

St James the Great RC (VA) Primary and Nursery School



Policy for Special Educational Needs

Summer 2006

St James the Great RC (VA) Primary and Nursery School

Special Needs Policy

School Arrangements

"Every teacher is a teacher of pupils with special needs. The key lies in the teacher's knowledge of the child's skills and abilities and the means of providing appropriate access to the curriculum."

Croydon curriculum document

Rationale

At St James the Great, it is the shared responsibility of the whole school to plan and give access to the National Curriculum, so that the needs of all our children are met. We aim to encourage children to reach their full potential, spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. We are aware of the importance of giving all children equality of opportunity. We recognise that some of our children face great obstacles to achievement and may need special consideration. The main purpose of this document is to provide practical guidance and information about our approach and procedures, which will enable all partners to work together to the benefit of our children.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

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

A child has a learning difficulty if he/she:

- a) *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age*
- b) *has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority*
- c) *is under compulsory school age and falls within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do if special education provision was not made for the child.*

A child must not be regarded as having learning difficulty solely because the language /form of language at home is different from the medium in which the child is taught. A child may also need special attention if they are gifted or talented.

Special Educational Provision means:

- a) for a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the child's age in maintained school's, other than special schools in the area.
- b) For a child under two, educational provision of any kind.

At St James the Great, children who may need special consideration include:

- Children with a recognised medical condition
- Children who have a physical/sensory need
- Children who are gifted and/talented
- Children who have general/specific learning difficulties and who, are underachieving as result
- Children who have behavioural difficulties
- Children who have an emotionally/socially based difficulty

Aims

The Governing body expects the school policy to aim to:

- Promote equal opportunities for all children whatever their gender, background, race or abilities
- Ensure that wherever possible all children are taught in their own class group, and that withdrawal is kept to a minimum.
- Allocate resources that can be used flexibly to support all children's individual needs
- Provide a staffing structure with clear lines of responsibility for SEN, with provision for staff training.
- Put in place programs of work (for classes/groups/individuals) that enable all children to make progress
- Operate a system of record-keeping and regular monitoring of each child's progress
- Find effective ways of informing and consulting with all parents about SEN in the school; and supporting those parents who have children with SEN
- Devise effective lines of communication between all those involved with SEN.

Roles and Responsibilities

a) Head teacher

The head teacher has the responsibility for the management of all aspects of the school, including provision for children with SEN. These responsibilities are met within the close collaboration of the head teacher, senior management team and the SENCO in the early identification and subsequent provision of pupils with a significant educational need.

The head teacher will:

- Assist in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the governor's SEN policy
- Assist in establishing success criteria
- Involve all staff and governors in SEN development
- Agree job description with SENCO, creating the opportunity for non-contact time
- Establish procedural guidelines for all staff

- Maintain responsibility for the day-to-day management of SEN.

b) The Governing Body

In order to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN, the Governing Body should:

- Have a knowledge of the school's system for the identification of pupils experiencing difficulty
- Have knowledge of the school's course of action for such pupils in relation to the Code of Practice (COP)
- Publish information about and report annually on the School's SEN policy, and ensuring that this information is readily available to parents
- Ensure that where the head teacher/link governor has been informed by the LEA that a child has SEN, those needs are made known to all those who are likely to teach them
- Promote procedures in the school that are inclusive and ensure equal access to the National Curriculum, where children with SEN join with children who do not have SEN in all the school's activities, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the learning needs of the child receiving SEN provision and the efficient education of all children
- Ensure that parents are included in and notified of a decision by the school to make SEN provision
- Ensure that the Link Governor meets regularly with the SENCO/head teacher to consult with regard to systems and management.

c) The SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision and monitoring Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children with SEN
- Supporting staff in the interpretation of the SEN policy
- Co-ordinating the work of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)
- Assisting in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the SEN policy
- Identifying and contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Maintaining a central record and overseeing the records of all children with SEN
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Liaising with outside agencies.

d) The teacher

Teachers are responsible for:

- Identifying and assessing children who are causing concern, sharing all evidence collected with the SENCO
- Ensuring the right of all pupils to access the National Curriculum
- Planning differentiation
- Initiating School Action
- Liaising with parent and child
- Developing, reviewing and delivering IEP's
- Liaising with SENCO, teaching and non-teaching staff
- Liaising with outside agencies where needed
- Involving themselves in policy development
- Their own professional development with regard to SEN via INSET.

e) Learning Support Assistants and other support staff

We have built up a large team of LSAs and support staff and they have become the eyes and the ears for the teacher. We fully encourage our staff to contribute and participate in discussions about pupils experiencing difficulties.

These members of staff are responsible for:

- Working in collaboration with the class teachers and the SENCO
- Assisting in the identification of individual needs
- Helping to provide effective learning strategies for 1:1/small groups
- Developing a variety of methods appropriate to individual pupils
- Assessing , recording and regularly evaluating pupil progress
- Feeding back information to parents

Co-ordinating and Managing Provision

The SENCO plays a key role in determining the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school, in order to raise achievement of children with SEN. At our school SEN provision is also an integral part of the whole school development plan. The SENCO reports informally to the head every day but meets with senior management fortnightly to provide a briefing and to communicate with key-stage co-ordinators. The Link Governor and the SENCO meet termly to discuss any SEN issues and to provide an update. The SENCO also meets regularly with teachers and LSA's to discuss record keeping, planning and identification of pupil-related issues as well assisting in the co-ordination of review meetings, other meetings with parents and meetings with external agencies. Support provided for pupils may be through withdrawal if needed, extra numeracy and literacy teaching, pastoral/behaviour support and support for statemented children. Each class has a well-structured SEN ring binder that provides teachers with:

- Relevant general/specific information relating to the special needs children in their class
- Detailed procedures to follow in the identification, assessment and review of pupils with SEN, with reference to the roles and responsibilities and active partnership of all involved
- Recording sheets for LSA's to help inform teaching and track pupil progress
- Pro-forma's for correspondence with parents
- A means for monitoring IEP's and tracking SEN provision within the classroom
- The opportunity for giving to and receiving feedback from the SENCO.

Admission Arrangements

St James the Great values each child and aims to meet the needs of all pupils within the context of inclusive practice. Pupils are admitted to our school without reference to ability or aptitude. The school endeavours to make reasonable adjustments or take reasonable steps, to ensure that disabled pupils/prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their non-disabled peers, without justification. Parents provide the school with their child's educational and medical history and liaison with the nursery, agencies and other schools provide continuity if a need has been identified.

Specialisms and Special Facilities

Our school has pupils with a wide range of needs and we are committed to their integration and inclusion in the whole life of the school. The school is a single storey building that has no steps or stairs. Wheelchair access has been taken into account through the provision of a ramp as well as steps to the junior playground. There is ramp access to the nursery. There is a disabled toilet located between the Infant and Junior parts of the school. In addition to class based differentiated resources we also have a developing learning support resource centre based in the learning support room. This room is also available to pupils for timetabled work with support staff. We have a full time SENCO who provides specialised support and MRs Shakespeare (Foundation Stage co-ordinator) has training in Makaton stages 1-4.

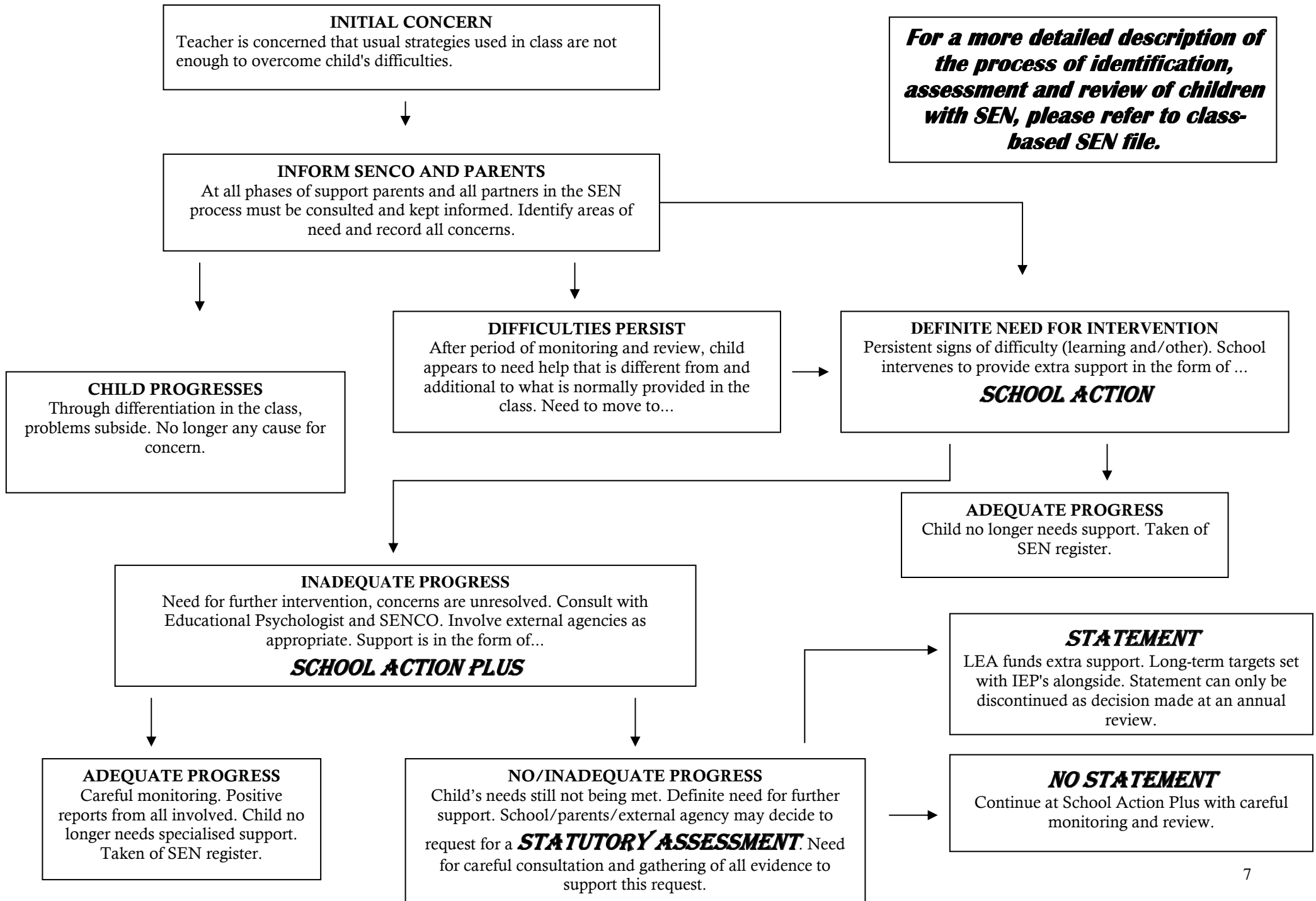
Allocation and Provision of Resources:

At St James the Great, we believe that an appropriate level and type of staffing are the most important resource in making Special Needs provision. We have therefore made higher than the minimum staffing provision throughout the Nursery and Infant phases. This has provided a full time classroom assistant in addition to the Nursery Manager and Nursery Nurse. At Reception level each class has a full time teacher and Nursery Nurse. Year 1 classes each have full time classroom assistants and Year 2 classes have part time assistants for support. Each KS2 (Juniors) year group, has a full time learning support assistant shared between them.

Curriculum Access and Inclusion

St James has an inclusive curriculum that provides the framework for well-defined and achievable aims and objectives. This includes:

- ❑ the choice of appropriate teaching methods and learning environments. Through this, opportunities for success are built into the programs of work, in order to nurture positive attitudes and inspire confidence in children with regard to their own abilities.
- ❑ Children are encouraged to be aware of and be proactive in their own learning, through evaluating their learning styles and setting targets for themselves. Pupils are directly involved in evaluating their progress both orally and in writing and they are given the opportunity to celebrate any successes.
- ❑ Class teachers, support staff and the SENCO work closely with each other through as part of the school's assessment procedures, to ensure that learning is differentiated according to the needs of the pupil
- ❑ IEP's are designed monitored and reviewed in close collaboration with the SENCO, class teacher, support staff, child and parents
- ❑ Arrangements for withdrawal support are monitored by the class teacher and SENCO to ensure the child's access to the wider curriculum is not unduly affected
- ❑ Assessment procedures may sometimes require differentiation in administration(i.e. special arrangements) to ensure that children requiring educational support are given every chance to achieve
- ❑ For children with SEN each child's learning style is taken into account and an adaptation/modification may be made in presentation, content and context to assist a child with a task-a multi-sensory approach is used wherever appropriate



For a more detailed description of the process of identification, assessment and review of children with SEN, please refer to class-based SEN file.

Evaluating Success

All our children attend school happily and cope well with classwork. Liaison with parents is well established and parents are very supportive. There is good contact between school and home. Children continually move from one phase of support to another as their needs change and many no longer need School Action as their concerns diminish and their needs are addressed.

The effectiveness of the Special Needs Policy is continually under review and amendments are made where necessary, with the approval of the governors.

The success of the school's SEN policy is evaluated through:

- Monitoring of classroom practice by SENCO's/subject co-ordinators
- Analysis of pupil tracking data and results
- Value-added data for pupils with SEN
- Termly monitoring of procedures and practice by SEN governor
- School self evaluation
- The School Development Plan and the SEN Action Plan
- Governor's Annual Report to parents.

Complaints Procedure

Many complaints/concerns can be resolved by informal discussions between the class teacher and parents. Should these concerns remain unresolved, discussion should ensue with the SENCO. If there is further need, parents are invited to make representation to the head teacher. The head teacher will review the case and inform the link governor for SEN. A written response will be made to any individual and the complainant will be informed of any further action to be taken.

Partnership within & beyond the school

Staff Development

In line with the governing body's aims, we have built up a very experienced and capable team of teachers and support staff.

Our school maximises opportunities for development and professional growth:

- Staff is involved annually in the planning of staff INSET.
- Members of staff compile information as well as informally assisting NQT's and new support staff, with regard to school procedures including SEN identification and assessment.
- Support services and the SEN advisory services give input with regard to inset training on SEN legislation development and concerns.

The Voice of the Pupil

At our school, we listen to the thoughts and feelings of our children and focus on their strengths as well as their areas of need. We include them in decision-making; IEP's are discussed with them and they are encouraged to take ownership of their targets by monitoring and evaluating their own progress. They are regularly given the opportunity to share their achievements and all children are encouraged to reflect on how they contribute to the well being of the class. Confident young children who know that their opinions are valued, and who can practice making choices, will be more secure and effective pupils during the school years.

Partnership with Parents

Parents, as primary educators may be the first observers to identify a special need in their child. Parents must tell the school about any specific needs their child may upon entering school and at any time during their school career. Our school will endeavour to:

- Help parents understand the purpose of any intervention as well as the program of action including them in the decision-making process and informing them of review dates.
- Help parents understand SEN procedures
- Provide help, support, encouragement and guidance, informing them of outside support services if need be
- Provide information on the SEN policy and make it available on request
- Include information in the Annual Governor's Report
- Keep parents informed about current projects, homework and general progress of their child
- Fulfil any other obligations under the Home-School Agreement, which sets out expectations of both sides.

Links with Agencies, Organisations and Support Services:

St James the Great makes additional arrangements for pupils with SEN when they transfer to high school, ensuring that the pupil's needs are known to the high school SEN co-ordinator and that the parents are comfortable with the secondary placement. Links with mainstream feeder schools and transfer to other schools are made as smooth as possible and include the exchange of relevant information regarding the transferring child. These links are equally beneficial when a statemented child has to transfer to a special provision.

St James the Great makes use of a number of additional services on a regular basis including:

- ❑ Educational Psychology Services
- ❑ Speech and Language Therapy
- ❑ Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy
- ❑ Hearing and Visual Impairment Services
- ❑ School Nurse and Health Clinic
- ❑ Counselling Services-Catholic Children's Society
- ❑ Ethnic Minority Achievement Services
- ❑ Literacy Support Centre
- ❑ Parent Partnership Services

