

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

Firs Farm Primary School Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

1 Introduction

This policy is in line with the revised Code of Practice.

At Firs Farm Primary School we believe all children have the right to fulfil their individual potential and we endeavour to provide facilities to achieve this. It is our aim to identify children with special needs as early as possible, to provide support to minimise future problems.

As stated in the Education Act, 1993:

'Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
 - b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition of a) or b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special Educational Provision means:

'for children over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area for children under two, educational provision of any kind.'

Definitions in the Children Act 1989 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 state that:

'A child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from a mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed.'
(Children Act 1989)

'A person has a disability for the purpose of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties also need consideration when defining special needs, particularly if these are a barrier to them achieving their potential. Our approaches to these are stated in our Behaviour Policy.

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Equally very able children should be seen as having a particular need and may need support. (See Gifted and Talented Policy)

This school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs making provision for support to enable children to participate fully. Some children may need different or additional support from that given to other children of the same age.

Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs;
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process.
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3 Educational inclusion

In our school 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 and literacy;
- 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.

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4 Special educational needs

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made.

Many of the children who join our school have already attended an early education setting. In some cases children join us with their needs already assessed.

4.3 If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This level of support is called School Action. The class teacher will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), if not already involved, will become involved if the teacher and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support. The SENCO will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs.

4.4 We will record the strategies used to support the child within 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, usually once a term.

If the IEP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in school by external support services. This may lead to additional or different strategies to those at School Action. This enhanced level of support is called School Action Plus. External support services will provide information for the child's new IEP. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's normal classroom setting.

4.6 If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for statutory assessment will be made to the LEA. A range of written evidence about the child will support the request.

The Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

At Firs Farm, the Special Needs Coordinator is supported in her role by the members of the Senior Management team, the whole staff through discussion and meetings with the SEN Governor/ Governors. Parents are welcome to contact the Special Needs Coordinator personally to discuss matters relating to their children and special needs. This contact is best initiated through the child's class teacher, although appointments can be made through the school office or by telephone.

The SENCO is a part time teacher, who presently works 3 days a week. Within this time she teaches in Year 2 for 1 hour a week. School has now employed a teacher to support the SENCO for 1.5 days a week. The SENCO liaises with all the support teachers/assistants and class teachers and is involved in developing their training package. The Governing Body is kept informed.

The Role of The SENCO:

- oversees the day-to-day operation of the policy;

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- co-ordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
- supports and advises colleagues;
- oversees the records of all children with special educational needs;
- liaise with parents;
- liaise with external agencies and other support agencies including the educational psychology service, medical and social services and voluntary bodies;
- monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision and reports to the governing body;
- manages a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with special educational needs;
- contributes to the professional development of all staff (including Lunch time Supervisors);
- timetables for Learning Support Assistants
- Review of policy

5 The role of the governing body

The governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.

5.2 The governing body does its best to secure the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs. The governors ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. They consult the LEA and other schools, when appropriate, and report annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs. The governing body ensures that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child.

5.3 The governing body endeavours to identify a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. The 'responsible person' in this school is the headteacher. The headteacher ensures that all those who teach a pupil with a statement of special educational needs are aware of the nature of the statement.

5.4 The SEN governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEN provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

6 Allocation of resources

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

The Headteacher informs the governing body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed.

The Headteacher and the SENCO meet to agree on how to use funds directly related to statements. The SENCO draws up the resources bid when the school is planning for the next school improvement plan.

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The school receives termly visits for the Educational Psychologist. The number of visits are determined annually. Statemented children receive their apportioned support from tutors and classroom assistants.

Each term during the updating of IEP's the needs and support of children are reviewed. Regular meetings are held between the Head teacher and SENCO. The targets are written and the SENCO puts them onto the computer. Each class is supported for at least 0.5 days per week by a teacher, Nursery Nurse or Classroom Assistant and children are taught in smaller groups or individually at their ability level, within classes. Occasionally, small groups may be taken to work in other areas when space is available. This gives the children more contact with teaching staff and ensures that Special Needs resources benefit all children.

This process avoids some of the problems that might occur to a child's self-esteem if they are withdrawn from the class for special support. Support for Special Needs may often take place in UNIT time, a system in operation for Years 2, 4, 5 & 6. This facilitates the support of children with special needs who are able to work in smaller groups at their ability level once a week. There are also a variety of small group interventions that run in different year groups, according to the needs of the children. All movements between stages are discussed with the SENCO and parents. Children with a Statement of Educational Needs are supported appropriately, by school classroom assistants. The Classroom Assistants work within the school's policy for Learning Support Assistants. The support is given within and without the classroom depending on the work and the needs of the child.

With regard to the allocation of resources, the school uses all available evidence to check whether support is needed or can be withdrawn. The evidence is as follows:

Annual Statement of Achievement and experience

Assessment results – particularly Baseline and KS1

Salford Reading Test (this is the LEA indicator)

Results of tests and assessments within year groups.

Parental consultation – twice yearly, where parents may express their concerns about their child's progress.

7 Assessment, Monitoring and Review

7.1 Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.

7.2 The class teacher and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.

7.3 The SENCO endeavours to work closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of support.

7.4 The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

The LEA seeks a range of advice before making a formal statement. The needs of the child are considered to be paramount in this.

Children may be identified as having a special need by:
Class teacher

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Parent/ Guardian
From screening/ testing
Outside agencies

When an initial concern is voiced a monitoring form is completed. This is not a requirement of the Code of Practice, but as a school we feel that these records provide the basis of evidence before moving onto the next stage, School Action. Children who meet the criteria for School Action may be placed immediately on this stage. At this stage the school uses its own resources to support the child and draws up an IEP.

If the child's needs are not being met fully then it may be necessary to request outside agency involvement. At this point the child moves to School Action Plus. For most children this will provide the support they need.

For some children, whose progress continues to be cause for concern, a statutory assessment may need to be carried out. (see appendix for tables of criteria)

Looked After Children

Every child who is 'looked after' by a local authority must have a Plan. The overall Plan will incorporate a Personal Education Plan which must include information on the special education needs arrangements made for the child.

8 Access to the curriculum

8.1 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 success and achievement.

8.2 Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

8.3 Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success. All children at School Action and School Action Plus have an IEP.

8.4 We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom situation. 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.

8.5 Other strategies in place are Unit Times, Phonic Groups, ELS, ALS, Guided Reading and Writing and Small group Maths support based on APP.

9 Partnership with parents

9.1 *The school works closely with parents in the support of those children with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing*

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dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.

9.2 The school prospectus contains details of our policy for special educational needs, and the arrangements made for these children in our school. The Governors' Annual Report to Parents contains an evaluation of the policy in action. A named governor takes a special interest in special needs and is always willing to talk to parents.

9.3 We have meetings each term to share the progress of special needs children with their parents. (Open Evenings) We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

10 Pupil Participation

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

10.2 Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets in their IEPs. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their targets. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

11 Monitoring and evaluation

11.1 The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in school. The SENCO provides staff and governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.

11.2 The SENCO is involved in supporting teachers involved in drawing up Individual Education Plans for children. The SENCO and the headteacher hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in this area. The SENCO and the named governor with responsibility for special needs also hold meetings, if appropriate.

11.3 The governing body reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The SENCO reports the outcome of the review to the full governing body.

12 Admissions

The school follows the Admissions Policy of the London Borough of Enfield which sets out the criteria for the admission of pupils to Primary Schools.

13 Links with Other Agencies

The school recognises the need to liaise with other agencies. The liaison is undertaken by the Headteacher or the SENCO and might be with the following organisations:

Health Visitor

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Early Years Unit
Home/ School Liaison Service
Education Welfare Service
Social Services
Area Child Protection Team
IST
Speech and Language Therapists
Occupational Therapist
Physiotherapist
Behaviour Support Service
Blanche Neville Service
Joseph Clarke Service

14 Educational Links

The SENCO meets with other special needs teachers at Partnership meetings and at LEA SENCO conferences. These involve teachers from Primary and Secondary schools and include discussions on topics such as:

New initiatives and implications
Information about specific difficulties
Transfer of SEN children between schools
School based projects
New borough guidelines

The links with secondary schools for the transfer of children who have special needs are particularly important. At Firs Farm we foster these links and arrangements are made for Secondary representatives to meet with Year Six teachers and for them to attend review meetings. All Year Six children now participate in a terms transition project which focuses on their concerns regarding secondary transfer as well as developing practical skills.

The school has been and is open to discussion with Special Schools regarding links which might lead to offering part time placements for children and under specific circumstances the possibility of them leading to a full time placement.

15 Complaints

Our policy indicates that we will identify and meet children's needs, wherever possible, from within the school's resources or with co-operation between school and LEA. Despite these intentions, there will be occasions when parents may feel that the school has not met their child's needs or has not recognised that their child has special educational needs.

Parents are urged to take note of this policy, the school Brochure and Governors' Annual Report to Parents as to what special educational provision is available within the school and the ways that pupils will have access to that provision.

Parents with worries, concerns or would like further information should contact the SENCO who will try to help. If the school is unable to resolve the complaint, there is a formal Complaints Procedure that can be used, details of which can be provided by the school.

Signed:

Date: