

The Priory Primary Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs Policy



January 2012
Reviewed annually by the governing body

Introduction

The Priory Primary Academy Trust emphasises a team approach in a friendly family atmosphere, where children's work is truly valued and the achievements and the contributions of the entire school community are recognised and celebrated. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. A minority of children has particular learning and assessment requirements that could create barriers to learning.

These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having Special Educational Needs (SEN). Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities.

Children may have special educational needs either throughout, or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

Our aims and objectives are:

- to provide a caring, stimulating, happy and secure learning environment in which all children can realise their potential
- to ensure early intervention regarding all forms of learning or behavioural problems
- to work in partnership with parents and the community to enhance learning, by involving parents in the life of the School and providing information about their child/children's progress by means of verbal and written communication
- to promote inclusion of all pupils and to ensure that all children with special educational needs feel valued and have a positive self esteem
- to develop a system for recording continued assessment so that each pupil's progress can be monitored
- to use a range of teaching strategies which incorporate different learning styles and ensure effective learning for all
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the curriculum
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process and where possible can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs

Special Educational Needs

Definitions

A child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

A child has learning difficulty if he or she;

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of education facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in ordinary schools

- is under five and falls within the definition of (a) or (b) above or would do if special education provision was not made for this child

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who 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. The term physical impairment covers a number of conditions, for example, hearing or sight impairment, diabetes, asthma.

Special educational provision is defined as *“Educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in ordinary schools.”* (Education (NI) Order 1996)

School Action

When a class teacher identifies a child as having special educational needs, the class teacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the Academy’s usual differentiated curriculum.

The triggers for this intervention could be the teacher’s or others’ concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child’s identified area of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not improved by the School’s behaviour management techniques
- has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

The class teacher in consultation with parents may decide that the child needs extra support to help their progress. To inform the type of help the child needs, the class teacher with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) should collect all the available information about the child, including information from the parents. Further assessment should take place to identify specific areas of difficulty then an Individual Education Plan (IEP) can be written. The child’s class teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individual programme.

School Action Plus

Schools and academies should always consult specialists when they take action on behalf of a child through School Action Plus. This is likely to follow a review of the IEP in consultation with the SENCO, colleagues and parents. However, specialists may also be involved with very early identification and in advising school of effective provision.

At School Action Plus external support services can provide advice to teachers on new IEPs, provide specialist assessments that can inform planning and give advice on the use of new strategies or resources.

The triggers for School Action Plus could be that despite receiving an individualised programme under School Action, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period

- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class, despite having an individualized behaviour programme
- has sensory or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barrier to learning.

Statutory Assessment

When a school makes a request for statutory assessment the child must have demonstrated significant cause for concern. The Local Authority (LA) will ask for evidence that all strategies and interventions that have been tried with the child have continued for a reasonable time without success and other interventions have taken place also without success. The LA then makes a decision based on all the evidence collected whether or not to make a formal assessment of the child.

At the Priory we are aware that there are some children who have SEN in different areas of the curriculum often on a short term basis. It is not necessarily the same children all the time.

Educational inclusion

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Access to the curriculum

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that brings feelings of success and achievement

Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the School. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success. All children on the special needs register have an IEP.

We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom situation. There are times though when, to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one to one situation outside the classroom.

Roles

In the Priory Primary Academy, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO):

- manages the day to day operation of the policy
- co-ordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs
- supports and advises colleagues
- maintains the Academy's SEN register
- contributes to and manages the records of all children with special educational needs
- manages the School-based assessment and completes the documentation required by outside agencies and the LEA
- acts as the link with parents
- maintains resources and a range of teaching materials to enable appropriate provision to be made
- acts as a link with external agencies and other support agencies
- monitors and evaluates the special educational needs provision and reports to the governing body
- manages a range of resources, human and material, linked to children with special educational needs.

The class teacher:

- works with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), other teachers, classroom assistants and the head teacher to implement a curriculum differentiated to individual children's needs in their class
- liaises with the SENCO to become familiar with SEN procedures
- draws up, implements and reviews Individual Education Plans (IEPs) with the SENCO during regular meetings
- identifies children with SEN and assesses, evaluates targets and completes referral forms alongside the SENCO
- keeps up-to-date IEPs
- liaises with parents and keeps them up-to-date with new information and current IEPs
- informs classroom assistants of any targets in place for a child as they may need to be implemented outside the classroom environment
- records concerns about individual children's behaviour and implements the positive school discipline policy.

The classroom assistant:

- works at all times within school policies and promoting independence and inclusion for the pupil. Under the direction of SENCO/class teacher the adult assistants will undertake a range of duties to support pupils with SEN including;
 - supporting the class teacher in the delivery of the curriculum
 - delivering one to one support as identified in education plans.
 - working with small groups giving support.
 - motivating and encouraging reluctant learners.
 - promoting inclusion.
 - any other duties identified by class teacher/SENCO.

Partnership with Parents

The Academy's prospectus contains details of our policy for special educational needs, and the arrangements made for these children in the Academy. A named governor takes a special interest in special needs and is always willing to talk with parents.

At all stages of the special needs process, the Academy keeps parents fully informed and involved. We take into account the wishes, feelings and knowledge of parents at all stages. We encourage parents to make an active contribution to their child's education.

We have regular meetings each term to share the progress of special needs children with parents. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

It is vital that parents:

- provide support at home
- supervise homework
- attend parent/teacher meetings, annual/transition review meetings, and if required meetings with the SENCO
- keep medical or educational appointments.

The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has decided that children with special educational needs will be admitted to the School in line with the School's agreed Admissions policy.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child who has special needs
- be kept informed of the Academy's updated policy and ensure that it is kept under review so that individual needs are being provided for
- establish appropriate staffing and that they are aware of the importance of providing children with special needs
- consult with the LEA and other schools if as or when appropriate.

Allocation of resources

The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the School, including the provision for the children with statements of special educational needs.

The Head Teacher informs the Governing Body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed.

The Head Teacher and the SENCO meet annually to agree on how to use funds directly related to statements. The SENCO draws up the resources bid when the School is planning for the next Academy improvement plan.

Assessment

Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active support.

The class teacher and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing Academy practices.

The SENCO works closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of intervention and support.

The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the Academy. The class teacher and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

Monitoring and evaluation

The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the SEN system in the Academy. The SENCO provides staff and governors with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the Academy.

The SENCO is involved in supporting teachers involved in drawing up Individual Education Plans for children. The SENCO and the Head Teacher hold regular meetings to review the work of the Academy in this area. The SENCO and the named governor charged from time to time with the responsibility for special needs also hold termly meetings.

The Governing Body reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The SENCO reports the outcome of the review to the full governing body.