

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

Mission Statement

The School follows the DCSF Code of Practice for pupils who may, at times, experience learning difficulties, or Special Educational Needs (SEN). It is our responsibility to identify that need, to assess it and to make provision to rectify the difficulty.

We aim to provide every possible opportunity to develop the full potential of every child. Children with Special Educational Needs must be valued as individuals and should be encouraged to integrate with their peers, both socially and academically. They should have access to the whole school curriculum. At all times, consideration will be given to maintaining and enhancing the self esteem of children with Special Educational Needs.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy includes complying with the criteria of the current Code of Practice.
- 1.2 The Old Vicarage School provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the school.
- 1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional or different help from that given to other children of the same age.
- 1.4 Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

2 Aims and objectives

The Old Vicarage School's Special Educational Needs policy provides a framework for the provision of teaching and support for children with learning difficulties. The framework refers to entitlement, access and partnership.

Although we aim to make provision for identified Special Educational Needs, it may not always be possible to do so within the school's resources. In such cases the Headmaster and the child's parents would be informed. Where a concern has been raised, any SEN's will be identified at the earliest possible opportunity. The assessment process will involve partnership with all those concerned with the child, including parents/carers, teachers and other professionals. The child's views will also be sought.

Details of provision and areas of responsibility will be guided by the current Code of Practice for SEN. (Code of Practice, January 2002, DCSF) All staff should be aware of their particular responsibilities with respect to the SEN Policy. They should seek advice from the SENCO whenever necessary. The Headmaster and staff should be kept informed of those children on the Register for Special Educational Needs.

The School has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) As children progress through the school, all information and records relating to their Special Educational Needs are transferred with them. The needs of gifted or more able children should be met within the classroom, following the School's policy for gifted/ brighter children.

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are:
 - to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child;

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

3 Educational inclusion

3.1 In The Old Vicarage School we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

3.2 Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

4 Special educational needs

4.1 SEN is defined as a child having significantly greater difficulty in learning in one or more areas than the majority of children of the same age.

Such children are entered on the school's SEN register. No child is placed on the register without the knowledge of parents. These children are given extra help and support. A copy of the school's full SEN policy is available on request.

4.2 SEN may not always be educational. We believe, absolutely, in the development of the whole person, emotionally, spiritually, socially, behavioural, physically and educationally. While all of these areas are equally important, we do recognise that needs may occur in any one or more of these areas.

4.3 Early identification and assessment of 'learning difficulties' enables the school to make sure that such pupils have access to the full curriculum. *Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children have a learning difficulty if:*

- they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for children of the same age;
- they are under school age and fall within the definitions above.

4.4 Many of the children who join our school have already attended an early education setting. In many cases children join us with their needs already assessed. All our children are assessed when they join our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

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- 4.5** If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This level of support is called School Action. The child's class teacher will offer interventions that are different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The class teacher will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), if not already involved, will become involved if the teacher and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support. The SENCO will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs.
- 4.6** We will record the strategies used to support the child within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will show the short-term target set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term.
- .7** If the IEP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in school by external support services. This may lead to additional or different strategies to those at School Action.
- .8** This enhanced level of support is called School Action Plus. External support services will provide information for the child's new IEP. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's normal classroom setting.
- 4.9** If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for statutory assessment will be made to the LEA. A range of written evidence about the child will support the request.
- 4.10** The SENCO has overall responsibility for the co-ordination of SEN provision. In our school the SENCO:
- manages the day-to-day operation of the SEN policy;
 - co-ordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
 - maintains the SEN register;
 - has overall responsibility for IEPs;
 - supports and advises colleagues, keeping them informed of children with SEN;
 - oversees the records of all children with special educational needs, and ensures assessments are carried out;
 - has responsibility for children who have a *statement* and annual reviews;
 - acts as the link with parents;
 - acts as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
 - monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision and reports to the Headmaster;
 - liaises with the Headmaster to:
 - ensure that resources, including staff are available to meet SEN provision
 - in-staff training is available to maintain skills and expertise
 - plan LSAs' timetables and make optimum use of their time.
 - manages a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with special educational needs;
 - *contributes to the professional development of all staff.*
- 4.11** Support is provided, as appropriate, either in:
- the classroom by the teacher and classroom assistant, advised by the Special Needs specialist teachers, or
 - our Learning Resource Suite, working with special needs teachers on a one-to-one or small group basis.
- As far as possible, the help offered in the Learning Resource Suite reflects the work undertaken in the classroom, backed by appropriate materials and carefully chosen computer software.
- 4.12** For those who seem to have particular learning difficulties, we consult with parents who may decide to seek the advice of outside specialists, such as

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Educational Psychologists and Medical Practitioners. We are then guided by their advice.

5 The role of the Headmaster

- 5.1** The Headmaster has due regard to the Code of Practice when meeting the needs of children with special educational needs.
- 5.2** The Headmaster reports annually to parents on the success of the school's policy for children with special educational needs.
- 5.3** The Headmaster has specific oversight of the school's provision for children with special educational needs. The Headmaster ensures that all those who teach a child with a statement of special educational needs are aware of the nature of the statement.
- 5.4** The Headmaster must be aware of the school's SEN provision, including authorising the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

6 Allocation of resources

- 6.1** The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with statements of special educational needs.
- 6.2** The Headmaster and the SENCO meet annually to agree on how to use funds directly related to statements. The SENCO draws up the resources requirements when the Headmaster is planning for the next school improvement plan.

7 Assessment and monitoring

The assessment and monitoring of children with Special Educational Needs, as well as the provision of support, evaluation and record-keeping will be guided by the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs (January 2002) Parent should be kept informed at every stage. The views of the child should also be sought where possible.

Acting on the expression of an initial concern, the class teacher should be responsible for collecting information regarding the child, including evidence to support their concerns. National Curriculum levels and standardised tests should be used. If a child's needs cannot be met by differentiation within the classroom, the child's teacher should seek advice from the Learning Support Department and the SENCO should be informed. The SENCO then takes the lead in collecting relevant information, further assessments and planning support.

Following evaluation, various options are available:

- The SENCO advises teachers on the use of resources, strategies, and differentiation. The class teacher monitors progress.
- The SENCO plans the support programme; the child attends LSD; an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is implemented and SENCO monitors progress, liaising with other staff parents & the child.
- The SENCO may seek further assessment and advice from external specialists.

Support will reflect a gradient of Special Educational Needs and will be categorised as: *School Action* and *School Action Plus*. Individual Education Plans will be discussed with the child 's parents and where possible, the views of the child will be sought. IEPs will be reviewed termly and more frequently as needed. Children are assessed twice yearly, using current standardised tests. Other specialist tests may be used to gain a more detailed individual profile. In some cases, external specialists may carry out further assessment i.e educational psychologist, behavioural optometrist and speech therapist.

At present, the main focus of support is on the establishment and development of literacy, difficulties with mathematics and study skills as well as aiming to address the underlying causes of disability. Once a learning support need has been identified, support will be given whenever possible, within the constraints of staff expertise and

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timetabling. However, if the child's needs cannot be met by the school, or the child is unable to cope with the whole school curriculum, the parents and Headmaster will be advised.

- 7.1 Early identification is vital. The Headmaster informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.
- 7.2 The class teacher and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an ongoing process.
- 7.3 The SENCO works closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of support.
- 7.4 The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

8 Access to the curriculum

- 8.1 All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:
 - understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
 - *experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.*
- 8.2 Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.
- 8.3 Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success. All children at School Action and School Action Plus have an IEP.
- 8.4 We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom.

9 Partnership with parents

- 9.1 The School works closely with parents in the support of those children with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. The Home-School Agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.
- 9.2 We have regular meetings each term to share the progress of special needs children with their parents. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

10 Child participation

- 10.1 In our school we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. The work in the Foundation Stage recognises the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills.
- 10.2 Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets in their IEPs and in the termly IEP review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their IEP targets. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

11 Monitoring and evaluation

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- 11.1** The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in school. The SENCO provides staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school.
- 11.2** The SENCO is involved in supporting teachers involved in drawing up Individual Education Plans for children. The SENCO and the Headmaster hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in this area.
- 11.3** The Director of Studies reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The SENCO reports the outcome of the review to the Headmaster.

12 Staffing and resources

A range of teaching resources are used, employing multi-sensory elements to enhance learning and memory. These include ICT facilities.

13 Accessing learning support

Children may have 1 to 4, 35-minute support lessons per week. A fifth lesson may be given. Most teaching takes place in small groups, although programmes of work are designed to meet individual needs. Individual support may be advised for some children.

14 Charges

There is an extra charge for learning support lessons, details of which are available from the School Secretary. Certain specialist assessments also carry a charge and parents would be fully informed before proceeding. External specialists have their own fees and would provide a separate bill.

15 Complaints

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with either the child's class teacher or any member of the Learning Support Department. The SENCO and the Headmaster should be aware of any concerns. The School also has an official complaints policy and procedure.

16 Curriculum

It is our intention at The Old Vicarage School to provide for children with Dyslexia, giving them access to a complete age-appropriate curriculum. This:

- is adapted to children's special needs
- meets National Curriculum requirements – including those of National Curriculum 2000 - wherever possible.
- is overseen by our Subject Co-ordinators

The prospective child's needs are evaluated using standardised reading and spelling tests, and diagnostic tests judged to be appropriate. The optimal placement of the child will be determined following consultation with the Headmaster and in collaboration with the Class Teacher. The latter will have observed the child in the classroom. The literacy and numeracy programmes of work vary according to the individual needs of the children

Teachers submit Medium Term Curriculum Plans to the Director of Studies on a termly basis and these are copied to the Headmaster. They are extracted from the the Old Vicarage School Schemes of Work and specify when children will cover specific aspects of the curriculum. They are differentiated in response to group progress and the needs of individual groups. They are accompanied by a timetable indicating precisely when lessons will be delivered.

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Children are differentiated into teaching groups for English and Mathematics. Small group or one-to-one provision may be provided for dyslexic children with less severe needs who require minimal support with Literacy and/or Numeracy. These children are usually assessed 'in-house' by the SENCO, and parents may thereafter seek an Educational Psychologist's Report.

Class Teachers (who are also the Personal Tutors) are responsible for tracking each child's progress in Literacy and/or Numeracy throughout their time at The Old Vicarage School. In Literacy the emphasis in Years 3 and 4 is on reading and the sub-skills needed for reading, and improving phonological processing. However, all children receive help with spelling, composition and written comprehension so that by the End of Year Examinations, teachers are able to assess their National Curriculum Level. Dyslexic children receive extra time in school examinations.

17 Individual Education Plans

IEP targets should be kept under constant inclassroom review, but will be classally reviewed and outcomes recorded each term. Present targets revised. There will be liaison with parents whose input will be sought.

Children should be made aware of any targets set where this is judged to be useful and appropriate. Caution should be exercised where children are new to The Old Vicarage School since we need to ensure that targets are realistic for the child.

Care will be taken to avoid the four most common weaknesses in IEPs which are:-

- imprecise terminology (with frequent use of phrases such as 'improved reading', 'increased confidence', 'improved self-esteem');
- failure to indicate which teachers and subjects would be involved;
- lack of child involvement;
- failure to link them with other areas of assessment and recording procedures in the school.

The five most frequent strengths in IEPs are:

- based on sound knowledge of the child;
- taking account of children's strengths and interests;
- stating realistic time scales;
- linked to resources in school;
- involving parents at some stage (either in their setting and/or review).

Distribution of IEPs – copies should be made for:

- Parents
- The Headmaster
- The SENCO
- Class Teachers/Group Co-ordinator
- Subject teachers

18 Disability Discrimination Act

The whole raison d'être of the Old Vicarage School is whenever possible to provide for children who have a disability - albeit a hidden one - and to enable them to realise their potential.

We would always consider admitting any dyslexic children - no matter what accompanying disabilities they have providing we are confident that we are able to meet their special educational needs.

In the light of the Disability Discrimination Act we have carefully considered what we might do to make our building more accessible to those who have a physical handicap.

We have thought about whether we could teach without the need for a physically

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disabled child to go upstairs. Unfortunately, we have had to conclude that this would not be possible because of the nature of the building. However, the child's Class could simply swap to a downstairs room.

Signed:.....

Date:.....September 2008

To be reviewed no later than: September 2009