

Policy for Special Educational Needs & Inclusion



Black Firs School

“the purpose of education for all children is the same, the goals are the same. But the help that individual children need in progressing may be different. (Warnock Report)”

Rationale:

It is initially of vital importance to establish the fundamental difference between Integration and Inclusion. Integration crucially implies that the pupil adapts to the school whereas in Inclusion the two must move towards each other. It is our view that successful inclusion relies on absolute respect for the needs of the individual, devising support structures that intrude as little as possible so that the needs of the majority are not compromised and children with special needs experience a ‘normality’ alongside other children. It also needs to take place within a strong and highly effective pastoral system; we feel it is this combination of pastoral care and special needs expertise that is the key to success. It is about child-centred education for life in the wider world beyond school. It must retain, at its core, the idea of providing the pupils with a sense of self-worth and social inclusion. At its heart lies the provision of a secure environment in which a child can develop, grow, learn and progress; where he/she can experience success and failure receive praise encouragement and understanding, be reassured, receive protection and stability. THE POLICY RELIES ENTIRELY UPON THE WIDER ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL.

Inclusion

The Statutory Inclusion statement outlines how teachers can modify the National Curriculum programmes of Study to provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage. It sets out three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum;

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to pupils’ diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

Aims-

- To give every child the experience of success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible;
- To plan teaching and learning for individuals to achieve (teachers are to be aware that pupils bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way they learn and to apply equal opportunities policy that covers race, gender and disability);
- To create an effective learning environment where children are motivated to learn;
- To ensure the contribution of all children is valued, so that all pupils feel secure in contributing;
- To help pupils to learn to take responsibility for their own actions, and challenge bullying and harassment;
- To help pupils to view positively differences in others whether by race, gender, disability, ability or religious beliefs.

Teaching Strategies

- Using teaching approaches appropriate to different learning styles;
- Using a range of organisational approaches, such as grouping, setting, peer tutoring, individual work, to ensure that learning needs are properly addressed;
- Varying subject content and presentation so that this matches learning needs;
- Planning work which builds on their interests and cultural experiences;
- Planning appropriately challenging work;
- Using learning materials that provide positive images of race, gender and disability;
- Monitoring the pace of work to maintain interest and enable children to learn effectively and achieve success.

Definitions:

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty that 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 that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind 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 above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children 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.

Parental partnership:

Having an open door for parental approach not always by appointment at set times and also by telephone is key to partnership in addressing the concerns immediately.

Benefits to the school

As Aristotle would have it: 'THE SUM OF THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN ITS PARTS.'

A successful inclusion programme constitutes a genuine attempt to tackle equal opportunities by challenging stereotypes and confronting prejudice. Amongst all pupils it helps create an awareness of special needs in the context of the familiar rather than something that happens out there, to strange people, in strange places.

It leads to a greater awareness of personal and social responsibility and most importantly fosters a climate of achievement where everybody is expected to tackle everything.

What happens in school?

This school recognizes that all children, across the ability range, may at some point in their education, have a special need. 1 in 6 children have a special need.

1. **Differentiation-** it is expected that the teacher differentiates work to meet the abilities of the children in the class, special needs intervention is where a child's needs cannot be met within current differentiation strategies. The IEP sets out that which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum.
2. **The three 'waves' of support for children in literacy and numeracy-:**
 - Wave 1 is the inclusion of all children in a high quality literacy and numeracy lesson.
 - Wave 2 allows small group intervention for groups who, with a little help, can catch up with their peers, In Numeracy we use materials from Springboard. In Literacy, Early Literacy Support is provided for Year 1 for the Spring term and Additional Literacy support (ALS) for Years 3 & 4, Further Literacy Support (FLS) is used in Years 5 and 6.
 - Wave 3 targets SEN intervention.
3. **Triggers for intervention at School Action:**
 - Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness;
 - Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
 - Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques employed by school;
 - Has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist therapy and/or equipment;
 - Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.
4. **Ongoing Assessment-**The school has assessment criteria related to the NLS and NNS expectations for the child's age group and the 'norm' is set against these criteria as detailed in the Child's record of achievement. Teaching assistants and teachers work alongside a child to build up an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses. Where concerns about the child's educational progress are voiced by the class teacher or the parents, a fuller assessment is discussed.
5. **Internal assessment tests-** standardised results are obtained from progress tests in the Autumn and Spring term and from SATS tests in the Summer term. Children who attain less than 92 as a standardised score are monitored as 'borderline' in meeting expected levels of attainment. Tests are used in collating a picture where a child's special needs are discussed.
6. **Identification** Where it is agreed with parents, teacher and SENco that a child should have personal targets on an Individualised Educational Plan (IEP), this child is included on the school's special needs register at 'SCHOOL ACTION'. He/she may be included for a short space of time as intervention is often the trigger to the child's weaknesses being addressed and they reach a point where they no longer need a personal plan. With other children they may remain on the register as long as their needs demand. This is a confidential process and no 'stigma' should be attached. The child is fully included in the curriculum.
7. **The Role of the I.E.P.-**The I.E.P. is a vital tool in the administration of an inclusive policy. The plan sets out needs and goals, which vary according to the individual pupil. They may help to decide individual pupil's targets, along with a collaborative team of people. This team will include special needs staff, parents and if possible the pupils themselves. The I.E.P. is centrally administered and reviewed by the SENCO and special needs teaching assistant. Its main function is the provision of information and an awareness of the pupils' needs at a level, which is useful to and useable by all staff. P levels are available for children working below the levels of tests and National Curriculum levels (www.qca.org.uk/uk/ca/tests/below_level.asp).
8. **Responsibility-** (i) The class teacher is responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering the individualised programme; a teacher can develop his/her own approach, utilizing individual skills. In this way the I.E.P. becomes a working document, rather than a file-bound exercise. (ii)The support assistant will often have input into a pupil's individual

- education plan and works with the teacher to support a child in meeting individual targets. (iii) The SENCo takes the lead in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in planning future support for the child in discussion with colleagues and in monitoring and subsequently reviewing the action taken.
9. **Monitoring progress and Review-** At least two IEPs are followed in an academic year, usually one a term, reviewed at the end of the term and a copy sent to/discussed with parents. If the child does not make progress against targets, the IEP is reviewed and strategies and targets amended. The key test for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate.
 10. **Adequate progress is defined in a number of ways-** It might be progress which:
 - Closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers;
 - Prevents the attainment gap growing wider;
 - Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline but less than the majority of peers;
 - Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress;
 - Ensures access to the full curriculum;
 - Demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills;
 - Demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour.
 11. **SCHOOL ACTION PLUS-** In some cases we feel that advice, assessment and active involvement from a specialist is needed. We draw on a team of professionals including the Speech and language therapists (SALT) , the Cheshire Autistic Spectrum Disorder Team (CASDT), the Learning support team, Educational Psychologist, statementing team, Occupational therapists, School doctor and nurse, physiotherapists, Dyslexia teacher...These specialists assess the child's needs and make recommendations that are incorporated into the next IEP. The school aims to provide 'seamless' provision in working with other agencies.
 12. **STATEMENT-**Where it is considered that the child's special needs may require a statement to outline specific requirements for inclusion, the child's needs are submitted to the Statementing panel. This is a request for 'Statutory assessment'; it can be made by the school or the parents. If the panel agree it is required, the child is given a statement of special needs to support access to the national curriculum and full inclusion. In Year 5 the annual review of the statemented child must consider transition to secondary school and the statement must be amended by February 15th of Year 6.
 13. **Pupil Involvement-** The new Code of practice (2002) places greater emphasis on pupil's involvement in the target setting, achievement and review process.
 14. **Parent Partnership-**The parents are involved in full at each stage. The LEA send an SEN newsletter to schools which is placed in the letter rack for parents to take a copy.
 15. **The LEA provide a 'graduated response booklet' for the collation of intervention for special needs.** This should be completed so that it can be submitted to the Learning support team or the Educational Psychology team where their specialist assessment and support is required.
 16. **There are four areas of need-** Communications and interaction
Cognition and learning
Behaviour, social and emotional development
Sensory and/or physical

Teaching Assistant's role within inclusion

Support staff are essential tools in the successful Inclusion strategy, providing the framework, which enables pupils to access, the wider curriculum, both within and outside the classroom. Hours are dependent on the budget. Currently one assistant is paid for 8 hours to support and monitor IEPs across school, liaising with teachers and SeNCo. A full time classroom assistant supports in the Reception class, Year 1 children have a teaching assistant's support for literacy and numeracy sessions. Year 4 have a teaching assistant to support groups and individuals for four mornings and one morning is provided for a group in Year 3. Year 5 and 6 share the support of a teaching assistant for 20 hours.

Teaching assistants able to use their own initiative are vital to successful inclusion and must be respected for their professional contribution. They are the people on the ground able to monitor and evaluate needs and progress. Sensitivity to the needs of the pupil will result in the appropriate degree of support. There can be a risk of 'over supporting' a pupil, which would encourage dependence on the child's part. This could block interactions with peers and create a situation where a pupil has little opportunity to become self – reliant. Ultimately the support assistant's role within inclusion is to facilitate independence, enabling and encouraging pupils to have confidence in their own abilities and strengths, while collaborating with others to provide a strong framework on which the pupil can continue to learn and develop with growing confidence in them. To achieve true 'inclusion' all pupils within a school, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses, need to be able to become part of the whole school community.

Part of the support assistant's role is to actively encourage special needs pupils to interact with peers and within lessons, whilst encouraging them to have as much control as possible over their actions and decisions. This gives pupils confidence in their own ability to learn and interact within the classroom and the school as a whole. The relationship that develops between a support assistant and a pupil is very important. The encouragement given and trust formed can only help the pupil reach their goals.

Another key area of the support assistant's roles is to provide, in collaboration with class teachers, suitable differentiated work, which meets the exact needs of each pupil to be supported and resources which clarify and promote understanding, on a suitable level of difficulty for the individual pupil. In order to do this, support assistants need to stay in frequent contact with classroom teachers, to stay informed about what will be covered in lessons and what the pupil will be expected to know and learn from each lesson.

Specialists

- We have employed a professional Dyslexia consultant, providing assessment of needs and key base-level training for individuals or small groups are tutored by specialists

- Currently individuals are supported by visiting occupational therapists, physiotherapists, specialists in Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- At School Action Plus, children are assessed by the LA SEN Support Teachers or Educational Psychologist with the consent of their parents.
- Children are referred to the school nurse and doctor where teachers or parents raise cause for concern on a medical matter eg. testing of eyes, ears, allergies, concentration span difficulties or to check aspects of physical development..
- Children are also referred to the Speech and language therapy centre (SALT) where appropriate and with the consent of their parents.

The S.E.N.C.O. liaises with representatives of all faculties to raise awareness of Inclusion issues and to develop appropriate differentiated classroom materials and include recommendations in targets for IEPs.

IT

Access to I.C.T. and other technological aids helps ease inclusion for a number of pupils. Software for fun activities reinforcing basic skills are loaded on our PCs (Clicker, wordshark and numbershark). A large mouse is available by arrangement. Talking books and CDs of books are held by Year R staff and can be borrowed. Children can use the photocopier to make visual timetables. Audio recorders, videos and digital cameras are useful for children who need to listen again to information or record other than by writing. Interactive smartboards are used in some classes.

Behaviour

We work closely with children to keep them interested in achieving goals and to guard against disaffection with school; each child requires a personalised approach to learning to afford them a measure of success and keep them 'on line'. A Discipline policy is implemented. PREVENTION RATHER THAN EXCLUSION BEING OUR GOAL. However there are unfortunate and isolated incidents where the LEA procedures for exclusion are followed.

Access Initiative -we have found it necessary to make some modifications to the school infrastructure. Ramps have been provided, along with disabled toilet facilities. Unfortunately this is still not sufficient to give access to all areas and herein lies the central problem of funding for inclusion. Within the school environment and, more particularly a school with dated fabric and design, it is difficult to envisage total mobility facilitation. A "best fit" has to be achieved within the framework of realistic infrastructure development as funding becomes available. See Accessibility Plan

Governor Responsibility-

- To publish the school's policy on meeting the needs at all Code of Practice stages;
- Secure that teachers are aware of their responsibilities in providing for pupils with special educational needs;
- Report annually to parents on the school's policy for SEN;
- Secure a responsible person on the governors for SEN to act as advocate for those children with SEN (currently Mrs Helen Bailey)
- Admit any pupil whose statement of SEN names the school;
- Have regard to the Code of practice when carrying out their duties toward all pupils with SEN;
- Include in the Annual Report, information on SEN as in section 2.11 of the Code of Practice and in Part 1 of circular 6/94
- Include a section in the Annual report detailing a description of admission arrangements for disabled children, the steps taken to prevent pupils with disabilities from being treated less favourably and details of facilities provided to assist access to the school by pupils with disabilities. (Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

Headteacher Responsibility

- Implement the SEN policy as agreed with the Governors;
- Agree a named teacher to co-ordinate provision for SEN and ensure the named teacher is trained and has time to carry out the duties, (currently Phill Critchlow);
- Report regularly to the Governors;
- Ensure that a 'register' is kept of children with SEN and steps to meet the needs of individual children;
- Ensure that parents are involved at all stages;
- Work within the LA's guidelines for a graduated approach to the Code of Practice.
- Liaising with the SeNCo to organise In-service training for staff;
- Ensuring the SeNCo has time to liaise with teachers, parents, support staff and external agencies.

Reviewed annually

Appendix:

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty, which hinders the learning of literacy skills and can occur at any level of intellectual ability. An aware teacher will notice that for the dyslexic the acquisition of literacy skills can be very painful and difficulties experienced will not be confined to particular subject or indeed to only the school situation. Problems with time, sequencing and memory also affect his/her relationships at home and in social situations and resulting frustrations may cause a dyslexic to exhibit behavioural problems too. In

spite of not having the best neurological system for the purpose, a dyslexic tries to read and spell by devising strategies, which are often faulty and can lead to inaccuracies and bad learning habits, which at Secondary School age have become firmly established.

The ultimate aim is the acquisition of literacy, which allows a person to read and write to the level required of his/her social and intellectual group. Most literate adults have acquired their skills by noticing patterns of sounds and letters, by using analogy, by remembering the hand movements of word shapes in handwriting. The dyslexic student does not and cannot absorb the skills of writing language in the same way. The teacher, therefore, must ensure that these skills of literacy are taught explicitly and thus ensure the student is made aware of sound patterns, letter strings, recurring suffixes or prefixes, base words etc. The student must be helped to see some structure and order and thus avoid perceiving every letter/word as a unique entity.

Introduction to Dyslexia, Lynsey Peer and Gavin Reid

- Discrepancies in performance
- Difficulties in phonological processing
- Reading difficulties manifest at 6 years
- Adopt inappropriate learning strategies in reading and spelling; need to rehearse correct strategies, takes time to 'unlearn'.
- Not readily consolidate new learning, need additional time, to reinforce skills and knowledge, need Teacher to make links to previous learning.
- Auditory processing- slow, slower recall, not have automaticity.
- Multi-sensory is useful reinforce learning
- Memory difficulties- short term & long term
- Difficulties in co-ordination
- Can be more creative and good at problem solving, good at random thinking
- Computation- recording is hard
- Difficulties in number, do not differentiate with language and symbols
- Early spoken language difficulties
- ADHD
- Need VAK (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) approach
- Spelling- usually 18 months behind reading age, consistent mistakes
- Writing- badly formed letters, inconsistent capital/lower case, lack of grammar and extended vocabulary;
- Writing- mechanical skills trail behind reading skills, when writing get order wrong. Think 'cat'- think 't' -write t first.

Booklet available from Headteacher.

Teaching strategies

Armed with as much background information as I can from pupils' histories and previous reports, I carry out my own testing programme using well established standardized tests as well as some of my own. My main interest is in establishing a pupil's level of under-achievement in language areas by comparison with other learning skills. I also need to be clear about each pupil's dyslexic tendencies, e.g. Short term memory deficit, poor phonological awareness, visual and auditory strengths and weaknesses, speech and reading fluency, legibility of written work, ability to convey and comprehend meaning, spelling accuracy etc. From this knowledge I decide on whether the teaching programme should be 'simplified', 'standard' or 'accelerated'.

Mind-Friendly

My approach therefore is to aim at integrating the four sensory modalities; visual, auditory, oral kinaesthetic (speaking) and manual kinaesthetic (writing) in all aspects of the dyslexic's learning from basic sound/symbol responses to complex learning tasks.

The programme I follow is phonics, thus allowing the pupil to gain a thorough knowledge of the correspondence between letters and sounds.

It is highly structured and based on the analysis of the structure of written language.

Teaching is sequential moving at the required pace through high frequency simple concepts to lower frequency concepts of more complexity.

The teaching is thorough, each stage is thoroughly understood and over-learned where necessary and given plenty of practice. The aim is to inculcate an automatic response thereby reducing the load on memory.

Incorporated are learning strategies to encourage the student to link new concepts to previous knowledge.

Much of the programme deals with word structure, the pupil learning basic sound/symbol responses and progressing to words and sentences. The pupil is taught the vocabulary and terminology necessary to communicate accurately with me and thoroughly understand the processes involved.

Each lesson contains a variety of elements

- A sequencing activity (to settle the pupil and promote organization)
- A reading routine (reinforcing memory of all previous sound symbol links and promoting an automatic response).
- Learning a new sound /letter link using all sensory channels (auditory, oral, manual and visual)
- Spelling routine of previously learned sounds
- A repeat-spell-write-check routine to co-ordinate all modalities
- Reading new words (alone and in context) including developing a more sophisticated vocabulary by adding suffixes and prefixes to new words and using them in context
- Composition – words/sentences to give practice and reinforcement, handwriting speed, over learning and memory.
- Direct discovery time – looking for links and patterns, question and analysis.
- Finish the lesson with a teacher produced game, which incorporates all previous skills, requires memory; uses tactics and strategies learned, reinforces new work, provides a treat and promotes an enjoyable pupil teacher atmosphere.

Although a strict framework is being followed, flexibility is important too. Time must be allowed for individual students' needs. Patience must be shown with erratic performance and short-term memory deficits. Discussion must be included and problems and queries articulated. Standards of presentation must be developed and improved upon and active/discovery learning encouraged. Marking must be done in a positive way, encouraging the idea that a word should look right, sound right and feel right as you write it.

The challenge really lies with the teacher as well as the pupil and teaching goes beyond the structure by using any available resource and opportunity, which are appropriate for the individual student.

See Summary of Alastair Smith's work on the brain and Learning, available from Headteacher and Dr Hoffman's booklets from In-service training.