

# **Sir James Knott Nursery School**



## **Special Educational Needs Policy**

**“Creating strong and lasting foundations for learning”**

**Certified as reviewed and approved by the Governing Body: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

**Next review date: February 2017**



## **Special Educational Needs at Sir James Knott Nursery School**

### **1 Background**

As early as 1978, the Warnock Committee recommended that the majority of children with special educational needs (SEN) should be educated in mainstream schooling and the Education Act 1981 started to put this recommendation into practice.

The Education Act 1993 took this principle further by enabling the Education Secretary to issue a code of practice for SEN. The code set out guidance on all the aspects of SEN provision in mainstream and special schools, including the responsibilities of governing bodies. Subsequent updates of the code have set the context for educating children with SEN firmly within mainstream education.

Today it is believed that every child needs to fulfil their potential and that this must apply just as much to children with SEN as to everyone else. This principle is now enshrined throughout our educational system. Standards of attainment have risen across all groups of learners, including those with SEN. However, the gap in attainment between children with SEN and their peers is still too large.

In 2008, the then DCSF established a committee of enquiry under the chairmanship of Brian Lamb. After a thorough investigation, recommendations were made for change in four key areas:

- Children's outcomes at the heart of the system.
- A stronger voice for parents.
- A system with a greater focus on children's needs.
- A more accountable system that delivers better services.

These recommendations were accepted in full and led to new guidance being issued by the then DCSF in March 2010. Increasingly, since the extended definition of the term 'disability' was thus enshrined in legislation, the needs of children with SEN are coupled with those of disabled children.

In March 2011, the coalition government issued an SEN and disability green paper entitled 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability'. The green paper proposed wide-ranging reforms and revision of existing SEN legislation and practice. This was followed by a major consultation exercise with a large range of interested parties. At the same time, a number of 'pathfinders' tested some of the proposals in the green paper.

An evaluation report of the pathfinders' experiences was published in 2013 and the outcomes of these findings have been incorporated into legislation. The Children and Families Act was passed in April 2014 and part three of that Act deals specifically with special educational needs. The final draft of the accompanying new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities was laid before parliament in June 2014. This SEN code comes into force on 1 September 2014.

## **2 Key features of the SEN regulations and the SEN code of practice 2014**

Under the SEN code of practice 2014:

- Local authorities (LAs) will publish a Local Offer describing the facilities and support available in the area for children with SEN and disabilities.
- LAs will involve children, young people and their parents in developing SEN provision.
- There will be in future a single assessment process which is intended to be more streamlined, quicker, and which involves children, young people and families much more fully. This means replacing the current system of statements and learning difficulty assessments (LDAs) by a '0 to 25' Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) which extends the rights and protection of children and young people with SEN through their early years, primary, secondary and further education and beyond into adult life.
- The LAs can authorise an EHC plan assessment for children or young people referred to it and will then draw up and put in place the EHC plan.
- There will be improved co-operation between all the various services available to and dealing with children and young people with SEN, and very specifically between educational, health care and social care agencies.
- There will be the offer of a personal budget for families that have a child or children who have an EHC plan.

The intended effect of the code of practice will be to ensure that:

- Children's special educational needs are picked up early and support is routinely put in place quickly.
- Staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to provide the right support for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled, wherever they are.
- Parents know they can reasonably expect their local school, college and LA to provide support, if necessary through an EHC plan, and are more closely involved in decisions about services.
- Children who currently have a statement of SEN, and young people over 16 who have an LDA can transfer to integrated assessment and a single EHC plan, which is completed as quickly as possible.
- Parents have greater control over the services they and their family use, with:
  - Every family with an EHC plan having the right to a personal budget for their support.
  - Parents whose children have an EHC plan having the right to seek a place at any state-funded school, whether that is a maintained school or special school, an academy, free school or special academy. Parents may also request a place at an institution operated by independent providers of special needs education.

- **Policy**

This policy is based on the new legislation ie the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEN code of practice and accompanying regulations 2014.

- **Introduction**

Children come to school with a variety of needs. Each child has a right to have those needs recognised and met. By taking account of those needs and differentiating our resources and practice, we provide an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils, whatever their disabilities. Not all learners with disabilities have special educational needs (SEN) and not all learners with SEN meet the official definition of disability, but this policy covers all of these learners.

Pupils have SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires additional support, that is, more than is normally offered in a classroom.

We are aware of the need for parental involvement in the support of our pupils and seek fully to involve parents and carers in the SEN process and provision. All of the children on the SEN register are integrated fully into mainstream classes and supported as appropriate by all staff members.

- **Objectives**

The specific objectives of our SEN policy are as follows:

- To identify learners with SEN and disabilities and ensure that their needs are met.
- To ensure that parents are informed of their child's special needs and that there is effective communication between parents and school.
- To identify, assess, record and regularly review pupils' progress.
- To ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress and grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- To ensure that pupils with SEN and disabilities have equal opportunities to join in with all the activities of the school.
- To ensure that pupils express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnerships and successfully liaise with and involve outside agencies to act together jointly in the best interests of the child.

To meet these objectives:

- Children with SEN will be identified as soon as is possible – we follow the approach outlined in the code of practice.
- According to their identified needs, children will be designated as needing:
  - SEN provision within school supported by a school Individual Education Plan (IEP).
  - SEN provision supported by an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, drawn up by the local authority (LA) in liaison with local education, health care and social care providers who have contact with the family.
- The SEN register, which contains the names of all of the children with SEN, will be updated at least once a term.
- IEPs will be reviewed at least once a year with teachers, parents and carers, and involved agencies in attendance.
- Parents and carers will be kept informed at all times.

- Clear and up-to-date records will be kept at every stage.
- The LA has the responsibility to make EHC assessments and draw up EHC plans.
- The LA must work within prescribed time limits to produce an EHC plan (a maximum of 20weeks).
- An annual review of the in-house SEN provision or the EHC plan is arranged for the child and targets are updated and monitored.

- **Roles of the governors and staff**

The success of the school's SEN policy will be judged against the objectives set out above. Annual success criteria will be reviewed, and the governing body will report annually on the efficacy of the policy and the effectiveness of the provision.

The designated SEN governor is Helen Elphick who will keep an overview of the SEN provision being made. The governing body, in conjunction with the headteacher, has responsibility for the school's general policy and approach to provision for SEN children, including the allocation of resources.

The headteacher is the designated responsible person in overall charge of the management of SEN provision and its funding. The headteacher works closely with the SEN coordinator. The SEN coordinator, Claire Lawrence is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the provision. The SEN coordinator is currently time-tabled to provide extra support (both withdrawal and in class) to groups and individuals.

Additionally she is responsible for:

- Liaising with and advising colleagues.
- Co-ordinating the provision for children with SEN, whether with or without an EHC plan.
- Maintaining the SEN register.
- Overseeing the records of pupils with SEN.
- Liaising with parents and carers of children with SEN.
- Dealing with SEN/EHC administration.
- Liaising with and co-ordinating the other external agencies involved with SEN and EHC planning.
- Managing the teaching assistants and individual support assistants.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.

The class teacher has a responsibility towards the children with SEN in their class. The class teacher has responsibility for:

- Planning and delivering a differentiated curriculum and collecting and gathering information.
- Liaising with parents and carers as well as external agencies, teaching assistants, other support staff and colleagues, where necessary.
- Planning, monitoring and evaluating IEP and EHC plan targets.
- Evaluating progress of IEP and EHC plan pupils.
- Attending INSET and training sessions.

Teaching assistants (TAs) who are directly involved with a child or group of children will liaise with the class teacher, parents/carers and SEN coordinator in order to plan for, and meet, the needs of that child. Regular support and monitoring will be provided by the SEN coordinator. The school provides, wherever possible, TAs to support children with IEP and EHC plans in the classroom.

- **Admissions arrangements**

One of the categories of the school's admissions policy gives priority to children who may have particular physical, social or emotional needs, if it can be shown that the school's SEN provision would have a beneficial effect on these children. The school still only has limited access for children with mobility problems, but has wheelchair access to most facilities. Before admission, parents, carers and children visit the school and they are encouraged to voice any concerns they might have about their child's integration into school. Our current admissions form requests that parents or carers state any special needs that their child has.

- **Identification, assessment and provision**

The school uses a system of base-line screening with all new children in the nursery class. Early year's literacy and numeracy screening programmes have been introduced and have proved successful in improving focus on children's literacy and numeracy skills as well as Readiness for School. These assessments are invaluable in highlighting needs and informing planning.

- **Education, health and care plans**

If, at any stage, it is felt that a pupil is performing below the expected level for his/her age, we initiate an IEP, which often is sufficient extra support. However, if in-school intervention programmes have not helped the pupil to make sufficient progress, then the school will liaise with parents and approach the LA to ask for an EHC assessment. The LA will decide as a result of the assessment whether an EHC plan is required. The plan is then drawn up in accordance with the facilities provided by the LA. (The LA has to produce a document called the 'Local Offer' which describes the support and facilities available.) Parents see a draft of the proposed plan. They have the right to state, if they wish, at which school they wish their child to receive their education. LAs are obliged to provide a place at the nominated school unless there are very good reasons not to do so.

Children's in-school IEPs or EHC plans are reviewed at least yearly by means of a consultation between class teachers, SEN coordinators, TAs, the LA plus any involved agencies, and parents and carers. Provision is also made for pupils to attend. Targets are reviewed and extended or updated as necessary. Informal monitoring of targets is on-going throughout the year.

The school behaviour policy for pupils and its consistent approach and methods of recording concerns make it an invaluable tool in highlighting individual emotional and behavioural problems.

- **Transfer arrangements**

- SEN records including details of EHC plans are transferred following agreed procedures.
- There are opportunities for all learners to visit their prospective primary school.
- Learners with SEN are given additional visits to primary providers if required, so that they can feel confident about the new situation with which they will be faced.
- Representatives from local primary schools are available for consultation before the time of transfer, and may visit pupils at nursery phase.
- The learner's IEP or EHC plan will be reviewed shortly before transfer to secondary school and amended if appropriate.

- The SEN co-ordinator from the receiving school often attends a final review meeting if that school has been specifically named in a child's EHC plan.

- **Evaluating success**

The criteria for success of the SEN provision are as follows:

- SEN register to be updated at least once a term.
- IEP and EHC meetings to be held at least annually and all action highlighted implemented. All associated data or paperwork to be forwarded to parents and carers, involved agencies and safely stored on-line or in SEN files.
- Parents and carers to be kept regularly informed and involved.
- Parents and carers to be invited to IEP/EHC reviews at least once a year.
- Children to be involved, as appropriate.
- Relevant SEN data or paperwork to be stored or filed in a central system.
- External agencies to be involved as indicated in the EHC plan.
- Agencies to be managed effectively by SEN co-ordinators.
- INSET/SEN updates passed on to colleagues where appropriate.
- TA monitoring sheets implemented by senior TA and passed on to SEN co-ordinator.

The headteacher and governors use these success criteria to determine the success of the SEN provision.

- **SEN in-service training for staff**

The SEN coordinator attends regular in-service training sessions held by the LA and additional courses and conferences as appropriate. Staff and governors are encouraged to attend all relevant INSET. INSET is provided for in the school's budget and school development plan.

In addition, the SEN coordinator holds INSET for teaching staff and their teaching assistants.

Topics have included:

- The role of the TA.
- Makaton
- Visually impaired strategies
- Deaf awareness
- Synthetic phonic work.
- Assessment and monitoring.
- Individual training sessions on children's IEPs or EHC plans.
- Precision teaching strategies.
- CLL strategies
- Behaviour strategies

- SEN network

- **Partnership with parents and carers**

Arrangements for including parents and carers of children with SEN follow the procedures outlined in this policy:

- Parents and carers are kept informed, both formally and informally, through IEP/EHC plan meetings, parent surgeries, report evenings, phone calls, emails, letters and by word of mouth.
- The school encourages parents and carers to discuss any concerns regarding their children. This can be done through the class teacher or SEN co-ordinator (by arranging a meeting). Interpreters can be arranged for those parents and carers who would like it.
- Updated IEP/EHC plans to be sent to parents and carers at least once a year.
- Each year the governing body will include the following information on their school website:
  - o The success of the SEN policy.
  - o Any significant changes to the policy.
  - o Any consultation with the LA and other schools and units.
  - o How resources have been allocated for SEN provision, including the use of the pupil premium where relevant.

- **External agencies**

A wide variety of agencies are available to support children with SEN and if the child has an EHC plan, the agencies involved (health care and social care) are required by legislation to work jointly in forming and carrying out that plan. The school liaises closely with a wide range of other colleagues and works with them as they provide therapy within the school. The school liaises with and refers to the following services.

- SENDIASS
- Health Visitor
- The speech and language service.
- Occupational therapy service.
- Visually and hearing impaired support service.
- DCC

The school is also aware of the following services which may be referred to at transition:

- The school nurse.
- The educational psychologist.
- CAMHs
- The educational welfare officer.
- Child and family psychiatry service.



- SEN outreach service.
- Dyslexia service

We would seek to co-operate and liaise with other mainstream and special schools in whatever way appropriate and necessary, particularly at any transfer stage.

- **Arrangements for complaints**

Any complaints regarding SEN provision should initially be discussed with the class teacher or the SEN coordinator. If this fails to provide a satisfactory answer, the issue should then be raised with the headteacher. If this fails to resolve the complaint, a group of three governors, including the governor who has oversight of the school's SEN provision and who will act as chair, will hear the complaint with the headteacher and SEN coordinator giving their case. Where a child has an EHC plan, the LA is obliged to have in place processes for dealing with complaints, disagreements and mediation, which are described in its Local Offer.

**Designated Member of Staff:-** Mr J. Croft, Headteacher

This policy will be formally reviewed by the governing body on an annual basis or earlier if new guidance becomes available.