

Canonbury Primary School



Special Needs Policy January 2008

Introduction

This policy has been written drawing on the documents *The SEN Code of Practice (2001)*, *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*.

Context of Canonbury Primary School

Canonbury Primary School is a larger than average two-form entry primary school in Inner London, it is popular in the local area and in 2007 was one of the most over-subscribed primary schools in Islington.

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage covers a wide range and is below average overall. A number of the youngest children have mature speech patterns, independency skills and some ideas about letters and numbers while others have difficulty with speaking and listening or are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

About a quarter of pupils have special educational needs; this is above average and the needs of the children are very varied and include social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and language difficulties, social communication difficulties and specific learning difficulties, for example, dyslexia.

The school serves a **significantly** diverse community. The social and economic backgrounds of the pupils are very mixed and well below average overall. The local housing is made up of a mixture of both private and social housing.

At least twenty percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is above average. The real proportion that is eligible might be higher because some families do not claim even though they are entitled.

Around a third of pupils come from BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) backgrounds and currently twelve percent of pupils speak English as an additional language (Turkish, Bengali and Somali in the main) and in the early years this is rising.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

SEN Revised Code of Practice points to four areas of need:

- Learning and Cognition
- Communication and interaction
- Physical and/or Sensory
- Emotional, Social and behavioural

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision. Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- **find it much harder to learn than most children of the same age;**
- **if he or she has a disability which makes it difficult to use the normal educational facilities in the area.**

For example a child may have learning difficulties caused by:

- **a physical disability;**
- **a problem with sight or hearing;**
- **a mental disability;**
- **emotional, social or behavioural problems;**
- **a medical or health problem**
- **specific difficulties with reading, writing, or maths;**
- **a language or communication difficulty**

“A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught.”¹

“Similarly, not all pupils with disabilities will necessarily have special educational needs, and many pupils with disabilities learn alongside their peers with little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life, such as a wheelchair, a hearing aid or equipment to aid vision.”²

Legal Requirements

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 introduced one of the most significant changes to education in recent years by confirming that children with SEN must be educated in a mainstream school **unless** that is incompatible with the wishes of his or her parent **or** the provision of efficient education.

The Disability Rights Commission issued a Code of Practice for Schools, which includes the duty not to discriminate against children with disabilities and to plan to improve access for them.

Guiding Principles of Inclusion

We at Canonbury School follow the principles of inclusive education as set out by the DCFS:

- Inclusion is a process by which schools, local education authorities (LEAs) and others develop the cultures, policies and practices to include all pupils;
- all children have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- all children have the right to effective learning opportunities;
- schools, LEAs and others should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation;
- mainstream education will not always be right for every child all of the time;
- the interests of all pupils must be safeguarded.³

Children with SEN have equal access to extra-curricular activities, trips music lessons, assemblies play and meal times Children with SEN work in the classroom with their peers for the majority of the time, although in some cases, withdrawing an individual children or group is the best way of reaching their learning targets effectively (see Nature of Provision)

Objectives of the SEN Policy

- a child with special educational needs should have their needs met;
- the views of the child should listened to and taken into account;
- the parents' have a vital role to play in supporting the education of their child's education, and their views are actively encouraged;
- children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad and balanced education, including an appropriate curriculum for the foundation stage and the National Curriculum.

Ethos

We believe that:

Individuals of all talents and backgrounds have an equal right

- to high quality education
- to a broad and balanced curriculum including the National Curriculum;
- to be a valued member of the school community
- be given the chance to realise their potential, and
- to reach the highest possible standard in their academic, personal and social development, whatever their racial, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

We also believe that all children are entitled to learn in a supportive environment in which self-esteem is enhanced and the unique talents of each pupil are developed, nurtured and celebrated. This includes building upon the strengths of each individual child as well as providing support in weaker areas.

We believe it is important to celebrate the diversity of our school and local community, in order to ensure individuals leave our school fully prepared and equipped to take their place successfully in the society in which we live, knowing that everyone is entitled to respect and is expected to be respectful.

We believe that **all teachers** are teachers of children with SEN, not just the Inclusion Manager and Support staff, and that individual class teachers, in collaboration with others, are responsible for planning work and implementing strategies to support SEN pupils;

We believe that partnership working is important in obtaining the best provision for all pupils with Special Educational Needs. This includes

- Involving children and their parents in decision-making and, where appropriate, in exercising choice
- Effective communication with parents; (support, advice and sharing/listening to information, parental views, knowledge and experience, and involvement in the planning and review of their child's provision.)
- Effective collaboration between school staff and specialists or other services outside the school.

Aims

We aim:

- to identify children with Special needs as early as possible, and to put in place strategies to support that child;
- to give all children access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum
- to ensure good liaison between all staff to ensure continuity of knowledge about individual children and their needs in each successive academic year
- to give emotional support and appropriate programmes of behaviour management to children with emotional, social or behavioural difficulties;
- to work in partnership with parents at all stages of identification and intervention of their child's special educational needs;
- to use the resources available for SEN provision in the most equitable but effective way necessary to ensure the maximum impact of targeted support given throughout the school.

Responsibilities for Provision of Special Needs

The Governing Body

The Governing body, in co-operation with the head teacher:

- Determines the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEN
- Establishes the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements for SEN
- Maintains a general oversight of the school's SEN work
- Monitors the school's work on behalf of children with SEN
- Reports to parents annually on the school's policy on SEN

- deals with any complaints related to Special Needs provision
- Ensures that the school follows the principle of Inclusion
- Ensures that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child.

The link Governor for Special Needs is Noor Jehan

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility

- for the day-to-day management of provision for SEN
- for ensuring the implementation of the SEN Policy and for actively promoting inclusion
- for keeping the Governing body fully informed about SEN provision
- for working closely with the Inclusion Manager

This includes:

- Attending Annual Review meetings of Statemented children
- Ensuring that all staff are made aware of children with Emotional, Social or Behavioural Difficulties, and those on behaviour programmes;
- Liaising with the Deputy Head, the Learning Mentor, the Inclusion Manager and other staff who provide behaviour programmes;
- Ensuring that appropriate teacher cover is provided when Reviews of children need to take place;
- Writing the annual policy summary and review of SEN provision for parents;
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the SEN policy;
- Monitoring staff to ensure that the SEN policy is being followed
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training and professional development to carry out their responsibilities with regard to SEN.

The Inclusion Manager

The Inclusion Manager, working closely with the Headteacher, SLT, SMT and the Inclusion Team should be involved the formulation of the SEN policy and provision.

The Inclusion Manager has responsibility for:

- day to day operation of the SEN Policy;
- co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN;
- liaising with outside agencies involved in SEN;
- co-ordinating and facilitating communication between staff and outside specialists;
- communicating and liaising with parents of children with SEN;
- organising and facilitating SEN reviews , including Annual Reviews of Statemented children;
- contributing to INSET on SEN for the school staff;
- reporting to governors in the SEN policy;
- giving advice to staff and parents;
- working with classteachers in identifying children with SEN;
- helping classteachers formulate targets and strategies for children with SEN;
- managing the SEN records.
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The Inclusion Manager is Jo Pottle BA (hons); MA; RSA Cert.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of and are putting in practice, the school's SEN policy.

In particular, they are responsible for:

- following the procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for children with SEN in their class;
- liaising with parents and other school staff in the identification of pupils who may have Special Needs;
- knowing which children in their class have SEN and following strategies to help children to meet the targets outlined in their IEP;
- planning work appropriate for children with SEN in ways that are **different from or additional to** everyday differentiation within the classroom
- formulating targets and strategies for pupils on School Action;
- writing and reviewing Individual Education Plans at least twice a year, in conjunction with parents and the individual child;
- seeking advice if necessary from the Inclusion Manager or external specialists to inform their strategies;
- liaising with the Inclusion Manager, Learning Mentor and support staff as necessary in order to pass on relevant information regarding children with SEN;
- ensuring that Support staff working with children with SEN are given clear guidance on how to support individual children;
- setting work for support staff to do with individual children or groups of children with SEN
- keeping a class SEN folder with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), assessment data and other important information about those children with SEN in their class;
- working with the Inclusion Manager when writing IEPs;
- informing parents that their children have been identified as SEN and passing on information about their progress;
- attending relevant meetings about children in their class with SEN including reviews and annual Reviews
- working closely with support staff who work with SEN children in their class

Special Needs Teachers

Special Needs Teachers are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of and are putting in practice the school's SEN Policy, including:

- liaising with class teachers regarding timetables and IEPs
- keeping plans and records of the work they undertake with individual or groups of children;
- carrying out assessments of children with whom they work to ascertain progress;
- keeping assessment data on individual children in order to provide evidence during reviews, and to inform class teachers and the Inclusion Manager;
- attending relevant meetings including reviews and Annual Reviews for the children they teach;
- helping to identify children with Special Educational Needs.

Teaching Assistant/Special Needs Assistants

Teaching assistant/Special Needs Assistants are responsible for:

- keeping themselves informed of significant factors with regard to the children with whom they work;
- knowing and working towards children's current targets as set by the Class teacher or Inclusion Manager;
- keeping records of targets achieved or significant events which occur when they are working with the children;
- liaising with Class teachers, the Inclusion Manager and parents regarding the children that they work with;
- attending relevant meetings about the children they work with
- contributing to, and following IEPs and plans of the teachers they are working with. (However it is not the responsibility of the Teaching Assistant to plan work for children)
- attending training as required to keep abreast of SEN issues or methods of delivering special intervention Programmes of work, such as Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support, Further Literacy Support or Springboard (maths).

Learning Mentors

Learning Mentors have responsibility for

- supporting the emotional, social or behavioural needs of the children with whom they work;
- keeping confidential certain parts of their discussions with individual children;
- passing on concerns of possible Child Protection to the named Child Protection Officer in the school;
- liaising with class teachers and the Inclusion Manager regarding children with whom they are working;
- devising, in collaboration with children and their classteachers, or playground staff, strategies to support children with ESD in the classroom and in the playground;
- liaising with parents of children with whom they are working;
- helping to identify children or groups of children who may benefit from having a learning Mentor, a Counsellor or other forms of psychological help;
- Being the contact point for counsellors
- School parliament
- Trips
- Buddying initiative etc
- Working with the Head Teacher and other staff on pastoral initiatives and behaviour policies

Admissions

Children with a wide range of special educational needs are welcomed to Canonbury Primary School. These include those with learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorders, physical disabilities, sensory impairment, speech and language difficulties, specific medical conditions, Developmental Coordination Difficulties, dyspraxia and Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia and Dyscalculia).

The school building currently has limitations in terms of wheelchair access, but the school is aiming to improve this in line with recent legal requirements.

The school admits children according to the Local Education Authority admissions policy.

Resource Allocation

There are now four main elements to SEN funding for mainstream school in Islington.

- i. The basic School budget: A small percentage (5%+) of the amount given for each pupil on role is expected to be spent on SEN.
- ii. Extra funds for SEN are available through a formula agreed with schools which looks at indicators such as the number of children on Free School Meals, the mobility of pupils, and pupils with English as an additional language.
- iii. Since April 2001, extra funds have been delegated to schools to support children with very significant, but commonly occurring (high incidence) special educational needs: e.g. dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties or behavioural difficulties.
- iv. Extra funds for children with a Statement of need for very significant and rare (low incidence) disabilities, such as severe visual and hearing difficulties, severe physical difficulties, severe communication disorders such as autism or a serious medical condition.

With limited resources, needs have to be prioritised. The school uses the SEN Code of Practise (Revised) to decide stages of Special Educational Need and to allocate resources fairly and according to need.

Identification of Need

The SEN Code of Practice 2001 stresses the need for early identification, preventative work and partnership working.

Initial identification of a child with SEN comes about through the day-to-day interaction between class teacher and pupil, together with any information, advice or concerns from parent's or previous teachers. It is essential that parents feel free to voice their concerns to teachers as this is a vital part of the identification process. Parents do not need to wait until the termly consultation times but should arrange to talk with the class teacher if they feel their child is anxious about school or is unable to cope with the homework.

Other factors that may contribute to the identification of SEN are

- ROAs and SATS;
- Foundation Stage Profile;
- day to day marking of children's work;
- observation of children's behaviour in the classroom;
- record keeping;
- looking at samples of work or reading records
- medical test routinely carried out by the school nurse such as hearing and vision

Where a child is working at a level substantially below the expectations for their year group, an initial concern, taking into account any extenuating circumstances (such as the child having English as an Additional Language, or particular family circumstances) will be noted by the class teacher. If the concerns are still present after a term (or less for major concerns) it will lead to the child being put on “School Action” (see below), and the writing of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), or a group IEP.

Formal Assessment of SEN

In some cases, children may need specific special assessments to determine their areas of need. This may be carried out external specialists who work regularly with the school, such as advisory teachers or by the school’s Educational Psychologist.

Statutory Assessment Tests (SATS) at the end of Year 2 and 6.

Some children with SEN will be ‘disapplied’ from SATs. For others , special arrangements may be made to allow additional time, as specified under the Guidelines for SATS

Providing support for children with Special needs

If a child is identified with special educational needs, an intervention programme will be put in place to help meet the individual needs identified. There are 3 stages of intervention:

1. *School Action / Early Years Action*
2. *School Action Plus /Early Years Action Plus*
3. *Statement*

School Action / Early Years Action

When a pupil has been identified as having SEN, the Class teacher will write an Individual Educational Plan (see section12) to address the child’s needs. This may be done in conjunction with the Inclusion Manager, who is also informed about the child’s needs. This means that the child will get additional help at school, either in the classroom or sometimes working in small groups outside the classroom setting. Often the child will be doing targeted work planned by the teacher but supported by a Teaching Assistant. Parents will be contacted to discuss the intervention and will be kept informed of progress twice a year when the targets are reviewed.

School Action Plus / Early Years Action Plus

If after around two terms on “*School Action*” or “*Early Years Action*”, a child’s needs are not being met, and adequate progress is not achieved, it may be felt that the child’s needs need a further level of intervention. In this case, the child may progress to “*School Action Plus*”. The Inclusion Manager and outside specialists such as Advisory teachers, or Educational psychologists will be involved with the class teacher in setting targets and agreeing strategies for meeting the child’s needs. A more formal assessment of the child’s needs may need to be carried out. Parents and the child will be asked to contribute their views during a Review held every six months (or possibly every term in certain cases).

Statements of Special Educational Need

The special educational needs of the great majority of children should be met effectively within mainstream schools, through *Early years Action / School Action*, or *Early years Action Plus / School action Plus*, without the LEA needing to make a statutory assessment. In a very small number of cases the LEA will need to make a statutory assessment of special educational needs and then consider whether or not to issue a *statement*.

Statements are now only issued for children with whom the complexity or severity of need requires **exceptional** arrangements, or there is it felt that the LEA needs to maintain **direct oversight of provision**⁴ This normally means that a child has a severe physical disability, a severe communication difficulty or a severe medical condition. Children given a *statement* will have an Annual Review and will also have an IEP with targets which are related to the areas of need identified in their *Statement*.

Staff Training

We aim of equip the school's staff with the knowledge, skills and qualifications to effectively provide for SEN. Teachers and Teaching Assistants regularly receive training on different aspects of SEN, either delivered by staff within School or by external professionals or advisory Teachers from the LEA.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

An IEP is a working document drawn up for all children on *School Action / Early Years Action*, or *School Action Plus / Early Years Action Plus*. It sets out the learning difficulties experienced by a child and the extra help and intervention planned to help meet the child's identified needs. It records only that which is additional or different from the differentiated teaching in place as part of provision for all children. The IEP will contain:

- 3 to 5 short term and achievable targets (set for and shared with the child);
- teaching strategies (or ways to meet the above targets);
- the provision or the type of intervention (where and when these strategies will be worked on and how often)
- a review date to see if the targets have been met or need changing;
- a space to record the parents comments and views

The IEP is reviewed at least twice a year and both the child and parents will have input into the discussions about the child's progress. Parents may be involved in supporting some of the discussed targets at home.

Following a review, the child may continue (with the same, modified or new targets) at *School Action*, or may be taken off that level of intervention if progress has

School Action/Early Years Action
School Action plus/Early years Action Plus

Group Education Plans

When pupils in the same group or class have common needs, a Group Education Plan can be written, listing shared targets and hence strategies. Each child in the group will however be monitored individually to see if s/he has achieved the shared targets. S/he may also have an Individual Education Plan, listing specific targets not shared by the group.

Individual children with SEN

The positive progress of children will be the measure by which support and provision for children with SEN is evaluated. Such progress includes social and physical development, and improved communication skills as well as 'academic' results. Progress will be evaluated in Review meetings between the teacher, parent and child every six months or occasionally more frequently. This meeting will review targets and strategies necessary to support the child.

Annual Review of SEN Policy

Monitoring of children's progress across the school will assist in reviewing this policy annually. It will also feed into future planning and identifying staff training needs.

It is important to know if we are spending/using SEN budget effectively and what difference intervention has made to the progress and attainment of children.

The head teacher submits a report to the governors who in turn inform the parents of the SEN provision for the last year. This includes information about the SEN budget. And the use of delegated funds for SEN work.

In addition, an annual audit of SEN provision in the school is conducted by the LEA.

Complaints

It is our belief that Special Needs provision is most successful when built upon a partnership between school and parents. However, if there are issues of concern, then the class teacher, and/or Inclusion Manager should be informed as soon as possible as an informal discussion can often put worried parents at ease. If the complaint cannot be resolved in this way, parents should speak with the Head Teacher. Having seen the Headteacher, and if the matter is still not resolved, parents should send in a written complaint to the SEN Link Governor. If the matter is still not resolved, parents should contact the LEA and follow its formal complaints procedure.

Transition to other schools

When a child with SEN leaves Canonbury their SEN records are sent on to their next school. If they are transferring to a Secondary school in Islington, the Inclusion Manager or their class teacher will meet staff from their new school to discuss any needs, which the child has, and strategies to support the child.

Links with other Schools and Specialist Support Services

Canonbury School uses the support and advice available from a wide range of outside agencies, including the Inclusion Advisory Team and Special Educational Needs department at CEA @ Islington. This includes Educational Psychologists and specialist advisory teachers who come in to observe, assess or advise teachers on strategies to support children with specific learning difficulties, medical conditions, and/ or behavioural difficulties. We also have links with Special Schools who have expertise on working with children outside mainstream education.

Other agencies such as the Speech and Language Therapy Service, Occupational Therapy Service and Child Guidance or Counsellors also provide advice on supporting individual children.

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