

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Introduction

The term **special educational need** has a legal definition. Children with **special educational needs** all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. These children may need extra or different help from that given to other children of the same age.

The law says that children do not have learning difficulties just because their first language is not English. Of course, some of these children may have learning difficulties as well.

Children with **special educational needs** may need extra help because of a range of needs, such as in thinking and understanding, physical or sensory difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or difficulties with speech and language or how they relate to and behave with other people.

Many children will have **special educational needs** of some kind at some time during their education. Schools and other organisations can help most children overcome the barriers their difficulties present quickly and easily. But a few children will need extra help for some or all of their time in school.

Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

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Basic Principles

Principles from the New Code of Practice are:

- All children with **special educational needs** should have their needs met
- The **special educational needs** of children are normally met in mainstream (ordinary) early education settings or schools
- Parents' views should be taken into account and the wishes of the child should be listened to
- Parents have a vital role in supporting their child's education
- Children with **special educational needs** should get a broad, well-balanced and relevant education, including the foundation stage curriculum (for children aged (3 to 5) or the National Curriculum (for children aged 5 to16).

So **special educational needs** could mean that a child has difficulties with:

- All of the work in school
- Reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- Making friends or relating to adults
- Behaving properly in school
- Organising themselves
- Some kind of sensory or physical needs which may affect them in school.

At Rida Girls' High School we accept the definitions of Special Educational Needs as well as the principles from the New Code of Practice but also believe that children at the higher end of the ability range also have **special educational needs** and have the right to have those needs met.

At Rida Girls' High School we recognise that:

- Each learner is an individual with his or her own particular educational needs
- All pupils have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated to reflect these needs and with regard to continuity and progression.
- Learning experiences should encourage self-motivation and independence and focus on positive achievement.
- Every effort should be made to reduce the risk of 'labelling' for children experiencing SEN. Wherever possible these children should be integrated to work alongside their peers to share educational experiences with those whose needs are different from their own. However, there may be times when children are withdrawn for specialist teaching which we strive to make a positive experience and a 'natural' course of events.
- The nature of children's Special Educational Needs might be long or short term and in one or more areas i.e. physical, social, behavioural, emotional, or cognitive development.
- The special needs provision made by the school is a process which is strongly rooted in partnership with parents.

These objectives will be met by the school's:

- Early identification of children's needs
- Gathering of relevant and important evidence, including from discussions with parents.
- Drawing up individual education plans (IEPs) and reviewing outcomes termly
- Using IEPs to guide teacher's planning and focus support for the individual pupil.
- Teachers working closely together and with the SENCO to ensure that the school's SEN provision is the best possible within budgetary constraints.

Role of the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

The responsibilities of the SENCO are:

- Day to day operation of the school's SEN policy
- Advising class teachers
- Managing SEN provision for the school through a delegated portion of the school budget
- Liaising with parents and outside agencies
- Overseeing the school's record keeping and data gathering for SEN
- Overseeing resources specifically purchased for SEN materials and equipment.

Identification of SEN

Initial identification is in most cases either due to class teacher or parental concern about a relative lack of progress on the child's part. Evidence is gathered through classroom observation, the child's work, and assessment data, any other information on health or social problems, discussion with parents and then child him/herself and from previous teachers. We feel it is important at this point to examine different perceptions of those concerned with the child and the wider context of the child's difficulties.

Assessment

Children are assessed in school in both a summative and formative manner and when deemed necessary, by outside agencies. The results of the assessments are used to help individually tailor the support programme needed for the child. Work is differentiated accordingly and support arranged in the classroom. If the child's need specific support from outside experts e.g. speech therapy, this is arranged by the SENCO in close liaison with the School Support Team. The School Support Team meets with the SENCO and other members of the school teaching staff on a termly basis.

Review

A termly review takes place of the child's progress against his/her IEP. The review is conducted at a meeting with all of the teaching staff present. Recommendations are discussed and the IEP modified, as and where necessary. Parents are sent a copy of the previous IEP with the outcomes, as well as a copy of the proposed new IEP. They are then invited to discuss the new IEP with the class teacher. They may also meet with the SENCO if they wish. Children with statements have an annual review which is attended by parents, the class teacher and SENCO and representatives of the School Support Team. The recommendations of this 'panel' are then passed on to the appropriate authority for ratification. New targets may be set for the child. Funding to support a statement is child specific and pays for direct support to them. Should the child move schools, any funding moves with him/her.

Liaison with other schools

The school works closely with local high schools for the smooth transition of pupils with SEN and to ensure that there is continuity and progression in provision for them. The SENCO also liaises closely with the previous schools of children joining Rida Girls' High School in order that we can be immediately be aware of any special educational needs and quickly put a suitable programme of support in place.