

RAVENSCROFT NURSERY SCHOOL

SPECIAL & ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND INCLUSION POLICY



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MISSION STATEMENT

"We, the Staff and Governors of **RAVENSCROFT NURSERY SCHOOL**, believe that nursery education is a very valuable and important experience for all children.

We see it as an extension to and compliment of the love and care already experienced by the child at home.

Therefore, it is important to maintain a close relationship between you the parent, and the staff, for the benefit of your child.

Each child is an individual with different needs. Our awareness of this allows us to organise a varied curriculum, which will enable all the children in our care to reach their full potential.

We aim to provide a safe, secure, interesting, and challenging learning environment for each child to become increasingly independent, self-confident and a happy individual."

This policy is for all members of the school community - staff, pupils, and parents.

POLICY STATEMENT

The main thrust of this policy is to meet the needs of all children in Ravenscroft Nursery School with Special Educational Needs /Disability /Additional Educational Needs (SEN/Dis/AEN).

This policy has been developed within the current context of legislation and policy in SEN/Dis/AEN:

- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996
 - The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (Operative date; 1st September 1998)
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (referred to as SENDO) which aims to:
 - Introduce disability discrimination law to the education sector in Northern Ireland
 - Strengthen the rights of children with Special Educational Needs to be educated in mainstream education
 - Place a 'duty on schools to work towards making school life more accessible to disabled pupils for example, in terms of premises, the curriculum and written information'
- (Operative date: 1st September 2005)

- The Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification of Special Educational Needs 2005
- Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with Special Educational Needs 2005
- Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools 2006
- 'Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs' , Guidance Document from the Department of Education and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety 2008
- Provisional Criteria for Initiating Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Need and making Statements of Special Educational Need. (Operative date: 1st September 2009)
- Good Practice Guidelines (Operative date: 1st September 2009)

This policy also takes cognisance of the Every School a Good School - The Way Forward for SEN and Inclusion proposals (2009) which introduces the concept of Additional Educational Needs (AEN).

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Ravenscroft Nursery School serves children from the East Belfast area. The premises consist of an entrance hall, office, 2 classrooms (each with its own quiet room and toilet area), a Parent's/Staff room, a kitchen, and a school meals kitchen. There is a large outdoor play area. The school is well resourced.

The school was rebuilt in 2009.

SCHOOL ETHOS

Ravenscroft Nursery School aims to provide a child-centred pre-school experience featuring developmentally appropriate learning in a positive, fun, friendly and flexible environment in which all children are encouraged to reach their full potential as members of a happy, caring community.

The aims of Ravenscroft Nursery School are founded on the belief that:

- Childhood is not merely a preparation for adulthood but is a valid and important point of life
- Every child is a unique individual with his/her own needs
- Learning for young children is holistic and not separated into subjects
- Children have a right to develop physically, emotionally, cognitively, socially, and morally to their full potential
- Children learn through first-hand experiences, using their senses to develop an understanding of their world

- Children need opportunity and space to explore their environment.
- Play is central to a child's learning process; play is the business of childhood
- What each child can do rather than what they cannot do is the starting point in their education

AIMS

- To reach high levels of achievement for all
- To be an inclusive school
- To ensure the identification of all pupils requiring SEN/Dis/AEN provision as early as possible
- To meet individual needs through a wide range of provision
- To attain high levels of satisfaction and participation from pupils, parent and carers
- To share a common vision and understanding with all stakeholders
- To provide curriculum access for all
- To work towards inclusion in partnership with other agencies and schools
- To achieve a level of staff expertise to meet pupil need

We recognise that many pupils will have special needs at some time during their school life. In implementing this policy, we believe pupils will be helped to overcome their difficulties.

OBJECTIVES

The school, in line with the code of practice for special educational needs, will ensure that the fundamental principles of the code of practice are followed which are that:

- The needs of all pupils who may experience learning difficulties during their school careers must be addressed; the Code recognises that there is a continuum of needs and a continuum of provision which may be made in a variety of forms;
- Children with SEN/Dis/AEN require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education, including the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- The needs of most pupils will be met in mainstream schools, and without a statutory assessment or a statement. Children with special educational needs, including those with statements, should, wherever appropriate and taking into account the wishes of their parents, be educated alongside their peers in mainstream schools.

PRINCIPLES

The school will work in Partnership with Parents.

The school will "Listen to and act upon the voice of the child" (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child).

The school will do all in its power to ensure each child reaches full potential.

DEFINITIONS

As outlined in the 1996 Order (and summarised in para 1.4 of the code of practice)

A pupil is regarded as having special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her. A child has a 'learning difficulty' if:

- He/she has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age;
- He/she has a disability which either prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his/her age in ordinary schools; or
- He/she has not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him/her, likely to fall within either of the previous two paragraphs when he/she is of compulsory age.

Definition of Disability

SENDO 2005:

- defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities.
- states that the definition does not include any impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness, unless that illness is a clinically well-recognised illness. A clinically well-recognised illness is one that is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion.

The same definitions are used in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

These definitions may include pupils with cerebral palsy, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, autism, depression and ME. The list is not definitive.

The school will work with parents, the Educational Board and outside agencies in order to provide reasonable adjustments and relevant and purposeful measures that it may be able to provide for a pupil with a disability.

CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Department of Education has identified seven 'areas' of Special Educational Need. Within each area there are a number of SEN categories which are as follows:

1 Cognitive and Learning

- a) Dyslexia/SpLd (DYL)
- b) Dyscalculia
- c) Dyspraxia
- d) Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- e) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- f) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- g) Profound and Multiple Learning difficulties (PMLD)
- h) Unspecified (U)

2 Social, Emotional and Behavioural

- a) SEBD
- b) ADD/ADHD (ADD)

3 Communication and Interaction

- a) Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)
- b) Autism (AUT)
- c) Aspergers (ASP)

4 Sensory

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

5 Physical

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

6 Medical Conditions / Syndromes

- a) Epilepsy (EPIL)
- b) Asthma (ASTH)

- c) Diabetes (DIAB)
- d) Anaphylaxis (ANXS)
- e) Down's Syndrome (DOWN)
- f) Other Medical conditions/syndromes (OMCS)
- g) Interaction of complex medical needs (ICMN)
- h) Mental Health Issues (MHI)

7 Other

- a) Other (OTH)

Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with SEN, Dept Ed 2005

Definition of Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

The concept of AEN consists of 4 categories:

1. SEN
2. Learning Environment e.g. EAL
3. Family Circumstances e.g. LAC or travellers
4. Social and Emotional e.g. short term problems eg bereavement

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

Children with SEN/Dis/AEN are admitted to Ravenscroft Nursery School in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PROVISION

Our SEN provision adopts a five-stage approach as outlined within the Code of Practice 1998.

Structure of the 5 Stage Approach

Stage 1	Class Teacher /SENco	Action Plan / Education Plan
Stage 2	SENco /Class Teacher	Education Plan
Stage 3	SENco /Class Teacher / External Agency	Education Plan
Stage 4	Statutory Assessment	Education Plan
Stage 5	Statement Issued	Education Plan

SCHOOL BASED STAGES

STAGE	Criteria	Support Offered By
Initial Identification	Teacher has concerns about a child socially, emotionally or educationally. Information is gathered and observations noted. A record of concern form is completed, SENco consulted. A decision about placing/not placing the child on the SEN register will be made. Parents informed.	SCHOOL TEACHER PRINCIPAL SENCO PARENTS
1	Teachers identify and register a child's special educational needs and, consulting the school's SEN co-ordinator, take initial action.	SCHOOL TEACHER PRINCIPAL SENCO PARENTS
2	The SEN co-ordinator takes lead responsibility for collecting and recording information and for co-ordinating the child's special educational provision, working with the child's teachers.	SCHOOL TEACHER PRINCIPAL SENCO PARENTS
3	Teachers and the SEN co-ordinator are supported by specialists from outside the school.	REFERRAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST SENCO TEACHER PRINCIPAL PARENTS
4	The Board considers the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate, makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.	BELB TEACHER SENCO PRINCIPAL OUTSIDE AGENCIES
5	The Board considers the need for a statement of special educational needs; if appropriate, it makes a statement and arranges monitors and reviews provision.	AS ABOVE

IDENTIFICATION

Raising Concerns/Observations

- If a teacher is concerned about a child socially, emotionally or educationally, they will keep a record of the concern and note down relevant observations. The class teacher will consult with the SENco and inform the child's parents. A decision about placing/not placing the child on the SEN register will be made.
- If a parent has concerns they will be given the opportunity to express these at the initial parent interview before the child starts Nursery School or at the first teacher/parent consultation held during the first term.
- Parents are free to contact the school at any time during the school year and request a consultation with the Class teacher or the SENco. This can be done by arranging an appointment via the school secretary or Principal.

Gathering Information

- Teachers will use their professional judgement to identify and raise concern
- Observation sheets/assessment records will be completed by Nursery staff
- During consultations, parents will be given opportunities to inform the school of any relevant information. For example: attendance at speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, involvement of paediatrician or any social or personal circumstances which may have an affect on the child's progress. Parents will be encouraged to keep the school updated with regard to this relevant information.

STAGE 1

If concern remains, the class teacher and SENco together decide to place the child on the SEN Register at Stage 1 and inform the child's parents in writing. The class teacher, in consultation with the SENco, draws up an Action Plan (AP) /Education Plan(EP) with appropriate targets. These should reflect alternative teaching and learning strategies or different classroom organisation that may help to meet the child's needs. The class teacher should also monitor and review progress. The class teacher will liaise with the parents and give them a copy of the AP/EP. Parents are asked to sign another copy for the school records.

If, following one or two review periods at Stage 1, progress is satisfactory; the child may remain at Stage 1 or be removed from the SEN register. The class teacher and/or SENco will inform the child's parents.

STAGE 2

If, following one or two review periods at Stage 1, progress has not been satisfactory, the class teacher and SENco will decide to move the child to Stage 2. Parents will be informed.

The SENco, working with the class teacher and other appropriate staff, will ensure that an Education Plan is drawn up for the child. The class teacher and/or SENco will liaise with parents and give them a copy of the EP. The parent will be asked to sign another copy of the EP for school records.

If, following one or two review periods at Stage 2, progress is satisfactory; the child may remain at Stage 2 or move back to Stage 1. Parents will be informed.

STAGE 3

If, following one or two review periods at Stage 2, progress has not been satisfactory, additional expertise from BELB Psychology will be sought. A Stage 3 referral will be sought. The SENco will liaise with parents and correlate the necessary paperwork. The pupil will continue to have an Education Plan. The class teacher and/or SENco will liaise with parents and give them a copy of the EP. The parent will be asked to sign another copy of the EP for school records.

BOARD BASED STAGES

STAGE 4

At this stage the Board will consider evidence from the Educational Psychologist, the school and any other agencies involved. The Board will consider the possible need for Statutory Assessment. The Board will consult with the parents and the school.

STAGE 5

The child will receive a statement of Educational Needs from the Education Board. The school will endeavour to meet the needs of the child as recommended in the statement. Annual reviews will take place in line with the Code of Practice and Board Policy.

Throughout the Board Stages the pupil will continue to have an Education Plan. The class teacher and/or SENco will consult with parents and give them a copy of the EP. The parent will be asked to sign another copy of the EP for school records.

The Supplement of the Code of Practice 2005 contains information with regard to arrangements for dealing with Parent/Board Disagreements. A cross-board independent Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) is available. See paragraph 4.33 - 4.46 of the Supplement.

Education and Library Boards are also required to provide SEN information to parents of children with SEN. Parents can contact the Advice and Information service (AIS). Most of the advice is available on a regional website: www.educational-support.org.uk

MANAGEMENT OF SEN

The Role of the Governors

The Board of Governors of the school should, in co-operation with the Principal, determine the school's general policy and approach, establish appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain general oversight of the school's work.

The Role of the Principal

The Principal will:

- Be responsible for the day- to-day management of the school's SEN/Dis/AEN provision
- Keep the Board of Governors informed of policy and SEN/Dis/AEN practice in the school
- Liaise with parents if/when necessary and contribute to Annual reviews
- Provide opportunity for teacher training in SEN/Dis/AEN
- Ensure the budget for SEN is allocated for provision and resources

In Ravenscroft Nursery School the Principal is also the SENCO.

The Role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENco)

In line with the recommendations in the SEN Code of Practice 1998, the SENco will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Policy
- Respond to requests from other teachers
- Liaise with all teachers and assist in the identification of children with SEN/Dis/AEN
- Maintain a register of children with SEN/Dis/AEN
- Oversee all the records kept on children with SEN/Dis/AEN
- Assist teachers to draw up and implement any individualised programme of work (Stages 2-5)
- Liaise with parents and other necessary external agencies, health and social services, and voluntary bodies
- Assist staff with monitoring and reviewing the progress of children with SEN/Dis/AEN
- Support staff with their continuing professional development in relation to SEN/Dis/AEN
- Attend relevant courses at the BELB

The Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher will have responsibility for all the children with SEN/Dis/AEN in his/her class. He/she should:

- Be familiar with the procedure for the identification of and provision for children with SEN/Dis/AEN within both school and BELB
- Gather information about the child and make initial assessment.
- Liaise with parents
- Inform the SENco
- Liaise with other staff and professionals as appropriate
- Provide special help within the normal framework of the class situation and differentiate work if/when appropriate
- Be familiar with the 'Good Practice Guidelines' and implement appropriate strategies if/when necessary
- Monitor and review the child's progress through the use of an Action Plan/Education Plan
- Keep a record of achievements and observations to show evidence of the outcomes of the targets set in the Action/Education Plan
- Keep the SEN File for their class updated and organised
- Keep relevant information in their Professional Development File
- Manage and develop resources for SEN/Dis/AEN for use in their classroom
- Inform substitute teachers of the SEN/Dis/AEN children and special arrangements/strategies being used in the classroom
- Ensure confidentiality is adhered to at all times

The Role of Classroom Assistants

Assistants play a major role in the support of pupils with SEN. The Classroom Assistant should therefore:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher to assist in the teaching and learning of all pupils
- Be flexible in working with everyone to allow the class teacher time to be involved with individual children with SEN/Dis/AEN
- Keep the class teacher informed about the child's progress

When the CA is allocated to a specific child (Stage 5) s/he should work under the direction of the child's class teacher and the SENco to enable the objectives set out in the child's statement to be met as adequately as possible.

The Role of Peripatetic/Outreach Teachers

The involvement of Peripatetic/Outreach (P/O) teachers will usually be the result of recommendations from Psychology and the BELB for a child on Stage 3-5 in line with the Code of Practice.

It is expected that the P/O teacher will

- Liaise with the SENco and class teacher and keep them regularly updated
- Provide advice if/when required for the class teacher

Partnerships with Parents

In Ravenscroft Nursery School close liaison between school and home is valued and viewed as an important step in meeting the needs of children with SEN/Dis/AEN.

In accordance with the Supplement to the Code of Practice 2005 (paragraph 1.15) 'parents should be encouraged to be fully involved in the school-based response for their child, understand any purpose of any intervention made and told about the Board's Advice and Information Service (AIS).'

Parents have responsibilities in working effectively with the school. They should:

- Communicate regularly with the school and alert it to any concerns they might have about their child's learning or provision
- Fulfil their obligations to ensure that their child receives education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any SEN/Dis/AEN they may have.

Links with other schools and agencies

Ravenscroft Nursery School will liaise closely with Primary 1 staff and inform their SENco of any children with potential difficulties. An information session will be arranged at the end of the academic year before transition into Primary 1.

Discussion will take place with parents prior to liaison with other schools and/or outside agencies.

ACCESSIBILITY

Physical Access:

The main entrance to the school has no steps or raised areas. Wheelchair users would have access to all rooms inside the school and the outdoor play area. There is an adult disabled toilet in the school. All wash hand basins and toilets are at a level easily accessible to all children.

Access to the Curriculum:

The school will endeavour to ensure that every child, regardless of SEN/Dis/AEN, has access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff will use a range of learning and teaching strategies to suit different children.

The school development plan should take account of training needs for staff and these should be regularly updated to meet the needs of the range of SEN/Dis/AEN that may be present in the school.

Access to Information:

Ravenscroft Nursery School is working towards a variety of ways to making information accessible to all members of the school community (including those whose first language is not English) through formal and informal consultations, written reports/forms and parent meetings.

Reasonable Adjustments:

Ravenscroft Nursery School will endeavour to provide reasonable adjustments and relevant purposeful measures in order to provide for a child with SEN/Dis/AEN during the school based stages of the Code of Practice (1-3).

The school will liaise with the Board and seek advice for children during the Board based stages (4&5) in order to consider reasonable adjustments and relevant and purposeful measures which the school may be able to provide for a child with SEN/Dis/AEN.

Special Facilities

The school can use the parents/staff room for learning support. Children may be withdrawn from class individually or in small groups.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be carried out in accordance with the school's Observation and Assessment policy document.

Diagnostic testing will take place to help identify children who may meet the Board's criteria for a Stage 3 Assessment for a Specific Learning Difficulty eg Autism. If necessary, a discussion will take place with the parents prior to a consultation with Educational Psychology.

DATA PROTECTION

Parents can have copies of materials on request

ANNUAL REPORT

The Board of Governors will report each year on SEN/Dis/AEN Provision in school.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

This policy is integral to all our policies, specifically Positive behaviour, Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Assessment.

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with all the staff.

It has been adopted by the Board of Governors

This policy will be monitored, evaluated, and updated annually.