



# Special Educational Needs/ Disability Policy



## **Statement of intent**

We provide an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential.

## **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

It is the policy of Hart Memorial that special educational needs (SEN) be defined according to the Education (Northern Ireland) order 1996 which suggests that "A child has special educational needs if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age or a disability which prevents him or her from making use of educational facilities generally provided in ordinary schools." Translated into the school situation, the child will be deemed to have special needs if they demonstrate a significant delay in the development of cognitive skills, social/emotional skills and communication skills.

## **Aims**

- We have regard for the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and SENDO
- We endeavour to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum so that all children learn at a pace appropriate to their ability and reach their full potential
- We include and integrate all children in our provision as fully as possible
- We identify the specific needs of children with SEN/disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs
- We monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

## **Admission Arrangements**

Children with special needs are admitted to this school in the same manner as all other children. Some pupils may require flexible settling in arrangements and an extended period of "settling in" with reduced hours and this will be managed as appropriate to best meet the needs of the child.

## Special Facilities

Access to the Nursery building is via the green entrance gate which is suitable for wheelchair access. Internally, both classrooms have wheelchair access to a toilet cubicle. If the Education Authority deems it necessary for a child to have one to one support (i.e. an SEN assistant), it will provide a Statement of Educational Need. Without the appointment of additional designated support staff, the Nursery has a staff to pupil ratio of one adult to thirteen pupils.

## Procedures

### The Role of the Nursery

- The designated member of staff responsible for SENCO is made known to parents. Our SENCO is Mrs. Thompson.
- We ensure that the provision for children with SEN/disabilities is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children with disabilities.
- We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with SEN/disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children with SEN/disabilities.
- We provide a differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs and abilities.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing IEPs for children with SEN/disabilities.
- We use a system for keeping records of the observations, planning, provision and review for children with SEN/disabilities.
- We, in partnership with the EA, provide resources to implement our SEN/disability policy.
- We ensure the privacy of children with SEN/disabilities when intimate care is being provided.
- We provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. PECS trained staff/ Wellcomm.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. IEP reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies' views and inspections.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

## **Support staff and outside agencies**

There will be planned and regular opportunities for liaison between SEN assistants and teaching staff. Planning occurs at staff meetings involving teachers and all assistants. The school will liaise closely with external professionals and facilities will be provided for peripatetic staff to work with SEN children within the school.

## **Identification and assessment**

Children with special educational needs are identified in different ways:-

1. The Educational Psychologist may have identified a child's needs prior to the child starting Nursery and therefore the school is aware of any special needs before the school term begins
2. Children may be identified as having special educational needs following observations and assessments carried out by staff
3. Parents / carers may communicate difficulties / concerns they have regarding their child with Nursery staff

Staff will monitor and assess all children on a regular basis, with any concerns being acted on at an early stage in accordance with the five steps as laid out in the Code of Practice.

## **The structure of Special Educational Provision**

The school follows the five stage approach as set out by the Code of Practice (September 1998). However, with the young age of the children being catered for in the Nursery and the short timescale that they attend, it may be that, after consultation with the Education Authority (EA) Special Education section, some of these stages may be shortened or passed over, in order to obtain the best outcome for the child. Each case will be considered on an individual basis and in consultation with the appropriate personnel.

## **Access to the curriculum**

Every effort will be made to ensure that children with SEN / disabilities have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

## **Allocation of resources**

Children identified with SEN / disability will benefit from individual education plans and, where necessary, additional support. Specialised equipment and resources will be used as appropriate.

This policy is implemented alongside the SEN/ disability policy of the main school.

**Reviewed: November 2019**

