

# **The Hermitage School SEN policy**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy is in keeping with the school's aims, its teaching and learning policies, and its policy on equality of opportunity. The Hermitage is an inclusive learning community where the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of all students matter – including those identified as having special educational needs. The culture, practice, management and deployment of the school's resources are designed therefore to ensure that all students are enabled to fulfill their full potential.

The Governing Body believes that all students, regardless of potential or performance, should be valued equally at The Hermitage School. Consequently SEN students are not viewed as a separate entity but are an integral part of a whole learning community where their differing needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision.

This policy is informed by:

- The 1993 Education Act
- Durham LA's Special Educational Needs Policy
- Removing Barriers to Achievement DfES 2004
- Special Education Needs Code of Practice DfES 581/2001
- The 2001 Special Education Needs and Disability Act
- The Hermitage Learning Community Inclusion Policy
- Every Child Matters DfES 2003
- Durham LA Common Assessment Framework Policy

## **AIMS OF THE SEN POLICY**

1. To ensure that all students, whether or not they have special educational needs, have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, differentiated to meet their individual needs.
2. To ensure early identification, accurate assessment and appropriate provision for any student who may have special educational needs.
3. To help every student to realise his or her full potential and thus maximise their self-esteem.
4. To help students to develop self-evaluation skills and independence in their learning.
5. Wherever possible to enable SEN students to participate in all major decision-making processes that affect their education through promoting self-evaluation skills.
6. To encourage in students an enjoyment in learning and achievement which fosters a life long interest in education.
7. To enable all staff to play an effective part in identifying SEN, taking responsibility for recognising and addressing their student's individual needs and demonstrating a positive attitude towards them.
8. To encourage an effective partnership with parents in developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and at school.
9. To promote the increasing effectiveness of SEN provision through a continuous cycle of evaluation, target setting, monitoring and analysis for individuals, groups and the school as a whole.
10. To follow the Code of SEN Practice (2001) which recommends a graduated approach whereby appropriate actions (School Action, Action Plus and Statemented provision) are matched to the individual student's needs.

## **DEFINITIONS RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The Code of Practice 2001 provides the following definitions

### 3.1. "Special Educational Needs":

"Students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them."

### 3.2. "Learning difficulty":

Students have a learning difficulty if they “have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of the same age;”

Or “have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for students of the same age in schools within the area of the local educational authority.”

n.b. Students must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from that in which they will be taught.

### 3.3. “Special Educational Provision”:

“educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for students of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area.”

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All teachers are teachers of students with Special Educational Needs. Teaching students with special educational needs is a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response. Central to the work of every class and every subject is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the students. The majority of students will learn and progress within these arrangements. However, for students with special educational needs, there is a need to provide an enhanced level of provision that supports and promotes their learning abilities. The purpose of this document is to provide staff with information, which will help staff to respond to student’s individual needs.

### Key Roles

Trust link Oversight	Governor with responsibility for SEN issues;
Monitoring and Evaluation	Executive Principal and Principal;
Day to Day management of SEN Provision:	Assistant Vice Principal i/c inclusion:
Deployment of LSAs:	Special Needs Co-coordinator (SENCO);
Individual student support	Co-ordinators of Learning Learning Support Assistants (LSA)

### Classroom Teachers

Subject teachers, in their own classrooms, provide the first stage of support for any student. They will work with departmental colleagues and Leaders and Managers to develop differentiated teaching approaches. Each year group’s Co-ordinators of Learning and Learning Managers are responsible for tracking and promoting individual students progress across the curriculum providing a second level of support to subject teachers.

At the start of each academic year each member of staff is provided with a document called “Responding to Individual Needs” (also known as ESMI “Essential Student Management Information”) This provides details of each students SEN, including statement summaries and advice on particular learning difficulties. It is essential that all staff are aware of the individual needs of their students and annotate running records/mark books accordingly.

The governors recognise the statutory obligation for all teachers (National Curriculum 2000 QCA) to respond to the three principles of inclusion

1. setting suitable learning challenges;
2. responding to students’ diverse learning needs;
3. overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups.

In doing so teachers should: -

1. Identify student's subject specific areas of weakness and adapt their teaching approaches to address them;
2. Use all the behaviour management techniques available to them e.g. class-based sanctions, referral to the LaM, detentions, report cards and actions triggered by the "Aiming High" strategy in order to keep students on track;
3. and develop and draw on differentiated curriculum material and specialist equipment from their department's own resources.

An effective working partnership between students, staff and parents/guardians is essential. The current Code of Practice emphasises the importance of working closely with parents and students. Classroom teachers have a particularly important role in this respect and may use the Student Planner in the first instance to contact home.

### **Departmental Leaders and Managers and Year Group Co-coordinators of Learning**

The Hermitage School aims to ensure that every student realises their full potential by setting challenging but achievable expectations for them. Student's effort is monitored by the "Aiming High" initiative. This is an inclusive strategy, which encourages each child to give maximum effort. Subject teachers award these grades, from E1 to E6. All students, including those with Special Needs are thus able to achieve the highest E1 grade. Each Co-ordinator of Learning, (CoL) in consultation with Leaders and Managers (LaMs), will set appropriate expectations and monitor students' effort across the curriculum. The staff are committed to playing their own particular part in this process providing equality of opportunity regardless of students' ethnicity, creed, ability, or gender.

LaMs and CoLs will co-ordinate home/school communication and will often do so in conjunction with the SENCo, particularly where multi-agency School Action Plus meetings are required.

Where a subject teacher is considering allocating an E5 or E6 to a student they should first ensure that they have consulted with the School SENCo to ensure that they are fully aware any SEN and/or AEN (additional educational needs as described in the section Inclusion for all) which the student may have and the strategies and resources available to support them.

### **The role of the SENCo**

The SENCo's duties include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy;
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers;
- Managing the SEN team of Learning Support Assistants (LSA) in consultation with LaMs;
- Co-ordinating provision for students with special educational needs in consultation with CoLs;
- Overseeing the records on all students with special educational needs;
- Liaising with parents of students with special educational needs in consultation with CoLs;
- Contributing to the continuing professional development of staff;
- and liaising with external agencies including the LEA's support and Educational Psychology services, the Connexions Personal Advisor, Behaviour Support, health and social services and voluntary bodies.
- Representing the Hermitage at Community of Learning meetings
- Attendance at SENCo Network Meetings

## **SEN SPECIALISMS AND FACILITIES**

The school achieved "Dyslexia Friendly School" status in 2004.

Technology College status has enabled the Hermitage to develop a whole school approach to ICT with an extensive computer network. Every teacher has a Laptop on which SIMs.net can be accessed over a wireless network. As part of it's "Dyslexia Friendly Schools Project" the Hermitage pioneered the use of LEXIA literacy

software firstly in-house, secondly within Newker and Bullion Schools and now in all 18 schools within the Community of Learning. It continues to act as a reference site for other secondary schools within the county.

The main building and hall have wheelchair access and there are toilet facilities for disabled students. The school, together with the LEA, is implementing its accessibility plan, which aims to further improve access to the curriculum.

## **INSET and CPD**

Staff training needs in SEN are identified and met through both in-house provision and Durham LA courses. SEN training sessions are organised as required to meet the current needs of staff and are led by the SEN Team or by an appropriate outside agency. Learning Support Assistants are invited to attend relevant CPD sessions and external courses. The SENCO attends the Durham LA SEN Network meeting/training sessions, which are usually held termly. Particular CPD sessions are provided for NQTs, other new members of staff and PGCE students. The SENCO takes responsibility for prioritising the training needs of staff.

Further collaborative training is reviewed and developed annually through the local Community of Schools.

## **AN INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM**

The Hermitage is an inclusive school. Wherever possible, all students with SEN will join in all the activities of the school with students who do not have special educational needs, although it is recognized there may be occasions where this may be inappropriate. This policy of inclusion covers all areas of the curriculum, acts of worship, school visits, sporting activities and social events.

All students, including those with SEN, will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which will include the National Curriculum. The Governing Body of the school being ultimately responsible for ensuring that all students receive the curriculum to which they are entitled.

The programmes of study for each key stage and for each subject in the National Curriculum will be taught to all, or at least the great majority of, students in the key stage, in line with the National Curriculum (2000) Document.

In the exceptional case of such a curriculum being inappropriate for a student with special educational needs, the Head Teacher may give a special direction for either modifying or disapplying the National Curriculum for that student for a period of up to six months, in accordance with section 19 of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Parents, governors and the LA will be informed of such a decision. The only other time a disapplication or modification will occur will be when this is amended by and registered on a student's Statement of Educational Needs.

### **Inclusion for all**

In planning an inclusive learning environment the governors recognize that some groups of students may be particularly vulnerable to underachievement. While not having Special Educational Needs (SEN) as such the following groupings (Ofsted 2000) might have Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

- Minority ethnic and faith groups; travelers, asylum seekers and refugees
- Students who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- Gifted and talented students
- Children looked after by the local authority (LAC)
- Children with persistent medical and/or mental health needs
- Young carers and children from families under stress
- Pregnant school girls and teenage parents
- Students at risk of disaffection and exclusion

Where such students require support above and beyond that available to all students a Pastoral Support Plan will be drawn up to co-ordinate the work of all agencies providing additional resources or advice to promote the young person's learning and well being within the Every Child Matters framework.

The school supports the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO) on inclusion and in particular recognizes that: ".....schools with (an) inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for the majority of children and improving the efficiency and ultimately the effectiveness of the entire system." (Gibson and Blandford 2005)

### **Admission arrangements:**

The Hermitage School admissions criteria do not discriminate against students with special education needs or disabilities, and has due regard for the guidance in the Codes of Practice which accompany the SEN and Disability Act 2001. Parents or carers seeking the admission of a student with mobility difficulties are advised to approach the school well in advance so that consultations can take place in liaison with the LA.

### **Teaching and Support Arrangements:**

For the most part, students with SEN will be taught in the classroom alongside their peers. Where necessary, at School Action and above, students will have the in-class support of a Learning Support Assistant. Staff will use a variety of teaching techniques and strategies within each class, including differentiated resources and learning tasks, to accommodate students with special needs, wherever appropriate and necessary. CPD sessions run by the SENCo support the development and use of differentiation by subject teachers aided by LSAs.

We believe that it is essential that students who are having difficulty learning such skills be supported as soon as possible. Students who are struggling with acquiring basic reading, spelling, or mathematical skills will, on occasions, be withdrawn to be given individual or group tuition by the SENCO or Learning Support Assistant.

## **IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The school is committed to early identification of special educational need and adopts a graduated response to meeting special educational need in line with the Code of Practice 2001. A range of evidence is collected through the usual assessment and monitoring arrangements: if this suggests that the learner is not making the expected progress, the Co-ordinator of Learning for the year group will consult with the SENCO in order to decide whether additional and/or different provision is necessary. There is no need for students to be registered or identified as having special educational needs unless the school is taking additional or different action.

### **Initial Identification:**

Concerns regarding student's progress may result from: -

- Discussions with teachers/SENCO from feeder school/ transfer school
- KS2 SAT scores
- Information/reports/SEN register from feeder schools
- Formative assessment and professional judgements of staff
- Yr 7 MIDyis scores
- Vernon Spelling scores
- NFER group reading test scores
- Parental information
- Self-referral

## **PROVISION**

### **School Action**

At "School Action" the SEN Team (SENCo and Learning Support Assistants) actively support students.

Students are at "School Action" due to concern, underpinned by evidence, that they: -

1. Make little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a student's identified area of weakness;
2. Show signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
3. Present persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school;
4. Have sensory or physical problems, and continue to make little or no progress;
5. or have communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continue to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum and specialist equipment.

The SENCO will support the further assessment of the student, assisting in planning future support for them in discussion with colleagues and monitoring the action taken.

Subject teachers will continue to work with the student on a day-to-day basis and implement the IEP as it relates to their curriculum area. The school will make every effort to consult parents and keep them informed of the action taken to help their son/daughter, and of the outcome of this action.

### **Nature of intervention**

When a CoL and the SENCO identifies a student with special educational needs, the school will need to provide interventions that are additional to the usual differentiated curriculum. This may include: -

1. Resources: provision of specialised learning materials or equipment not available from within subject departments resources,
2. SEN Team support: some small group coaching or individual support either within the class situation or through withdrawal,
3. Advice & support: extra staff time to devise the nature of the planned intervention and to monitor its effectiveness,
4. INSET: staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies,
5. Consultation: access to LEA support services for one-off or occasional advice on strategies or equipment.
6. Health or Social Services may already be involved with the student. Where these professionals have not already been working with the school staff, the SENCO may contact them, if the parents agree, in order to get a fuller picture of the student's individual needs.

### **School Action Plus (active support from external services)**

At School Action Plus external support services, will usually: -

1. See the student so that they can advise teachers on new IEPs with fresh targets and accompanying strategies;
2. Provide more specialist assessments to inform planning and the measurement of a student's progress;
3. Give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials;
4. and, in some cases, provide support for particular activities.
5. Contribute advice to be incorporated into a new IEP.

A request for support from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the SENCO and CoL, in consultation with parents, at a review of the student's IEP.

Where needed a Common Assessment Framework application will be made in accordance with LA policy by a trained member of staff.

### **The triggers for School Action Plus**

The triggers for School Action Plus will be that, despite receiving individualised support under School Action, the student:

1. Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period

2. Continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of students of a similar age
3. Continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills
4. Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the student's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
5. Has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
6. Has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

### **Students with a Statement:**

The statement of special educational needs will determine the teaching arrangements for those students with a statement. However in general they: -

- Will have access to good quality teaching and learning
- May receive in-class support from a Teacher Assistant or Teacher
- May be withdrawn to receive, literacy or Numeracy support
- May follow a programme of recommendations from outside agency adapted by the SENCO
- Will have an Individual Education Plan and may have an Individual Behaviour Plan

Some or all of the above may be also being applicable to non-statemented students at Band D as appropriate.

### **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)**

All students with Statements have an IEP, as have those at School Action Plus. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) records the strategies employed to enable a student to make progress. The IEP will include information about:

1. The short-term targets set for the student
2. The teaching strategies to be used
3. The provision to be put in place
4. When the plan is to be reviewed
5. Outcomes (to be recorded when IEP is reviewed).

The IEP will focus upon three or four individual targets that match the student's needs. These should be SMART targets (Short-term, measurable, achievable, recorded and timed) The IEP will have been discussed with the student and/or the parents.

### **Reviewing IEPs**

IEP Reviews take place once per term as set out in the SEN Calendar of events. IEP Reviews for each year group are timed to coincide with their Target Setting Day and are preceded by consultation with CoLs, Subject Teachers Learning Managers, the student themselves and parent/carers. This process ensures that the new draft IEP, which is sent out before Target Setting day, is the result of consultation, consensus and therefore more likely to elicit the commitment of all parties. Parents and students are invited to meet the school SENCO on Target setting day to review progress and finalise the new IEP.

Interim Reviews can take place at any time in the light of concerns about student progress, achievement of targets and the need for new targets or updated advice/strategies recommended from external agencies.

Students will participate fully in the review process. Parents/carers will also be invited to participate in the target setting and review process.

### **Annual Reviews of Statements**

For students who have statements of SEN, in addition to the termly review of IEPs, their progress and the support outlined in their statement will be reviewed annually and a report provided for the Local Education Authority. If a student makes sufficient progress a statement may be discontinued by the Education Authority.

### **Transition Reviews**

The school will liaise with the Connexions Service and other agencies to arrange Transition Plans for students with Statements (and other students with SEN who may benefit from Transition Planning) in Year 9, and will ensure that these Transition Plans are reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review process.

When students move to another school their records will be transferred to the next school within 15 days of the student ceasing to be registered, as required under the Education (Student Information) Regulations 2000

## **ALLOCATION OF FUNDING:**

### **Statemented pupils**

Funding is specified within the Statement and provided by LA according to Audit Banding. For criteria that must be met in order to apply for a Statutory Assessment please refer to SEN Code of Practice Ch.7.

### **Students at Band D**

Within the context of the formula funding of students with additional educational needs the school is implementing Durham LA policy, which came into practice in Sept 2006.

### **Intervention Funding**

Bids for intervention funding are drawn up by the Assistant Headteacher ic Inclusion (Mr. Stout)

### **Learning Support Funding**

LS Dept funding reflects the needs identifies in the Departmental Development plan for the year which is agreed with the Headteacher.

## **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

### **Partnership with parents**

Parents will be fully involved in the school-based response for their child, and we will ensure that they understand the purpose of any intervention and any subsequent programme of action.

Parents are informed when the SENCo in consultation with the CoL considers that a student's needs are significant enough for the student to be placed at School Action. Regular meetings are held with parents, teachers, SENCO and the student, as appropriate, to review the student's progress and the programme of learning on a termly basis.

During the procedure of applying for a statutory assessment (which may lead to a statement), the parents will be given as much help, advice and support as possible. They will be given a copy of the Durham County Council "Guidance to Parents on Statutory Assessment" and asked to complete the relevant section on the request for statutory assessment form.

We formally report student's progress to parents termly through the "Aiming High" Strategy and at through end of key stage SATs results.

In addition, we operate an open door policy. Parents are welcome to talk to teachers whenever they have a concern about a student (at a mutually convenient time). Whenever a parent mentions a specific concern, it is always investigated and results reported back/discussed with parents.

## External Support services

External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for students with special education needs.

Outside agencies may provide:

- Assessment, advice and recommendations,
- Information regarding resources,
- Information/support/advice for parents,
- Staff development, consultations/training and teaching.

Multi-agency liaison meetings, with representation from the Learning Support Service, Social Services, Connexions, Health, and the Educational Psychology Service are held on a termly basis to ensure effective collaboration in identifying and making provision for vulnerable students. In this context a practical response to the "Every Child Matters" agenda is being developed.

The Hermitage works with a wide range of other agencies

1. Educational Psychology Service: (allocation: 15 hour per year):
  - Consultation re. Individual pupils – assessment/ advice/support with SENCo, teaching staff and LSAs including Statement and Review advice.
  - Modeling intervention strategies.
  - Staff INSET/CPD
2. Learning Support Service – assessment, advice and individual support for pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties or Behavioural Difficulties (Jean Carter, Enid Armstrong)
3. IMPACT: Providing alternative curriculum for KS students
4. Youth Engagement Service (YES) and Yiplet (under 14s based at Bullion Lane) social inclusion agencies
5. Chester-Le-Street Youth Club: Monday afternoons vulnerable girls group
6. Speech and Language Therapy Service:
  - regular assessment/recommendations for Statemented pupils
  - referrals for non- statemented pupils
7. Adviser for Autism/ASD –
  - consultation, assessment and recommendations.
8. GP/Social Services where appropriate.\*
9. Home and Hospital service (Jane Moore) for pupils with long term illness etc.
10. Education and Welfare Officer – referrals made through regular visits to Deputy Head and CoLs
11. School Nurse and School Doctor (Dr Coatham)- monitor health/hygiene concerns and available to provide support and advice to staff, students and parents
12. Advisers for Hearing, Physical, Visual impairment – assessment, monitoring and advice.
13. SEN Advisory Service (John Farrow) – available for consultation and support.
14. Connexions: The Connexions Service Personal Adviser is invited to attend all Annual Reviews in Year 9 in order to contribute to the first Transition Plan, and then to the subsequent reviews of the Transition Plan.

Copies of records of consultations and reports/recommendations are kept in SEN folders in the SEN Office.

\*Copies of reports of a confidential nature are stored in the CoLs or Main office.

## Complaints Procedures

The schools' complaint procedures are set out in the school prospectus.

Learning Managers and Co-ordinator of Learning will work closely with parents at all stages in each student's education and should be the first port of call in case of any difficulty. Parents of students with SEN or disabilities whose concerns cannot be resolved by the usual school procedures can request independent disagreement resolution. Durham LA provides independent advice to families through the Parents Partnership initiative. The school will make further information about this process available on request.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF THE POLICY**

### **SEN Development Plan**

The SENCO is responsible for drawing up the SEN Curriculum Development Plan. Specific areas for development are reviewed and monitored for success on an annual basis. The Governing Body are informed of the Development Plan.

Particular areas for monitoring are listed below however the main areas for development will be recorded will be selected accord with the School Development Plan.

- Identification of need
- Appropriate differentiation
- Effectiveness of provision
- IEPs and Reviews, (format, procedures, information to parents, pupils and all staff)
- Effective target setting.
- Partnership with parents and pupils.
- Training and support for staff, in particular Teacher Assistants.
- Use of IT to support learning.
- External monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken by Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED)

Ultimately the success of the school's SEN policy will be judged against the aims set out above. Annual success criteria will be reviewed and the Governing Body's Annual Report will detail the successful implementation of the policy and the effectiveness of the provision made head teacher and governors will set new success criteria The Governing Body will ensure that it makes appropriate special educational provision for all students identified as in need of it.

In drawing up the report the SENCo will take into account: -

- Perceptions and observations by parents, pupils, teachers and classroom assistants/external Agencies.
- Success rate of IEP targets
- Students moving down and off the SEN register
- Improvement in reading and spelling scores
- Teacher Assessments
- SATs/NC levels and calculation of Value Added
- GCSE performance against Fischer Family Trust and County predictions
- SEN pupils with healthy self-esteem integrated into school life

In response to Durham LA's the recently published policy on "The Monitoring and Evaluation of the effectiveness of SEN Provision" The SEN Team are developing the use of Provision Maps to record the range of support made in the school each year in response to identified need.

Reviewed: May 2008

Proposed Review date: May 2010