Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir



Special Educational Needs Policy

**2022**

**Rational/Vision**

The staff of the Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir are committed to providing equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils. We recognise that some pupils 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. In meeting these responsibilities, Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir has due regard to:

* Code of Practice 1998 (DENI)
* Supplement to the Code of Practice 2005 (DENI)
* Disability Discrimination Code of Practice 2005
* Every School a Good School 2009 (DENI)
* Good Practice Guidelines 2009
* SEN Resource File & Early Years Supplement
* New SEND Act 2016

**Definitions**

*Disability*

A disability is when someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities (Disability Discrimination Act, 1995).

*Learning Difficulty*

A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children who are the same age as him or her, and/or has a disability which hinders his or her use of educational facilities.

*Special education provision*

Special education provision means educational provision which is different from, or additional to, the provision made generally for children of comparable age (Code of Practice 1998, paragraph: 1.4).

**SEN Provisions of SENDO**

‘The new law will strengthen the right to an ordinary school place for children with a Statement, unless it is against the wishes of the parents or is incompatible with the efficient education of others.’

‘Children who have a Special Educational Need but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in an ordinary school.’

SENDO 2005

**Key Principles of Inclusion**

‘Inclusion is about the quality of children’s experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school’.

Removing Barriers to Achievement 2004

**Areas of Special Educational Needs/Disability**

(New Descriptors 2018)

**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)

**\*Under Assessment (U) -** *It is not anticipated that this will be commonly used.*

A pupil with SEN who is recorded in any one of the five overarching SEN categories and who has been assessed by the Educational Psychology Service at the current Stage Three of the Code of Practice (1998) can be recorded as ‘*Under Assessment’* (U) if no other descriptor applies, and:

*either*

1. They have been referred for a medical diagnosis and are on the waiting list.

*or*

1. They are too young for an educational psychologist to make a clear category determination and they plan to follow up.

*or*

1. They have been placed in a specialist provision by Statutory Operations as an emergency placement and are undergoing statutory assessment.

**Medical Register**

(New Descriptors 2019)

The following is a list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population:

* 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

(Source: Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) *Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools,* Bangor: DENI)

**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.
3. To ensure that all pupils with SEN/disability feel valued and develop a positive attitude towards his/her ability to succeed.
4. To offer curricular, pastoral and extra-curricular opportunities that 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 involvement in all aspects of SEN provision. The support of parents and pupils is crucial if an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is to be effectively implemented.
7. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision. When considering the wishes of the child, his/her age and powers of understanding must be taken into account.
8. To strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned in order to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SENs.
9. To educate pupils with SEN/Disability, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
10. To develop a recording system so that each pupil’s performance can be monitored and reviewed appropriately.
11. To encourage and/or maintain interest of pupils with SENs in their education.
12. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
13. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
14. 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.
15. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEN policy.
16. To work closely with all EA departments and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENs.

**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 the board of governors and principal of the school. However, in order to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision the board of governors has delegated responsibility to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs to Nicole Rabbett (SENCO).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The following section highlights the key roles and responsibilities of all those involved in meeting the special educational needs within Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir.

* Board of Governors
* Principal
* SENCo
* Class Teacher
* SEN Support Staff
* Pupil
* Parent/Carer

***Board of Governors***

The role of the board of governors of a mainstream school 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. A governor is responsible for monitoring the school’s work 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;
* allocate funding for special educational needs and disability.

***Principal***

According to the Code of Practice (1998) the principal should:

* support and guide the SENCo on all aspects of their coordinating role including developing the SEN policy, SEN Action Plan and maintenance of SEN records;
* work closely with the SLT and SENCo to ensure whole school knowledge, understanding and application of the provisions in this Code of Practice and the implementation of the school SEN policy;
* facilitate appropriate liaison with parents and young people and other agencies as required;
* delegate and monitor the SEN budget.

*Working in collaboration with the Board of Governors to:*

* determine and keep under review the school’s SEN policy and approach to school special educational provision mapping;
* provide regular updates to Board of Governors on all SEN areas, procedures, planning and delivery of school special educational provision and any specific SEN issues;
* ensure that the designated SENCo receives:
* The necessary ongoing training to conduct their role effectively;
* Sufficient time to conduct their role effectively; and
* An opportunity to provide information to the Board of Governors about SEN matters.
* ensure that all staff have sufficient time and ongoing training to effectively perform their duties with regard to children with SEN;
* ensure that SEN training is included in the School Development Plan, considering both current and anticipatory training needs of school staff.

*Working closely with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that:*

* the senior leadership team (SLT) are actively involved in the management of SEN within the school;
* a focused SEN policy is delivered and that all aspects of the SEN policy are implemented;
* the needs of pupils with SEN are appropriately identified, and special educational provision put in place;
* delivery of the SDP ensuring that all SEN Action Plan requirements are included and realised;
* delivery of the schools Accessibility Plan;
* 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***

In all mainstream schools, a designated teacher who usually assumes the title of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) should be 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;
* maintain 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
* ensuring that all children for whom special educational provision is to be made have an IEP prepared and implemented, working closely with, advising and guiding teaching staff, as appropriate, on the creation, monitoring and review of the IEPs;
* ensuring that procedures are in place for involving the child in all decisions about their education, according to their age, maturity and capability;
* encouraging and supporting staff in involving the child in order to seek the Views of the Child and inform their PLP;
* liaising/facilitating teacher engagement through partnership with parents;
* liaising with the EA, and other external agencies if appropriate, to secure access to resources, advice and support regarding provision for children with SEN to ensure that pupils receive the appropriate provision to enable them to reach their full potential.

***Class Teacher***

The class teacher should:

* be aware of current legislation;
* be involved implementation of the school’s SEN policy;
* keep up-to date with information on the SEN Register;
* gather information through observation and assessment and when concerned that a child may have learning difficulties, taking into consideration whole school educational provision including normal differentiation, draw the child to the attention of other school staff e.g. literacy and numeracy coordinators, pastoral care, SENCo;
* develop and maintain an inclusive learning environment including making reasonable adjustments to help disabled pupils and pupils with additional needs access the curriculum and have information in different formats;
* work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching;
* contribute to, manage and review EPs in consultation with the SENCo;
* direct and support adult assistants in their role of implementation of IEPs;
* attend professional development training as appropriate;
* seek and share information regarding children with SEN in their class as a child moves from one class to another;
* through involvement of the child, seek and consider the views of the child within the IEP process;
* through partnership with parents, seek and consider views and contribution within the IEP process.

***Learning Support Teacher***

The learning teacher will work under the direction of the SENCo. She should:

* be aware of current legislation;
* be familiar with the administrative process within the school;
* be involved in testing and recording data for the SEN Register;
* work closely with all members of staff to identify pupils’ needs;
* implement the delivery of suitable programmes for all identified pupils with

SEN/Disability which promote progression within an inclusive setting;

* contribute to IEPs which inform learning and teaching;
* monitor and review progress;
* be involved in the Annual Review process; and
* attend professional development training.

***SEN Additional Adult Assistants***

Working under the direction of the SENCo and teachers, adult assistants should have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities in the classroom in regard to individual or groups of children with SEN in the classroom. The adult assistant is a key contributor in supporting the teacher through the delivery of targeted strategies and interventions as set out in a child’s IEP.

Support staff should:

* 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.

***Pupil***

‘The child should, where possible, according to age maturity and capability, participate in all the decision making processes which occur in education’ (Supplement to the Code of Practice, 2005 paragraph 1.19). Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

* contributing to the assessment;
* contributing to individual education plans through setting targets;
* working towards achieving agreed targets; and
* contributing to the review of IEPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process

in Year 7.

***Parent/Carer***

The relationship between the parents of a child with SEN and their child’s school has a crucial bearing on the child’s educational progress and effectiveness of any school based action. Professional help can seldom be wholly effective unless it builds upon parental involvement and provides reassurance that account is taken of what parents say and that their views and anxieties are treated as intrinsically important.

(Code of Practice, 1998 paragraph 2.21)

It is essential that parents inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. For example, important information may need to be made available by a parent upon a child’s entry to the school.

It is the school’s responsibility to inform parents when staff are considering placing the pupil’s name on the SEN register or moving the child to a higher or lesser stage of need. Parents should 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.

**It is also the responsibility of parents/carers to forward SEN information to a new school when pupils change school.**

**Admission**

Children with Statements of SEN are placed in schools 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**

At present, pupils with SEN/Disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school.

The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users.

There are facilities for personal care, including 3 toilets for use by persons with disabilities.

**Special Facilities and Resources**

The naíscoil unit has a sensory room and a sensory area.

The main school has one sensory room, a quiet area for counselling / meetings, a dedicated space for 1:1 and small group work.

Every class has a calm box filled with a range of sensory resources and a sensory corner in each classroom.

The playground has a sensory swing.

**Annual Report**

The board of governors report each year on SEN provision in school. Information for this report is collated by the SENCo and the Principal.

**Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs**

Early identification and intervention.

The staff of Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir believe that it is vitally important to identify children with special educational needs as early as possible and that an awareness of their difficulties is communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.

In Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, the following is used to identify pupils’ needs:

* information from transferring school;
* teacher observation;
* standardised tests;
* diagnostic assessments;
* whole school assessment (eg: CATS/PTE/PTM);
* key stage assessments;
* class tests;
* individual education plans;
* care plans;
* statements of special educational need;
* annual reviews;
* professional reports;
* parental contributions;
* pupil contributions.

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

In Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, we follow the 3 stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice (2020).

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN and that the requirements of the majority of pupils with special educational needs lie at stage 1. This means that their needs are met by the provision of the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

**STAGE 1**

* School delivered special educational provision;
* IEP required;
* the majority of SEN will be met through this stage;
* the responsibility lies within the school;
* in mainstream schools and classes;
* reasonable adjustments and additional strategies and approaches aimed at meeting and addressing the child’s SEN.

**STAGE 2**

* School delivered special educational provision plus external provision, e.g. the EA or HSC Trust;
* IEP required;
* a smaller number of children will need this provision;
* the responsibility lies within the school plus external provision from EA;
* in mainstream schools and classes (and by exception special school or learning support centre for the purpose of assessment);
* reasonable adjustments, additional strategies and approaches plus resources, advice, guidance, support and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child’s SEN.

**STAGE 3**

* Statement of SEN;
* school and EA delivered special educational provision plus any relevant treatment or service identified by a HSC Trust;
* IEP required;
* a smaller number of children will need this provision;
* the responsibility lies within the school and the EA – with input from HSC Trust where relevant;
* in mainstream schools, LS Centre attached to mainstream schools or special schools (as determined with the statement);
* reasonable adjustments, school delivered special educational provision plus EA provision as set out in the Statement.

**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, whether attending a special or mainstream school, 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 should be 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 Review will take place in school and is chaired by the principal or SENCo.

Parents/Guardians, relevant school staff, staff from outside agencies (where appropriate), are all invited to attend annual review.

**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.

**Record Keeping**

Class teachers keep records of pupils in their class relevant to their needs, progress, meetings etc. These records are passed on with the child as they move up through the school. In addition to this, the SENCo keeps records of:

* SEN register
* IEPs and reviews
* Statements of SEN
* Annual Reviews
* Assessment results
* Individual pupil files
* Referral forms
* Liaison/meetings with Board/Health Services
* Reports from outside agencies/services
* Minutes of meetings with parents
* Staff support, advice and training records.

**Monitoring Progress of Pupils with SENs**

Several steps are taken within Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir to ensure that pupils with SENs are making progress both throughout the school year, and as they progress from one year group to the next:

* Time to meet new class teacher at the end of June in preparation for new school year beginning in September;
* a Transition Plan is implemented if necessary;
* individual pupil profiles, reports and results passed on to next year’s teacher;
* time set aside during staff development days to pass on information to next year’s teacher regarding children with SENs;
* meetings with SENCo termly to update SEN register and discuss new needs;
* individual education plans are monitored and reviewed for quality, progression and appropriateness through meetings with teachers on a regular basis;
* evidence is collated to demonstrate whether or not 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.

**Annual Report**

An end of year report is submitted to the Board of Governors detailing:

* School SEN register profiles;
* overview of special educational provision – internal;
* overview of special educational provision – external;
* views of the child and parental involvement;
* resourcing and staffing;
* referrals made throughout the year with outcomes;
* considerations for next school year;
* staff training;
* analysis of data of scores children on the SEN register achieved;
* other developments;
* future concerns;
* future developments.

**Professional Development**

The principal in consultation with the SENCo oversees the professional development of all staff in her school. It is essential that all staff are kept up-to-date with developments in the whole area of SEN in order to provide effective teaching and support for pupils.

The SENCo should keep a record of all training attended by or delivered to staff in relation to SEN. Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members should be encouraged to disseminate the information provided in order to build the capacity of their colleagues.

**Partnership Working**

In Gaelscoil Éadain Mhóir, we have developed partnership working with each of the following services:

* Autism Advisory & Intervention Service (AAIS)
* Behaviour Support Team
* Language & Communication
* EA Literacy Service
* RISE NI
* Speech and Language
* Occupational Therapy
* Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
* Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS)

**Complaints**

All complaints regarding SEN in your school will be dealt with in line with school’s existing complaints procedures.

**SEN Advice and Information Service**

The EA has set up a SEN Advice and Information Service to provide support in relation to children with Special Educational Needs. Details of this service can be found on EA’s website:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen/contact-details-for-special-education-in-the-local-education>

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

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) was established in September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Needs and Disability Order (SENDO). It aims to provide an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the areas of disagreement between parents and schools/Boards of Governors or the EA for pupils who are on the Code of Practice, in relation to special educational provision. Where interested parties have made an attempt to resolve a disagreement and this has been unsuccessful, a referral may be made to DARS.

Members of the DARS team will facilitate the possible resolution of disagreements (in a separate venue from home or school) but do not have the authority to resolve a dispute. DARS is separate and independent from the Statutory Operations section in relation to Special Education.

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

The main office for DARS is based in Armagh. Parents/Guardians may contact this service directly either by telephone: (028) 3751 2383 or email: [DARS@eani.org.uk](mailto:DARS@eani.org.uk)

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

Where agreement cannot be reached between a parent and the EA with regard to a child’s special educational needs, legislation gives the right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). This body considers parents’ appeals against decisions of the EA and also deals with claims of disability discrimination in schools.

**Monitoring and Evaluating the SEN Policy**

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in light of changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents and external agencies.

**Staffing**

Governor responsible for monitoring SEN: Grace Mhic Niallais

Principal: Mary Nic Ailín

Vice Principal: Alicia O’Kane

Senior Leadership Team: Mary Nic Ailín, Alicia O’Kane, Nicole Rabbett

SENCo: Nicole Rabbett

Learning Support Teacher: Caitlin Ní Earcáin

Class Teachers:

Naíscoil Nicole Rabbett

Rang 1 Mairéad McDaid

Rang 2 Saoirse Duggan

Rang 3 Conchúr Mac Diarmada

Rang 4 Patricia McCorkell

Rang 5 Deirdre Crabtree-Bailie

Rang 6 Moira Armstrong

Rang 7 Alicia O’Kane

Classroom Assistants:

Sinéad McLaughlin Naíscoil Assistant

Rebecca Brown Rang 1 Assistant

Orlagh Harkin Rang 2 Assistant

Ruaidhrí McLaughlin General Assistant

Toni Brown General Assistant

Nóirín Ní Mhianáin SEN Assistant

Eamonn Carlin SEN Assistant

Álainn Duffy SEN Assistant

Sarah Kyle SEN Assistant

Sean McKenna SEN Assistant

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

Signature of Principal:……………………………………………..

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors: …………………………………………

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