



# Ashfield Girls' High School



**“Each different. Each talented. All valued.”**

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy**

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Adopted Date:	May 2023
Review Date:	May 2024





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**Flowchart**



## Executive Summary

Ashfield Girls' High School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum.

This policy document is intended to be of practical use and to make explicit the philosophy, aims, organisation and resources which are deployed to staff in meeting pupils' Special Educational Needs and Disability. It conforms to the recommendations of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs.

*The term "special educational needs and disability" is defined in the relevant legislation as "a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made."*

It will be the School Policy to use a range of sources for identification, assessment, and provision. If teaching or support staff have concerns that a pupil they work with may have SEND, they will raise their concerns with the Learning Support Co-Ordinator (LSC/Asst LSCs).

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEND and that the requirements of most pupils with SEND are managed at either Stage One, Two or Three which means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

It is essential that parents inform the relevant school staff of any significant needs their child may possess. They should do this as early as possible. It is the school's responsibility to inform parents when staff are considering placing the pupil's name on the SEND register or moving the child to a higher or lesser stage of need.



## Section A – Aims of the Policy

### Policy Aims

- Comply fully with SEND legislation related to the provision for learners with SEND.
- Act as a point of reference document for all school ideas.

### Objectives

1. To identify pupils with SEND as early and thoroughly as possible using a variety of measures and in consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. To ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEND to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated curriculum.
3. To encourage a range of teaching strategies that accommodate different learning styles and promote effective learning.
4. To promote an environment that supports all learners to feel valued.
5. To encourage parental involvement in all aspects of SEND provision. The support of parents and pupils is crucial if a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is to be effectively implemented.
6. To consider the wishes of the child when planning and implementing SEND provision, taking into consideration, her age and powers of understanding.
7. To create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their individual learning needs.
8. To promote close co-operation between all services and agencies to support a multi-disciplinary approach and to work closely with all EA departments and other outside agencies to improve the quality of support available for each pupil with SENDs.
9. To educate pupils with SEND, wherever possible, alongside their peers.
10. To promote collaboration amongst teachers in the implementation of the SEND policy.



## **Rationale/Vision**

Ashfield Girls' High School staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum including the Northern Ireland Curriculum. We recognise that some pupils during their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability. In the interests of these children, we will endeavour to make every reasonable arrangement to provide for their individual needs.



## Section B – Legislative context, guidance and linked policies

### Key Principles of Inclusion

Inclusion, according to the report 'Removing Barriers to Achievement', is about the quality of children's experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve, and participate fully in the life of the school (DfES, 2004).

To make sure that we meet our pupils' needs and include them in all aspects of school life, this SEND policy links closely with all our other policies in supporting pupils such as: Positive Behaviour, Child Protection, Health and Safety and Medical Needs.

The following areas encompass all aspects of SEN/disability:

- 1. Cognition and Learning (CL) – language, literacy, mathematics, numeracy**
  - a) Dyslexia (DYL) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - language/literacy
  - b) Dyscalculia (DYC) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - mathematics/numeracy
  - c) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
  - d) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
  - e) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
  
- 2. Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-being (SBEW)**
  - a) Social and Behavioural Difficulties (SBD)
  - b) Emotional and Well-being Difficulties (EWD)
  - b) Severe Challenging Behaviour associated with SLD or PMLD (SCB)
  
- 3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)**
  - a) Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
  - b) Language Disorder associated with a differentiating/ biomedical condition (LD)
  - c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties (CSID)





## 4. Sensory (SE)

- a) Blind (BD)
- b) Partially Sighted (PS)
- c) Severe/Profound Hearing Impairment (SPHI)
- d) Mild or Moderate Hearing Impairment (MMHI)
- e) Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI)

## 5. Physical Need (PN)

- a) Physical (P)

Pupils should be under this category if they have a medical diagnosis that requires provision in addition to reasonable adjustments as stated in the Access Arrangements Policy. (See further information in Access Arrangements Policy.)

### **\*Under Assessment (U)**

*It is not anticipated that this will be commonly used.*

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

*either*

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

*or*

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

*or*

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



## Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Since January 2019 a new separate medical diagnosis register has been used by the Education Authority. This medical diagnosis register is the responsibility of the Pastoral Care Team. A student being on the medical register does not entitle them to SEN provision.

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

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyspraxia/ Development Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Developmental Language Disorder (Medical) (DLD)
- Global Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Complex Healthcare Needs
- Anxiety Disorder (includes social anxiety, phobia, school refusal, obsessive compulsive disorder)
- Depression
- Eating Disorder
- Psychosis
- Other Medical Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina Bifida – with Hydrocephalus
- Spina Bifida – without Hydrocephalus
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Other Medical Condition/ Syndrome



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



## Section C – Policy and Procedure

### **Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy (SEND)**

This policy document is intended to be of practical use and to make explicit the philosophy, aims, organisation and resources which are deployed to staff in meeting pupils' Special Educational Needs and Disability. It conforms to the recommendations of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs.

Copies of this policy are available to all relevant stakeholders. The SEND policy reflects current practises in Ashfield Girls' High School.

### **Definition of Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)**

- The term “special educational needs and disability” is defined in the relevant legislation as “a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.”
- “Learning difficulty” means that a child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than many children of comparable age or has a disability which hinders his or her use of the kind of facilities generally provided in mainstream schools.
- “Special educational provision” means educational provision, which is different from, or additional to, provision made generally for children of comparable age.
- “Special assessment need” is a term applied to pupils who require special exam arrangements to demonstrate their understanding of the curriculum.



## **SEN Provisions of Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (2005)**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) (2005) legislation strengthened the right for children with a Statement to an ordinary school place unless it is against the wishes of parents, or it is incompatible with the efficient education of others. Children who have special educational needs but do not have a statement, must, except in specific circumstances, be educated in a mainstream post primary school (Article 3(1) SENDO, 2005).

## **Admissions**

The admission arrangements with respect to most pupils with SEN (Stage 1 and 2) must be consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils. (See Admission's criteria on our school website.)

Children with statements of special educational needs and/or disability (Stage 3) are placed in schools at the request of the Education Authority. When responding to a request for a place, a pupil with a statement from the Education Authority, the Board of Governors will consider:

- The ability of the school to meet the child's special education needs and/or disability.
- The provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school.
- The efficient use of resources.

## **Accessibility Plan**

- At present pupils with SEND have equal access to all areas of the school building;
- The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users; and
- There is a well-equipped SEND teaching/resource base, Learning Zone, and facilities for personal care, including a toilet adapted for use by persons with the disability;
- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude, and attainments.
- Accessible changing rooms;
- Relevant staff have EVAC chair training;

## The Learning Zone

Our school has a 'Learning Zone' area for pupils with SEND which provides a safe and secure environment for pupils working with external agencies. The Learning Zone also has a one to one withdrawal for students with their classroom assistant when necessary, a sensory room and the Sanctuary for pupils with ASD to regulate when necessary.

## Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

- It will be the School Policy to use a range of sources for identification, assessment, and provision.
- On admission, all Year 8 pupils undertake Standardised Tests in English and Mathematics (PTE/PTM). For pupils who have been previously identified as having SEND, all information will be passed onto subject/form/year teachers. If a pupil is admitted in any year other than Year 8, a similar approach will be used.

If teaching or support staff have concerns that a pupil they work with may have SEND, they will raise their concerns with the Learning Support Co-Ordinator (LSC/Asst LSCs). They will complete a SEN Concern Form via Microsoft Forms.

## Gathering Information

As a school we gather information about pupils' aptitude and progress from a range of sources. The most common sources of information are listed below:

- Primary Feeder Schools (if transferring into Year 8)
- Baseline assessments, Screening Tests and Standardized Tests.
- Information from parents
- Teacher observations
- Past-primary schools from where pupils may have transferred from to AGHS.
- Whole school assessment (PTE / PTM)



- Diagnostic assessment
- Educational Psychology reports
- Code of Practice Stage 2 Report
- Statements of Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Medical Advice
- Class tests / school examinations
- Personal Learning Plans
- Annual Reviews
- Parental contributions
- Pupil contributions

It may also be appropriate to include information from other agencies.

## The Management of Special Educational Needs

In Ashfield Girls' High School, we follow the three-stage approach as set out in The Code of Practice (2021).

This approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEND and that the requirements of most pupils with SEND are managed at either Stage One, Two or Three which means that their needs are met by the school with the help of outside agencies and/or specialists as required.

Each of the three stages focuses on provisions required for pupils who have SEND:

**Stage One:** Pupils who are recorded at Stage One will be receiving school delivered special education provision. These interventions will be delivered by the classroom teacher where needed and as outlined on the students' PLP.

**Stage Two:** Pupils who are recorded at Stage Two will be receiving school delivered special educational provision (these interventions will be delivered by the classroom teacher where needed, and as outlined on the students PLP) plus external provision, e.g. from one of the Education Authority (EA) Pupil Support Services or from a service within the Health and Social Care Trust. Pupils who are going through the statutory assessment process will be recorded at Stage Two also.

**Stage Three:** Pupils who are recorded at Stage Three will have a statement of Special Educational Needs and will be receiving school and EA delivered special educational provision as detailed in their statement.

## **Learning and Teaching**

All children have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum, considering the entitlement framework. This involves all staff in utilising a range of teaching strategies and classroom management styles designed to take account of the differing abilities, interests, and experiences of pupils. To facilitate this:

- the classroom environment is inclusive, stimulating and attractive, featuring as much pupil work as possible on display;
- lessons are structured in a series of simple clearly defined steps;
- work tasks and activities are stimulating and differentiated so that pupils experience success yet challenging enough to promote progression in learning;
- pupils are set work to allow them to progress at their own rate;
- encouragement is given to pupils to take responsibility for their own learning;
- sensitivity is shown by staff to pupils' literacy and numeracy difficulties and how these impact communication. This needs to be taken into consideration when giving instructions.
- positive feedback is provided by staff and the achievements of pupils with SEND are celebrated.

## **Access Arrangements for Examinations**

Special Access Arrangements for Examinations are designed to provide access for pupils with specified learning difficulties. Further information can be found in the Access Arrangements Policy.

- pupils will be only considered in accordance with the national regulations agreed by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk);





- such arrangements should be the normal way of working;
- the final decision regarding this remains with the principal as Head of Centre; and
- once it has been agreed that a pupil qualifies for special access arrangements, it is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer to ensure these are implemented.

## Section D – Roles and Responsibilities

### Arrangements for Co-ordinating SEN Provision

#### Roles and Responsibilities

Although meeting the needs of pupils with SEND is a whole school endeavour, the overall responsibility for managing SEND provision resides with the Board of Governors and Principal of the school. However, to facilitate the day-to-day running of the provision, the board of governors has delegated responsibility to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities to Ms Rossborough (Learning Support Co-Ordinator)

The following section highlights the key roles and responsibilities of all those involved in SEND provision:

#### *Education Authority (EA)*

The EA is required to complete the statutory assessment process within statutory timeframes. The EA has a duty to identify those children with SEND for whom they are responsible, and if it is necessary for the EA to determine the special educational provision which any learning difficulty calls for. The EA is required to act on the request for statutory assessment and practical guidance as set out in this Code. This includes investigating evidence provided by the school, a child (who is over compulsory school age) or the parent of a child (in any other case), as to the child's learning difficulties. An assessment should be undertaken by the EA only if the child has SEND and the EA believes that it needs, or probably needs, to determine the child's special education provision which the child's learning difficulty calls for. The EA is required to consider whether it is necessary for it to make an assessment and this consideration may, or may not, result in a decision to carry out an assessment. If an assessment is carried out, it will not always lead to the EA making a Statement for the child concerned. Information gathered during an assessment, may indicate ways in which the school or the school, external agencies and the EA can further support the child's needs without the need for a Statement (Stage 3).



## *Board of Governors*

The role of the Board of Governors of a mainstream school is to exercise its functions in relation to the school with a view to ensuring that provision is made for registered pupils with special educational needs. Mrs Hamilton is the school's governor for children with special educational needs and/or a disability.

The *SEND Resource File* (DENI, 2011) outlines that the board of governors has a statutory duty to:

- take account of the provisions in the DE Code of Practice on identifying and assessing special educational needs and/or a disability;
- use their best efforts to provide for pupils identified with SEND and parents are notified of their child's special needs;
- maintain and operate a policy on SEND;
- ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs and/or a disability, those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them;
- check that the teachers in the school know the importance of identifying those registered pupils with SEND and of providing appropriate teaching; and
- allocate funding for special educational needs and/or a disability; and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

## *Principal*

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

- keep the board of governors informed about SEND issues;
- work in close partnership with the LSC;
- ensure the senior leadership team (SLT) is actively involved in the management of SEND within the school;
- delegate and monitor the SEND budget;
- provide a secure facility for the storage of records relating to special educational needs and disabilities.



# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

## *Learning Support Co-Ordinator*

In all mainstream schools, a designated teacher who usually assumes the title of Learning Support Co-Ordinator (LSC) should be responsible for:

- the day-to-day operation of the school's special educational needs policy;
- responding to requests for advice from other teachers;
- coordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- maintaining the school's SEND register and oversee all the records on pupils with special educational needs;
- working in partnership with parents of children with special educational needs and/or a disability;
- establishing the SEND in-service training requirements of the staff and contributing as appropriate to their training; and
- liaising with external agencies.

## *Assistant Learning Support Co-Ordinator*

The Assistant Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC) should be responsible for:

- assisting in the production and reviewing of Personal Learning Plans (PLP);
- the organisation and administration of access arrangements;
- the timetabling of internal examinations, relating to those students who have access arrangements;
- liaising with external agencies, specifically Park Outreach and Secondary Pupil Support Service (SPSS);

## *Subject Teacher*

The subject teacher should:

- be aware of current legislation;
- keep up to date with information on the SEND Register;
- gather information through observation and assessment;
- develop an inclusive classroom;
- work closely with other staff to plan for learning and teaching;



- contribute to, manage and review IEPs in consultation with the LSC; and
- involve classroom assistants as part of the learning team.

## *Head of Progress*

The Head of Year (HOP) should:

- be aware of current SEND Policy;
- keep up to date with the SEND Register;
- liaise with other staff regarding pupils who are experiencing difficulty;
- work closely with the LSC, and
- update records as appropriate.

## *Head of Department*

The Head of Department (HOD) should:

- be aware of the SEND Policy;
- keep up to date with the SEND Register;
- ensure new members of department are familiar with the SEND Policy;
- ensure that practice and procedures within the department promote learning and teaching which is relevant and accessible to all pupils;
- support subject teachers to enable them to provide an appropriate and differentiated curriculum;
- ensure appropriate resources are available; and
- discuss issues with subject teachers through departmental meetings and forward minutes to LSC when appropriate;

## *SEND Support Staff/ Additional Adult Assistants*

Support Staff/ Additional Adult Assistants should:

- work under the direction of the class teacher;
- be involved in planning;
- look for positives by talking to the pupil about his/her strengths;
- provide practical support;



- listen to the pupil/speak to staff on the child's behalf;
- explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly;
- keep records and attend meetings; and
- share good practice.

### *Pupil*

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

- contributing to Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) through setting targets;
- working towards achieving agreed targets; and
- contributing to the review of PLPs, Annual Reviews and the Transition process in Years 10, 12 and 14.

### *Parent/Carer*

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

(Code of Practice, 1998 paragraph 2.21)

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

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



- attend review meetings when invited;
- inform staff of changes in circumstances; and
- support targets on PLPs



## Section E – Consultation, communicators, monitoring and evaluation

### **The Annual Review**

Article 19 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires that any child or young person who is the subject of a statement of special educational needs (Stage 3), whether attending a special or mainstream school, must be reviewed annually, to make sure that the needs of the child or young person are still being met and to consider the appropriateness of the placement. Annual Reviews should be seen as part of the process of continuous monitoring of the child's progress. The Annual Review procedure is designed to:

- gauge the child's progress towards meeting the objectives specified in the Statement;
- review the special provision made for the child, including placement; and
- consider the appropriateness of maintaining the statement of special educational needs.

The annual review is carried out by the school on behalf of the EA.

The Review will take place in school or online and is chaired by the LSCs and attended by parents and any external agencies supporting the pupil.

### **Partnership working**

In Ashfield Girls' High School, we have developed partnership working with each of the following services:

#### **Education Authority Stage Two Support Services**

- Autism Assessment and Intervention Service (AAIS)
- Behaviour Support
- Visual Impairment
- SPSS
- Park Outreach





## Other Support Services (for example)

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Careers Service
- Cedar Foundation
- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Education Welfare Service
- FamilyWorks Counselling

When necessary, the pupils, LSCs/Assistant LSCs and teachers are supported by specialists from outside school. External agencies that currently support us are:

Suzi Robinson	Educational Psychologist	EA Belfast
Caoimhin Doherty	SPSS	Link Centre
Ruth Johnston	Peripatetic Teacher	Park Outreach School
Pauline Turner	Counsellor	FamilyWorks
Hilary Livingstone	Transition Officer	EA Belfast
Karen Murray / Gillian Whiteside	Support Teacher/Support Assistant	Autism Advisory & Intervention Service (AAIS)
Clare Bradley	Support Officer	Cedar Foundation



### **Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities**

The progress of pupils on the SEND register is monitored by the LSC. This may be achieved by considering that:

- individual education plans are monitored and reviewed for quality, progression and appropriateness through meeting with teachers on a regular basis;
- evidence is collated to demonstrate whether the pupil is making progress; and
- information gathered is used in future planning for intervention and to inform movement either up or down through the stages of the Code of Practice.

### **Professional Development**

All staff are kept up to date with developments in the whole area of SEND to provide effective teaching and support for pupils.

The LSC keeps a record of all training attended by or delivered to staff in relation to SEND. Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members are encouraged to disseminate the information provided to build the capacity of their colleagues.



## **Monitoring and Evaluating the SEND Policy**

The SEND policy is reviewed bi-annually and considering changes in legislation or practice following consultation with all staff members, parents, and external agencies.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy was ratified by the Board of Governors. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy will be monitored by the Principal and reviewed bi-annually or in line with any changes to legislation.

# ***Challenging girls today; creating women of value in the future***



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