

## **Learning Difficulties and Disabilities/Special Educational Needs (LDD/SEN) Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy was reviewed and updated in March 2009 in line with the revised Code of Practice.
- 1.2 St Helen's College provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. A structured curriculum aligned to 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 require particular action to be taken by the school and/or outside agencies.
- 1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having learning difficulties and disabilities/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 or different help from that given to other children of the same age.
- 1.4 Children may have learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy is aimed to ensure that curriculum planning and assessment for children with learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

### **2 Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are:
- To ensure that the learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs of children 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 learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs;
  - To enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
  - To ensure that our children have a voice in this process.

### **3 Educational inclusion**

- 3.1 We aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. 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, literacy and computation;

- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and 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 Learning difficulties and disabilities/Special educational needs**

**4.1** Children with learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have learning difficulties and disabilities/special needs at some time in their school 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 children of the same age;
- they are under statutory school age and fall within the definitions above.

**4.2** Many of the children join St. Helen's at the Early Years stage. Others have mostly attended an Early Years setting. All children are formatively assessed when they first join the school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

**4.3** If our assessments / discussion meetings show that a child may have a learning difficulty, the class teacher and SENCo will agree differentiated work in class, using a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources.

**4.4** If, after a suitable period of time, progress is slow and the child continues to have difficulties, the SENCo will consult the Head and the child may be added to the LDD register. The child will then be provided with interventions that are different from or additional to those that are part of the school's working practices including small group tuition. The class teacher will keep parents informed regularly and draw upon them for additional information. The SENCo will become involved if the teacher and parents feel this would benefit both discussion and support outcomes. The SENCo will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs. This level of support is called School Action.

**4.5** We will record the strategies used to support the child with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). 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 termly.

**4.6** If it is later identified and agreed that further support is needed through one-one tuition at school, or from outside services, we will consult parents to action the support. This may lead to additional or different strategies to those at School Action. This enhanced level of intervention, assessment and support by both the child's LSA and/or outside services is called School Action Plus. Outside agencies may provide information to develop the next IEP for the child. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's normal classroom setting.

**4.7** If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for a Statutory Assessment may be agreed. A range of written evidence about the child will be expected to support the request. If our policy and practice is followed the discussion, formal referral and

IEP's should satisfy the evidence requested. If the child receives a Statement they will then be added to the SEN register.

**4.8** Stages of identification and implementation:

- a) Child's needs raised at a half-termly SENCo/ClassTeacher discussion meeting.
- b) Classroom strategies tried with outcomes recorded.
- c) All assessment outcomes recorded and if possible analysed.
- d) Child placed on the LDD register.
- e) An IEP devised with simple targets set.
- f) IEP shared with parents and parents sign.
- g) IEP review meeting with either a new IEP devised or child taken off the LDD register.
- h) Following IEP reviews, outside services may/may not be requested.
- i) Use of outside services advice to devise a new IEP.
- j) Continuation of monitoring and provision of support.
- k) If necessary, a Statutory Assessment is requested and the child is recommended for Statementing and may be placed on the SEN register.

**4.9** The SENCo:

- manages the day to day operation of the policy;
- arranges the meetings with teachers and ensures they are recorded;
- ensures the LDD/SEN register is kept up to date;
- ensures the IEP's are reviewed in accordance with policy;
- co-ordinates any support given to individuals or small groups outside of the classroom;
- meets with parents and class teachers as requested at School Action stage;
- meets with parents and class teachers at School Action Plus stage;
- acts as links with outside agencies and other support services;
- monitors and evaluates the learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs provision and reports to the head teachers;
- refers children to the head teachers for placement onto the LDD/SEN Register;
- seeks to provide appropriate resources to use to support the child's identified need;
- is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing of the learning difficulties and disabilities/special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with statements of special educational needs;
- ensures all LDD/SEN records are up to date and on the school ICT network;
- Manages the support timetables of LSAs;
- Finds and encourages professional development of LSAs;
- Monitors LSAs interaction with individual children, class groups and class teachers.

**4.10** The Class Teacher:

- identifies a child who is showing significant learning needs;
- raises the child's needs at a half-termly discussion meeting with the SENCo;
- records all strategies and outcomes tried with child;
- discusses the learning needs with the parents;
- records all assessment outcomes and analyses outcomes wherever possible to define area of learning need more precisely;
- meets with the SENCo to agree an IEP for the child with short, achievable targets and practical knowledge of how the IEP will be put into practice;
- shares the IEP with the parents and agrees any parental support;
- reviews the IEP at IEP review meetings with the SENCo;
- involves the child as much as possible at an appropriate stage/age.

**5.0** **Assessment**

5.1 The SENCo and teacher have a half-termly discussion meeting regarding the needs of the class and in particular any outcomes of assessment. This discussion is recorded and any child

discussed is monitored until it is either no longer deemed necessary, or further action needs to be taken.

- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 SNAP test is undertaken as an initial indicator of areas of need.
- 5.4 The class teacher and SENCo assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.
- 5.5 The SENCo works closely with the teachers and possibly the parents to plan an appropriate programme of support.
- 5.6 If no real progress is made, a formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist may be deemed necessary and advice will be given to the parents.

## **6 Access to the curriculum**

- 6.1 All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:
  - understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
  - experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of individual success and achievement.
- 6.2 Teachers use a range of strategies and teaching methods (according to the VAK learning styles) to meet children's individual educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives, we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.
- 6.3 Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success. All children at School Action and School Action Plus have an IEP.
- 6.4 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 situation. Due to timetabling issues and educational needs, there are times though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one to one situation outside the classroom.

## **7 Partnership with parents**

- 7.1 The school works closely with parents in the support of those children with learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through ongoing dialogue with parents.
- 7.2 The school website/prospectus contains details of our policy for learning difficulties and disabilities/special educational needs, and the arrangements made for these children.
- 7.3 We have regular meetings to share the progress of learning difficulties and disabilities/special needs children with their parents; introducing and reviewing IEPs on a termly basis. Parents are asked to sign their child's IEP and take a copy home with them.

**7.4** We discuss with the parents any outside intervention and work with them to implement any strategies and recommendations made.

## **8 Pupil participation**

**8.1** We encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to all children but more specifically children in Years 3 to 6. The work in the Foundation Stage recognises the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills.

**8.2** Children are increasingly being involved at an appropriate level in setting targets in their IEPs and in the review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their IEP targets before the end of term and then discuss new targets set with them when they return after the holidays.

## **9.0 Monitoring and Evaluation**

**9.1** The SENCo monitors the movement of children within the LDD/SEN system in school. The SENCo provides staff and head teachers with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.

**9.2** The SENCo draws up Individual Education Plans for children.

**9.3** The Lower school / Upper School SENCo and head teacher hold a meeting each half term to review the respective class teacher/ SENCo discussion sheets.

**9.4** The SENCos and head teachers hold a termly meeting to review the work of the school in this area.

Author(s)	DH/NH
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