shared home language for bilingual development
- Shared preferred learning style

Flexible grouping is the key to organising for effective learning and the reason for the grouping should relate to the task/target you have chosen. Remember that group work is not always a co-operative endeavour – it may be that children are sitting in a group because they are on the same task but that task may well be an individual one. Be clear about your aims and objectives of group work in your planning.

Place and position:

Some children have problems, which have implications for where they sit in the classroom:

- Handedness – don't sit a left-hander to the right of a right-hander – they'll jostle!
- Hearing – make sure the child can hear instructions clearly and is sitting in a quieter part of the room. Can the child hear with one ear better than the other? Is she/he placed to maximize this fact? Can the child see your face clearly?
- Vision – a child with a vision problem needs to have a clear view of work sheets, the board, visual aid etc. Try to ensure that lighting is adequate and that glare and reflections are minimal.
- Distraction – some children are more easily distracted than others. Sometimes isolation can help but make sure this is for particular tasks and the reason for the temporary isolation is made clear to the child. Try sitting the child with a calm, settled group as a help.
- Sitting at the back of a class is sometimes better for these pupils than at the front.

Materials:

Make sure these are:

- Suitable to age/ability/needs
- Real, relevant and realistic
- Stimulating and motivating
- Give early chance of success
- Clearly written/easily understood
- Suitable length
- Offering varied approaches- games, puzzles etc
- Easily accessible
- Well organised and ordered
- Cross-curricular where possible
- Informative of daily routines, e.g. visual timetables

Teaching Methods:

- Plan the structure of the lesson in order to give individual and group help as appropriate.
- Match child and task very carefully.
- Have additional extension material available -not just more of the same.
- Build success into task to give confidence and reduce any risk of failure.
- Introduce new skills in small stages.
- Proceed in steps from the 'known'.
- Use practical demonstration where possible.
- Ensure generalisation of skill to other tasks where appropriate.
- Make sure attention has been gained before trying to teach a new skill.
- Keep careful records to ensure continuity and progression.
- Set realistic timed targets for completing work.
- Praise and reward often but with purpose - ensure rewards are relevant to the child.
- Provide feedback immediately and in a positive way.
- Evaluate and review the work set and the achievement made.
- Accommodate different learning styles.

Ethos

The learning environment should be:

- Encouraging and friendly.
- Purposeful and positive.
- Fair and consistent.
- Self-motivating and confidence boosting.
- Relaxed and non-stressful.
- Secure and stable.

Make sure that:

- Rules and routines are clearly explained, understood, displayed and referred to.
- There is consistent use of praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour – focus on the positive.
- The teacher labels behaviour and not the child.
- Wherever possible, problems are anticipated and dealt with discreetly and pro-actively.
- Children's work is seen to be valued.

- Children's feelings are respected.
- Children are encouraged to be self-reliant.
- The teacher sets a good role model – a positive approach.
- There is time to listen to children.
- The success of children is shared.
- There is open and positive communication amongst staff.
- Parents/carers are involved appropriately.
- Children are encouraged to be enthusiastic in their learning, building confidence in a supportive atmosphere.

Additional help and support

What help is available and how can it be used?

- Support in planning and evaluating lesson content.
- Support in planning a learning programme.
- Support in delivering a planned programme.
- Support by withdrawal for specific teaching input.
- Support in assessing and identifying need.
- Support from colleagues working collaboratively.

Who might help?

- SENDCO/Assistant Headteacher
- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Other colleagues
- Parents/carers
- Other pupils
- External agencies