

# ROBINSFIELD INFANTS SCHOOL

## **Special Education Needs Policy 2007/2008**

### **Aims**

Our school values the abilities and achievements of all its pupils. We are committed to discovering and providing the best learning conditions for each pupil, promoting development in understanding and social maturity alongside their peers whenever possible.

We shall work together to create a safe community which enables each person to learn and grow socially and emotionally through respect and mutual support.

We aim to:

- Ensure that everyone, whatever their gender, ethnicity or social circumstance, is respected and that every pupil has access to the curriculum and makes the best progress.
- Deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which complies with the requirements of the school curriculum (Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 curriculum), is appropriate to the child's needs and contributes continuity of learning and high levels of progress.
- Promote respect through knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs.
- Develop acceptable social behaviour in the community and the wider world.
- Promote attitudes of fairness and honesty.
- Develop all the people who work within the school and empower excellence of teaching.
- Ensure positive partnerships between parents and the school.
- Maintain the positive profile of the school as part of the wider community.

We believe that these aims can only be achieved with the partnership of all staff and parents, by having strong links between home and school and within an ethos of a secure and supportive environment.

### **Equal Opportunities**

At Robinsfield we celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity of our school community. It is an important part of our practice to clearly distinguish between SPECIAL NEEDS and SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS. The needs of children from whom English is an additional language, and the other needs perceived from arising from different cultural perspectives, are SPECIAL NEEDS and as such are clearly distinct from SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

The Dearing Report, section 6:41 reaffirms the principle of entitlement for all pupils to the National Curriculum. All children have the same entitlement to the full range of the school curriculum and we are wholeheartedly committed to making this accessible to all our pupils through differentiation and varied styles, according to individual needs. Robinsfield embraces the philosophy of inclusion but is determined to maintain a clear distinction between the needs of those with SEN and pupils for whom English is an additional language.

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

We aim to identify children who are showing signs of difficulty with any aspect of their life at school as soon as possible.

### **Initial Concerns**

The SEN Code of Practice describes a graduated response to identifying and meeting special educational needs. This can be mapped onto the '3 waves' of support described in the Primary National Strategy. This emphasises 'quality first teaching' as the basis for children at any point on the 'graduated response'.

If a child is causing concern or 'performing differently from her/his peers' the class teacher will work in conjunction with the SENCo to:

- Examine her/his expectations of the child – are these appropriate given the child's educational, cultural, ethnic and linguistic background?
- Complete an assessment checklist to examine possible areas of difficulty.
- Raise concerns with parents/carers and explain that we will be monitoring their child closely.
- Monitor the child closely to establish their current attainment and rate of progress (evidence could include samples of work, observations and assessments of attainment in core curriculum areas).
- Monitor learning and teaching in the classroom in conjunction with the inclusive teaching checklist to ensure children are receiving wave 1 high quality teaching (see provision section).

At this point a Wave 2 strategy such as the Early Literacy Support (ELS) programme may be introduced. This is not considered to be primarily an SEN intervention and children taking part will not necessarily be placed on School Action. However school action will be considered for pupils who are not judged to have made sufficient progress following the programme (see section on provision).

Following this additional monitoring and possible wave 2 interventions the SENCO and class teacher consider the child's difficulties in conjunction with the Westminster Audit Criteria for Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus or School Action and School Action Plus. They will discuss the results of these observations and assessments, along with any other concerns, with the SENCo or during the next MILS meeting.

## **Early Years Action/School Action**

Early Years Action and School Action are characterised by target setting, systematic monitoring and the planning of extra or differentiated support for an individual child.

*Specific targeted approaches for children who have been identified as requiring SEN intervention are known as Wave 3 interventions.*

At this point a class teacher will:

- 1) Collate relevant information about the child, consulting with the SENCo and Headteacher.
- 2) Devise an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which details a child's targets and the support and resources which will be put in place to help them to meet these. *In some cases there will be a group of children in a class who will be working towards very similar objectives. If these children are receiving support as a group then a Group Education Plan (GEP) may be appropriate. However class teachers will need to ensure that each child's progress is assessed and reviewed individually.*
- 3) Meet with the parent or carer, child, and SENCo or Headteacher to discuss the decision to initiate school action and the support to be provided.
- 4) Ensure that support teachers, teaching assistants and learning support assistants are involved in planning and record keeping for the child.

## **Early Years Action Plus/School Action Plus**

Early Years Action Plus and School Action Plus are characterised by the involvement of specialists from outside the school. The SENCo will work with the Headteacher and class teacher to:

- 1) Meet with parents, class teacher and external agencies eg Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist; and devise an Individual Education Plan drawing on their recommendations.
- 2) With external advice monitor and review a child's progress. If sufficient progress is evident a child may be moved back to Early Years Action/School Action. However if there are continuing concerns and there is a lack of progress, despite ongoing support, a request of Statutory Assessment will be made.

## **Statutory Assessment**

This request is usually made by the school following external advice. However other agencies including the child's parents may request this assessment.

When making a referral for statutory assessment, the school will state clearly the reasons and submit the following material:

- The current IEP and previous reviewed IEPs at Action and Action Plus, records of ongoing assessment and the action and support put in place to date.
- The recorded view of parents.
- Evidence of health checks if appropriate.
- Evidence of any social services involvement.
- Evidence of the involvement of external agencies.

### **Statement of Special Educational Needs**

When a LEA draws up a statement it is the responsibility of the Westminster LEA Planning and Placement Officers and the school's Headteacher, in conjunction with the SENCo, to ensure that any key professionals are involved in this process and in review meetings.

### **Early intervention with children new to the school**

We recognise that children who are new to the school may not have been identified by the above process. It is very important that children who are experiencing severe difficulties are identified and documented as quickly as possible.

A child causing concern may enter this programme at Action or Action Plus. There is no need to work through the earlier stages with children who are new to the school or who have experienced some trauma in their lives that causes their needs to change. Colleagues should raise any concerns immediately with the SENCo or the Headteacher.

### **Provision**

The school is committed to providing pupils with special educational needs with access to a balanced and broadly based curriculum. In the development of our curriculum map and schemes of work there is scope for teachers to plan with the varying needs of the children in mind and differentiate activities accordingly.

When children have sensory or physical difficulties we endeavour to include them as much as possible at meal times and recreation times. Our building has been ramped to enable wheelchair access to the ground floor. We have experience of very successfully including pupils in wheelchairs, pupils on the autistic spectrum, children with vision and hearing loss, plus other complex needs.

### **Wave 1**

All children are entitled to receive high-quality teaching within their class. This will include children with different needs through a combination of setting suitable learning challenges, responding to pupils' diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers for learning. Inclusive teaching will be

accessible to pupils with a range of special education needs (communication and interaction; cognition and learning; behaviour, emotional and social development; physical and/or sensory impairments).

Our quality first teaching should:

- be interactive and allow children to be actively involved in learning.
- provide opportunities for different styles of learners (eg drama or role-play activities).
- involve practical and concrete experiences.
- provide opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills.
- provide opportunities for children at all attainment levels to develop the skills necessary to work independently.
- provide opportunities for children at all attainment levels to work with an adult on guided activities.
- provide opportunities for collaborative work and peer support.
- involve children in assessing their own learning and setting future targets.
- use additional adult support effectively.

## **Wave 2**

For children identified as not reaching age-related expectations Wave 2 support may be implemented. This will consist of additional time-limited provision for a small-group of children who can be expected to catch up with their peers as a result of the intervention.

The Early Literacy Support (ELS) programme has been a successful example of wave 2 provision put in place to allow children in year 1 who are underachieving in literacy to catch up with their peers.

Children who do not make adequate progress following a wave 2 intervention early years or school action will be considered.

## **Wave 3**

This provision involves specific, targeted approaches for children identified as requiring SEN support. Again, this provision will be time-limited. As an infant school we recognise the vital importance of supporting children's social and emotional development in the early years and enabling them to be 'available to learn'.

Before an intervention commences clear targets will be set for progress. Children will be assessed before taking part and following the intervention to allow the support to be evaluated effectively. Given the nature of some wave 3 intervention work (for example story groups) and the needs and age of our pupils, evaluation of these interventions may take the form of children's comments, teacher observation and parental feedback as well as indicators of academic progress.

## **Withdrawal of children from the classroom**

We aim to include children as much as possible in the 'quality first teaching' they receive in their own class. However we recognise that in some cases it may be preferable to withdraw children from the classroom for small group or individual support.

We believe withdrawal is justified in order to:

- Support small groups or individuals who are working towards key literacy or maths objectives and need support at a pace and level significantly different from the rest of their class.
- Support children who are experiencing social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.
- Support children in developing language and communication skills.

Where pupils would benefit from additional support outside the classroom the school will accommodate that provision. The decision to withdraw should be taken in conjunction with the SENCo, Headteacher and support teacher.

***It is important that all interventions which involve withdrawal are monitored closely by the class teacher and SENCo to ensure they are effectively meeting children's needs. When the decision has been made to withdraw a child a record should be kept showing:***

- Who will be working with the child or children.
- *When they will be out of class (day of the week and time)*
- *The intended time scale of the withdrawal (eg Spring term).*
- The targets the child or group will be working towards (eg To learn number bonds to 10).
- Assessment of children's progress towards their targets.
- ***An evaluation of the withdrawal – ie Has this intervention enabled the child to make progress?***

## **Support for parents**

Parent workshops take place once a fortnight. These are run by a psychotherapist and a family therapist. These workshops offer an opportunity for parents to discuss issues of concern to them: discipline, sibling rivalry, parenting issues. The workshops are seen as part of our preventative work and are aimed at ensuring improved communication and emotional knowledge for the good of our pupils. In addition a psychotherapist is available to meet with parents twice a week. These meetings are confidential but staff are able to offer these to parents who express difficulties or concerns.

## **Outside agencies**

The school works closely with our Educational Psychologist. The SENCo, headteacher and EP meet twice a year to discuss and review issues involving

SEN. In addition the school will use additional EP time for assessment of individual children, in-class observation and support for class teachers, and whole-staff INSET.

This year the school has also worked with a Speech and Language Therapist. This time has been used for assessment of individual children, individual and small-group speech and language therapy and in-class observation and support for class teachers.

Direct referrals to the Child Development Team at St Mary's are made to ensure professional advice is obtained rapidly to support the child's inclusion.

### **Child Protection**

If there is a concern for a child's safety or welfare the Headteacher, as Designated Officer for Child Protection, should be informed. The appropriate steps will then be taken in liaison with Social Services.

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

#### **MILS meetings and planning for provision**

During their Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time class teachers will review the overall presentation of each child in the school. MILS meetings with the class teacher, teaching assistant and Headteacher will take place at the end of each term. The aim of the meetings will be to review each child's:

- Social and emotional development and self-esteem.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Progress and attainment in curriculum areas.

The progress of children in foundation stage will be monitored against the early learning goals. In key stage 1 attainment will be measured using P-scales and National Curriculum levels. The relevant PIVATs will be used to assess children on school action plus and those with statements. Targets will be set for all children in their perceived area of need. The meeting will also establish the need for specific strategies eg developing an IEP for a child with SEN or an individual study plan for a very able child.

During the MILS meeting the class teacher and Headteacher will complete a provision planning form listing and prioritising children who could benefit from wave 2 and wave 3 interventions. Completed forms will be carefully considered by the SENCo and Headteacher as the basis for strategic planning of interventions over the following term and the development of a thrice-yearly provision map.

### **Individual Education Plans**

Any child with SEN will have a record of special education needs kept in the class 'active file'. Records of other correspondence will be kept in the central SEN record with copies placed in the active file if necessary. This file will be marked as confidential and will be accessible to the SENCo, class teacher and teaching assistant.

IEPs for children on early years or school action should be reviewed twice a year in October and April. Children on early years or school action plus, or with a statement of SEN, may need IEPs to be more frequently updated. A copy of a new or updated IEP should be given to the SENCo to file centrally with the SEN records. New and updated IEPs should be shared with parents or carers as soon as possible. It is important that children are also involved in this meeting and understand the targets they are working towards and the support they will receive in achieving these.

It is expected that an IEP should be treated as an active document and will be regularly annotated and updated by the class teacher and any other teacher responsible for teaching the class or individual.

### **Guided Work Records**

Support for groups of children or individuals should be recorded on a 'Guided Work Record'. This record will show the targets a group or individual is working towards, the activity and learning intention for each session and a brief summary of their progress.

These records are intended to aid communication between adults working with a child and provide an informal evaluation of progress being made. They should also feed into a child's individual education plan

### **Every Child Matters**

The Every Child Matters green paper identified five outcomes which are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances. We aim to continue improving outcomes for children with special education needs in the following ways.

#### **Be Healthy**

- Monitoring the uptake of school lunches for children with SEN.
- Ensuring that children with SEN have equal opportunities to take part in physical activity (eg avoiding withdrawal from PE lessons).
- Continuing to value therapeutic interventions as legitimate and essential and prioritising the identification and support of emotionally vulnerable children.

#### **Stay Safe**



- Providing a safe environment for all pupils.
- Taking action to monitor and safeguard children with SEN and looked after children from discrimination or bullying.

### **Enjoy and Achieve**

- Valuing interventions which support children in their social and emotional development.
- Acknowledging children with SEN as stakeholders in their own learning and evaluating their attitudes towards school.
- Monitoring the attendance and punctuality of children with SEN.
- Maximising the achievement of children with SEN through appropriate and effective interventions.

### **Make a positive contribution**

- Ensuring that children with SEN have opportunities to take on positions of responsibility around the school (eg as a member of school council, hall monitor).
- Supporting SEN children in developing self-confidence and dealing with changes and challenges (eg supporting emotionally vulnerable children in their transition to junior school).
- Ensuring that the achievements and successes of children with SEN are recognised and celebrated by all members of the school community.

### **Achieve Economic Well-being**

- Ensuring that the percentage of children with SEN achieving level 2 in reading, writing and maths continues to exceed the average of other Westminster schools.

### **Transition Links**

The SENCo will ensure that SEN records are passed to Barrow Hill Junior School. Robinsfield will release the SENCo and the two Year 2 teachers for the equivalent of one half-day each for handover meetings.

Children identified as vulnerable learners will be given additional learning mentor support in their final term at Robinsfield. They will also have additional time to visit Barrow Hill. Where possible, an annual review for children in year 2 with statements or at school action plus should be planned to take place during the summer term. Robinsfield will invite the SENCO or other appropriate person from the child's junior school to attend this meeting, with a focus on planning for a successful transition.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The school aims to support our most valuable commodity – the staff group. The Headteacher takes the view that the emotional wellbeing of staff is essential. Our first hand experience of working with pupils with complex needs has informed us that it is essential to acknowledge the additional pressure on staff. Working with pupils with special education needs is rewarding but can be difficult. Confidential support and ‘supervision’ is available for any member of staff affected by their work.

### **Special Education Needs Co-ordinator**

The SENCo will:

- Support class teachers in the initial assessment of children who are causing concern.
- Work with class teachers and the Headteacher to identify and prioritise children requiring additional support.
- Support class teachers in writing Individual Education Plans.
- Support class teachers in communicating concerns to parents.
- Check that IEPs are being reviewed with parents and new targets are being set.
- Support class teachers in planning for children with special educational needs, including planning for the deployment of teaching assistants and other support staff
- Work with teaching assistants and other support staff to plan for, deliver and evaluate SEN support.
- Meet with parents, class teacher and external agencies eg Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist; and devise an Individual Education Plan following their recommendations.
- Identify and make arrangements for training opportunities relating of SEN issues for teaching and support staff.
- Liaise with the SENCo at Barrow Hill Junior School (and other schools to which children may transfer as appropriate) and make arrangements for a successful transition at the end of year 2.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher will

- Keep the governing body informed of SEN issues in the school.
- Through the termly MILS meeting support the SENCo and class teacher in identifying and prioritising children requiring additional support.
- Arrange and attend Annual Review meetings for children with statements of special educational need.

### **Class teachers**

A child’s class teacher will

- Raise any concerns about a child with the SENCo or Headteacher, and parents.
- Work with the SENCo and Headteacher to identify and prioritise children requiring additional support.
- Help the SENCo to devise IEPs for children in their class.
- Meet with parents to discuss their child's progress in relation to the IEP.
- Ensure that children's individual targets receive sufficient teaching time and resources to enable the pupil to achieve them.
- Ensure support teachers, TAs and LSAs are involved in planning and assessment of children with SEN.
- Plan for the deployment of teaching assistants and other support staff in their classroom (in conjunction with the SENCo).
- Ensure that teaching assistants working within their classroom are familiar with children's individual targets and how they can best support them in achieving them.

### **Teaching assistants**

Teaching Assistants will

- Raise any concerns about a child with the class teacher or SENCo.
- Meet with a the class teacher during weekly planning time to discuss how children with SEN will be supported across the curriculum throughout the next week and their own role in this support.
- Be familiar with the individual targets for children they work with and understand their role in supporting children in achieving them.
- Deliver programmes of support for which they have been trained (eg ELS, 5 Minute Box).
- Work with the class teacher to ensure these programmes are delivered regularly and consistently.
- Inform the child's class teacher about progress made or any concerns.
- Update records of support received by individual or groups, with guidance from the SENCo or class teacher (eg guided work record, 5 Minute Box records)

### **Parents and carers**

It is the school's policy to keep in close contact with parents about all issues. This is the case for all pupils, not just those with SEN, and is part of our inclusive provision. It is the right of parents to be kept informed of any matters relating to their children. A close partnership with parents is essential.

As close partnership with parents of pupils with SEN is crucial as they provide much of the background information, which may help us to identify and overcome problems. Parents will always be informed and involved by the class teacher/SENCo/Headteacher (as appropriate), as soon as their child is deemed to have SEN. Initially this will be via a parent interview and thereafter through regular meetings. It is the parents' responsibility to work in

partnership with the school, attending meetings and ensuring that their child attends regularly and punctually.

### **The Governing Body**

The governing body, in co-operation with the Headteacher, determines the school's general policy and approach to provision for the children with SEN, establishes the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintains a general overview of the school's work. There is a designated governor responsible for overseeing special educational needs provision and monitoring on a regular basis.