

# Hurworth School

## Special Education Needs Policy

**Accepted by:** Governing Body – May 2009

**Senior Leadership Team Lead Reviewer:** James Keating

**Review Cycle:** 1 Year

**Date for Review:** July 2010

### Rationale and Objectives

#### Rationale

At Hurworth School we aim to raise pupil's standards of attainment in all areas of school life by developing and extending curriculum opportunities for all. Whilst encouraging students to develop lively and enquiring minds, we also aim to support them while they grow in independence and confidence, academically and socially.

Hurworth is proud of its inclusive ethos which embraces and celebrates the ability of all its students, combining high quality teaching with challenging opportunities in an environment where tolerance and understanding of others are equally important.

The school welcomes all students, from those with a multiplicity of special needs who may need specialist support, to those who require a more significant challenge to achieve all that they are capable of. All of our students are encouraged to reach their full potential through excellent teaching and targeted support.

#### Objectives

These objectives have been written in conjunction with the aims and objectives of the school and also within the guidelines laid down in the revised SEN Code of Practice.

1. To provide full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils within the school at a level that is appropriate to their ability and needs.
2. To identify and assess the special needs of pupils during transition from feeder primary schools and within Hurworth School itself across the whole ability range and to make appropriate provision in order to meet these needs.
3. To assist departments in the identification of pupils with special needs and provide ideas for them in terms of advice, resources and appropriate teaching strategies which will help staff develop to the full, the potential of all pupils in their care.
4. To prepare pupils with special needs to take a full and active part in the community after leaving the school by developing and sustaining strong links with the Further Education sector and outside agencies.
5. To develop the understanding and skills of the staff to meet the need of pupils with special needs through partnership in and out of the classroom and through INSET.

6. To carry out all assessment and monitoring procedures, as laid down in the revised SEN Code of Practice, fully involving parents or carers of pupils with special needs in all aspects of their child's education and to continue and extend the good relationships already established with parents.
7. To develop strong links with the school's governing body, particularly the SEN Governor, and so involve them in the development and monitoring of Special Needs provision in the school.
8. To build on the pastoral and academic links within the school to enable provision for special needs to be co-ordinated in all areas.

## **Roles**

### **The Role of Senior Management**

The Head Teacher and Senior Management are committed to furthering our inclusive ethos and creating opportunities for all.

The Learning Support Co-ordinator is a member of the Pastoral Team whose role includes decision and policy making for the school. There is an active policy for the monitoring and assessment of all pupils across the curriculum. This involves target setting in all subject areas. The Learning Support Department works with members of staff to co-ordinate the monitoring of the registered students. It is also involved in the implementation of the Key Stage 3 Literacy and Numeracy Framework and raising the achievement of all students.

### **The Role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

The name of the Special Educational Needs coordinator is **Mr James Keating**. He is the SENCo as defined in the revised SEN Code of Practice and has overall responsibility for provision for those students on the SEN Register. He is assisted by **Mrs Melanie Pitchford**, the Coordinator of Learning Support. There are also four Learning Support Assistants working in the Learning Support Department.

#### **The SENCo's responsibilities include:**

- Liaison with all outside agencies concerned with SEN pupils. These agencies include the Educational Psychologist, Social Services the EWO service and the school Doctor and Nurse.
- Liaison with parents of SEN pupils.
- Preparation of details documentation for moderation and assessment of SEN prior to statement.
- Liaison with pastoral staff at regular meetings to discuss any concerns.
- Representing the school on LEA committees eg. Moderation and Assessment panel, and the Head Teacher/SEN group etc.

The SENCo is assisted in the above duties by the Coordinator of Learning Support.

#### **The Coordinator of Learning Support responsibilities include:**

- The monitoring and assessment of all SEN pupils, including mentoring and half termly feedback to carers about progress in core subject areas.
- Liaison with feeder schools, working with the Head of Year 7.
- Liaison with all student teachers to familiarise them with SEN procedures and practice at Hurworth School.
- The compilation of the SEN Register and its distribution to all staff. This is updated on a termly basis.
- The co-ordinator of all aspects of the new SEN procedures.
- The maintaining of Special Needs files of all pupils on the SEN Register.
- The writing, distribution and monitoring of I.E.P's
- The monitoring of the curriculum provision for all SEN pupils throughout their time at school.
- The organisation of all external SEN reviews, preparation of review reports, attendance at the reviews, distribution of the review reports to outside agencies and dissemination of any relevant information to staff.
- The co-ordination, with the appropriate member of the Pastoral Team, of internal reviews for SEN pupils.
- Liaison with feeder schools, the FE Sector and the careers service with regard to SEN pupils.
- Liaison with the Educational Psychologist and the schools examination officer with regard to special arrangements for SEN pupils in GCSE and SAT exams.
- The co-ordination of Learning Support across the school through the timetabling of in-class support, withdrawal groups and curriculum support work.
- The maintenance of the school SEN budget, ensuring value for money.
- Preparation of detailed referrals to the Learning Support Department at the LEA for pupils with SEN who need intervention by outside agencies.
- Organisation of multi-agency meetings when applicable.
- Contact on a regular basis, with parents of SEN students and with those who have general concerns about their child's progress.

## **The Role of the Resourced Provision for Autistic Pupils**

### **Staffing**

The Provision has 6 members of staff who have specialist skills and expertise in working with autistic students. Mrs Helen Whitten manages the Provision and co-ordinates the programme of support for students. In addition, 5 teaching assistants work with the autistic students to meet their individual needs and break down learning barriers to allow them to thrive within a mainstream educational setting.

All students who access the Provision have a statement of Special Educational Needs, and close liaison with the SENCo provides a co-ordinated approach in line with the Code of Practice and LEA guidelines.

### **Placement in the Provision**

Decisions on placement are made by a multi-professional team, whereby evidence of previous and projected needs is taken into account, usually but not entirely through the annual review

of a statement. Students at the milder end of the spectrum have their needs met through their local mainstream school, with access to well trained staff and resources. Students who access the Resourced Provision are identified as having more extreme needs, and are usually working from level 2 upwards of the National Curriculum.

### **Aims of the Provision**

The aim of the Provision is to provide an opportunity for students with ASD to access a broad and balanced curriculum in conjunction with mainstream provision. By offering a high level of experienced support, and responding to their diverse needs, each student is encouraged to take advantage of the school community and activities. Opportunities for more independent working, greater confidence and raised self-esteem are central to the provision of extra support.

### **Principles behind the Provision**

- To recognise and meet the needs and strengths of individuals characterised within the triad of impairments.
- To raise the self-esteem, confidence and independence of students.
- To promote access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To promote inclusive education through a child-centred approach.
- To promote effective links with other specialist provision.
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of ASD students.
- To support staff to meet the needs of ASD students in a mainstream setting.
- To provide a multi-agency approach to meeting special needs, including speech and language therapists.
- To work in partnership with parents.
- To promote peer support.
- To support the transition of students from one phase of education to another.
- To work in partnership with the LEA to provide a continuum of support within the LEA strategy for ASD provision development.

### **Strategy for achieving the Aims**

- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum through the mainstream school.
- Develop department and whole school strategies to support the individual needs of students, and promote independent working, attention to task and concentration skills.
- Use the Provision base room to support the development of communication skills, social understanding and flexible thought processes.
- Identify and reduce the potential stress factors experienced by individual students.
- Liaise regularly with parents and develop the use of social stories for home/school use.
- Develop in-reach/out-reach opportunities with special and mainstream schools where appropriate.
- Assess and review student progress towards individual targets.
- Raise peer awareness of ASD through the PHSCE syllabus.
- Liaise with primary schools and plan supported visits to meet individual needs.

### **The Curriculum**

Students who access the Provision receive a broad and balanced curriculum which is delivered mainly through mainstream classes. The Provision base room is used to provide individual and small group withdrawal support and currently the balance between integration and withdrawal varies between 78% and 100% integration into mainstream classes. The curriculum in the Provision base room is designed to develop a range of skills that require direct teaching beyond that available in mainstream classes. The students work with the Provision staff on a 1:1 or small group basis in order to support their ability to understand and communicate with the world around them, and to reduce the anxiety levels of students, maximising their potential to participate in mainstream school. According to need, the skills which are directly taught include:

- Life skills such as road safety, shopping, finding your way around the local community, travelling on public transport.
- Learning how to make choices and decisions.
- Social skills such as working in a group, recognising and respecting the needs of others, appropriate behaviour.
- Language and communication skills such as recognising the feeling of others, understanding the thoughts and opinions of others, interpreting language correctly and the use of body language and gesture.

Mainstream classes are grouped to ensure that pupils are placed in a class with those of similar ability. To support the students in the mainstream classes support staff work with the teachers to plan appropriate work and strategies to meet each student's individual needs. These include the use of differentiation, whole class support and withdrawal as appropriate, work schedules to motivate completion of tasks and strategies/resources to reduce anxiety of students (e.g. noise or crowd stress).

### **Transition Arrangements**

In addition to procedures carried out by the Head of Year 7, liaison with the feeder primary schools is established at an early stage by the Autism Provision Manager. A series of visits to the relevant primary schools provide an opportunity for Provision staff to work with students within their current setting. From this initial contact several visits to Hurworth School enable the students to become familiar with the Provision within the context of the school.

A package of visual information is developed with the student during the transition visits, including the use of photographs, text and a video recording for home use.

### **Information Sharing on Student Intake**

Once a child has entered school in year 7 and indeed in every subsequent year all relevant information about the individual is shared with staff. This information will typically include student strengths and weaknesses, actual need, possible strategies for teachers to use when meeting that need and any other required actions to ensure that the student thrives in school. In addition to this each student with a statement of special educational need will have a 'reasonable adjustment' list prepared for them that outlines what lengths school will go to in meeting the needs of the student. These are shared with parents and student before being placed into the student file.

### **SEN Staff File**

Each year a SEN file is prepared by the Coordinator of Learning Support for all staff. This file includes details on all students who are placed on the SEN register. Typical details listed are Key stage 2 and 3 attainment levels, learning needs, hobbies, interests and strengths and medical needs.

There are also detailed notes on the conditions that students may have and how staff can best meet their needs and support them in the classroom.

A list of students with statements of special needs is also included along with the nominated member of staff responsible for their welfare.

The SEN file is distributed to all staff on the first day of the September term. The information is also discussed with staff and great care is taken to ensure that all staff and adults other than teachers have sufficient information about each students to help them settle and meet their academic and social needs.

## **Identification, Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

All procedures are carried out in line with the Code of Practice and LEA guidelines.

### **Admission Arrangements**

The Head of Year 7 works closely with feeder primary schools. He visits the primary schools and gathers the information available on these children. Any relevant information is then passed to the Coordinator of Learning Support who contacts all feeder schools to discuss in detail any children who are on the SEN register or who need special support of some kind during transition to secondary school. Information such as IEPs and reports by outside professionals are collected and visits to school to have lunch and take photos are arranged for those students who may be anxious about leaving their old school.

The Coordinator of Learning Support also attends any Annual Reviews held in the primary schools in Year 5 and 6. Before entry, the feeder schools pass on SATs results in the core subjects to the Head of Year 7. All this information is used to place children in mixed ability and mixed social tutor groups and in streamed teaching groups before entry to school. Any relevant information regarding children with Special Needs is passed to the teachers of the various groups and to the new Year 7 tutors as soon as possible. Extra information is provided in the Red SEN files which are given to all staff in September each year.

### **Identification**

Children with Special Needs are identified both before and on entry to school. During their school career other children are identified as having special educational needs by teaching staff and parental concerns which might arise both pastorally and academically.

The most able children are identified by staff on a formal basis during their first term in school using information from primary liaison, test results and recommendations from subject staff etc.

## **Assessment**

Children with learning difficulties are assessed by the Coordinator of Learning Support and an IEP is drawn up for those children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs following discussions with teachers, parents, external agencies and the child concerned. Further diagnostic testing is carried out as and when necessary.

Children with emotional or behavioural problems are referred to the pastoral staff and counselling or behaviour support services.

All staff must include any children with Special Educational Needs in their lesson planning, showing what resources, support or differentiated materials are to be used.

TA's who support students with SEN are expected to liaise with teachers and make themselves fully aware of lessons and objectives set for these students. They are there to support the students and the teacher in the most appropriate manner whether this is individual support of a student, small group work or whole class team teaching.

IEP's, for those students with Statements of SEN, are put onto the schools computer system in a secure site by the Coordinator of Learning Support. A maximum of 3 targets are set for each child. At the end of each term the staff are invited to decide which targets have been met or are no longer appropriate and which new targets need to be set in order for the child to progress.

A hard copy of the IEP is kept in the pupils file and another is sent to parents. Parents are asked to comment on the appropriateness of the targets and report back to the Coordinator of Learning Support if any changes are to be made. The Learning Support staff will sit with students and discuss their new targets to make sure they understand why they have been given and what they can do to achieve them.

For children at School Action Plus or with Statements of SEN, regular help is sought from external agencies. They provide help with assessment of children when necessary and specialist equipment if appropriate.

All staff are given a copy of the Special Needs Register and details of any children with medical conditions.

## **Assessment of Special Provision**

A small reading scheme involving students in year 7 & 8 is provided to encourage and support those children who have a low reading ability. The sessions are run by a Teaching Assistant and supervised by the Coordinator of Learning Support. During this time, any children who are seen to be exceptionally weak can be selected for specific regular 1-1 withdrawal work with a Teaching Assistant in the SEN Department to concentrate on improving their literacy skills.

In KS4 a small group of pupils undertake an ASDAN course as part of their studies. This course provides an alternative external accreditation to GCSE for students. All work is assessed by the ASDAN co-ordinator, who attends ASDAN moderation meetings. Bronze and Silver Awards are gained if sufficient modules have been completed to a certain standard and key skills have been demonstrated and verified.

A lunchtime club for our more vulnerable children operates every day. This is supervised by a Teaching Assistant and promotes social activities and games in a friendly and safe environment. Each child has a membership card and the group is reviewed at the end of each term.

The learning support base also acts as a special support room for our students with ASD. It is available every morning, breaks and lunch and is a quiet social area where lockers are kept and staff are available at all times.

## **Monitoring**

All students with Special Educational Needs, either learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or those who are the most able, are monitored by the Learning Support Department. Children with ASD are monitored by Helen Whitten who manages the ASD Provision in school. Literacy skills are tested every year by the English Department and a list of reading and spelling ages is provided to all staff.

In-class support is arranged by the Coordinator of Learning Support. Students in need of support are identified each term and support is allocated to departments, core subjects having priority. Those students with ASD have their own specific Teaching Assistants and their support timetables are arranged by Helen Whitten.

In-class support is monitored by means of an evaluation form given to staff at the end of each school year and by regular observations carried out by the SENCo and Coordinator of Learning Support.

## **External Reviews**

All pupils with a Statement of SEN must have an annual external review of their statement. The Coordinator of Learning Support is responsible for the organisation of these reviews. She contacts all the appropriate agencies and the LEA and collects reports and comments from teachers, doctors, EPs, social services etc. and anyone else involved with the welfare of the pupil. Copies of these reports are circulated to everyone who is invited to the review two weeks prior to the meeting.

The review is hosted by the SENCo and is attended by parents, the Educational Psychologist and any other relevant agencies. The pupil is also invited but is not forced to attend. The Coordinator of Learning Support completes the appropriate forms and adds to or amends the statement as appropriate. From Year 9 onwards, the Connexions service and FE colleges are also invited to attend to give advice to students about choices after leaving school. A new person centred review is currently being developed to include the student more in their review.

After the review, relevant information is passed on to staff and a copy of the review reports is sent to all those who attended as well as the Children's Services Department at the Town Hall. A copy of all documentation is kept in the SEN files in the Learning Support Office.

## **Pastoral Liaison**

Most minor behavioural problems are dealt with at form tutor level. If the behaviour becomes a concern that affects the pupil's education or that of other students then the SEN staged procedure is employed and the Pastoral Team and the SENCo become involved. Pastoral PSP's are written by the pastoral staff and the pastoral reviews are organised by them.

All documentation regarding pupils on the staged procedure are maintained in both the pastoral and SEN files.

There is a weekly discussion meeting for pastoral concerns attended by the Pastoral Team. This is chaired by the Deputy Headteacher/Head of Pastoral. Relevant pastoral and SEN information is then passed on to all staff.

The SENCo and the Pastoral Team meet regularly to discuss any serious concerns.

## **Provision and Resources**

### **Provision**

#### **Curriculum Access.**

The SEN pupils within the school are given full access to the National Curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs. (Dissapplication has only been provided in cases of long-term illness). All children in KS3 are taught within streamed teaching groups, the lower ability groups being smaller.

In KS4 the teaching groups are generally smaller and streamed where it is viable. In Maths and English they are streamed and in Science there is a small single science group. Most departments are exploring or using alternative accreditation at this level.

There is in-class support throughout the school, allocated on an annual basis. All departmental policy documents include provision for the most and least able pupils. Limited withdrawal is provided in KS3 for individual or small groups of pupils who have statements because of severe numeracy, literacy problems or issues relating to ASD. They use individual learning plans for individuals in their care.

There is an established Group Reading Scheme for children who need extra reading practice and pupils are encouraged to read during registration time.

The department produces, if needed, differentiated materials for staff to use with the pupils that they are supporting. All departments have access to IT facilities and are encouraged to use them with SEN pupils where appropriate.

Full information and strategies for dealing with SEN pupils are given to all staff in a red SEN file. This is updated every year and includes pen portraits of the students and medical information.

Support is provided for SEN pupils in both internal and external examinations in the form of reading papers, amanuensis where necessary and extra time.

### **Resources**

We have 4.5 full time Teaching Assistants in mainstream SEN support and a further 5 teaching assistants supporting students who access the resourced provision for ASD.

There is a small SEN teaching and resource base which is equipped with 2 computers and a selection of educational software aimed at students with special needs. Other specialist resources include multi-sensory programmes, recorded story tapes and books, STILE material, games, puzzles and practical equipment.

There is an established Group Reading scheme which has a separate resource box of reading books which is added to regularly.

### **Celebration of Achievement**

The school puts considerable resources into this area. There is an annual evening organised that aims to celebrate the achievement of as many pupils as possible within as wide a field as possible. Achievements of pupils are recorded on display boards in the school hall and in displays around the school. The aim is to encourage all pupils to achieve their best and to celebrate their own achievements and those of others.

Most departments within the school provide rewards for achievement, progress and effort. These are additional to the school's reward system. The Learning Support Department feel that this is very important, particularly with pupils who experience difficulties with their learning and behaviour. The department provides its own system of rewards for children, such as certificates for pupils who have significantly improved their reading skills.

## **External Links**

### **Links with External Support Services**

Regular contact is maintained by the SENCo and the school with the Educational Psychologist, the Connexions Service, Medical Services, the Educational Welfare Officer, Social Services, Behaviour Support and the Learning Support Service on both a formal and informal basis.

- Formal multi-agency meetings are held with outside agencies to discuss pupils causing concern.
- The Educational Psychologist liaises with the SENCo and Coordinator of Learning Support to organise external review, case conferences and the referral of individual pupils.
- The Head of Careers and the SENCo liaise with the post 16 sector concerning pupils with special needs.
- The pastoral team liaise with the EWO.
- The Learning Support Dept. works with the Learning Support Services eg. assessments for exams, where necessary.
- All arrangements with external agencies regarding formal reviews are organised and co-ordinated by the Coordinator of Learning Support.
- Help and guidance is sought from external agencies for students at School Action Plus and the Coordinator of Learning Support and/or the pastoral team regularly attend

meetings concerning individual pupils which are organised by external agencies, such as Social Services.

### **Links with Other Schools**

Primary liaison is carried out with the feeder school by the Head of Year 7. The Coordinator of Learning Support then follows this up with detailed discussion with the teachers concerned of all SEN pupils in Year 5 & 6. She also attends Year 6 reviews, where possible, to gauge what support may be needed during transition and to introduce herself to parents and other professionals involved with particular pupils. Liaison is carried out as details above with the post 16 sectors also.

The Coordinator of Learning Support attends training sessions with other SENCOs in the LEA and feeds back relevant information to staff in school. Links have also been established with other schools including local special schools so that their expertise can be sought if necessary.

### **SEN In-service Training**

Teaching Assistants are encouraged to attend external courses when appropriate. Departments can also submit bids to the SENCO for the TA's to attend SEN courses which are relevant to their subjects.

There is an identified amount of money specifically for SEN in the GEST budget. The use of this for INSET is co-ordinated by the Deputy Headteacher and the SENCO. Internal INSET for staff is provided by the departments when a need is identified by the senior management or the SENCO.

### **Parents**

The school sees partnerships with parents and carers as vital to the success of all pupils and particularly those pupils with special needs, as defined in this policy.

Contact is made with all new SEN pupils informally at the Parents Evening for Year 6 parents and pupils. Formal contact is then made after these pupils enter school and are assessed and after identification of other pupils during their school career. Parents of pupils receiving additional SEN support are contacted by the Coordinator of Learning Support on a regular basis to make them aware of any progress, assessments to be done, IEP targets etc. Parents are always encouraged to contact her if they have any concerns about their child's education or if there are any problems school need to be aware of.

All pupils have a school planner which is used to record homework, attendance, red star awards etc. as well as providing a link with parents. It is checked regularly by tutors and Heads of Year and parents are invited to use it as a means of communication with school.

Formal contact is made, in line with the revised SEN Code of Practise, at all stages of the referral and assessment procedure and full parental involvement is encouraged at all stages of this process. Parents are invited to all review meetings, both internal and external, for their children.

The SENCO is available for consultation at all Parents Evenings.

The pastoral team is kept informed by the SENCo and Coordinator of Learning Support of any contact with parents. Parents are also encouraged to help with all aspects of work engaged in by pupils at home and to help with providing access to the curriculum, particularly at KS4.

### **Complaints About Provision**

There is open access for parents to contact the Head, Deputy Head, Pastoral Team, Coordinator of Learning Support and the school Doctor or Nurse should a problem arise. Indeed, parents are actively encouraged by the school to do this.

If a problem cannot be resolved through normal school procedures, a parent may then take a complaint to the governing body, particularly the Governor responsible for special needs.

There is also further support available from the Parent Partnership Service. Contact details are as follows :

Sue Hall

Harewood House

01325 254548

E mail [sue.hall@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:sue.hall@darlington.gov.uk)

## **Evaluating the Effectiveness of the SEN Policy**

The effectiveness of the policy is evaluated using the following criteria:

1. The monitoring of the academic and social progress of the children with learning and behavioural difficulties by academic, pastoral and learning support staff on a regular basis, inline with the revised SEN Code of Practice.
2. The monitoring of the use of differentiated materials, at both ends of the learning spectrum, by the Learning Support staff.
3. The monitoring of the development of teaching and learning styles of members of staff. The monitoring increases staff awareness of all pupils with special needs, including the most able.
4. The monitoring of links with outside agencies.
5. The monitoring of links with the governing body.
6. The monitoring of the development of pastoral, academic and learning support links.

7. The annual monitoring of the effectiveness of in-class support, both by the support teacher and the teacher being supported.
8. Regular monitoring of SEN pupils through discussions with parents.
9. Production of the SEN Department SEF.

### **Methods of Evaluation**

- By regular review meetings.
- By questionnaire, teacher and teaching assistant observations.
- Through an annual meeting with all external agencies.
- By an annual meeting with the Deputy Head and Governor responsible for Special Needs.
- At regular meetings with the pastoral staff and with the heads of departments.
- At parents' evenings, review meetings etc.

NOTE: Minutes of all meetings are kept as documentary evidence.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

SEN Register

Medical records

SEN files

Review documents

The above documents are either in SEN files, or if not, available to all staff. However, all staff are made aware of the confidential nature of this information and of the fact that it must be treated appropriately.