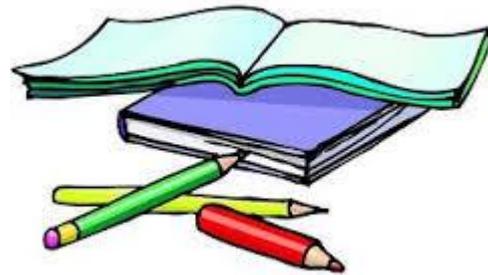


***St. Mary's Nursery and  
Primary School,  
Bellaghy***



***Special Educational Needs  
and Disability Policy***

***September 2014***



## **Rationale/Vision**

St. Mary's Primary and Nursery School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum including the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We recognize that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. In the interests of these children we will endeavor to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

## **Mission Statement**

St. Mary's Primary and Nursery School believes that Childhood is a unique experience. We believe that we must respect it, enjoy it and protect it. We accept and share the responsibility of nurturing in our children, the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith, with home and parish. We promote a way of life inspired by the life of Christ. A 'Child-Centered', inclusive approach is adopted in all issues. Effective communication with all partners involved in the education of our pupils is viewed as central to achieving our vision and aims. The Board of Governors, principal and all members of staff are committed to and share these ideas, values and beliefs.

## **Definitions**

### ***Learning Difficulty***

"Learning difficulty" means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children his or her age, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities. 'Special education provision' means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age."  
***Code of Practice 1998 (paragraph: 1.4)***

### ***Disability***

"Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

***Disability Discrimination Act (1995)***

## **St. Mary's Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

- General Learning Difficulties (includes delay in Literacy or Numeracy)
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Sensory Impairment

- Physical Difficulties - O.T and Physiotherapy
- Medical Conditions
- Newcomer children

## **SEN Provisions of SENDO**

'The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of parents or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others.' 'Children who have Special Educational needs but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school.'

**Article 3(1) SENDO (2005)**

## **Key Principles of Inclusion**

'Inclusion is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school'.

**Removing Barriers to Achievement (2004)**

In order to make sure that we meet our pupils' needs and include them in all aspects of school life, this SEN policy links closely with all our other policies in supporting pupils such as; Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Medical Needs. It also links with our policies for pupils with Additional Needs such as Gifted and Talented or English as an additional Language. *For example*

- A pupil may be Gifted or Talented in one area yet have communication difficulties/ASD
- A pupil may have English as an Additional Language but also have a Specific Literacy Difficulty.
- A pupil may have a medical need which has an impact on their learning.

**The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/Disability:**

### **1. *Cognitive and Learning***

- a) Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulty (DYL)
- b) Dyscalculia (DYC)
- c) Dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Difficulties (DCD)
- d) Mild Learning Difficulties (MILD)
- e) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- f) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- g) Unspecified learning difficulties (U)

### **2. *Social, Emotional and Behavioural***

- a) Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)
- b) Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD)

### **3. *Communication and Interaction***

- a) Speech and Language Difficulties (SL)

- b) Autism (AUT)
- c) Asperger's Syndrome (ASP)

**4. Sensory Difficulties**

- a) Severe/profound hearing loss (SPHL)
- b) Mild/moderate hearing loss (MMHL)
- c) Partially sighted (PS)
- d) 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)
- f) Other medical conditions/syndromes (OMCS)
- g) Interaction of Complex Medical Needs (ICMN)

**7. Other**

- a) Other (OTH)

*Guidance for Schools: Recording Children with Special Educational Needs - SEN Categories  
(Department of Education)*

**Policy Aims**

The principal aims of our SEN policy are:

- To provide a happy, safe, caring and supportive environment in which all children are valued regardless of ability and behaviour
- To ensure that all children have access to and are included in a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which is differentiated to meet individual needs
- To encourage all children to reach their full potential
- To ensure that all pupils with SEN/Disability feel valued. To offer curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular opportunities that allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence

- To identify children with additional needs as early as possible, and within Nursery and to follow the procedures outlined in SEN (2001) SENDA (2004), SENDO (2005) and SENDIST (2008) Codes of Practice, Good Practice Guidelines/Provisional Criteria
- We sought guidance from CCMS and the Department of Education on Enrolment of Pupils with Physical Disabilities / Mobility Difficulties 2004
- To support the school staff
- To promote a partnership built on openness and trust, between home and school
- To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEN provision. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding must be taken into account
- To provide opportunities for all children to integrate and be included, as fully as possible in all areas of school life
- To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs
- To develop a recording system so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately
- To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning
- To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs
- To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy
- To work closely with all ELB departments and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENs.
- To include all Newcomer children.

## **Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision**

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

SEN provision will be the overall responsibility of the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. However in order to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision the Board of Governors have delegated responsibility for pupils with special educational needs to **Mrs Conway (SENCO)**.

#### **✓ Board of Governors**

In 'Every School a Good School' (DE) - The Governor Role (2010) Chapter 12 of the document relates specifically to the Governor role for pupils with special educational needs.

The following section provides an overview of Governor's responsibilities from this document as highlighted in the **SEN Resource File (2011)**:

The role of the Board of Governors of a mainstream school is to exercise its functions in relation to the school with a view to ensuring that provision is made for registered pupils with special educational needs. The Board of Governors has a statutory duty to:

- Take account of the provisions in the DE Code of Practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs;
- Use their best endeavors to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents are notified of their child's special needs;
- Maintain and operate a policy on SEN;
- Ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;
- Ensure that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying those registered pupils with SEN and of providing appropriate teaching;
- Allocate funding for special educational needs and disability; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

✓ **Principal** (Code of Practice 1998)

The Principal should:

- Keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN issues
- Work in close partnership with the SENCo
- Liaise with parents and external agencies as required
- Delegate and monitor the SEN budget
- Ensure the SMT are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school. SMT members should ensure consistency of practice and contribute to the realisation of the SDP
- Provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to Special Educational Needs

✓ **SENCo**

In all mainstream schools, a designated teacher should be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the school's special educational needs policy
- Responding to requests for advice from other teachers
- Co-coordinating provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Maintain the school's SEN register and oversee all the records on pupils with special educational needs
- Liaison with parents of children with special educational needs
- Establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training
- Liaison with external agencies.

✓ **Class Teacher**

The class teacher should:

- Be aware of current legislation
- Keep up to date with information on the SEN Register
- Gather information through observation and assessment
- Develop an inclusive classroom
- Work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching

- Contribute to, manage and review IEPs in consultation with the SENCo
- Involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team

✓ **SEN Learning Support Staff**

Learning Support Staff should:

- Work under the direction of the class teacher
- Be involved in planning
- Look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths
- Provide practical support
- Listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf
- Explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly
- Keep records and attend meetings
- Share good practice.

✓ **Pupil**

'The child should, where possible, according to age maturity and capability, participate in all the decision making processes which occur in education.'

*(Supplement to the Code of Practice - para 1.19)*

In our school children are encouraged to:

- Contribute to the assessment process
- Contribute to education plans through setting targets (KS2)
- Work towards achieving agreed targets
- Contribute to the review of IEPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Year 7.

✓ **Parent/Carer**

'The relationship between the parents of a child with SEN and their child's school has a crucial bearing on the child's educational progress and effectiveness of any school based action' (Code of Practice 2.21).

It is essential that parents inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child's entry to the school.

It is the school's responsibility to inform parents when staff are considering placing the pupil's name on the SEN register or moving the child to a higher or lesser stage of need. In our school it is our policy to invite our parents in to:

- Meet with staff to discuss their child's needs
- Attend review meetings
- Inform staff of changes in circumstances
- Support targets on IEPs.

## **Admissions**

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN in our school will be consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools at the request of the relevant Education and Library Board.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the Board will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement.

This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

### **Accessibility**

Our school has an Accessibility Plan which includes the following:

- At present pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users
- There is a well-equipped SEN teaching/resource base and facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disabilities
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude and attainments.

### **Allocation of Special Needs Resources**

Most appropriate use of Additional Needs Budget is reviewed after careful consideration is given to:

- Learning Support Staff
- Release time for SENCo
- Monitoring of Additional Needs provision
- Additional Needs specialist resources
- Administrative support.

Principal keeps the use of Special Needs resources, human and material under constant review.

### **Annual Report**

On an annual basis the Principal and SENCO share the following with the BOG:

- Action Plan for SEN
- Evaluation of previous action plan
- Update of SEN policy
- Record of children on the register and in each class.

### **Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs**

'It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.' (*Code of Practice 1998 paragraph 2.14*)

'Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness'

***(Supplementary Guide of the Code of Practice paragraph 5.12 - page 44)***

In St. Mary's Primary and Nursery School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Parental information
- Information from Nursery School or other transferring school
- Cognitive ability tests
- Attainment tests
- Summative and formative assessment
- Key Stage Assessments
- Teacher observation
- Professional Reports
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Care Plans
- Personal Education Plans for looked after children
- IEP Reviews
- Annual Reviews

*This list is not exhaustive*

It is our policy to strive for early identification of children with Additional Needs. Ongoing assessment of all children, by all staff (including our Nursery), is an integral part of the school curriculum.

As a result of this, a teacher may express a concern about a particular child and this initiates the school's Special Needs procedure.

***(Appendix A: St. Mary's SEN Procedure)***

Areas of concern may cover a wide variety of problems.

*(See Definition of SEN)*

A parent, health or social service professional may also initiate the procedure.

Once a concern has been expressed, the child is placed in the school's SEN register. This register is held centrally, recording children at each stage. Parents are informed and consulted at every stage of procedure.

In addition to the above, we also undertake regular whole-class screening, and regular, specific screening of children whose needs should be monitored.

## **The Management of SENs**

In St. Mary's Primary School, we follow the five stage approach as set out in the Code of Practice (1998).

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with SEN lie at Stages 1, 2 or 3. This means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

### ➤ **Stage 1**

Initial assessment will be carried out by class teacher to identify areas of strength/weakness and which, if any, additional measures need to be taken. These may include keeping the child's progress under review, providing special help within the normal classroom situation or seeking advice and support from SENCo. A SEN log is kept of relevant action taken.

#### ✓ **Assessments**

- In our Nursery, all children are observed and monitored and in-depth pupil profiles are kept which are communicated to P.1 teacher.
- P.1 - teachers administer Standardised Tests to assess Literacy and Numeracy Skills (British Picture Vocabulary Scale at beginning and end of P.1). Other Curricular, Social and Physical assessments are also carried out (including Primary Movement Assessments and MAST Assessment).
- P.2 - children are screened using 'Mist' Tests
- P.3 children are screened using Reading Partnership Tests and PM Benchmarking kit to identify reading levels
- P.4 - P.7 - children are all screened using Standardized Literacy and Numeracy tests (NFERs). Primary 4/7 complete Key Stage Assessments. Primary 4/6 complete IQ tests. P.4/6 complete group reading tests. Primary 7 children complete further NFER assessment in June.

Where a teacher or parent expresses a particular concern to SENCo, the child is screened using PM Benchmarking Kit, which measures reading age and comprehension level of child. Wherever necessary, children may also be assessed using tests based on key principals from Primary Movement.

### ➤ **Stage 1 Review**

Parents should always be informed of proposed action and any review date. Having considered review outcomes the SENCo will decide whether to remove pupil's name from the register, keep the pupil at Stage 1 or move the child to Stage 2.

➤ **Stage 2**

Through careful and specific analysis of children's reading errors, SENCo can determine where the child's strengths and weakness are, exactly what the child is attending to and what he/she is ignoring. Analysis is discussed with class teacher and SENCo helps to translate this information into good practice to be reinforced in the classroom. Where necessary, IEPs are devised collaboratively, by SENCo, Class teacher and Learning Support to address the needs of the child and to pitch teaching at appropriate level for the child (Good Practice Guidelines/Provisional Criteria). The education plan may be drawn up in consultation with parents and also will include the views/preferred learning styles of the child.

➤ **Stage 2 Review**

The Stage 2 review is conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and, where possible, child and parents. This review focuses on the child's progress.

- If progress has been satisfactory the SENCo may decide that the child should continue at Stage 2 in order to consolidate gains. If the progress continues to be satisfactory, the SENCo may decide that the child no longer needs special educational provision at Stage 2 and may decide to move the child to Stage 1.
- The child's name is kept on the SEN register until there is no longer any significant concern about progress.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stages 1 and 2 do not result in adequate progress the SENCo moves the child forward to Stage 3 and referral may be made to specialist support services/agencies outside the school.

➤ **Stage 3**

SENCo, Literacy and Numeracy Co-coordinators and Principal meet to compare/discuss results of Standardized tests. Results are recorded and SEN register is reviewed and updated. The SENCo may decide to call upon specialist help from outside the school to inform the school or to provide the school with a set of strategies to meet the child's educational needs.

Advice may be sought from the following outside agencies:

- Educational Psychology
- Special/Primary Education
- Literacy/Numeracy Support
- Education Welfare
- School Clinical Medical Services
- Social Work
- Speech/Language Therapy (Homefirst Trust and Thornfield Speech/Language Centre)
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- MAST
- Primary Behaviour Support (Thornberry)

### ➤ **Review of the Stage 3 Education Plan**

The review of the Stage 3 Education Plan is conducted by the SENCo, in consultation with the class teacher and where possible, parents and child. Relevant external support services may also be present, particularly if the child's progress has not been satisfactory. The review focuses on the child's progress and whether this has been adequate.

- If intervention remains appropriate the child will remain at Stage 3 for a further period of time.
- If the progress has been satisfactory and intervention is no longer required, the SENCo, following consultation, may agree that the child no longer needs external support at Stage 3 and may decide to move the child back to Stage 2 and action appropriate to that stage will be taken.
- If the relevant and purposeful measures at Stage 3 have not resulted in adequate progress, following consultation with the SENCo, teacher, external support services and parents, the Principal may request a Statutory Assessment.

### **Review Process**

Review meetings are held regularly where parents, class teacher, SENCo (if required), learning support (if involved) meet to agree on an individual education plan designed to meet the child's identified needs.

Reviews for children on Stage 1-4 of our register occur twice yearly by teaching staff and learning support. Parents are invited to be present and their contribution to the education plan is recorded. Contribution towards the education plan is also valued from older KS2 children on the register. Action plans are drawn up for the following IEP.

### **Individual Education Plans contain information about:**

1. Curricular needs for the child
  - Targets - Long and short term
  - Learning objectives and success criteria
  - Monitoring and recording arrangements
2. Teaching requirements
  - Teaching strategies
  - Equipment and resources
3. Non-curricular needs
  - Pastoral Care arrangements
  - Medical requirements
4. Review arrangements
  - Review dates

- People involved
- Any significant comments

#### 5. Parental involvement

- Parents comments
- Plans for co-operation and support

#### 6. Pupil Involvement (KS2)

- Awareness of own strengths and weaknesses

Following a review meeting, the class teacher's planning will consider the targets set on the IEP. SENCo, class teacher and learning support, if involved, each will retain a copy of the IEP to ensure differentiation takes place and targets are included in daily planning. For children with statements, learning support keeps detailed daily notes/observations, which provide class teacher with child's areas of strength/difficulty. Regular liaison between all persons involved takes place.

Where appropriate, the child will be supported within the classroom through differentiated work. However, it is sometimes valuable to withdraw the child individually or a small group in which the child is working, in order to give support to, for example a child or small group who need

- multi-sensory experiences from our large Literacy Trolley,
- a child requiring speech and language activities,
- physiotherapy, occupational therapy, behaviour, social and emotional,
- Numeracy or other curricular support - use of ICT, the Interactive Whiteboard and Ipads to develop Literacy/Numeracy skills, feelings and emotions (PDMU), thinking skills,
- Reading Partnership Programme

Many other children also benefit from this regular small group or one to one support in a quiet atmosphere away from classroom distractions, working through a specific programme to address their particular needs. This is extremely effective in our Nursery, or in any class with access to learning support. A balance between in-class support and withdrawing children is recognised according to resources and individual children's needs.

Short term planning by class teacher takes account of timetabled withdrawals and its implications for the children concerned. Withdrawal is always handled sensitively for the individual and classes, for example, swimming, sport or music lessons are very much valued by both staff and children.

➤ **Stage 4**

If a child's needs are such that they require more support than can be provided from the school's Special Needs budget, then it may be necessary to request that a Statutory Assessment be carried out. This may result in a Statement of Special Educational Needs being issued.

'In some cases schools will conclude that the pupil's needs remain so substantial that they cannot be effectively met within the resources normally available to the school.'

***(Supplement to the Code of Practice - 4.64)***

Following an application to the ELB from school's principal or the parent, the Board will consider the need for transition to Stage 4. It should be noted that a request of this kind will not always result in Statutory Assessment nor will Statutory Assessment always lead to a Statement of SENs.

In reaching a suitable decision, the Board will consider:

- The degree of the child's difficulty
- The nature of the provision required
- Whether the child's needs can reasonably be met by the resources normally available to the school and
- Use the 5 Board Provisional Criteria for Statutory Assessment.

**Following Statutory Assessment**

***The ELB will either:***

- ✓ Make and maintain a Statement of Special Educational Needs and arrange, monitor and review provision.

**Or**

- ✓ Provide a Note in Lieu of a Statement.

A Statement of Special Educational Needs sets out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and the arrangements for monitoring and review.

A Note in Lieu of a Statement sets out the reasons for the Board's decision not to make a Statement of Special Educational Needs and includes supporting evidence from the Statutory Assessment.

➤ **Stage 5**

Once the statement has been made final:

- Provision and /or support will be arranged to meet the child's needs.
- The SENCo ensures that a Stage 5 Education Plan is drawn up, implemented, monitored and reviewed

- The Annual Review and Transition processes will take place.

### **The Annual Review**

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs, whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews should be seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress.

#### ***The Annual Review will:***

- Gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the statement
  - Review the special provision made for the child, including placement
  - Consider the appropriateness of maintaining the Statement of SENs
  - Relevant school staff will undertake the Review on behalf of the Board
  - The Review will take place in school, chaired by the SENCO (or other person as delegated)
  - Relevant forms and ELB guidance for this process is available from Special Education.
- ✓ **Annual Reviews in our school take place every February.**

### **Exceptional Cases**

In most cases transition through the five staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

### **Record Keeping**

In our school we will keep the following records for 25 years:

- SEN Register
- Records of Concern
- Education plans/Reviews
- Statements/Annual Reviews
- Assessment results/data
- Individual Pupil Files
- Record of liaison/meetings with Board/Health Services
- Staffs' Support, Advice and Training Records

## **Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with SENs**

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is monitored.

- IEPs monitored for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis.
- Evidence that the pupil is making progress.
- Quality reviews of IEPs and other relevant and purposeful measures that focus on educational outcomes to inform future planning and inform movement either up or down through the Code of Practice Stages.

## **The Able Learner**

In St. Mary's, we recognise that children have additional needs if they have ability over and above the expectations for a particular year group. These children's needs are catered for within the classroom through differentiated, carefully structured, challenging activities (including the use of ICT, IWB and Ipads).

## **Professional Development**

- ✓ The Principal oversees the professional development of all staff in his/her school in consultation with the SENCo.
- ✓ The SENCo keeps a record of all training relating to SEN - MAST and ASD training.
- ✓ All staff are kept up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effectively for pupils.
- ✓ Staff attending INSET disseminate the training with colleagues.

## **Partnerships**

In St. Mary's Primary School we have developed partnerships with each of the following:

### ➤ **ELB Support Services**

- Audiology
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Primary Behaviour Support (Thornberry)
- Language & Communication (Thornfield)
- Specific Literacy Difficulties (SPLD - LTSS)
- Visual Impairment
- MAST

### ➤ **Other Support Services**

- Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Child Development Clinic (CDC)

- Barnardos
- Counselling Services

### **Complaints**

All complaints regarding SENs in our school will be dealt with in line with school's existing complaints procedures.

## APPENDIX A

### **St. Mary's Additional Needs Procedure**

#### **STAGE 1**

A teacher or parent expresses a cause for concern about a particular child. The child is registered on our Additional Needs register as being at Stage 1. Problems are addressed within the classroom, under guidance from class teacher through differentiated work, with support from assistant or SENCo if appropriate.

#### **STAGE 2**

The child requires regular extra help, either within the classroom or withdrawn to 'quieter' or less formal area, to follow a specific programme of work, under guidance of an assistant where available or class teacher or SENCo (For Reading Partnership Programme).

#### **STAGE 3**

Outside agencies are called in to help address the child's needs.

#### **STAGE 4**

A multi-disciplinary assessment of the child's needs is requested from a variety of sources.

#### **STAGE 5**

A Statement of Special Educational Needs is issued.

A copy of The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 is held centrally in the school office along with other current and relevant SEN Documents and also in Mrs Conway's SEN filing cabinet and may be sought on request.

We, in St. Mary's have sought expert advice and gone through various routine checks to ensure that we provide for the needs of all children in our care, and that we are meeting legal requirements as set out by SENDO and Equality Commission. Approval was granted by DENI for a Minor Works Programme to include a disabled toilet and wheelchair access. This work has been completed.

## Advice and Information Service

An Advice and Information Service has been set up by the NEELB to support parents of children with SEN. This can be accessed by telephoning 028 25662407.

## Dispute Avoidance and Reconciliation Service (Dars)

This service was established and came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO).

Dars aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/Boards of Governors or ELBs for pupils who are on the Code of Practice, in relation to special educational provision. Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to Dars.

Members of the Dars team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a neutral venue) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute.

Agreement can only be reached with the approval of interested parties. From referral to conclusion is approximately 40 working days.

Dars is separate and independent from Special Education Branch.

Involvement with the Dars will not affect the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

Parents/Guardians may contact this service directly.

Dars NEELB

County Hall

182 Galgorm Road

Ballymena

BT42 1HN

028 25662391/028 25662387

Email: [Dars.enquiry@neelb.org.uk](mailto:Dars.enquiry@neelb.org.uk)

Dars Officer: Miss Frances McKinney (AAO Nursery & Primary)

Mr David Lewers (Secondary)

Inter-board Dars Manager: Oliver Sherry

## Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the ELB with regard to a child's special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal or SENDIST.

SENDIST considers parents' appeal against decisions of ELBs and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

There is a two month time limit from the notified date of 'disputed decision' to appeal to the tribunal.

Various time limits apply for

- Board Compliance with Orders of the Tribunal
- Boards to comply with in Unopposed Appeals

([www.education-support.org.uk](http://www.education-support.org.uk))

Further information regarding the appeals procedure can be obtained from:

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal  
Secretariat  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Albany House  
73-75 Great Victoria Street  
Belfast BT2 7AF  
028 90322894  
Email: [secretary@sentrribunal.co.uk](mailto:secretary@sentrribunal.co.uk)

### Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This policy will be reviewed in September 2015 and in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

**Policy Date:** *September 2014*

**Signature of Principal:**

**Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors:**

**Review Date:** *September 2015*