

LARNE GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**  
**POLICY**

**Brief Statement**

This school policy acknowledges that the needs of all pupils who have Special Education Needs (SEN), either throughout, or at any time during, their school careers, must be addressed: and their rights to have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including maximum possible access to the National Curriculum, must be met. Effective assessment and provision will best be secured where there is partnership between parents, schools, boards and other agencies (Code of Practice 1.6)

The school recognises that ‘gifted children’ have special needs and if a pupil is recognised as being ‘gifted’, a suitable programme will be devised to suit his/her individual needs. At present pupils are encouraged to develop their talents in areas both within the academic curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. Examples are given in Appendix A. However this policy is primarily concerned with those who have learning difficulties.

Reference to the Code of Practice throughout this document relates to the Department of Education’s Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (September 1998)

**Section 1**

**Definition**

The term “special educational needs” is defined in the legislation as a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.

In this context learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her peer group and/or has a disability which hinders his/her use of everyday educational facilities.

Special educational provision means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age. (Code of Practice 1.4)

The individual needs of pupils must be identified by an appropriate, ongoing review and consultation which requires specific consideration or provision within the mainstream curriculum on a permanent or temporary basis. Pupils who exhibit learning difficulties embrace those with physical disabilities, those who exhibit behavioural problems and those whose backgrounds inhibit their ability to learn.

**Aims**

1. To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated education as a right for all.
2. To identify children with special educational needs as early as possible through a variety of means and in consultation with appropriate personnel. This should be provided by the primary school, unless a special educational need arises while in Larne Grammar School.

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3. To ensure that all children with special needs feel valued and have a positive self-image.
4. To encourage parental involvement and co-operation between various professionals and/or agencies in the diagnosis and treatment of special needs pupils.
5. To offer experiences and opportunities which allow pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills which ensure progress, promote success and develop self-confidence.
6. To develop a system for recording continued assessment so that each pupil's performance can be monitored.
7. To promote the integration of all pupils with SEN as far as is reasonably practical into the life and work of the school.
8. To encourage the use of teaching strategies which are responsive to different learning styles and which ensure effective learning.
9. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their learning needs.
10. To develop and utilise all available resources in support of pupils with special needs.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

Name: Miss L Hunter

Role

- The day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- Liaising with and advising other members of staff, particularly teaching staff
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- Maintaining the SEN register and overseeing records on all pupils with SEN
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Liaising with external agencies

Arrangements for co-ordinating provision

Each member of staff will be provided with a list of all class tutors, to enable them to refer an individual to the appropriate class tutor.

Each subject teacher will then initially report to the class tutor, informing them of concerns about an individual pupil.

The class tutor will inform the Year Head who will pass the information to the SENCO. The SENCO and Year Head will inform the parents.

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**Section 2**

**Identification and assessment of needs** (Reference Aim 2)

The role of the subject teacher is vital to the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. If it becomes apparent through normal classroom work and assessment that a pupil is performing at a level below that of his/her peers, **sufficiently to warrant concern**, then the subject teacher will refer that pupil to the class teacher.

The class tutor will inform the Year Head, who will pass the information to the SENCO. The Year Head will then begin to gather information designed to establish whether or not the pupil has a learning difficulty. Initially the pupil may be placed on report for a particular subject(s) or all subjects. The parents will be informed by the Year Head and are asked to co-operate by signing the report each evening and returning it to school with the pupil.

This report asks the subject teacher to comment on the pupil's attitude and behaviour, his/her class participation and the homework which the pupil is given and completes. The pupil should return the daily reports to their class tutor who will pass them to the Year Head. The Year Head will report to the SENCO and together they will make an assessment as to whether the child has a special educational need.

Once a learning difficulty is confirmed, the SENCO will consult with the Principal, and outside agencies if deemed appropriate, and the pupil will be placed on the SEN register. The parents will also be informed of this action and its consequences.

The SENCO and outside agencies will then work with the class teacher as appropriate, following the procedures in place for the school-based stages.

**Teaching strategies** (Reference Aims 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

Teaching and learning strategies should allow access to the whole curriculum for each pupil. This should involve all subject teachers in utilising a range of teaching strategies and classroom management styles designed to take account of the differing abilities, interests and experiences of the pupils. Work should be stimulating, allowing pupils to progress at their own level and rate and designed in such a way to **ensure that all pupils experience some measure of success**. All reasonable efforts should be made to involve the pupil in decisions affecting their own learning so that they have greater personal responsibility for their own progress.

Pupils should be provided with positive feedback and their achievements celebrated. Again, this should be encouraged in the classroom and be recognised using the school merit card system.

Teachers should be sensitive to the literacy and numeracy difficulties of SEN pupils in terms of how they communicate both verbally and in writing, and in how they give specific instructions. Teachers should seek to ensure that learning takes place in a classroom environment which is stimulating and attractive, involving, as appropriate, the display of the pupils' work. Where education plans become necessary they should build on the curriculum the pupil is following alongside other pupils and should make use of other, readily available materials. They should set clear, realistic targets which are time-bound and indicate the special educational provision required to address pupil needs.

**Partnership with Parents** (Code of Practice 2.21 - 2.27)

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The school recognises the need for a close partnership with parents to be promoted because of the unique contribution parents can make to a child's progress. Relevant information on policy and support provision will be made available to parents in order that their contribution may be encouraged.

The partnership will ensure that the views of parents are taken into account and will enable them to be involved in assessment and review arrangements.

**Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy and Practice** (Code of Practice 2.3 – 2.10)

The implementation of the Special Educational Needs Policy will be monitored by the Board of Governors and Senior Management Team in relation to the effectiveness in the following areas:

- identification
- assessment
- provision
- monitoring and record-keeping
- use of external support.

There will be an annual review towards the end of each academic year when necessary amendments to the policy and practice will be considered.

**Record-keeping and Review of pupils' progress** (Code of Practice 2.19, 2.51, 2.58, 2.68)

A Special Educational Register will be kept by the SENCO of all pupils identified as having special educational needs. Pupils identified through concern expressed by teachers / parents / outside agencies will be added to this register after consultation between the SENCO and the Principal and, if appropriate, outside agencies.

The register will contain the name of the pupil, the nature of the difficulty, the appropriate stage, and a brief outline of the proposed additional provision.

Stages 1-3 (see Section 3) are dealt with internally by the school and Stages 4 and 5 require a referral to the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB).

The progress of each pupil will be reviewed at each of the stages 1 to 3 by the SENCO, in consultation with the parents. If necessary, the SENCO will refer a case to the Principal, who may recommend proceeding to stages 4 and 5.

If a pupil transfers to another school, the necessary information will be forwarded.

**Management Arrangements** (Code of Practice 2.7 – 2.12)

The Board of Governors and the Principal have overall responsibility for the policy and must report on it in the Annual Report. They must also establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements. In addition, the Principal has responsibility for the management of all the school's work, including the Special Educational Needs provision.

The SENCO, has responsibility for the day-to-day operation and co-ordination of the Special Educational Needs provision. All teaching staff should be involved in the development and implementation of the policy and should be made familiar with Special Educational Needs procedures.

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Staff Development and Resources (Code of Practice 2.7, 2.9, 2.12, 2.20)

Arrangements will be made for the training needs of the staff and governors, and the necessary resources will be made available to staff.

Liaison with External Services (Code of Practice 2.30 – 2.41)

The Principal, in conjunction with the SENCO, will initiate, develop and maintain contact with the Health and Social Services and with Special Educational Needs support services (NEELB). Parents will be informed of the support available and the necessary point of contact.

Integration Arrangements (Code of Practice 1.6, 2.5)

Children with Special Educational Needs require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education, including the Northern Ireland Curriculum. These children should, wherever appropriate, be educated alongside their peers in mainstream schools. The school will seek to ensure that they join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, in so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with their receiving the necessary special educational provision. The school will also seek to ensure the efficient education of other children in the school and the efficient use of resources.

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**Section 3**

**Pre-Stage 1**

Any subject teacher who is concerned about the progress or behaviour of an individual child may pass this concern to the class tutor and then to the Year Head who, if it is deemed necessary, will place this child on daily/weekly report for all or some subjects. These sheets will be monitored by the Year Head and will be signed by a parent each night/week. If no improvement is observed then the child may be moved to Stage 1.

**Stages 1 - 3 (Code of Practice 2.45 - 2.71)**

Stage 1 begins, as outlined in Section 2 (identification and assessment of needs), with concerns being raised about the progress of a child by a subject teacher and these concerns being passed on to the class tutor and, if necessary, the SENCO and the Year Head. If it is deemed appropriate the parents will be informed and the child will be placed on the school register. The information required about the child will include

**from the school**

- class records from all subject teachers
- test results
- observations about the child's behaviour

**from the parent**

- views on the child's health and development
- perceptions of the child's performance and behaviour at school and at home
- factors contributing to any difficulty

**from the child**

- personal perception of any difficulties and how they might be addressed

**from other sources**

- any information already available to the school from health or social services or any other source.

When progress no longer gives cause for concern the child will be removed from the school register and the parents informed. If further action is felt necessary then the pupil may be moved onto a higher stage. Each pupil will be reviewed after an appropriate interval and the decision taken will be made known to all concerned parties.

Stage 2 will generally follow Stage 1 and will involve the SENCO working with the subject teachers of the child to provide a suitable Education Plan. Again, the parents will be kept fully informed and the child will be reviewed periodically. The Education Plan should set out the following

- the nature of the child's difficulties
- the SEN provision required, including staff and resources
- the nature of the support at home
- the targets to be achieved in a given time
- any pastoral care or medical requirements
- the monitoring and assessment arrangements

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the review arrangements and date  
At this stage the child may return to Stage 1, be kept at Stage 2 or moved to Stage 3. At Stage 3 the SENCO should decide whether further professional advice is needed before drawing up the Education Plan. The Education Plan and the review arrangements will be similar to those at Stage 2.

The outcome from Stage 3 may be to return to Stages 1 or 2, continue at Stage 3 or for the Principal to consider a referral to the NEELB for statutory assessment which may result in a movement to stage 4 or 5 (Code of Practice 3.1 – 3.40)

Role of the SENCO (Code of Practice 2.11 - 2.13)

The SENCO will be involved in the management of SEN provision, monitoring records and communicating with parents and external agencies as outlined in Section 1 of the policy.

Arrangements for involvement of parents of children with special educational needs  
(Code of Practice 2.21 - 2.27)

Arrangements for informing and involving parents of pupils with special educational needs should include information about:

- the school's SEN policy
- the support available within the school and the Board (NEELB)
- parents' involvement in assessment and decision-making, emphasising the importance of this contribution
- any relevant health and social services contacts, or voluntary organisations which might provide information or counselling.

Arrangements for parental complaints (Code of Practice 6.12 - 6.15, 3.38 - 3.39)

When a parent has a concern he/she should make an appointment to meet with the Principal and/or the SENCO.

Review Procedures (Code of Practice 2.51, 2.58 - 2.59, 2.68 - 2.71)

As previously outlined, school-based assessment and provision will be followed by review at each of the four stages. Parents will be informed of proposed actions and the appropriate review dates. Parents will always be invited to attend reviews, in particular when considering a move beyond Stage 2.

Support available (both internal and external) (Code of Practice 1.8, 2.41)

The school does not have a special unit for SEN. The school does have facilities which assist access to the school with a ramp, which is accessible from Mill Brae, and a lift. In most cases provision for special educational needs will be made by the child's school with a co-ordinated effort from subject teachers, class teachers, the year tutors, the SENCO and the Principal.

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External support is provided initially within the NEELB and may be widened to include specialist agencies, if necessary.

*For further information please refer to the Department of Education's Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (September 1998).*