



## Special Educational Needs Policy

### Background

This policy has been drawn up with reference to models for best practice. However, the policy must also operate within the unique local conditions and limited resources available on Ascension Island:

Factors affecting provision:

- Isolation of the island and there being only one school on the island means that it operates without the usual Special Educational Needs Support networks of a local authority, health authority, social services, psychology services or specialist services e.g. speech therapy, behaviour support service, sensory impairment services or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- In the absence of external professional support agencies, expertise must come initially from the staff available within the school, agencies on the island or agencies/advice available online.
- Where additional support has been agreed there is likely to be a time delay in providing specialist support, equipment and training whilst sourcing takes place.
- Location means that external assessment, advice and training may have significant budgetary impact.
- Small class size means that the curriculum can be tailored to meet the majority of individual needs. However, there may still be some children who require additional/special support.
- Number of pupils with additional needs across the school is comparatively small; therefore pupils and their families do not have local support networks.
- The terms School Action and School Action Plus commonly used as terms of identification within SEN are replaced by locally used stages;
  - Monitoring
  - Action
  - Action Plus
  - Significant Additional Needs

### Definition of Special Educational Need (SEN)

“Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.”

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### **Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:**

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age on the island.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. It is important to distinguish learning difficulties from difficulties with learning resulting from home circumstances, erratic attendance, poor behaviour etc. Such difficulties with learning will be addressed as far as possible, but not through special educational provision.

### **Special educational provision means:**

- educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age on the island

## **Aims**

We believe that every child has the capacity to learn and has something positive to offer society, so we provide a broad, balanced curriculum that pupils find stimulating and enjoyable, and that provides them with skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to their current and future needs. We want to make it possible for every child to achieve their potential regardless of ability or disability and no matter what their heritage or family circumstances. To this end we include every child as fully as possible in everything that we do at school.

We work in close partnership with parents/carers who play an active and valued role in their child's education. Our aim is that all children with special educational needs participate in activities compatible with the education of all other children in the school.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of our policy are:

- To identify and monitor children's individual needs from the earliest possible stage (Home Visit / Health Visitor information) so that appropriate provision can be made and their attainment raised;
- To plan an effective curriculum to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and where necessary ensure that the targets set on Individual Education Plans are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time related;

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- To involve children and parents/carers in the setting and review of targets for their Individual Education Plans;
- To work in close partnership with, and involve, parents/carers of children who have special educational needs;
- To ensure that all who are involved with children are aware of the procedures for identifying their needs, supporting and teaching them;
- To work in close partnership, where appropriate, with outside agencies to support the needs and provision for children who have special educational needs.

## **Provision for children with SEN**

The needs of the majority of children will be met in the classroom. Teachers are expected to make every effort to ensure that children with SEN are fully involved in the life of the class. For some children it will be necessary for them to spend some time in small group work or be withdrawn from the class for specific, timed activities related to the needs identified. This may be delivered by a teacher, teaching assistant or volunteer and will complement class work so that skills, knowledge and understanding will be transferred to the classroom.

## **Identification & Assessment Arrangements and Review Procedures**

The school follows a graduated approach and recognises that children's needs and requirements may fall within or across the following four broad areas:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Behavioural, emotional and social development
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Where possible we will try to meet every child's needs within the classroom through ensuring that planning and teaching approaches meet the needs of the majority of children in our school.

However, where through careful identification and assessment teachers and /or parents/carers determine that the child is not making adequate progress, a referral will be made to the SENCO, who, in conjunction with the child and parents/carers, will review the strategies and approaches that are currently being used and the way these might be developed. Where this review leads to the conclusion that the child needs help over and above that which is normally available within the class or school the child will move to one of the stages identified on the SEN register.

N.B. Ability grouping for teaching phonics through the programme RML and/or Numeracy in the Primary school is part of the normal curriculum provision not additional

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or different from that provided. However, individual and small group teaching may constitute additional provision.

The SENCO maintains the School's SEN register and co-ordinates intervention and support. Individual Education Plans are reviewed at least twice a year with parents.

## Admissions

- Provision for children with SEN is a matter for the school as a whole; we strive to be fully inclusive.
- We welcome all children to our school and endeavour to ensure that appropriate provision is made to cater for their needs. Exceptions will be made where the school's capacity and resources are insufficient to meet significant and/or complex needs. In such cases the final decision for admission rests with the Island Administrator (see Island Education Policy)
- All children with SEN play a full part in the daily life of the school and are encouraged to join in all activities. If additional provision is necessary the parents/carers are always informed.
- Where pupils with significant additional needs are admitted into school they are fully integrated unless it would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, and there are no reasonable steps that can be taken to prevent the incompatibility.

## Resources

Most of the resources used by children with SEN are available within the classrooms. Money may also be spent on further additional resources, staffing costs and time allocated to manage the support for SEN and meet the objectives of this policy. Any requests for further additional resources should be made to the Headteacher.

## Co-ordination of SEN provision

The SENCO has overall responsibility for the coordination of SEN and will:

- ensure that relevant information about children with SEN is collected, recorded and updated;
- liaise with class teachers to plan the provision of programmes to support individual students with SEN and where necessary assist in producing an Individual Education Plan.
- work alongside staff, if required, to assist them in identifying, assessing and planning for children's needs and ensuring that children make progress;

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- coordinate the range of support available to children with special educational needs; including Teaching Assistants and volunteers
- manage and provide professional support to the SEN team; Teaching Assistants;
- oversee and maintain specific resources for special educational needs;
- in conjunction with the class/subject teacher(s) liaise with parents/carers of children with special educational needs.
- liaise with other external agencies in respect of children with SEN; medical, voluntary groups, overseas advisors, etc.
- contribute to and, where necessary, lead the continuing professional development (CPD) of staff;
- monitor, evaluate and report on the provision for children with SEN to the governing body;
- work as a member of the Senior Management team to ensure the needs of pupils with SEN are part of all school development planning and policy making.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

- All staff are responsible for children with SEN throughout the school day.
- Class teachers are responsible for planning and provision to include all children.
- Some Teaching Assistants are deployed to support individual children with SEN and provide a key role in home school liaison and ensuring their welfare as well as academic progress.

## **The role of the School Governors Committee**

- Governors are involved in monitoring the policy. They are kept up to date and knowledgeable about the provision, deployment of funding, equipment and personnel resources.

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