

School Character

Forge integrated primary School is a Belfast Controlled integrated school. Our school catchment is large. The majority of our children come from the Ormeau, Ravenhill and Rosetta areas. We are privileged that children from all religions, racial and socio-economic backgrounds come to Forge IPS to learn together.

Our Philosophy

At Forge we believe in inclusion. We recognise that children come to school with a variety of needs and we will endeavour to recognise and meet those needs. We aim to make the curriculum accessible to all children by recognising their individual needs and differentiating our practice and resources. We are aware of the importance of parental involvement in the support of our pupils and seek to fully involve parents in the SEN process, wherever possible. All of the children on the SEN Register are integrated fully into mainstream classes and supported as appropriate by all members of staff.

Policy Rationale

This policy is a living, working document which has been agreed by all members of staff, ratified by the Board of Governors and updated regularly. The policy is used by staff and is freely available to all interested parties on request.

A useful leaflet outlining the main points of the policy is available in the foyer however this does not replace the full policy.

The Code Of Practice

The fundamental principles of the code are that:

The needs of all pupils who may have SEN either throughout, or at any time during their school careers must be addressed. The code recognises that there is a continuum of needs and an equally wide continuum of support to meet those needs.

Children with SEN require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The needs of the majority of children will be met in a mainstream setting.

The knowledge, views and experience of the parents and children are vital. Effective assessment and provision will be secured where there is partnership between parents, children, schools, EA Belfast Region and other involved agencies.

To meet these principles:

All children with SEN should be identified and assessed as soon as possible. Provision for all children should be made by the most appropriate agency; in most cases this will be the school. At stage 3 and above external agencies will be involved.

Where needed, EA Belfast Region must make assessments within the prescribed time limits; must write clear and thorough statements, setting out the child's educational and non-educational needs, the objectives to be secured, the provision to be made and ensure the annual review of the special educational provision arranged for the child and the updating and monitoring of targets.

Special educational provision will be most effective when those responsible take into account the ascertainable wishes of the child concerned, considered in the light of his or her age and understanding. There must be close co-operation between all the agencies concerned and a multi disciplinary approach to the resolution of issues.

From: The Code of Practice

Objectives

In order to achieve these aims the following objectives are set:

The SEN register, which contains all of the children at Forge with Special Educational Needs, will be updated twice per year.

- Children with SEN will be identified as soon as possible and in accordance with the 5-stage approach outlined in the Code of Practice.
- Individual Education Plans will be written and reviewed twice per year. IEPs will be evaluated by teachers, LST and/or relevant support agencies and discussed with parents at parental consultations.
- Parents will be kept informed at all times.
- Clear and up to date records will be kept at each stage.
- Where it is practical targets may be discussed with children.
- Children will be referred to appropriate agencies where required.

Definitions

- 'Special Education Need' is defined as 'a learning difficulty which calls for special education provision to be made.'
- 'Learning difficulty' a child has a learning difficulty if he has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age and/or has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of his age in ordinary schools.

'The Code of Practice 1996 and
Supplement of the Code of Practice
2005'

- 'Disability' 'Someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

Part 1 of Disability Discrimination Act
1995

School Based Stages

Identification of children with SEN.

Enrolment

Consideration will be given to children with special circumstances of a medical or social nature as long as the school can meet the educational needs of that child. Our current admissions form requests that parents or carers state any special needs that their child has. The school has no Specialist Units, but is sympathetic to every child's needs and would seek to provide the necessary learning environment within the constraints of the budget and buildings.

The school has wheelchair access and accessible toilet facilities.

Some children may enrol with an existing Statement of SEN or while undergoing Statutory Assessment.

In addition to the initial enrolment form further information, concern or notification may be given by parents, class teacher, staff member, previous school or nursery.

Assessment and Provision

Forge adheres to the five-stage approach set out in the Code of Practice. In addition to this, screening results, standardised test results and informal teacher observation are used to inform planning and highlight individual needs. Below is a table outlining the steps followed.

Stage 1	Personnel Involved	Action/Support
Initial concern expressed	Led by Class Teacher SENCO Principal Parents	Teacher initiates programme in child's class to include additional resources, teacher time and differentiated work.

EXIT – if the child progresses and can cope within the class without a support program for a sustained period of 4 months.

ENTRY to Stage 2 – if the child fails to respond to the measures taken within Stage 1 for a sustained period of 4 months or if further information arises (see 'identification')

Stage 2	Personnel Involved	Action/Support
Initial concern expressed or Stage 1 review	Led by SENCO Class Teacher Parents Principal Learning Support Teacher	EP drawn up by the teacher and implemented to include additional resources, teacher time and differentiated work. Combination of in class and out of class support from the Learning Support Teacher. Strategies dependent on the child's needs, age, and subject area in focus.

EXIT – If the child progresses and can cope with the class environment with minimum support – stage 1 or without support – remove from register.

ENTRY to Stage 3 – if the child fails to respond appropriately to the measures taken within Stage 2 for a sustained period of 4 months or if further information arises (see 'identification'). In some cases a

Psychology consultation will take place with verbal permission from parents.

Stage 3	Personnel Involved	Action/Support
Initial concern expressed or Stage 2 review	Led by SENCO Class Teacher Principal Learning Support Teacher EA (Belfast/Dundonald Region) Psychology Service Parents External Support Agencies e.g. RISE, Harberton	EP is drawn up and implemented. Child assessed by the Educational Psychologist. Detailed recommendations are made for the support of the child's individual needs. These are implemented by the class teacher and supported by the LST. Support may also be provided by the EA() specialists.

A referral is made to the Educational Psychologist with parents' formal permission. Parents can be in attendance during the psychologist's assessment.

EXIT – if the child progresses sufficiently so that outside school support is no longer necessary – Stage 2.

ENTRY to Stage 4 – if the child fails to respond to the measures taken within Stage 3 then they may be referred for statutory assessment of if further information arises (see 'identification')

Stage 4	Personnel Involved	Action/Support
Referred for statutory assessment	Led by SENCO Class Teacher Principal Learning Support Teacher EA (Belfast/Dundonald Region) Psychology Service Parents Social Services GP External Support Agencies e.g. RISE, Harberton	Multi-disciplinary assessment commences.

The outcome of statutory assessment is either EXIT Stage 4 and revert to Stage 3 or

EXIT Stage 4 and Enter stage 5 with a specific statement of need for the child.

Stage 5	Personnel Involved	Action/Support
EA(Belfast/Dundonald Region) obtains advice from others involved	Led by SENCO Class teacher Principal EA(Belfast/Dundonald Region) Psychology service Parents Social Services GP Any other involved agencies	EA(Belfast/Dundonald Region) decision made based on the information gathered as to whether to proceed with a statement or not

The statement of need will make specific recommendations regarding the support necessary to enable the child's educational progress. Forge IPS will seek to meet the needs of all pupils with statements by making reasonable adjustments as long as they are compatible with the efficient education of other children.

SEN Register

A child may be moved to a different stage or removed from the Register at any time if it is deemed that he/she no longer requires that support or if he/she requires a higher level of support. Parents will be kept informed and involved at all stages; the main point of contact will be the child's teacher.

Individual Education Plans

Children's Individual Education Plans are written by the class teacher in collaboration with the pupils and the learning support teacher and reviewed twice per year. In October and February the review takes place by means of a consultation between class teacher, parents and any other involved agencies.

The school Positive Behaviour Policy is used for highlighting individual emotional and behavioural problems.

The SENCO/learning support teacher will meet with external support teachers to review individual children and pass on information on progress to teachers and parents.

The learning support teacher is Miss MacKenna who is timetabled to provide individual and small group support through in class and withdrawal sessions with pupils from stage 2 on the SEN register.

Evaluating success

The criterion for success of the SEN provision is:

- SEN Register updated at least twice per year
- Review meetings held in October and February
- Outcomes of reviews recorded and filed in child's SEN record
- Parents invited to review meetings and kept informed
- Pupils have a clear understanding of their targets
- Clear, relevant paperwork to be filed in the SEN filing cabinet
- SEN updates passed on to colleagues where appropriate
- Meetings with external agencies honoured

Partnership with parents

At Forge we recognise that 'school based arrangements should take into account of the wishes, feelings and knowledge of parents at all stages' (Code of Practice paragraph 2:28). To this end we will endeavour to keep parents informed both formally and informally, through review meetings, parental interviews, phone calls, letters and by word of mouth. Each year the Governing Body will inform parents of any significant changes to the SEN Policy at the Annual General Meeting.

Staff Roles

The designated SEN Governor is the Chairperson. The Governing Body in conjunction with the school have responsibility for the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEN including the allocation of resources.

The Governing Body will report annually to parents on the implementation of the SEN policy and its provision.

The Principal, is the designated person in overall charge of the management of SEN provision and its resourcing. The principal works closely with the SENCO.

The **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)** is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the provision. The SENCO attends cluster group meetings held by the EA (Belfast/Dundonald Region) and additional courses as appropriate. Staff are encouraged to attend relevant INSET.

Additionally the SENCO is responsible for:

- Liaising with and advising colleagues
- Co-ordinating the provision for children with SEN
- Maintaining the SEN Register
- Overseeing the records of pupils with SEN
- Dealing with SEN administration
- Liaising with and co-ordinating external agencies
- Advising the Learning Support Teacher and classroom assistants
- Contributing to in-service training of staff

The **Class Teacher** has the responsibility for all children in his/her class with SEN. These responsibilities include:

- Planning and delivering a differentiated curriculum where appropriate
- Collecting and gathering information for records
- Liaising with parents, external agencies, Learning Support Teacher, SENCO and other colleagues
- Planning, monitoring and evaluating IEP targets
- Effective deployment of classroom assistants

The **Learning Support Teacher** will liaise with the SENCO and class teacher in order to plan for and meet the needs of the child. Support and monitoring will be provided by the SENCO.

External Agencies

A variety of agencies are available to support children with special educational needs. The school liaises closely with these colleagues. The school refers and liaises most regularly with the following services:

School Nurse

Educational Psychologist

Educational Welfare Officer

Hearing Impaired Support Service

Harberton Outreach Service

Clarawood Behavioural Support

Peripatetic Service

Behavioural Support Team

RISE Team

Multidisciplinary Health Professionals

Arrangements for complaints

In School

Any complaints regarding SEN provision should initially be discussed with the class teacher or the SENCO. Further concerns should be raised with Mr Watson. If these procedures have failed to provide a satisfactory outcome the complaint should be addressed to the Board of Governors.

If the in school procedures have failed to provide a satisfactory outcome you can address your complaint to DARS.

What is DARS?

The 5 Boards have set up a Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service or DARS. If your child has special educational needs and a problem has arisen, between either your child's school or your local Education and Library Board and yourself then you can ask for the assistance of the DARS.

When can I use DARS?

You can use DARS any time you want. Both your child's school and the board will make every effort to reach agreement with you. If you feel that your questions are not being answered or your concerns are not being properly addressed, you can contact DARS.

Can anyone contact DARS?

Yes. Any member of the public can contact DARS.

Your child's school or the board can suggest the use of DARS. They cannot contact the service about your child without your consent.

How does DARS work?

Each board has a DARS officer whose job is to help facilitate agreement between the parties concerned. The DARS service operates independently from the special education section in each board. The DARS officer is not involved in decision making with regard to the identification or assessment process or provision to meet your child's special educational needs. The DARS officer will talk to each party and if necessary attend meetings to ensure that your child's special education needs are met.

How do I contact DARS?

You are best advised to contact your local Board DARS Officer. You can also contact the DARS office.

What happens when I contact DARS?

The DARS procedure is explained in the Supplement to the Code of Practice (.PDF) (paragraphs 4.34-4.47).

If I use DARS does this mean I cannot appeal to the Tribunal?

If you use DARS this means you can still appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. Once you appeal to the Tribunal you can continue to use DARS to reach a solution.

Will DARS help me and my child with other problems at school?

No. The DARS officer may only be used in matters relating to Special Educational Needs.