

# *Knockloughrim Primary School*

## **Special Needs Policy**



### **UN CRC Article 28**

All children have the right to a primary education

**UN CRC Article 23** Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support, as well as all the rights in the Convention, so that they can live full and independent lives.

Adopted: November 2022  
Renewal date: November 2023

## **Rationale/Vision**

Knockloughrim Primary School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced educational experience based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. In the interests of these children, we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs.

The legislation that currently governs practice regarding children and young people (C&YP) with special educational needs (SEN) is the Education Order (1996). The current Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of SEN (1998) provides guidance on how the legislation is to be delivered in schools.

SENDO (2005) increased the rights of Children and Young People with SEN and/or disabilities to be educated in mainstream schools and aimed to ensure that children with disabilities were not disadvantaged compared to their peers in school. This included the school being proactive in areas such as ensuring that we are prepared with an adapted environment and differentiated curricula for all children who may wish to attend Knockloughrim Primary School, including those with SEN/Disabilities.

The Supplement to the CoP was published in 2005 and updated parts of the 1998 CoP to reflect the changes following SENDO (2005).

The most recent legislation, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016, strengthens and builds upon the duties contained within the Education Order (NI) 1996 and SENDO (NI) 2005. It places new duties on our Board of Governors, the Education Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts. It provides new rights for parents and children over compulsory school age. It is one element of the new SEN and Inclusion Framework which include new SEN Regulations and a new statutory Code of Practice as of 2021, awaiting ministerial approval.

In the interim, we have been advised that we must continue to adhere to all aspects of the Code of Practice (1998) and the Supplement to the Code of Practice (2005), with the exception of recording children under the new three stages of the Code of Practice.

## Definitions

For all involved in a child's education it is important that there is a clear understanding of the terms 'special educational needs,' 'learning difficulty' and 'special educational provision,' as defined in Article 3 of the 1996 Order.

### Special Educational Needs

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.

### Learning Difficulty

A child has a learning difficulty if:

(a) they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than **the majority of** children of the same age;

(b) they have a disability which either prevents or hinders them making use of everyday educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in ordinary schools; or

(c) they have not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age and is or would be if special educational provision were not made, likely to fall within (a) or (b) when of compulsory school age.

### Special Educational Provision

Special educational provision (SpEP) is educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in ordinary schools.

## Disability

The following definition of disability is taken from the Disability Discrimination Act (1995):

A disability is when someone has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

(Paragraph 2.3)

## Key Principles of Inclusion

The Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools (ECNI, 2006), states: “...all pupils have a right to the same opportunities in the whole of their educational life.”

Knockloughrim Primary School has an inclusive ethos and actively seeks to promote the inclusion of all children. We approach inclusion as an integral part of all of our school policies including our SEN policy, school development plan, our accessibility plan and policies relating to e.g., discipline, bullying and pastoral care.

## SEN and Medical Categories

The following is the list of the five overarching SEN categories and sub-categories taken from: Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) *Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools*, Bangor: DENI).

1. **Cognition and Learning (CL) – language, literacy, mathematics, numeracy**
  - a) Dyslexia (DYL) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - language/literacy
  - b) Dyscalculia (DYC) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - mathematics/numeracy
  - c) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
  - d) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
  - e) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

**2. Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-being (SBEW)**

- a) Social and Behavioural Difficulties (SBD)
- b) Emotional and Well-being Difficulties (EWD)
- b) Severe Challenging Behaviour associated with SLD or PMLD (SCB)

**3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)**

- a) Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- b) Language Disorder associated with a differentiating/ biomedical condition (LD)
- c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties (CSID)

**4. Sensory (SE)**

- a) Blind (BD)
- b) Partially Sighted (PS)
- c) Severe/Profound Hearing Impairment (SPHI)
- d) Mild or Moderate Hearing Impairment (MMHI)
- e) Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI)

**5. Physical Need (PN)**

- a) Physical (P)

**Children with a medical condition**

Children who have an identified medical condition will be recorded on our medical register. Those who do not require special educational provision will be recorded on the Medical register only and will not be placed on our SEN register.

A pupil with a medical diagnosis or disability may or may not have a SEN but what is key is “does the pupil have a requirement for special educational provision to access the curriculum.”

A pupil can be recorded on both our SEN register and our medical register if they have both a medical need and require special educational provision to be made for them.

Our Medical Register is the responsibility of Mrs H Clarke (SENCO) and Mr Finlay (Principal).

The following is the list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population taken from Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) *Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools*, Bangor: DENI).

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyspraxia/ Development Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Developmental Language Disorder (Medical) (DLD)
- Global Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Complex Healthcare Needs
- Anxiety Disorder (includes social anxiety, phobia, school refusal, obsessive compulsive disorder)
- Depression
- Eating Disorder
- Psychosis
- Other Medical Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina Bifida – with Hydrocephalus

- Spina Bifida – without Hydrocephalus
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Other Medical Condition/ Syndrome

## **Policy Aims**

1. To identify pupils with SEN/disability as early and thoroughly as possible using a variety of measures and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN/disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated curriculum so they can reach their full potential and enhance their self esteem.
3. To ensure that all pupils with SEN/disability feel valued.
4. To offer curricular, pastoral, and extra-curricular experience and opportunities which allow pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills so ensuring progress, promoting success and self-confidence.
5. To offer a broad curriculum which will promote intellectual, emotional, social, and physical progress in order that pupils can develop as valuable members of society both now and in the future.
6. To encourage parental partnerships in all aspects of SEN provision.
7. To consider the views of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision taking into account their age and capacity.
8. To support children in participating in making decisions in all aspects of their learning.
9. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SEN.
10. To educate pupils with SEN/disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
11. To develop a recording system so that each pupil's performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately.
12. To encourage and/or maintain the interest of pupils with SEN in their education.

13. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
14. To create a caring and supportive environment in which our pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
15. To meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN/disability by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources.
16. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of our SEN policy.
17. To work closely with EA services and other outside agencies as appropriate to support each pupil with SEN.

## **Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision**

Although meeting the needs of pupils with SEN is a whole school issue the overall responsibility for managing SEN provision resides with our Board of Governors and Mr Finlay, the principal of Knockloughrim Primary School. However, to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision our Board of Governors has delegated responsibility to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs to Mrs Heather Clarke (SENCo).

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Board of Governors**

The role of our Board of Governors is to exercise its functions in relation to the school with a view to ensuring that provision is made for registered pupils with special educational needs. Our SEN Board of Governor is Mr Mark Montgomery who will monitor Knockloughrim Primary School's provision for children with special educational needs.

Chapter 12 of the document *'Every School a Good School'* (DENI, 2010) relates specifically to the role of the governor in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Based on this information, The *SEN Resource File* (DENI, 2011) outlines that the Board of Governors has a statutory duty to:

- take account of the provisions in the DE Code of Practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs;
- use their best efforts to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents are notified of their child's special needs;
- maintain and operate a policy on SEN;
- ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;
- check that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying those registered pupils with SEN and of providing appropriate teaching; and
- allocate funding for special educational needs and disability; and
- prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

### **Principal**

According to the Code of Practice (1998) our principal (Mr Finlay) will:

- keep the board of governors informed about SEN issues;
- work in close partnership with the SENCo;
- liaise with parents and external agencies as required;
- delegate and monitor the SEN budget;
- ensure the senior leadership team (SLT) are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school.
- SLT members should ensure consistency of practice and contribute to the realization of the school development plan; and
- provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to special educational needs.

### **SENCo** (soon to be known as Learning Support Co-ordinator)

Our special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo), Mrs Clarke is responsible for:

- the day to day operation of the school's special educational needs policy;
- responding to requests for advice from other teachers;
- co-ordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs;

- maintaining the school's SEN register and oversee all the records on pupils with special educational needs;
- working in partnership with parents of children with special educational needs;
- establishing the SEN in-service training requirements of the staff, and contributing as appropriate to their training; and
- liaising with external agencies.

### **Class Teachers**

Our class teachers will:

- be aware of current legislation;
- keep up to date with information on the SEN Register;
- gather information through observation and assessment;
- develop an inclusive classroom;
- work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching;
- contribute to, manage, and review IEPs in consultation with the SENCo; and
- involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team.
- Discuss pupil targets and progress with parents.

### **SEN Support Staff/ Additional Adult Assistants**

Our Support Staff/ Additional Adult Assistants will:

- work under the direction of the class teacher;
- be involved in planning;
- look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths;
- provide practical support;
- listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf;
- explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- keep records and attend meetings; and
- share good practice.
- Encourage independence.

## **Pupil views**

In Knockloughrim Primary School, as far as reasonably practicable, we seek and have regard to the child's views about their strengths, learning difficulties and education, taking into account their age and maturity. We seek and listen to our pupils' views about how they learn effectively and then focus on the strategies that work for them.

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- contributing to their own assessment, provision, and progress;
- contributing to the review of IEPs, Annual Reviews, and the Transition process; and
- involving and supporting the pupils to participate in making decisions about matters affecting them.

Seeking their views and supporting them to participate in making decisions about their learning is good practice. The child's progress will be more effective when both they and, where appropriate, their parents are involved, and account is taken of their wishes, feelings, and perspectives.

## **Parent/person with parental responsibility**

At Knockloughrim Primary School we acknowledge that successful partnerships between parents, pupils and school play a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation, openness and transparency and have a crucial impact on the effectiveness of special educational provision. Seeking the views of the child or young person also plays a key role in helping us understand individual needs.

Teachers, pastoral staff, Learning Support CO-ordinator (LSC) and other school staff all have a significant role in developing positive and constructive relationships with parents and pupils. We encourage this participation and value its contribution.

It is our responsibility to inform parents when staff are considering placing their child's name on the SEN register or moving their child between stages. It is essential that parents inform the relevant school staff and provide reports of any significant needs their child may

possess. They should do this as early as possible. Essential information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child's entry to the school.

Parents will be invited as necessary to:

- meet with staff to discuss their child's needs;
- attend review meetings;
- inform staff of changes in circumstances; and
- support targets on IEPs.

## **Admissions**

The admission arrangements with respect to the majority of pupils with SEN will be consistent with our general arrangements for all other pupils.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) (2005) legislation strengthened the right for children with a Statement to an ordinary school place unless it is against the wishes of parents, or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others. Children who have special educational needs but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school (Article 3(1) SENDO, 2005).

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in our school at the request of the Education Authority (EA). When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the EA will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement. This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

## **Accessibility**

Knockloughrim Primary School is required to have a written accessibility plan which is publicly available and accessible via the school's website. The focus in our accessibility plan is to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum. For example teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure, and cultural activities;
- improve the physical environment of our school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by Knockloughrim Primary school; and
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of the information which is provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled. This will be completed within a reasonable time and take into account their disability and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

At present:

- pupils with disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building;
- the school is fully accessible to wheelchair users;
- there are well-equipped facilities for personal care;
- access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude, and attainments; and
- written information can be provided in a variety of formats upon request.

## **Special Facilities, Resources and Accommodation**

At Knockloughrim we have the following facilities, resources and accommodation:

- Sensory Room
- Two learning stations in a quiet area outside the Sensory Room
- Excellent outdoor grounds for movement breaks, etc.
- Floor movement circuits
- Additional monies in school budget for SEN.
- Funding for Engage Programme, from the Department of Education, until the end of the 2022/23 school year.

## Annual Report

The Board of Governors report annually on all aspects of SEN provision in school. The SEN section in the Annual Report contains information on: the number of statemented pupils; pupils that received provision from EA Pupil Support Services or Health and Social Care Trust; and those that accessed school-delivered special educational provision. This report is made available in Term 3.

## Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.

*(Code of Practice 1998, paragraph 2.14)*

Children with SEN should be identified as early as possible and assessed as quickly as is consistent with thoroughness.

*(Supplementary Guide of the Code of Practice paragraph 5.12 - page 44)*

In Knockloughrim Primay School, the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- information from transferring school or pre-school setting;
- teacher observation;
- standardised tests;
- diagnostic assessments;
- whole school assessment (e.g.: CAT/PTE/PTM,PASS);
- key stage assessments;
- class tests
- individual education plans;
- care plans;
- personal education plans for children who are looked after;

- statements of special educational need;
- annual reviews;
- professional reports/advice;
- parental contributions;
- pupil contributions;
- reports from previous teachers
- input from classroom assistants (where applicable)

## **The Management of Special Educational Needs**

### **The Three Stages of Special Education Provision**

In Knockloughrim Primary School, we adhere to the three stages of the Code of Practice. These stages focus on the level of intensity of the special educational provision required for a child to make adequate progress commensurate with their abilities and improve their outcomes. Responsibility for pupils with SEN at each stage lies with the school, given the day-to-day role of the school in a pupil's teaching and learning, with increasing EA involvement when required. A summary of the three stages of special education provision is set out below:

#### **Stage 1 includes:**

- School delivered special educational provision;
- A PLP is required (currently IEP);
- The majority of special educational needs will be met at this stage;
- The responsibility lies with our school;
- Reasonable adjustments and additional strategies and approaches are implemented, aimed at meeting, and addressing the child's SEN.

The PLP (currently IEP) contains the core information/evidence of our action to inform a request, if considered necessary, for access to EA SEN services at Stage 2. The child will only move to Stage 2 once any external special educational provision is being implemented.

**Stage 2 includes:**

- School-delivered special educational provision plus external provision, for example, the EA or the HSC Trust;
- A Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is required (currently Individual Education Plan).
- The responsibility lies with Knockloughrim Primary School plus external provision from EA;
- Operates in our classes for the purpose of assessment; and
- Reasonable adjustments, additional strategies and approaches are implemented plus resources, advice, guidance, support, and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child's SEN.

In the event of a child not making progress, despite the external support from the EA, the child may require consideration for a statutory assessment. A new online form designed to guide the user through the process is used to make a request for statutory assessment. The PLP (currently IEP) contains the core school information the EA will use to consider and if appropriate make, a statutory assessment.

The pupil will remain at Stage 2 when a request for a statutory assessment is being considered, is being made and, if appropriate until a Statement is made.

**Stage 3 includes:**

- Pupils with a statement of SEN;
- School and EA delivered special educational provision plus any relevant treatment or service identified by the HSC Trust;
- A PLP is required (currently IEP);
- The responsibility lies with the school and the EA –with input from the HSC Trust where relevant;
- Reasonable adjustments, the school delivered special educational provision are implemented plus EA provision as set out in the Statement.

At Stage 3, the child has a statement and is receiving special educational provision (as set out in the Statement).

The pupil's PLP (IEP) will be revised, to reflect the content of the statement (as it relates to the PLP (IEP) including the SEN category (or categories); setting intended outcomes based on the objectives of the special educational provision and the nature and extent of the EA's provision including any relevant service and treatment the HSC Trust are to provide; and any additional school provision or modifications to the curriculum, as itemised in the statement; the pupil's PLP (IEP) will be subject to regular monitoring, review and evaluation and will form the key basis of educational information to inform the annual review of the statement.

## **Exceptional Cases**

In most cases transition through the three-staged assessment process occurs in sequence. However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

## **The Annual Review**

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a statement of special educational needs must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews are seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress. The Annual Review procedure is designed to:

- gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the Statement;
- review the special provision made for the child, including placement; and
- consider the appropriateness of maintaining the statement of special educational needs.

The annual review is carried out by the school on behalf of the EA.

The Reviews take place in our school and are chaired by the principal (or another person as delegated by the principal).

## **Record Keeping**

The SENCo keeps the following records in school:

- SEN Register;
- records of concern;
- individual education plans/(PLP)reviews;
- statements/annual reviews/transition plans;
- assessment results/data;
- individual pupil files;
- record of liaison/meetings with staff from the Education Authority's SEN Support Services/Health and Social Care Trust
- minutes of meetings with parents; and
- support, advice, and training provided to staff.

## **Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is monitored. This may be achieved by considering that:

- individual education plans are monitored and reviewed for quality, progression, and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis;
- evidence is collated to demonstrate whether the pupil is making progress; and
- information gathered is used in future planning for intervention and to inform movement either up or down through the stages of the Code of Practice.

## **Professional Development**

The principal in consultation with the SENCo oversees the professional development of all staff in Knockloughrim Primary School. It is essential that all staff keep up to date with SEN developments to provide effective teaching and support for pupils.

Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members are encouraged to disseminate the information provided to build the

capacity of their colleagues. This is also saved on the school network in a Staff Development folder for future point of reference.

## **Partnership working**

In school we work with a range of EA Pupil Support Services, where appropriate, to receive training and guidance to support the school and parents in meeting the needs of children with special educational and medical needs.

- Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS)
- Sensory Service
- Special Educational Needs Inclusion Service (SENIS)
- Literacy Service
- SEN Early Years Inclusion Service (SENEYIS)
- Language and Communication Service

Other services include:

- Behaviour Support and Provisions
- Education Psychology Service
- RISE NI
- Barnardo's
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Child Development Clinic (CDC)
- Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS)

## **Complaints**

All complaints regarding SEN in Knockloughirm Primary School will be dealt with in line with school's existing complaints procedures.

If you have any queries in relation to special educational needs of a child with a Statement or who is currently being assessed for a statement of special educational needs, you can contact

your local EA Office. Please contact your SEN Link Officer in the first instance. Contact details should be on the EA documentation issued to you alongside your child's statement.

### **Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)**

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) provides an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the disagreement, in relation to special educational provision, between parents and school/Boards of Governors or the EA for pupils who are on the Code of Practice where previous attempts to do so have been unsuccessful.

Parents can contact the service which is provided by Global Mediation.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right to appeal to the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) considers parents' right to appeal against the decisions made by the Education Authority about their child's special educational needs whenever an agreement cannot be reached.

This service also addresses claims of disability discrimination in school.

### **Monitoring and evaluating the SEN Policy**

The SEN policy will be reviewed annually. It will be amended as appropriate in light of changes in legislation or practice following targeted consultation with all staff members, parents, and external agencies. This policy will be brought to the Board of Governors for final approval.

Policy Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature of Principal:.....

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors: .....

Review Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_