

Carrick Primary School



Special Educational Needs Policy

November 2019

Carrick Primary School

1. Vision Statement

Forward Together “Ar aghaidh le chéile”

Mission Statement

In Carrick Primary School we aim to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment to realise and celebrate the academic and non-academic potential of all our pupils. We expect our pupils to work hard and encourage parents to assist us in helping children to learn and to become lifelong learners.

Aims of Carrick Primary School

We aim to:

- develop and strengthen each pupil’s understanding and love of Catholic values by promoting the Catholic ethos throughout the school;
- create a safe, enjoyable learning environment, in which effective learning is facilitated and quality teaching is provided;
- implement all aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- help our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards life and a love of learning;
- value, respect and nurture every child in our care;
- encourage pupils to respect themselves and others and to support and care for one another;
- equip our children with the necessary life skills to enable them to participate in a fast changing society;
- Endorse the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child and work towards the implementation of policies and practices which reflect the Convention; and
- involve the parents, Board of Governors and wider community in the life of the school and in the holistic development of the children in our care.

Inclusion Statement

In Carrick Primary School, we actively seek to identify and remove the barriers to learning and participation, that can hinder or exclude a child with Special Educational Needs and to engender a sense of community and belonging. We will do our best to address the particular learning difficulties of children with SEN, whilst facilitating the provision of an efficient education for other children with whom they will be educated, and ensuring the efficient use of resources.

2. Definition

“At the heart of the work of every school and every class lies a cycle of planning, teaching and assessing. These general arrangements in a school take account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests, which children bring to school. Most children learn and progress well within these arrangements; those who have difficulty in doing so may have special educational needs.” (Paragraph 2:1 Special Educational Needs, Code of Practice).

The term “Special Educational Needs” is defined in the legislation as “a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made.” A “learning difficulty” means that the child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his or her age, and/or has a disability, which either prevents or hinders his or her use of everyday educational facilities. “Special Educational Provision” means educational provision which is different from, or special to, the provision made generally for children of a comparable age.

A person is considered to have a disability if: “he has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

In operating our Special Educational Needs Policy, we will adhere to the statutory legislation and Catholic ethos and will fulfil our statutory duty under the Northern Ireland Curriculum by having regard to the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) and the Supplement to the Code of Practice.

3. Objectives

We recognise that the definition of Special Educational Needs embraces a myriad of learning difficulties, varying in type, duration and severity, and that this continuum of needs must be matched by a continuum of provision.

All staff members and the Board of Governors will do their best to meet the Special Educational Needs of all pupils in the school.

This will be achieved by:

- enabling all pupils with SEN to access a broad, balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum with the maximum degree of social and educational inclusion;
- ensuring that pupils with SEN have their needs identified and addressed as early as possible, by appropriate provision, which may be made in a variety of forms. This intervention will be reviewed regularly;
- ensuring that parents are informed of their child's SEN provision, are made aware of the Special Educational Needs Advice and Information Service and participate fully in the decisions relating to their child's education;
- ensuring that all pupils make the best possible progress;
- ensuring that pupils express their views and are fully involved in all decisions which affect their education, given their age, maturity and capability;
- supporting teachers' and classroom assistants' continuous professional development in relation to Special Educational Needs;
- promoting effective partnership with parents and external agencies;
- providing equal educational opportunities for all children regardless of age, race, sex or individual need;
- fulfilling a duty not to treat pupils who have a disability less favourably without justification, for a reason which relates to their disability;
- developing each child's self-confidence and self-esteem;
- providing a happy, sensitive and secure environment which will promote effective learning;
- using teaching strategies which ensure effective learning;
- making appropriate use of ICT;
- ensuring that notable achievements made by children are recorded, recognised and celebrated;
- ensuring that all teachers recognise their responsibility as teachers of children with Special Educational Needs;
- recognising and utilising the contributions of other staff and other agencies;
- developing and employing an effective record-keeping system within the school, including provision mapping;
- monitoring, evaluating and reviewing current practice in order to ensure effective provision; and
- employing an appropriate range of resources in the most effective way.

The staff members believe that the knowledge, views and experiences of parents and of children with Special Educational Needs are vitally important. Effective assessment and provision will be secured where there is the greatest possible degree of partnership between parents, the child and the school. Co-operation between the Education Authority's Support Services, outside agencies and the school is also essential in order to assess and support the Special Educational Needs of children.

4. Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with Special Educational Needs are consistent with our school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs are placed in our school, at the request of the Education Authority.

A child with a Statement can be educated in Carrick Primary School, as long as this is compatible with:

- The child receiving the Special Educational Provision which his/her learning difficulty calls for;
- The efficient education of children with whom he/she will be educated; and
- The efficient use of resources.

5. Special Facilities and Specialisms

The physical environment in our new school is very appropriate for meeting a wide range of children's needs. Our facilities, which increase and assist pupils' access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum, include the library and an increasing range of resources, including information technology equipment. A number of our teachers have extra qualifications and /or expertise in the field of Special Educational Needs provision. Our aim is to utilise all expertise within our school.

We will continue to plan and make progress in increasing accessibility to our premises and the curriculum, and in improving ways in which information is provided to pupils and parents.

6. Arrangements for Co-ordinating Special Educational Needs Provision

Role of the Special Needs Co-ordinator.

In our school Mrs Duffin is the designated teacher, who is responsible for the co-ordination of Special Educational Needs provision.

This includes responsibility for:

- the day-to-day operation of our Special Educational Needs Policy;
- liaising with, supporting and advising teachers and classroom/general assistants;
- informing parents where Special Educational Needs provision is being made for their child;

- maintaining the Special Educational Needs Register and overseeing records on all pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- liaising with the Assessment Co-ordinator, in order to help identify children with Special Educational Needs;
- liaising with parents of children with Special Educational Needs;
- ensuring that children are involved, as much as possible, in decisions which affect their education;
- supporting staff as they write, implement and review Education Plans for children at Stage 1 to Stage 5 of the Special Needs Register;
- developing and implementing the school's monitoring, evaluating and reviewing procedures for Special Educational Needs;
- planning, providing and facilitating in-service training for staff;
- using ICT to improve Special Educational Needs provision and administration;
- liaising with external agencies, including the educational psychologist, other support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary bodies;
- requisitioning and managing Special Educational Needs resources;
- advising and providing staff with suitable support materials;
- advocating on behalf of the child;
- providing teachers with standardised tests which can be used for class screenings and assessments;
- carrying out diagnostic tests on children;
- assessing the suitability of commercial materials for pupils with Special Educational Needs; and
- planning for and conducting Annual Reviews and Transition Reviews.

Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors will:

- have regard to our Special Educational Needs policy, SENDO, the Code of Practice and the Supplement to the Code of Practice, when carrying out its functions;
- determine and keep under review the Special Educational Needs Policy;
- do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for every pupil who has Special Educational Needs;
- report annually on the steps taken to implement the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. This report will include information on the effectiveness of our school's system for identifying, assessing, providing for, monitoring, record-keeping and use of outside support services and agencies, in relation to children with Special Educational Needs. It will also include information on how resources have been allocated to and amongst children with Special Educational Needs;
- establish appropriate staffing and funding arrangements to implement our Special Educational Needs policy;
- ensure inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs, in so far as it is compatible with the pupil receiving the necessary Special Educational provision which his/her learning difficulty calls for, the efficient education of children with whom he/she will be educated and the efficient use of resources;
- ensure that a climate is created, which is inclusive of Special Educational Needs, and where the quality of education offered to all, is of the highest standard; and
- liaise with the Education Authority on issues related to Special Educational Needs Provision in our school.

Role of the Principal

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including the provision made for children with Special Educational Needs.

The Principal will:

- keep the Board of Governors fully informed about developments within Special Educational Needs;
- work with the Board of Governors to establish appropriate staffing and funding arrangements to implement the Special Educational Needs Policy; and
- work with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and staff to develop high quality Special Educational Needs provision in our school.

Role of Teachers and the Learning Support Teachers

Each teacher:

- will be involved in the development, review and implementation of the Special Educational Needs Policy;
- will retain overall responsibility for the children in his/her class who have Special Educational Needs;
- will recognise the needs of children who have learning difficulties, and will try to provide specific help within the classroom, through differentiation, alternative teaching and learning strategies and different classroom organisation;
- will follow the correct procedures when identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- will consult with the Special Needs Coordinator, the Principal and external agencies when appropriate;
- will maintain appropriate records on children with Special Educational Needs;
- will work in conjunction with the Special Needs Co-ordinator to identify and address learning needs;
- will draw up and implement Individual Education Plans for children from Stage One to Stage Five of the Register in consultation with the Special Needs Coordinator and /or the Learning Support Teacher;
- will inform parents of the targets which have been set for their child as detailed on the Education Plans;
- will monitor and record the progress of children with Special Educational Needs, in relation to the targets as listed on their Education Plans;
- will conduct reviews of Education Plans;

- will help to prepare for the Annual/Transition Reviews of children with Statements of Special Educational Needs;
- will consult with the parents of children with Special Educational Needs; and
- will provide children with Special Educational Needs with the opportunity to express their views and to be involved in all decisions which affect their education, given their age, maturity and capability.

Role of Classroom Assistants and General Assistants

The classroom assistants and/or general assistants will:

- assist the classroom teacher in the process of supporting children with Special Educational Needs;
- have regard to all the school policies, the Code of Practice, the Supplement to the Code of Practice and SENDO when carrying out their duties towards all pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- assist the classroom teacher in the process of assessing and monitoring the progress of children with Special Educational Needs;
- assist with the implementation and reviewing of Education Plans and preparing for Annual/Transition Reviews; and
- ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs, join in all the activities of the class with pupils who do not have Special Educational Needs, in so far as is reasonable.

7. Identification and Assessment Procedures

The learning difficulties of a pupil can be identified in a number of ways. Identification may be made by:

- a Pre-School Agency/Nursery Class;
- a Health Visitor;
- a General Practitioner;
- a Parent or Guardian;
- a class teacher and/or classroom assistant; and/or

- outside agencies, such as the Education Authority's Special Education Section.

In Carrick Primary School, we believe that children's Special Educational Needs should be identified as soon as possible, and that the earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be. If progress is limited, consideration will be given to special provision, which may be necessary to support the child's progress.

In Carrick Primary School our identification process is twofold:

[i] When a pupil's difficulties are first identified, the problem will be diagnosed, addressed, monitored and recorded. If progress is unsatisfactory, the teacher will inform the Special Needs Coordinator. If it is thought necessary, the Special Needs Coordinator will then assess the pupil's needs, in order to determine appropriate provision.

[ii] Data from tests, assessments and/or diagnostic assessments will be used, where appropriate, in order to help identify children with learning difficulties. To assist with early identification, use will be made of all available indicators, including formative and summative assessment techniques and information obtained from staff, parents, children and outside agencies. Our aim is to broaden our identification procedures sufficiently, to enable us to identify all the children with Special Educational Needs. Having identified a child as having Special Educational Needs, the school, in consultation with the child's parents, adds the child's name to the Special Educational Needs Register. The class teacher and the Special Needs Co-ordinator will discuss the ways in which appropriate support will be made. The type, duration and intensity of provision for children with Special Educational Needs will be determined by the needs of the child, the judgements of all the staff involved and the views of the child and the parents, and where appropriate, outside agencies.

In order to diagnose children's learning difficulties in greater detail, use will be made of several forms of assessment including formative assessments, diagnostic assessments and summative assessments. The SENCO will discuss the findings with teachers. Together they will plan how to make appropriate provision for the child and will embark on an intervention programme.

8. Structure of Provision for Children with Special Educational Needs

Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs is a priority area in our school. Consequently, all staff are involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the provision.

Responsibility for the day-to-day teaching of pupils with Special Educational Needs, rests with the class teacher and the Learning Support Teachers [where involved]. Children on the Special Educational Needs Register will be supported primarily by the class teacher. Children at Stages 2, 3, 4 or 5 of the Special Educational Needs Register may also be supported by the Learning Support Teacher, Primary 1-3 supporting teachers, and/or classroom

assistants. Key Stage Two pupils with learning difficulties who are at Stages 2, 3, 4 or 5 of the Code of Practice, are withdrawn by the Primary1-3 teachers for up to two half hour Literacy and/or Numeracy support sessions per week. Additional help will be sought for those children who move to Stage 3 of the Code of Practice from external agencies including the educational psychologist, other support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary bodies.

Stage 1

The class teacher identifies a child's Special Educational Needs in consultation with the Special Needs Coordinator. The school then consults with the child's parents. An Education Plan is drawn up by the class teacher and a review date is set. The review focuses on the child's progress, the effectiveness of the provision made, the resources employed and possible future action. The outcome of the Stage 1 review may be that:

- the child remains at Stage 1;
- the child is taken off the Special Needs Register; or
- the child moves to Stage 2, if the review indicates that the child continues to have difficulties and progress at Stage 1 is limited.

Stage 2

Stage 2 begins with a decision either at a Stage 1 review, or following discussions between the class teacher, the Special Needs Coordinator and/or parents, to proceed with early intensive action. At this stage the Special Needs Coordinator takes lead responsibility in assessing the child's learning difficulty, in planning, monitoring and reviewing the child's Special Educational Needs provision and in working with the Learning Support teachers [where involved] and the child's class teacher, who remains responsible for working with the child in the classroom. An Education Plan is drawn up by the teacher, in conjunction with the Special Needs Coordinator and a review date is set. Parents receive a copy of the Education Plan. The outcome of the Stage 2 review may be that:

- the child remains at Stage 2;
- the child reverts to Stage 1; or
- the child moves to Stage 3. This occurs when the Stage 2 review indicates that the Special support provided is not addressing the needs of the child. The school, having secured permission from the parents, may involve external agencies.

Referral to services such as the Educational Psychology Service, may result in a consultation between the parents and/or school or an individual assessment of the child. As a result of this assessment, the Psychologist may forward the child's name for consideration by peripatetic services.

Stage 3

The Special Needs Coordinator continues to take the lead role, working closely with the child's teachers and sharing responsibility for the child with the appropriate external specialist services. The Special Needs Coordinator

advises the Education Authority's Special Education section whenever a child moves to Stage 3. On the basis of the information and specialist views obtained at this stage, the Special Needs Coordinator will decide whether further professional advice is needed. The child may then:

- remain at Stage 3;
- revert to Stage 2; or
- move to Stage 4.

This occurs when the strategies and resources employed at Stage 3 have not been sufficient to meet the child's needs. Having secured permission from the parents, the Principal, on the advice of the Special Needs Coordinator, will advise the Board that a Statutory Assessment may be necessary.

Stage 4

An Education Plan will be drawn up by the teacher in conjunction with the Special Needs Coordinator, while waiting for the Statutory Assessment and advice following the assessment. The parents are informed of the content of the Education Plan[s].

Stage 5

If, having considered the advice received as a result of the Statutory Assessment, the Education Authority is satisfied that the child's needs cannot reasonably be met within normal mainstream resources, it may make a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and arrange, monitor and review appropriate provision. Statements of Special Educational Needs are reviewed annually in consultation with parents, the Education Authority, the school and other agencies. Alternatively, the Statutory Assessment may recommend that the child should be provided for at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice, with or without peripatetic help. If peripatetic help is recommended it will be provided by a specialist employed by the Education Authority.

Annual and Transition Reviews

Annual or Transition reviews will be held annually for children who have Statements of Special Educational Needs, in accordance with the advice from the Education Authority. Parents and external agencies (where relevant) will be invited to attend the Annual Reviews and the Transition Reviews.

Stages 1- 5

All stages of provision will feature targets, strategies and programmes of work to address identified needs, together with records of the provision and the outcomes of reviews. Parents and children are consulted at each stage and parents are actively encouraged to support their child's targets by reinforcing the targeted areas at home.

9. Integration and Access to the Curriculum

In Carrick Primary School, we will continue to target areas for development, so as to ensure that all pupils have access to a balanced and broad curriculum, which meets the needs of each pupil and which facilitates progress. The school will attempt to fully integrate children with Special Educational Needs, providing that this is compatible with:

- the child receiving the Special Educational provision, which his/her learning difficulty calls for;
- the efficient education of children with whom he/she will be educated; and
- the efficient use of resources.

As far as possible, Special Educational provision will be made in normal classroom settings where children will experience learning across the breadth of the curriculum, in whole class groups, ability groups, mixed ability groups and through individualised teaching.

Extra provision for children who are at Stages 2, 3, 4, or 5 of the Code of Practice, will take the form of extra teacher support and support from assistants. The supporting staff and class teacher will work closely, following agreed programmes of work.

10. Allocation of Resources

The resources held centrally in the Learning Support Room and are designed to help children with Special Educational Needs and to help staff to meet the needs of these children.

11a. Partnership With Parents

“The relationship between the parents of a child with Special Educational Needs and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and the effectiveness of any school based action” (Code of Practice).

In Carrick Primary School, the parents of all children are welcomed into the school and encouraged to participate fully in their child’s education. We value the knowledge, experience and views of parents. We seek to establish a partnership with them in making appropriate provision for the children. We acknowledge that the professional help which we can offer, will seldom be wholly effective, unless:

- it builds upon parents’ capacity to be involved; and
- parents believe that professionals take account of what they say and treat their views and anxieties as intrinsically important.

The school-based stages therefore utilise parents’ distinctive knowledge and skills, and simultaneously contribute to parents’ own understanding of how to help their child. The staff members of Carrick Primary School encourage parents to recognise that they have responsibilities towards their children and that the most effective provision will be made when they are working in partnership with the school.

To facilitate the development of a good working relationship with parents, we provide information on:

- Carrick Primary School's Special Educational Needs Policy;
- the support available for children with Special Educational Needs within the school;
- Parents receive a copy of each Individual Education Plan;
- Education Plans and parents are asked to sign a copy of each plan on a termly basis;
- the Education Authority's Advice and Information Service; and
- parents' involvement in assessments and decision-making.

When the school has decided that the child needs to be added to the register, parents are informed and are given an opportunity to discuss the way forward with the class teacher and/or the Special Needs Coordinator so that the parents' views and the children's views can be taken into account.

Parents are invited annually to a parent-teacher meeting. In addition to this, parents can request meetings with the child's teachers, Special Needs Coordinator, Learning Support Teacher and/or the Principal to discuss any aspect of Special Educational Needs Provision.

We continually strive to maintain clear lines of communication between parents and staff. Where complaints do arise they will be recorded and dealt with initially by the class teacher, and where necessary by the Special Needs Coordinator and/or the Principal, in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

11b. Partnership With Children

Carrick Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. We recognise that pupils have the greatest of all stakes in their own education, as well as the most detailed and intimate knowledge of the school's provision, procedures, teaching and learning. Educational research suggests that children are able to make perceptive comments about education from a very early age and Carrick Primary School recognises the benefits of using pupils' insights and opinions to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all children including those children with Special Educational Needs.

We recognise pupils' involvement as having a crucial bearing on the children's educational progress and the effectiveness of our actions in school. The involvement of pupils in devising Education Plans, in setting targets and in commenting on their targets will depend in part upon their age, their maturity, their capabilities and their perceptiveness.

12. Links with Agencies and Schools

The staff members of Carrick Primary School believe that; “Effective action on behalf of the children with Special Educational Needs will often depend upon close co-operation between education, health and social services, who have statutory duties to help each other” (Paragraph 2.30, Code of Practice).

Our aim is to give all our pupils access to a broad and balanced curriculum. For pupils with Special Educational Needs, who require specialist help to achieve their full potential, extensive links with external agencies are a prerequisite, if pupils are to be provided with appropriate forms of help.

The school maintains links with the following educational based agencies:

- Educational Psychology;
- Language and Communication Team;
- Autism Advisory & Intervention Services;
- Education Authority’s Special Educational Needs Section; and
- Peripatetic Support Service.

Most of the educational based specialist help is accessed through referrals made by the Educational Psychologist.

The Health and Social Services agents with whom we liaise are:

- Community Medical Officers;
- General Practitioners;
- Social Services;
- Educational Welfare Officers;
- Paediatric Specialists and Consultants;
- Occupational Therapists;
- Speech and Language Therapists; and
- General Practitioners.

Carrick Primary School maintains links with Special Educational Needs Departments in other schools, to enable us to share and upgrade knowledge of Special Educational Needs issues and expertise. In order to ensure continuity of provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs, reports referring to children with Special Educational Needs will be forwarded to the Special Educational Needs Departments of the schools, to which our pupils are transferring, with the permission of the parents. These reports will detail the child’s difficulties, assessments carried out, provision made and information from reviews relating to the child’s progress.

13. Record Keeping

From entry into Carrick Primary School, a Pupil Profile Folder is maintained on each child. This contains samples of work, tests, and annual reports. Every child with Special Educational Needs is named on the school’s Register of Children with Special Educational Needs and names can be added or deleted where necessary. A special folder is maintained on each child on this register. This contains details of the child’s difficulties, the assessments which have been carried out, current and previous Education Plans, information from reviews, and details of the support made by the school and/or outside

agencies. Statements of Special Educational Need are also kept in the child's folder (where relevant). A folder for each child with Special Educational Needs is also maintained within the staff section of C2K. Within this folder all Education Plans and Reviews are stored. It is our aim that the records kept on children with Special Educational Needs will:

- be cumulative, accompanying the child as he/she changes class or school;
- involve parents and pupils;
- contain information from all teachers, classroom assistants (where relevant) and outside agents who have provided for the child;
- help teachers to make good provision for the child;
- be brief, accessible and up to date; and
- be treated confidentially.

14 Monitoring and Evaluating Special Educational Needs Support

Our aim is to collect high quality longitudinal data, using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure our Special Educational Needs Provision. Quantitative progress will be measured using the results of summative, formative and/or diagnostic tests. Qualitative progress will be measured, in relation to the effectiveness of the support, in addressing the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs. Our Special Educational Needs Policy acknowledges that learning support provision is developing in our school. Consequently, our Special Educational Needs Policy will be reviewed every two years.

15. In-Service Training

In order to support all pupils with Special Educational Needs, we believe that:

- staff must develop a unified and holistic view of Special Educational Needs and be committed to the progress of all pupils; and
- all teachers and classroom assistants require regular training, to keep informed of current issues and developments in Special Educational Needs.

Our aim would be that all staff would undertake quality professional development in Special Educational Needs. This development would be characterised by:

- a whole-school approach;
- in-school support; and
- the encouragement and support of the Special Needs Coordinator, the Leadership Team and the Board of Governors.

Such professional development activities will improve teacher reflection and the embedding of high quality Learning Support Strategies in our school. Staff will be given the opportunity to participate in Special Educational Needs training, which will be led by the Special Needs Coordinator and/or outside

agents. Training will be planned according to the needs which arise in our school. Information which is received by the Principal and/or Special Needs Coordinator from outside agencies and/or from training courses will be disseminated to staff on a regular basis in written and/or in verbal form.

16. Future Developments

Our aim is to develop effective Special Educational Needs support and to commit time and resources each year for whole school planning, so as to achieve our short-term goals and longer-term goals. By developing the quality of our Special Educational Needs support, the staff members of Carrick Primary School are attempting to promote the concept of inclusiveness. This recognises that all children are unique in their diversity and equal in their worth, irrespective of abilities or disabilities, within the ethos of our Catholic school.

Signed: Mrs A Cassidy (Principal)

Signed: Mr G Murdock (Chairperson of Board of Governors)

Date: November 2019

Date Review: November 2020

Off Register

