

Inclusion Policy



Sacred Heart Primary School
Dundrum

(Updated 2018)

Mission Statement

In Sacred Heart PS we aim to give all the children in our care wide experiences appropriate to their age and ability. We try to develop in our pupils a pride in their own self worth and recognition of the value of other people regardless of social or cultural background. We expect our pupils to work hard to achieve our aims and for parents to assist us in carrying out our responsibilities in a mutually supportive and caring environment.

“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence (physical and mental). They must be kept safe from harm and be given proper care by those looking after them.”
(United Nations Convention on the “Rights of the Child”)

Introduction

One of our aims at Sacred Heart PS is to value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving each child at our school every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards, to foster an attitude of caring for learning and enabling the opportunity for every pupil to shine. This policy helps to ensure that this happens for all the children in our school – regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment or background.

Aims and Objectives

Sacred Heart PS School aims to be an inclusive school. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our school:

- Girls and boys;
- Minority ethnic and faith groups;
- Children who need support to learn English as an additional language;
- Children with additional educational needs;
- Gifted and talented children;
- Any children who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion;
- Travellers.

Our Aims

1. To ensure all children have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Key Stage 2.
2. To ensure all children are able to develop in a caring and considerate environment where the staff and the children are all valued for their contribution to school life.
3. To ensure our school is committed to the early identification of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and to adopting clear and open procedures which are outlined in this policy and Special Educational Needs Policy.
4. To work in partnership with parents/carers and ensure they are fully involved in all decisions that affect their children's care and education.
5. To work with agencies and other care providers in a professional and open manner to enable individual needs to be met in a timely and purposeful way.
6. To provide, within available resources, the highest possible quality support and inclusive care and education for children with SEN or other additional needs.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) is our starting point for planning a curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. We do this through:

- Setting suitable learning challenges;
- Responding to children's diverse learning needs;
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils;
- Providing other curricular opportunities outside the NIC to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children. We achieve educational inclusion by continually reviewing what we do, by asking ourselves these key questions:
 - Do all our children achieve as much as they can?
 - Are there differences in the achievement of different groups of children?
 - What are we doing for those children who we know are not achieving their best?
 - Are our actions effective?
 - Are we successful in promoting racial harmony in preparing pupils to live in a diverse society?
 - Do we provide every opportunity for all our pupils to have a participatory role in every aspect of their school life?

Purpose of these aims to meet the individual needs of children in our setting.

1. To ensure that there is an Inclusive school environment and related practices are in operation.
2. To raise quality and standards.
3. To recognise the rights of the child.
4. To encourage parent/carers to avail of the provision.
5. To increase awareness of staff families and children.

Teaching and Learning style

We aim to give all children at Sacred Heart PS the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement. We analyse the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure that all pupils are achieving to their potential. We also make on-going assessment of each child's progress and teachers use this information when planning their lessons. This enables teachers to take into account the abilities of all their children. For some children, we adapt programmes of learning from a previous phase delivered in age related interest level. When the attainment of a child falls significantly below the expected level - using formative and standardised assessments - teachers enable the child to succeed by planning work that is in line with their child's individual needs. Where the attainment of a child significantly exceeds the expected level of attainment, teachers use materials from a later key stage or extend the breadth of work within the area or areas for which the child demonstrates a particular aptitude.

Staff are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability.

Teachers and support staff ensure that all children:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued;
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others;
- Take responsibility for their own actions;
- Are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success;
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles;
- Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed;

Children with Disabilities

Some children in Sacred Heart PS have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all groups of children within our school. The school fully meets the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in September 2002. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled children. The school is committed to providing an environment, within its resources and Health and Safety consideration, which allows disabled children full access to all areas of learning. For children with non-physical disabilities we review school routines and the curriculum to ensure that children and adults are not placed at a disadvantage. The school uses specialist desks, chairs and other furniture/ equipment as and when necessary for pupils. Teachers modify learning and teaching expectations as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, or they may modify teaching materials. In their planning teachers ensure that they give children with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers and support staff ensure that the work undertaken by disabled children:

- Takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use;
- Takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids;
- Is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials;
- Allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies;
- Uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities.
- Takes account of pupils whose disabilities impact upon their behaviour and make reasonable adjustments to accommodate this.

Disapplication and Modification

Sacred Heart PS can, where necessary, modify or choose not to apply the Northern Ireland Curriculum and its assessment arrangements. Our school policy is to do this only in exceptional circumstances. The school makes every effort to meet the learning needs of all its children without recourse to disapplication or modification. We achieve this through greater differentiation of the child's work, or through the provision of additional learning resources. When necessary, we also support learning through appropriate external specialists. In such cases, teachers work closely with these agencies to support the child.

In exceptional circumstances we may decide that modification or disapplication is the correct procedure to follow. We would only do this after detailed consultation with parents and the EA. The Board of Governors with responsibility for special educational needs would also be closely involved in this process. We would ensure that every effort had been made to provide the necessary support from within the school's resources before considering such action. Should we go ahead with modification or disapplication, we would do so through:

- Section 364 of the Education Act 1996. This allows modification or disapplication of the NIC, or elements of it, through a statement of special educational needs;
- Section 365 of the Education Act 1996. This allows the temporary modification or disapplication of the NIC, or elements of it.

Inclusion and Racism

The diversity of the society in which our children are living, is addressed through the planned schemes of work which reflect the programmes of study of the NIC. Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnic or social background. All racist incidents are recorded and reported to the Board of Governors by the Principal. The school contacts parents of those pupils involved in racist incidents. Further details are to be found in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

1. Learning and Teaching Policy
2. Behaviour Policy
3. Pastoral Policies
4. Anti-Bullying Policy
5. SEN Policy

The Role of our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

Since September 2001 it has been a requirement to appoint a named setting based Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

The SENCO:

- ☐ Works with the staff team to agree and implement the Inclusion and SEN Policies and agenda
- ☐ Co-ordinates the Special Educational Needs provision within our setting.
- ☐ Offers support for parents
- ☐ Supports staff development
- ☐ Liaises with other agencies
- ☐ Keeps appropriate records
- ☐ Assists staff in making observations and assessments
- ☐ Assists staff in planning for children with Additional Educational Needs
- ☐ Contacts the appropriate authorities at an early stage for informal advice and support.

When a Child Begins School

Parents are asked to complete a Data Collection Form. These are reviewed and updated following discussion between the parent/carer and/or the teacher/SENCO. Through discussion with the parent and the staff the most appropriate 'settling in' programme for a child will be decided upon. This will vary from child to child dependent on their individual needs.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents are consulted at every level of intervention and have a right to be involved in discussions about their child. Working in Partnership meetings will be held and documented. Any procedures will be explained so we can develop a close working relationship. Parents will be made aware of any targets being set for their child. Parents will be offered advice about supporting their child at home if they so wish. We understand the effectiveness of any intervention will depend upon the level of involvement of parents. Consultation with parents is made informally on a daily basis as well as an annual Parent & Teacher meeting. Additional consultation is made at either the parents or the schools

request at a mutually convenient time. We are committed to making sure all our contacts with parents and others are informative, friendly and supportive for all those concerned.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

Definition of SEN (From the SEN Code of Practice)

A child has SEN if she or he has a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for her or him.

A child has a learning difficulty if she or he:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Has a disability that either prevents or hinders the child from making use of existing facilities or resources for children of the same age.
- A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which she or he will be taught.

Early Action

The staff, in consultation with the SENCO, may need to gather information to assess the child's learning difficulties. An Individual Education Programme (IEP) is written and put into place. Provision for extra support is made within the resources available.

Request for Statutory Assessment

The child is considered for Statutory Assessment and the staff in consultation with the SENCO, parents and outside specialists. The EA considers the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate, makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.

Statement of Special Educational Needs

If the EA decides that there is sufficient need for statutory assessment further evidence will need to be collected by the school. The SENCO in consultation with the staff, parents and outside specialists will write a full assessment. The EA considers the need for a statement of special educational needs and if appropriate, make a statement and arrange, monitor and review provision.

Links with Support Services and Other Agencies

The school recognises that to provide a fully inclusive and supportive environment there is a need when considering SEN to work closely with the full range of support services and external agencies. Agencies are called upon when support is required for a specific need. The school also works closely with agencies when information is requested to support a child.

Staffing and Training

Our school fully complies with the DE (NI) requirements for staffing. If there is a need for an increase in staff due to issues surrounding inclusion, resources will be met initially within the school's budget and then depending on need, additional funding will be sought. Our school SENCO will participate in the training on inclusion provided by the EA. The SENCO will keep up-to-date with changes in legislation through regular liaison with the local ELB team.

Equal Opportunities

Our approach to equal opportunities encompasses the following areas:-

- ☐ Admissions
- ☐ Working in partnership
- ☐ Working with children
- ☐ Curriculum
- ☐ Food and Festivals
- ☐ Resources
- ☐ Language
- ☐ Special Needs
- ☐ Staff and recruitment

Admissions is detailed under our separate admissions policy and procedures.

Summary

Sacred Heart PS values each child as a unique individual. We will always continue to strive to meet the needs of all our children and seek to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

