



SEN Policy

Policy Date: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors: _____

Review Date: _____

Gortin Primary - SEN Policy

Gortin Primary School is a small 3-teacher school serving a rural community in Co Tyrone. At Gortin P.S we believe that all children should have equal opportunities to learn and that all teachers are SEN teachers. All children have a right to a broad and balanced curriculum and a relevant and appropriately challenging curriculum, suitably differentiated. Children have a right to be educated alongside their peers and we recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. All children have a right to a broad and balanced curriculum paying regard to the legal requirements as stated in the Code of Practice for N.I. and the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2005. All children should have an opportunity to achieve their full potential, through identification of their needs and minimising barriers to learning.

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)

SEN Provisions of SENDO

‘The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of parents or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others.’ ‘Children who have Special Educational needs but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school.’ Article 3(1) SENDO 2005

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'.

Removing Barriers to Achievement (2004)

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 Supporting Medical Needs. It also links with other pupils with Additional Needs such as Gifted and Talented or English as a Second Language. *For example*

- A pupil may be Gifted or Talented in one area yet have communication difficulties/ASD
- A pupil may have English as an Additional Language but also have a Specific Literacy Difficulty.
- A pupil may have a medical need which has an impact on their learning.

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/Disability:

1. Cognitive and Learning

- a) Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulty (DYL)
- b) Dyscalculia (DYC)
- c) Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Difficulties (DCD)
- d) Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- e) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- f) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- g) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
- h) Unspecified learning difficulties (U)

2. Social, Emotional and Behavioural

- a) Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)
- b) Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

3. Communication and Interaction

- a) Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)
- b) Autism (AUT)
- c) Asperger's Syndrome (ASP)

4. Sensory Difficulties

- a) Severe/profound hearing loss (SPHL)
- b) Mild/moderate hearing loss (MMHL)
- c) Blind (BL)
- d) Partially sighted (PS)
- e) Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)

5. Physical

- a) Cerebral Palsy (CP)
- b) Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus (SBH)
- c) Muscular Dystrophy (MD)
- d) Significant Accidental Injury (SAI)
- e) Other (OPN)

6. Medical Conditions/Syndromes

- a) Epilepsy (EPIL)
- b) Asthma (ASTH)
- c) Diabetes (DIAB)
- d) Anaphylaxis (ANXS)
- e) Down's Syndrome (DOWN)
- f) Other medical conditions/syndromes (OMCS)
- g) Interaction of Complex Medical Needs (ICMN)
- h) Mental Health Issues (MHI)

7. Other

- a) Other (OTH)

Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with Special Educational Needs – SEN Categories (Department of Education)

Policy Aims

1. To identify pupils with SEN/Disability as early and thoroughly as possible using a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/Disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.
3. To ensure that all pupils with SEN/Disability feel valued. 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.

4. To offer a broad curriculum which will promote intellectual, emotional, social and physical progress in order that pupils can develop as valuable members of society both now and in the future.

5. 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.

6. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs.

7. To educate pupils with SEN/Disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers.

8. To develop a recording system so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately.

9. To encourage and/or maintain interest of pupils with SENs in their education

10. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.

11. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.

12. To meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN/Disability by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources.

13. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy.

14. 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. 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. I Wallace (**SENCO**)

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors will be asked to take account of the specific guidance from 'Every School a Good School' (DE) – The Governor Role (2010) Chapter 12. This document relates specifically to the Governor role for pupils with special educational needs.

The role of the Board of Governors as highlighted in the **SEN Resource File (2011)** of a mainstream 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;
- Use their best endeavors to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents are notified of their child's special needs;
- Maintain 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.

Principal (Code of Practice 1998)

The Principal should:

- Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues
- Work in close partnership with the SENCo/teachers and classroom assistants
- Liaise with parents and external agencies as required
- Delegate and monitor the SEN budget
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special

Educational Needs

SENCo

In Gortin Primary School, a designated teacher(Mrs Wallace) is responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's special educational needs policy
- Liaising with and responding to requests for advice from other teachers
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Maintain the school's SEN register and oversee all the records on pupils with special educational needs
- Liaison with parents of children with special educational needs
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training
- Liaison with external agencies.
 - Monitor EPs and ensure review dates on EPs are adhered to
 - Monitor inclusive practice/provision in school and report to BOG on effectiveness of inclusion

Class Teacher

The class teacher should

- Be aware of current legislation
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Gather information through observation and assessment
- Develop an inclusive classroom
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching
- Write, manage and review EPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team

SEN Support Staff

Support Staff should

- Work under the direction of the class teacher
- Be involved in planning
- 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
- Keep records and attend meetings
- Share good practice

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)

Key decisions for a particular pupil will include:

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

Parent/Carer

‘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)

Parents are requested to inform the relevant school staff as early as possible of any significant needs their child may possess. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child’s entry to the school.

It is the school’s responsibility to inform parents and gain permission 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 (liaison record kept)
- Attend review meetings
- Inform staff of changes in circumstances
- Receive a copy of any EP drawn up and are requested to sign and support targets

Admissions

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN are 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 Education and Library Board.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the Board 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 Plan (Ref. Five Board Guidance)

- 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 is a well-equipped SEN teaching/resource base, included also is 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.
- Monies will be allocated out of the school budget for SEN resources/staffing

Annual Report

The BOG will report each year on SEN provision in school which will be collated by the SENCo/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)

In Gortin Primary School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

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

The Management of SENs

In Gortin Primary School, we follow the five stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice (1998).

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 will inform the SEN co-ordinator/ Principal and consult with the child's parents. In addition, the class teacher will:

- 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 will be recorded, together with the targets, monitoring arrangements and review date.
- Monitor and review progress and report back to SENCo.

The SENCo will:

- Ensure that parents are consulted and together agree that the child's name is included in the school's SEN register.
- Help the class teacher gather information and assess the child's needs.
- Advise and support the class teacher.

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

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

- The Good Practice Guidelines (2009 Inter-Board)
- SEN Resource File
- Encouraging inclusive activities to ensure integration of the pupil.
- Differentiated teaching.
- 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 ELB/other services.

Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan will 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 will 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 ELB from school’s principal or the parent, the Board 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.

In reaching a suitable decision, the Board will consider:

- The degree of the child’s difficulty
- The nature of the provision required
- Whether the child’s needs can reasonably be met by the resources normally available to the school and
- Use the 5 Board Provisional Criteria for Statutory Assessment.

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 Board'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 Board.

The Review will take place in school, chaired by the Principal/SENCO using relevant forms and 5 EA guidance.

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 following are some of the records that the SENCo will keep:

- SEN Register
- Records of Concern
- Education plans/Reviews (Written in Oct/Feb/May)
- Statements/Annual Reviews
- Assessment results/data
- Individual Pupil Files
- Record of liaison/meetings with Board/Health Services
- Records of meetings with parents
- Staffs' 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.
- Evidence that the pupil is making progress.
- Quality reviews of EPs and formal and informal assessment 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/SENCO oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school.

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

All staff will keep up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effectively for pupils.

Staff attending INSET will disseminate the training with colleagues.

Complaints

All complaints regarding SENs in your 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 or EA's 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 EA's and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

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Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

Our policy will be reviewed biannually and/or in the light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.