

Sample Special Educational Needs Policy (revised July 2007)

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

“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: -

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- 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 school.”

Special educational provision means: -

“For children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of this age in schools maintained by the LA, other than special schools in the area.”

See Section 312, Education Act 1998 in Special Educational Needs Code of Practice p. 6

Aims

(Pointer- this section on aims also needs to be cross-referenced to the overall school aims)*

We believe in providing every possible opportunity to develop the full potential of all children. All children will have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum including extra-curricular activities where appropriate and full access to the National Curriculum. All children are valued and their self-esteem promoted. We work in close partnership with parents/carers who play an active and valued role in their child's education. Our aim is that all children with special educational needs participate in activities compatible with the efficient education of other children and the efficient use of resources.

Objectives

(*Pointer- This section on objectives should reflect your main priorities for the year taken from the SEF and within the School Improvement Plan. They should be few in number and reflect the areas that the SENCO and any Governors with responsibility need to concentrate on for the year. If you are clear about your objectives you should have a ready made area to assess impact-in your criteria for success. The objectives set out below are examples they may not reflect your priorities.)

The objectives of our policy are:

- To identify and monitor children's individual needs from the earliest possible stage so that appropriate provision can be made and their attainment raised;
*(*Pointer- earliest possible stage may mean links with Early Years settings or children who transfer from other schools)*

- To plan an effective curriculum to meet the needs of children with special educational needs **such as in our Provision Map and where necessary** ensure that the targets set on Individual Education Plans are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time related;
- To involve children **and parents/carers** in the identification and review of **the targets set for individual children and where necessary those targets** identified in their Individual Education Plans;
- To work in close partnership with, and involve, parents/carers of children who have special educational needs;
- To ensure that all who are involved with children are aware of the procedures for identifying their needs, supporting and teaching them; and
- To work in close partnership, where appropriate, with outside agencies to support the needs and provision for children who have special educational needs.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors' role

The governing body of a community, voluntary or foundation school must:

- Do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child who has special educational needs;
- Ensure that where the 'responsible person' – the Headteacher or the appropriate governor – has been informed by the **LA** that a child has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;
- Ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those children who have special educational needs;
- **Ensure that parents/carers are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child;**
- Ensure that a child with special educational needs joins in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision their learning needs call for, the efficient education of the children with whom they are educated, and the efficient use of resources;
- **Have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001) when carrying out its duties toward all children with special educational needs;**
- **Consult the LA and the governing body of other schools, when it seems to be necessary or desirable in the interests of co-ordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole;**
- **Have a written SEN policy containing the information as set out in the Education(Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999 (reproduced in the SEN Code of Practice);**
- **Report to parents/carers on the implementation of the school's policy for children with special educational needs in the school profile and the school's prospectus; and**
- **In the school prospectus including the name of the person responsible for coordinating SEN provision in the school.**

The governors play an important role in ensuring that:

- They are fully involved in developing and monitoring the school's SEN policy;
- They are up-to-date and knowledgeable about the school's SEN provision, including how funding, equipment and personnel resources are deployed;
- SEN provision is an integral part of the School Improvement Plan **and the school's self-evaluation process**;
- The quality of SEN provision is continually monitored;
- **The SEN policy is reported on in the school prospectus and children's progress is reported in the school profile.**

In addition as part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) new duties came into effect in September 2002. These state that the responsible body must take all steps not to discriminate against disabled children in their admissions arrangements, in the education, **exclusion and associated services provided by the school for its pupils or in relation to exclusions from the school. They must also publish three year plans showing how they will increase access for disabled children to the curriculum, the physical environment of the school, and to written information in alternative formats (Accessibility Strategy –Access Plans).** The Act says that a responsible body for the school discriminates against a disabled child if:

- for a reason relating to the child's disability, it treats him or her less favourably than it treats, or would treat, others to whom that reason does not apply, or would not apply;
- it cannot show that the particular treatment is justified.

(Pointer:-From December 2006 (in Secondary) and December 2007 (Primary) the school must publish a 3 year Disability Equality Scheme showing how they will promote equality of opportunity for disabled children staff and those for whom they provide services. A school's Disability Equality Scheme should show the following:-

- a) how disabled people with an interest in the Scheme have been involved in its development;***
- b) the methods for accessing the impact of policies and practices on equality for disabled persons;***
- c) the steps that will be taken to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people;***
- d) the arrangements for gathering information on the effect of policies and practices on disabled people, including information on recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees; educational opportunities for and achievements of disabled children; and***
- e) the arrangements for making use of this information to help promote equality of opportunity.***

(Please note: - this new requirement stretches beyond children in your school to the adults employed or who may use the premises. Schools are free to locate their Accessibility Plans, Disability Equality Scheme and annual action plan in one or a number of different documents. A school's Accessibility Plan could, by considering staff and users of its services, be extended to form the basis of its Disability Equality Scheme as both are broadly the same planning cycles. Similarly, action plans for the scheme could be incorporated into the school improvement plan and self-evaluation arrangements under the New Relationships with Schools.

SENCO's role

(*Pointer- in Secondary schools add in bullet point about managing teams of SEN teachers/TAs and/or co-ordinating provision across departments/faculties/subject areas. You may use a different term for the person who co-ordinates the provision for SEN. However, SENCO is the current title used in the Code of Practice and DfES documentation. Please be clear here about the person's role if you don't use the title 'SENCO')

Currently the SENCO is _____ who is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of special educational needs throughout the school. This will involve:

- Day to day operation of the SEN policy;
- Providing advice to staff supporting, liaising with them and **where necessary the** completion of Individual Education Plans;
- Working alongside staff to assist them in identifying, assessing and planning for children's needs and ensuring that children make progress;
- Overseeing and maintaining specific resources for special educational needs;
- Liaising with outside agencies;
- Contributing to and, where necessary, leading the **continuing professional development (CPD)** of staff;
- Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the provision for children with SEN to the governing body in conjunction with the designated responsible person;
- Co-ordinating the range of support available to children with special educational needs;
- In conjunction with the class teacher liaising with parents/carers of children with special educational needs.

Arrangements for co-ordinating provision for children with SEN

(*Pointer- Secondary school may need to add in statement about the SENCOs role in co-ordinating provision across depts/faculties/subject areas)

The needs of the majority of children will be met in the classroom. Teachers are expected to make every effort to ensure that children with special educational needs are fully involved in the life of the class. For some children it will be necessary for them to spend some time in small group work or being withdrawn from the classroom for specific, timed activities related to the needs identified. This may be delivered by the teacher, teaching assistant or SENCO and will complement classroom work so that the skills, knowledge and understanding will be transferred to the classroom. **This may be part of the school's co-ordinated arrangements which appear in a Provision Map. A Provision Map details the various programmes and arrangements that we operate to meet identified needs. The SENCO and Governor/s will normally oversee this provision to ensure it meets the objectives of this policy.**

Admission arrangements

Normal admission arrangements apply. The admissions policy is based on the agreed Wiltshire policy. We strive to be a fully inclusive school. All children will be treated according to their needs in line with the school's policy for equality of opportunity. No child will be denied admission because of his or her creed, race, physical ability or academic attainment. Where a child has a particular need e.g. wheelchair access the governors will

make reasonable adjustments to ensure the child's needs are fully met. **(Please see Accessibility and DES above)**. If a child is transferring into the school with a statement, or has been receiving extra support from LA centrally funded resources in their previous school, the continuation of this support will be negotiated with the **appropriate officer** of the **LA** to ensure that their needs can be met.

Any variation to the above will need to be agreed by the full governing body.

Specialist facilities

*(*Pointer- If you have a **specialist learning centre** you should add a comment here about how the centre operates and its link to mainstream work. If you have teachers with specialist expertise you could add a comment here about the provision you make to support children- this is usually in addition or different to that which you offer to the majority of children in the school.)*

There are no specialist facilities or special unit in the school. There are currently no teachers with specialist knowledge of special educational needs.

Resources

*(*Pointer- Resources mean human as well as material. I have removed the % from the school budget set aside for SEN provision. It is anti-inclusive and we cannot determine a benchmark for all schools. It is useful for schools to know how much they spend so that you can judge and be sure you have added value. Resources may be allocated after an audit of need. In addition, it is useful to have clear objective criteria for judging whether or not the money you set aside is well spent (i.e. children make progress as a result of your expenditure. For example if you increase your budget for SEN for more TAs, how will you know as a result that children's reading ages have improved or their writing has improved? **You may have additional monies associated with your Provision Map-if you use one)***

Most of the resources used by children having special educational needs are available within the classroom. Money **may also be** spent on **further** additional resources, staffing costs and time allocated to the SENCO to manage the support for special educational needs and meet the objectives of this policy. Any requests for further additional resources should be made to the SENCO.

Identification and assessment arrangements and review procedures

The school follows the guidance contained in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2002). This recommends a graduated approach.

The Code does not assume that there are hard and fast categories of special educational need, but recognises that children's needs and requirements may fall within or across

four broad areas. These are: -

- ❖ Communication and Interaction;
- ❖ Cognition and Learning;
- ❖ Behavioural, emotional and social development;
- ❖ Sensory and/or physical.

Where possible we will try to meet every child's needs within the classroom through ensuring that our planning, teaching and approaches meet the needs of the majority of the children in our school. However, where through careful identification and assessment we and/or the parents/carers determine that a child is not making adequate progress, the class teacher (*or in secondary subject teacher/head of dept etc*) will consult the SENCO. They, in conjunction with the child and parents/carers, will review the strategies and approaches that are currently being used and the way these might be developed. Where this review leads to the conclusion that the child needs help over and above that which is normally available within the class or school we will help the child through *School Action*.

*(*Pointer- please remember that for Primary aged children ELS, ALS, FLS, Springboard Maths etc are part of your normally differentiated curriculum provision and not additional to or different from that provided. **Your Provision Map should detail these as part of your provision.***)*

School Action

*(*Pointer- It would be useful to mention the use of the LA's 'The Entitlement of Pupils in Mainstream Schools' document here so that staff and parents/carers know the criteria you are using to determine whether or not the children have an identified SEN. **Please note that the Entitlement document is currently being revised and may contain the word guidance not entitlement. In this section we have removed the explanation regarding IEPs. Schools do not need to write IEPs for children where they have a policy of planning, target-setting and recording of progress for ALL children as part of personalised learning that:-***

** identifies learning targets for individual children with SEN;*

** plans additional or different provision from the differentiated curriculum offered to children; and*

** reviews provision in the light of individual children's outcomes;*

In this case a Provision Map will be used. Please note we are currently advising that where a child continues to have learning difficulties and moves to School Action Plus they will need an IEP).

Following a review of the strategies **or approaches** it may be necessary to make provision which is additional to, or different from, that which is already provided. It may be that the child: -

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted to their particular needs;
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing skills in literacy or mathematics;
- Shows persistent signs of emotional or behavioural difficulties, which are not addressed through the behaviour and discipline approaches, used in school;
- Has physical or sensory problems and despite specialist equipment being provided still makes little or no progress;

- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties which lead to them making little or no progress.

We will seek additional information from the parents/carers, and in some cases, outside agencies, who may be involved with the child. When we have all the available information we will consider with the parents/carers and the child the next strategy for action. **This may involve engaging the child in an appropriate programme as part of our Provision Map. Any provision made and the progress made by your child will be discussed with you at parent evenings or through our normal channels of communication. (*Pointer -Please note if you don't use a provision map and still have IEPs for school action you will need to refer to the previous extract in the October 2004 guidance)**

Where, despite all of our best efforts, the child still continues to make little or no progress in relation to the targets set, or is working at National Curriculum levels significantly below those of his/her peers we will move to *School Action Plus*.

School Action Plus

This is similar to School Action, but will involve us in contacting external support services provided by the LA and other external agencies such as the Health Authority. We will seek advice on fresh targets and strategies, or more specialist assessments that can help us with our planning. An IEP will be written to reflect these new targets after consultation with these agencies, parents/carers, the child and the SENCO and class teacher. We will ensure that parental consent is sought before any outside agencies are involved. **An Individual Education Plan will provide for: -**

- **The child's strengths and weaknesses**
- **The date the IEP is written**
- **The names of staff and/or outside agencies involved with the targets**
- **Short-term targets;**
- **The teaching strategies;**
- **What provision we will make;**
- **When we will monitor and review the plan;**
- **How we will judge progress (success criteria) including the exit criteria;**
- **Any outcomes after a review; and**
- **The signature and comment from both the child and parent**

All IEPs are reviewed at least twice a year and targets are discussed at parents/carers' evenings and/or individual appointments.

(*Pointer- you may do this more frequently but the Code of Practice recommends a minimum of twice a year. If you want to specify a shorter time scale than that given, please alter. In addition you may be using the LA IEP which has monitoring identified on a fortnightly basis- whichever system you use it is useful to specify in this section what your monitoring arrangements are and how you can share those with the child and parents/carers. Don't forget that evidence is needed of IEP reviews and SMART targets if you progress through from School Action Plus towards submitting evidence to the LA for consideration for a statutory assessment).

Where, despite all of our best endeavours, the child still makes little or no progress in the areas targeted, we will discuss with the parents/carers and child the need for either of us to approach the LA to request a statutory assessment. This may or may not result in the LA issuing a statement of special educational need. Where a child has a statement of special educational need we will carry out an annual review which parents/carers, child, outside agencies, SENCO and **other staff as appropriate**, will be invited to attend.

Criteria for evaluating the success of our policy

*(*Pointer- this section should reflect the objectives that have been set for the policy. Cross-reference your objectives with the success criteria. **The ones set below are an example- you should put in your own success**).*

The policy will be evaluated against the objectives stated on page one by:

- An analysis of all teachers' planning by **Subject Leaders/Headteacher/SENCO ensures** that a differentiated approach is taken and that the learning objectives in Individual Education Plans are identified and reflected in planning. *(*Pointer- this broadens the notion that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs and should create wider ownership of children's learning needs);*
- Parents/carers **are involved with** individual targets set **with** children by discussing, **receiving and having their views recorded; (particularly relevant if used with Individual Education Plans for their child);**
- Children are involved in discussing, constructing, reviewing and having their views recorded on their own Individual Education Plans;
- Individual Education Plan targets being monitored to ensure that children progress through specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound targets (SMART);
- Ensuring that outside agencies, where appropriate, have their comments **and recommendations** recorded on the Individual Education Plans and are involved in their development;
- The **School Prospectus shows the success of the policy or any changes needed for the subsequent year;**
- The School Improvement Plan **and SEF** priorities which include the provision for SEN;
- Undertaking a value for money review of our Special Educational Needs funding;
- Any external evaluation or inspection.

Success criteria will be: - **(*Pointer- remember your school improvement priority criteria. These below are only examples- please put in your own)**

- (100% of) or All planning reflects IEP targets and any previously identified need. *(*Pointer - this refers to Early Years Settings records and/or children who transfer into the school from another school);*
- A % of those children identified and needing IEPs reach their expected target as judged through objective testing and/or teacher's professional judgement and/or no longer need additional support; *(*Pointer - if small steps are set in IEPs this should not present too many difficulties)*
- All IEPs include written/recorded comments from parents/carers and children, and where necessary outside agency involvement; *(*Pointer - teachers should record the child's voice/comment as well as parents/carers if either are unwilling or unable to write a comment on the proforma)*

- (**Pointer - add any School Improvement Plan target which impacts on children with SEN. Some schools feel able to include quantifiable criteria on different aspects of provision e.g. all pupils who have been at our school throughout KS2/ or KS3 and 4 will have a reading age of.....*).

Complaints procedure

If parents/carers have a complaint concerning provision for their child they should discuss this with the class teacher/tutor. If this proves unsuccessful the matter should be referred to the SENCO and/or Headteacher. Should the matter still be unresolved the parents/carers should contact the 'responsible person' on the governing body. If the complaint remains unresolved the Chair of Governors should be involved and finally the complaint should be taken to the Local Authority and/or Secretary of State.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Through the monitoring and evaluating of our provision the SENCO, with the headteacher (or **CPD co-ordinator**), will identify any particular professional development needs of the staff. This will, where appropriate, be linked closely to the school's improvement plan **and/or performance management objectives**. Staff who attend further courses will feedback on courses attended through staff meetings or department/faculty meetings. The effectiveness of such **professional development** will be monitored and evaluated by the SENCO, and information provided during the annual evaluation of the school's overall SEN provision.

Links and Use of outside agencies

(**Pointer- you will need to include agencies relevant to your situation e.g. Secondary schools and YPSS*)

Close links are maintained with the LA support services in order to ensure that the school makes appropriate provision for children with special educational needs. Where it is necessary to contact outside agencies, the SENCO **will usually** make the necessary arrangements and discuss with parents/carers accordingly. These agencies normally include the Local Education Team including the **educational psychologist**, learning support team, Physical and Sensory Impairment Support Service team, speech therapist, behaviour support team, health and LA personnel. Any or all of these agencies may be involved in the **Provision Map and/ or** construction, delivery or review of targets set in children's Individual Education Plans in order to ensure children's attainment is raised.

Partnership with parents/carers/children

Parents/carers are important partners in the effective working relationship with the school in raising their child's attainment. They are fully involved in the identification, assessment and decision-making process in the school. Parents/carers' contribution to their child's education is valued highly by the staff of the school. Parents/carers are encouraged to involve their child in the decision-making processes, including recording children's views and implementing and reviewing **where necessary** the Individual Education Plan. The school will also update parents/carers with relevant information.

We show sensitivity, honesty and mutual respect in encouraging children to share concerns, discuss strategies and see themselves as equal partners in the school. All children are involved in making decisions, where possible, as soon as they start at the school. The ways in which we encourage them to participate reflects their emerging maturity. Confident young children, who know that their opinions will be valued and who can practise making choices, will be more secure and effective children during their school years. In this school, we encourage children to participate in their learning. We encourage them to have a voice in deciding the priorities for our School Improvement Plan through the school council. We encourage them to take ownership of their learning targets by discussing their targets and what they can do to improve. For children with SEN this includes discussing the strategies **for their success**. We encourage them to take part in reviewing their progress and in setting new goals and challenges.

Links with other schools, (ADD IN) agencies including the voluntary sector

*(*Pointer- this section needs to refer to your specific situation)*

Links are maintained to ensure a smooth transfer on school entry through liaison and visits to local Early Years Settings **and School Start where necessary**. Children are invited to visit us for induction visits in the term before they start school. If necessary the school liaises with other agencies at this stage.

Children with SEN who transfer from other schools are supported through their induction to the school by the class teacher, SENCO and by classroom buddies to ensure that they have a smooth transition.

*(*Pointer- if you don't have a system such as the buddy system you will need to put in your system here).*

Liaison from Year 6 to Year 7 ensures a smooth transition. Staff from Secondary Schools (or School) usually visit us and specialist staff from the Learning Support Faculty *(or name of Secondary School provision)* also maintain close liaison which continues into Year 7.

*(*Pointer- you need to reflect your particular context and transition arrangements)*

*(*Pointer- include here any arrangements you have with other schools e.g. Special Schools. Also put a comment in for any SENCO or Governor cluster/collaborative arrangements that might exist in your area. You may have joint training or joint meetings. **The School Prospectus** has to comment **on the** arrangements the school has for links with **other** schools or **the wider community**. You may even have clustering or similar arrangements that form part of your objectives and consequently have success criteria for this arrangement.)*

Date of review

This policy will be reviewed in _____ **and reported on in the school prospectus.**

Agreed at the governing body meeting on

Date

Signed **(Chair of Governors)**