Primate Dixon Primary School

‘Working to meet the additional needs of children in our school community’

Primate Dixon PS Special Educational Needs Policy

Revised Autumn 2024
in the context of the
Revised Code of Practice NI

Primate Dixon PS
Special Educational Needs Policy
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PRIMATE DIXON PS – MISSION

'WE WANT EVERY CHILD

TO KNOW THEY ARE WELCOME'

In Primate Dixon Primary School, we want every child

- **to enjoy primary school**
- **to have the very best primary education**
- **to learn and grow to be the very best that they can be in every way**
- **to be confident and to know that they are always more than good enough**
- **to grow and develop to be the best they can be within a safe, caring, Catholic ethos.**

We want Primate Dixon Primary School to be a place

- **where no one is left out and no one is left behind**
- **where are no barriers to learning and taking part.**

We want to do this by working together in partnership – home, school and parish community.

'WE WANT EVERY CHILD TO KNOW THEY BELONG'

'WE WANT EVERY CHILD TO KNOW

THEY ARE MORE THAN GOOD ENOUGH'

The delivery of all aspects of supporting children's learning contributes to implementing school vision.

Effective delivery of learning support assists in

- removing barriers to learning
- promoting maximum participation
- children knowing they belong
- assuring children they are always more than good enough.

It is a very important principle that children may have specific special needs but these needs to do DEFINE children.

We believe that

'ALL CHILDREN ARE ENTITLED TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY AND TO ACHIEVE'.

PRIMATE DIXON PS – THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

Primate Dixon Primary School serves the parish of Coalisland and extended community area, working to meet the needs of all children in our care.

We promote quality and equality, inclusion and integration on every level.

Our school aims to provide the very best level of pastoral and educational experience for every child.

Primate Dixon staff are committed to providing equal access for all our pupils to a broad and balanced educational experience based on the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

We recognise that some pupils in their school career may have special educational needs and/or a disability.

In the interests of children, we will make every reasonable arrangement to provide for individual needs.

We work to promote 'positive' always.

Language is very important in promoting a culture of positivity, inclusion and opportunity for all.

For example, we never use the word 'unit' to refer to any class or group or provision in Primate.

We do not 'tolerate' difference of any sort, we celebrate and include all.

In the context of this policy statement and our provision, we wish for a better term than 'special educational needs' or 'SEN pupils'.

We struggle with this term and words like 'disability' and use these only in the context that this is how legislation is framed.

Rather we would wish for a kinder term that infers no negativity and 'difference', all children for example have educational needs, some have additional needs and some have greater additional needs that may be learning needs, medical needs, physical needs or other needs.

Some key principles of teaching and learning provision in Primate Dixon.

- We are committed to providing highest quality educational opportunity for all children.
- All children are entitled to have opportunities and to achieve and then more and more opportunities.
- Every child has their own learning potential.
- All children will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate and that reflects the Statutory Primary Curriculum through a wide range of teaching strategies and resources.
- Every child has his or her own learning 'needs'.
- Pupils with additional or 'special needs' will receive appropriate targeted support, including through Education Planning and review, within their class group.
- Additional support will be available within the resources available to the school along with external statutory agency support.
- We will share and consult with parents in order to discuss needs and support.
- We will talk to children, giving them opportunity to talk about their work and needs.
- Children's views are important and valued.
- Efficient assessment, record keeping, planning and reviewing systems will be in place.
- While the SENCO will have first responsibility for record keeping, all staff share this responsibility appropriately whilst delivering teaching and learning opportunities for children in their care.
- All staff will have opportunity to engage in In-Service training.

Within these guiding principles, each child as an individual is our first concern and interest.

We will always seek to place children at the centre of all school activity.

AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING SCHOOL

The Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools (ECNI, 2006), states that:

"…all pupils have a right to the same opportunities in the whole of their educational life."

Primate Dixon PS provides for the children of our parish and wider community.

Admissions to Primate Dixon are guided by the school's published Admissions Criteria.

Admissions to the school's Specialist Learning Support Centres are guided by EA referral procedures.

Children are welcomed in our school irrespective of ethnic, cultural, religious, social or economic background.

Our school welcomes, embraces and celebrates diversity.

Our school integrates and includes.

All areas of school policy and practice support integration, inclusion and meeting the needs of all children.

The needs of children come first always in Primate Dixon.

THE CONTEXT BEYOND THE SCHOOL – STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The legislation that currently governs practice regarding children and young people (C&YP) with special educational needs (SEN) is the Education Order (1996). The current Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of SEN provides guidance on how the legislation is to be delivered in schools was published in 1998. Irrespective of legislative requirement, in our school we begin by wanting to say yes to meeting the needs of children.

SENDO (2005) enhanced the rights of Children & Young People with SEN and/or disabilities to be educated in mainstream schools and aimed to ensure that children with disabilities were not disadvantaged compared to their peers in school. This included schools being proactive in areas such as ensuring that the school is prepared with a flexible and adaptive environment and culture and differentiated curricula for all children who may wish to attend, including those with SEN/Disabilities.

The Supplement to the Code of Practice was published in 2005 and updated parts of the 1998 Code of Practice to reflect the changes following SENDO (2005).

The most recent legislation, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016, strengthens and builds on the duties contained in the Education Order (NI) 1996 and SENDO (NI) 2005.

It places additional duties on schools' Board of Governors, the Education Authority and Health & Social Care Trusts.

It provides additional rights for parents and children over compulsory school age.

It is one element of the new SEN and Inclusion Framework which include new SEN Regulations and a new statutory Code of Practice as of 2023, awaiting Stormont ministerial approval.

NB: In the interim, schools have been advised that they must continue to adhere to all aspects of the Code of Practice (1998) and the Supplement to the Code of Practice (2005), except for recording children under the new three stages of the Code of Practice.

Legislation: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/special-educational-needs-legislation

- The Education (NI) Order 1996
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016

Documentation:

- Department of Education Northern Ireland (1998) Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Bangor: DENI
- Department of Education Northern Ireland (2005) Supplement to the Code of Practice. Bangor: DENI
- Equality Commission, Northern Ireland (2006) Disability Discrimination Code of Practice for Schools (SENDO).
- Department of Education Northern Ireland (2009) Every School a Good School – a Policy For School Improvement, Bangor: DENI.

School Management and other staff are guided the Provisional Criteria, the Good Practice Guidelines – Special Educational Needs and the SEN – A Resource File.

http://www.selb.org/specialeducation/Documents/GoodPracticeGuidelines.pdf

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/resource-file-children-special-educational-needs

https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen/useful-publications/provisional-criteria-for-statutory

DEFINING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We emphasise our guiding principle that while children will have special needs, children are not defined by these needs.

This policy statement sets out the school's agreed approach to meeting the special educational needs of children.

For all involved in a child's education it is important that there is a clear understanding of the terms 'special educational needs,' 'learning difficulty' and 'special educational provision', as defined in Article 3 of the 1996 Order.

Special Educational Needs

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.

Learning Difficulty

A child has a learning difficulty if:

(a) they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than **the majority of** children of the same age;

(b) they have a disability which either prevents or hinders them making use of everyday educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in ordinary schools; or

(c) they have not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age and is or would be if special educational provision were not made, likely to fall within (a) or (b) when of compulsory school age.

Special Educational Provision

Special educational provision (SpEP) is educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in ordinary schools.

Disability

Disability may or may not be accompanied by special educational need.

The following definition of disability is taken from the Disability Discrimination Act (1995):

> A disability is when someone has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.
> (Paragraph 2.3)

SEN and Medical Categories

The following is the list of the five overarching SEN categories and sub-categories taken from:

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

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)

CHILDREN WITH A MEDICAL CONDITION

Children who have an identified medical condition will be recorded on the school's Medical Register.

Children are only recorded on the Medical Register after parents have provided written statements from medical professionals confirming details.

Those who do not require special educational provision will be recorded on the Medical Register only and will not be placed on the SEN register.

A pupil with a medical diagnosis or disability may or may not have a SEN but what is key is "does the pupil have a requirement for special educational provision to access the curriculum."

A pupil can be recorded on both the SEN register and Medical Register if they have both a medical need and require special educational provision to be made for them.

PUPIL CARE & ACTION PLANS

A small number of pupils with individual specific special needs require that a Care Plan be in place.

These needs are most likely to arise from medical conditions or disability.

Needs are likely to be long-term but there may be short-term circumstances where a plan is needed.

Pupil Care Plans are agreed with parents or guardians before they are put in place.

Pupil Care & Action Plans are easily available within class as part of the teacher's desk file.

Plans will be shared as agreed with those who need to know.

Substitute teachers must be aware of Pupil Care & Action Plans – these are 'to hand' in classrooms.

The following is the list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population taken from Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) *Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools,* Bangor: DENI).

- 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

POLICY AIMS

Primate Dixon Primary School celebrates, includes, integrates and offers opportunity to all.

- Primate Dixon Primary School aims to achieve best practice in all provision and procedures.
- We aim to meet the needs of all pupils who have SEN by offering appropriate forms of educational provision and the most efficient use of available resources.
- We are committed to early identification of children with Special Educational Needs to enable staff to provide an appropriate programme to help children reach their full potential.
- All staff are familiar with and operate the staged approach of assessment and intervention contained within the Northern Ireland Code of Practice.
- Teachers differentiate within the class setting to meet the needs of all children.
- We provide access for pupils with SEN/disability to high quality education within a broad, balanced, relevant, and differentiated curriculum which will promote their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical progress.
- Staff are committed to help any child who is under-achieving.
- Records of children included in the Special Needs Register & Medical Register are maintained and regularly updated.
- Parents are our partners. We want always to work together to meet children's needs.
- Special Educational Needs also embraces the needs of gifted children.
- We seek the help of the appropriate support services and strive for close co-operation between all services and agencies concerned to achieve an effective multi-disciplinary approach to meeting SEN.
- We aim to educate pupils with SEN, as fully integrated as possible, alongside their peers.
- We aim to ensure that all pupils with SEN/disability feel valued.
- We want always to consider the views of the child when planning and implementing SEN provision taking into account their age and capacity.

WE AIM TO WORK AS A SCHOOL TEAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

At Primate Dixon PS, we acknowledge that successful partnerships between parents, pupils and school play a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation, openness and transparency and have a crucial impact on the effectiveness of special educational provision.

We will inform parents when staff are considering placing the pupil's name on the SEN register or moving the child between stages.

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

The Statutory Assessment process and Code of Practice can be daunting for many parents.

We make special effort to assist parents in understanding and managing referral and statementing processes – whatever time and effort is needed for assurance and information is provided.

We will discuss and consult appropriately with parents in regard to

- Initial identification of child's needs
- Pupil Learning Plans/Education Plans and Reviews
- Any change in circumstances that parents advise the school of

Primate Dixon school team have a huge and diverse range of knowledge and experience in working with children with special educational needs, including highly complex needs.

We work as a collegiate team to meet the needs of all children.

Parents are essential parts of that extended school community team, consulted with and contributing to all stages of special needs provision.

Pupil Views

Children's views are so important.
Children are part of our team – we talk to children positively about their learning.

In school, as far as reasonably practicable, we seek and have regard to the child's views about their strengths, learning difficulties and education, taking into account their age and maturity.

We seek and listen to their views about how they learn successfully and then focus on the strategies that work for them.

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- contributing to their own assessment, provision, and progress;
- contributing to the review of PLPs/EPs, Annual Reviews, and the Transition process; and
- involving and supporting the pupils to participate in making decisions about matters affecting them.

Seeking their views and supporting them to participate in making decisions about their learning is good practice. The child's progress will be more effective when both they and, where appropriate, their parents are involved, and account is taken of their wishes, feelings, and perspectives. Seeking the views of the child or young person also plays a key role in helping us understand individual needs.

Accessibility

At Primate Dixon PS we are committed to increase the extent to which 'disabled pupils' can access the statutory curriculum. This includes in teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school activities, leisure, cultural events and special occasions.

School procedures and practices reflect reasonable adjustments that we will take to manage a disabled pupil's personal (and occasionally invasive) care needs and medication. In all instances, our school be guided, where available by the healthcare plan from the Health and Social Care Trust.

The physical environment of Primate Dixon PS maximises the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and activities provided or offered by our school.

Our school is child-friendly and adult-friendly to all with physical and other needs.

- pupils with disabilities have equal access to all areas of the school building;
- the school is fully accessible to wheelchair users and users with mobility issues;
- there are no stairs or steps anywhere within school
- all outside spaces are also wheelchair-accessible
- there are well-equipped facilities for personal care;
- access to a broad and balanced curriculum can be facilitated appropriate to age, ability, aptitude, and attainments; and
- the development of extensive supportive sensory spaces at each side of the school including a Sensory Corridor, Rainbow Room and Sensory Rooms within each or our Specialist Learning Centres.
- Green Rooms provide discrete and comfortable working spaces for visiting professionals, including Educational Psychology, EA peripatetic teachers and others to work with children.

The Board of Governors of Primate Dixon PS continually reflect and build upon school policies and procedures to ensure that they anticipate and react by taking the reasonable steps necessary to remove the barriers possible to support all children in accessing all aspects of school life.

MANAGING ADMISSIONS

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) (2005) legislation strengthened the right for children with a Statement to a mainstream 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 school (Article 3(1) SENDO, 2005).

Admission of children with an SEN Statement to schools is not managed through the Open Enrolment Procedure.
This is managed separately through EA Special Educational Needs Office.
Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs, either on first admission or on transfer from another school, are referred for admission to school by the Education Authority.

SPECIALIST PROVISION CENTRE ADMISSION

The school has four Specialist Provision Centres, SPiMS (Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools).
These are;

- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Autism Support Centres
- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage Learning Support Centres.

Admission to these is managed by referral from the Educational Authority.

When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement, the Education Authority will take into account the wishes of the child's parents and the provision of efficient education for other children in the class or school and the efficient use of resources to determine the suitability of the placement.

This arrangement is in line with SENDO legislation.

COORDINATING SEN PROVISION

Although meeting the needs of pupils with SEN is a whole school issue the overall responsibility for managing SEN provision resides with the Board of Governors and the 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 to Siobhán Murphy (SENCo and Vice-Principal).

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

It is vitally important that children with Special Educational Needs are identified as early as possible and that awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.

Where any child has particular needs, whether academic, medical, physical or other, we will strive to ensure that needs are met within their school community by seeking to access and putting in place appropriate learning programmes and support.

Primate Dixon Primary School seeks to put in place necessary adjustments and support arrangements that will ensure that children are enabled to fully access all aspects of primary school education and life.

IDENTIFYING PUPIL NEEDS

In Primate Dixon PS the following may be used to identify pupils' needs:

- Pre-school data/information from parents, health agencies, Educational Psychology Service
- Information provided at Open Enrolment process
- Pre-school information meetings and Open Days
- Cognitive Standardised Scores
- Standardised Literacy & Numeracy Tests
- Class/Year Tests
- Class teacher Observation and Comment
- Parental Observation & Comment
- Records of concerns
- Information from transferring school
- Diagnostic assessments
- Individual Education Plans or Personal Learning Plans
- Care Plans
- Personal Education Plans for children who are looked after
- Statements of Special Educational Need
- Annual Reviews
- Reports from other professionals
- Pupil contributions

RECORD-KEEPING

Effective, workable records are maintained for SEN pupils, including referral documentation, IEP/PLP's and reviews, Educational Psychology advice, medical advice, Pupil Care Plans, parental advice and records of discussions with parents and others.

Information held is always treated with sensitivity and shared only as agreed and as appropriate.

The SENCo maintains the following records in school:

- Special Educational Needs Register
- Records of Concern
- Pupil Learning Plans and Reviews
- SEN Statements/Annual Reviews/Transition Plans
- assessment results/data
- individual pupil files
- record of liaison/meetings with staff from the Education Authority's SEN Support Services/HSCT
- minutes of meetings with parents
- and support, advice, and training provided to staff.

Records relating Special Educational Needs are held in accordance with the guidance set down by DE Schedule of Records Disposal Policy.

This is part of GDPR requirements.

Monitoring the Progress of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The SENCo ensures that the progress of pupils on the SEN register is reviewed and monitored.

This is achieved through:

- Pupil Learning 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 appropriate movement either up or down through the stages of the Code of Practice.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We liaise closely with the full range of EA Pupil Support Services, where appropriate, to receive and share with staff training and guidance to support the school and parents in meeting the needs of children with special educational and medical needs.

Examples of EA Pupil Support Services include:

- Autism Advisory and Intervention Service (AAIS)
- Sensory Service
- Special Educational Needs Inclusion Service (SENIS)
- Literacy Service (EALS)
- SEN Early Years Inclusion Service (SENEYIS)
- Language and Communication Service
- Primary Behaviour Support and Provisions
- Educational Psychology Service
- Downs Syndrome Service

Other Support Services

- RISE NI
- Barnardo's
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Child Development Clinic (CDC)
- Autism Diagnostic Intervention Service
- Southern Health & Social Care Trust

SPECIALIST PROVISION AT PRIMATE DIXON

Primate Dixon welcomes all children and strives to meet the needs of all children in our school community.

We have;

- an Autism Specific Centre (ASC1) (Years 1 – 4)
- an Autism Specific Centre (ASC2) (Years 5 – 7)
- a Learning Support Centre (LSC1) (Years 1 -4)
- and a Learning Support Centre (LSC2) (Years 5 - 7).

We are determined to emphasise maximum inclusion and integration at all times.

We use language of positivity in regard to all children. For example, we use the term Centre at all times when referring to ASC and LSC. We never, ever use the term 'Unit' – not for Nursery and not for AS or LS classes.

All centres and classes are fully integrated parts of Primate Dixon PS, taking part in all school activities.

Admission to the Specialist Provision is by referral from the Education Authority.

When Primate Dixon PS receives referrals for placement in any of the school's specialist learning centres, we always promptly accept these requests conditional only on places being available.

Parents and children are very welcome always to visit our Centres to talk to staff and see the Centres.

KEY STAGE 1 AUTISM SPECIALIST CENTRE

Our KS1 ASC offers specialist provision for children with autism, with places for 8 children of Key Stage 1 age (5 – 8 yrs).

The facility has three dedicated staff members – Teacher and two full-time SEN Classroom Assistants.

Staff work as a team, sharing planning and delivering appropriate individual programmes for children.

Staff have developed a strong base of knowledge and expertise.

AS staff participate in appropriate specialist support training. The ASC team provides advice to other staff through the school on matters related to supporting children with Autism. The team works in close consultation with the EA AAIS Team and other appropriate statutory agencies.

We have a specially adapted classrooms to create our Specialist Provision Centres with adapted lighting and flooring, Sensory Rooms, a secure play areas along with many other adaptations.
Each centre has been fitted with adjustable height NovoTech Touchscreens. Our recently opened Sensory Corridor has been a brilliant addition to our school. It provides a unique sensory space for use by all

children within the school. The school 'Rainbow Room' also provides a calm, soothing space for children to go when they are feeling overwhelmed or need to regulate.

EXTENSION OF SPECIALIST AUTISM PROVISION AT KS2

In September 2024 we opened a much-needed Key Stage 2 Autism Specialist Support Centre.
The establishment of this additional centre will be essential to enable continuity of provision for children already attending Primate Dixon as well as other children who may be referred for placement by the Education Authority.
This Specialist Centre has places for 8 children.
Claire Hamill is the class teacher and she is supported by AS Learning Assistants Aisling O'Neill and Maureen Murray.

LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

At Primate Dixon we have a long-established Learning Support Centre to meet the needs of Key Stage 2 children.
This class has up to 12 places and is led by Roslyn Arthur supported by Margaret Taggart.
In September 2022 a Learning Support Centre to meet the needs of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children was established.
This class led by Maria Canavan and supported by Eimear Loughran and Tierna Litter has places for 12 children.
Both Learning Centres have critically important roles in meeting the needs of children.
Primate Dixon is very conscious of the rising pressure of availability of places.
Children and staff in our ASC and LSC's have access to the very best levels of resourcing and equipment.
We are committed to continue to resource both centres to the highest level possible.
The knowledge, expertise and experience that have been gained through our ASC and LSC have been invaluable in also supporting children throughout the school.
This has helped us to ensure to take down barriers and ensure that no child is left out, a key ambition with Primate Dixon Mission Statement.
We are proud of the powerful contribution and the difference for children, their families and all of Primate Dixon made by the school's specialist centres.
This has been recognised in inspections of these centres.

INTEGRATION & REVERSE INTEGRATION

The provision offered in our AS Centre and Learning Support Centres is a reflection and recognition of the inclusive and integrative philosophy of our school.

We fully acknowledge the support received from parents in helping us meet the needs of all.

Maximum integration and inclusion are fundamental parts of programmes in our ASC and LSC's.

ASC and LSC children spend as much time as possible with their own year group peers in mainstream classes and join with peers in all school activities, including at all breaks, special events and occasions.

Some activities that require small groups of children are based on 'reverse integration', this also a very valuable strategy and works for all children growing their experiences and learning.

For these activities children of the same age come into either the ASC or LSC to complete tasks together.

We have found that both integration and reverse integration is very beneficial for all involved.

Understanding the needs of others, social skills, friendship and interaction are promoted through these curriculum-based activities.

We aim for maximum inclusion of all children in all activities in our school.

We do not dismiss the 'differences' there are between people.

We do not promote tolerance.

We promote recognition and celebration of all.

NURTURE PROVISION

In April 2023 Primate Dixon opened a specialist Nurture Centre, providing support for children across the school.

The principles of Nurture are already strongly embedded in daily life and the ethos of Primate Dixon.

Nurture approaches are being promoted across the whole school and all school staff have taken part in Nurture training.

Nurture Group will support children helping them reach their potential. It is a place where children can develop and learn at their own pace while receiving the additional support, reassurance and attention that may be difficult to receive in a busy class.

LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM & STAFF WHO ASSIST IN SUPPORTING PUPIL LEARNING

Siobhán Murphy	Vice-Principal & SENCO
Brenda Gervin	ASC1 Team Leader
Roslyn Arthur	LSC2 Team Leader and Specialist Provision Co-ordinator
Maria Canavan	LSC1 Team Leader
Claire Hamill	ASC2 Team Leader

SEN Specialist Learning Classroom Assistant Team

The school's Specialist Learning Support Team assists in providing appropriate support and advice for children within mainstream class settings, working in close collaboration with all teachers.

MANAGING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

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.

A School Governor has oversight responsibility for SEN provision and practice.

Chapter 12 of the document '*Every School a Good School'* (DENI, 2010) relates specifically to the role of the governor in supporting pupils with special educational needs-based on this information, The *SEN 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
- use their best efforts to provide for pupils identified with SEN and that parents are notified of their child's special needs
- maintain and operate a policy on SEN
- ensure that where a registered pupil has special educational needs, 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 SEN and of providing appropriate teaching
- allocate funding for special educational needs and disability
- and prepare and take forward a written accessibility plan.

PRINCIPAL

The Principal, Mr Seán Dillon, will

- ensure that staff are aware of their role in meeting the needs of children with special needs
- encourage staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of special needs education
- monitor and evaluate school progress in provision of special needs education
- agree with staff the allocation of time, finance, staff and other resources
- meet with parents and external agencies as required
- support the SENCO in delivering special needs education
- negotiate adult assistance packages with the Education Authority each year
- keep the board of governors informed about SEN issues;

PRIMATE DIXON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS COORDINATOR

Mrs Siobhán Murphy is the school's SEN Coordinator and Vice-Principal.

Mrs Murphy has responsibility for

- Day to day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs policy
- Coordinate the management of school-based assessment, including standardised IQ Literacy and Numeracy
- Using SIMS performance information to monitor and track pupil & group progress
- Maintaining the SEN & Medical Register
- Manages record-keeping in respect of Code of Practice
- Liaison with class teachers regarding provision for children on the Code of Practice
- Working in partnership with parents of children with special educational needs
- Liaison with other agencies
- Ensure completion of necessary referral and advice for pupils at Stage 1 – Stage 3 on the Code of Practice
- Leading preparation and completion of Annual/Transfer Reviews
- Day-to-day management of Classroom Assistance in collaboration with the School Secretary
- establishing SEN in-service staff training requirements and contributing to training
- responding to requests for advice from other teachers
- coordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs.

THE ROLE OF THE CLASS TEACHER

Teachers are guided by

the Good Practice Guidelines – Special Educational Needs & the SEN --A Resource File.

http://www.selb.org/specialeducation/Documents/GoodPracticeGuidelines.pdf

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/resource-file-children-special-educational-needs

Class teachers know pupils in their care best.

The Class Teacher

- removes barriers to learning and promotes inclusion and positive social experience within their class
- has responsibility for planning, teaching and delivering an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in class
- has first responsibility for children in their class on any stage of the Code of Practice
- is the first member of and leads the classroom team working with the Classroom Assistant(s)
- is familiar with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and be aware of current legislation
- identifies children with possible learning difficulty and brings them to the attention of the SENCO
- prepares and reviews Education Plans/PLPs ensuring appropriate targets, strategies and provision
- shares EPs/PLPs and Reviews with parents
- adapts class work and provide resources as necessary for children with Special Needs
- provides a wide range of teaching and learning experience in their class management
- plans and delivers curriculum activities that meet the needs of each child
- monitors the progress of all children including those with Special Educational Needs
- consults with parents, ensures that a Pupil Care Plan, if necessary, has been developed, reviewed annually and is available in class
- reports to parents regarding pupil progress and development.

This includes referral to the SENCO, preparation of appropriate Individual Education Plans/Pupil Learning Plans, preparation of advice through the Code of Practice, liaison with other agencies, such as the Psychology Service, and assisting in reporting to parents.

ADDITIONAL ADULT ASSISTANCE IN THE CLASSROOM

Classroom Assistants play a vital role in supporting and developing children's learning as part of the classroom team.

Classroom Assistants in Nursery, Primary 1 and Primary 2 have central roles in provision of support to all children and to children with special educational needs in particular.

Additional Adult Assistance is available to all pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The degree of additional support is determined and set the EA Special Education Office.

This support is then deployed within school to best meet the needs of the child within their class setting.

Our team of Classroom Assistants contributes greatly to supporting individual pupils' special educational needs, sharing in planning for and assisting in delivering provision for pupils.

All school staff are aware of and are sensitive to the specific needs of individual children and seek to act in their best interests at all times.

All staff share in group discussion in regard to a broad range of specific needs of children in our school.

These needs include learning, medical, physical, social and other needs.

Review of this shared awareness takes place at the beginning of every school year and at other times as necessary.

Classroom assistants provide sensitive, discrete and supportive intervention.

The aim is always to encourage children to develop independence rather than dependence on adult assistance. In support of this, classroom assistance is never 'stitched to any individual child' – support is always discrete and appropriate and managed at the direction of class teachers.

Additional Adult Assistants will:

- work under the direction of the class teacher
- be involved in planning
- look for positives by talking to the child about his/her strengths
- provide practical support
- listen to the child/speak to staff on the child's behalf
- explain boundaries and operate these consistently and fairly
- and share good practice.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CAPACITY BUILDING

Our school is committed to SEN capacity building amongst all staff.

We have engaged in a number of In-Service training for staff in recent years including PLP implementation, Dyslexia Friendly Classrooms, Trauma Informed Practice, Theraplay, Sensory Motor Group training and Autism Awareness.

The Principal in consultation with the SENCo oversees the professional development of all staff in our school.

It is essential that all staff are keep up to date with SEN developments to provide effective teaching and support for pupils.

Following attendance at relevant internal or external education and training programmes, staff members disseminate information provided to build the capacity of colleagues.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – THE CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice is the statutory administrative process that all schools use in working with children who may need learning or other support.

This is a three-staged approach used to identify and support a child with special needs.

The Three Stages of Special Education Provision

The three stages of the Code of Practice focus on the level of intensity of the special educational provision required for a child to make adequate progress commensurate with their abilities and improve their outcomes.

Responsibility for pupils with SEN at each stage lies with the school in consultation with the parent, given the day-to-day role of the school in a pupil's teaching and learning, with increasing EA involvement when required.

A summary of the three stages of special education provision is set out below:

Stage 1 includes:

- School delivered special educational provision
- A PLP/EP is in place guiding the provision for each child
- The majority of special educational needs will be met at this stage
- The responsibility lies with the school
- Operates in mainstream schools and classes and
- Reasonable adjustments and additional strategies and approaches are implemented, aimed at meeting, and addressing the child's SEN.

The PLP/EP contains the core information/evidence of the school action to inform a request, if considered necessary, for access to EA SEN services at Stage 2.

The child will only move to Stage 2 once any external special educational provision has been implemented.

Stage 2 includes:

- School-delivered special educational provision plus external provision, for example, the EA or the HSC Trust
- A PLP/EP is required - a smaller number of children will need this provision
- The responsibility lies with the school plus external provision from EA
- Operates in mainstream schools and classes (and by exception in special school or Learning Support Centre (LS Centre) for the purpose of assessment
- And Reasonable adjustments, additional strategies and approaches are implemented plus resources, advice, guidance, support, and training provided through the EA SEN support services to address the child's SEN.

In the event of a child not making progress, despite the external support from the EA, the child may require consideration for a statutory assessment.

A new online form designed to guide the user through the process is used to make a request for statutory assessment.

The PLP/IEP contains the core school information the EA will use to consider and if appropriate make, a statutory assessment.

The pupil will remain at Stage 2 when a request for a statutory assessment is being considered, is being made and, if appropriate until a Statement is made.

Stage 3 includes:

- Pupil's Statement of Educational Needs has been put in place by the Education Authority
- School and EA-delivered special educational provision plus any relevant treatment or service identified by the HSC Trust
- A PLP/EP is required
- A smaller number of children will need this provision
- The responsibility lies with the school and the EA –with input from the HSC Trust where relevant
- Operates in mainstream schools, Specialist Centres attached to mainstream schools or Special Schools (as determined within the child's SEN Statement)
- Reasonable adjustments, the school delivered special educational provision are implemented plus EA provision as set out in the Statement.

At Stage 3, the child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs and receives special educational provision (as set out in the Statement).

The pupil's PLP/EP should be revised, to reflect the content of the statement (as it relates to the PLP (IEP) including the SEN category (or categories); setting intended outcomes based on the objectives of the special educational provision and the nature and extent of the EA's provision including any relevant service and treatment the HSC Trust are to provide; and any additional school provision or modifications to the curriculum, as itemised in the statement; the pupil's PLP (IEP) will be subject to regular monitoring, review and evaluation and will form the key basis of educational information to inform the annual review of the statement.

Exceptional Cases

In most cases transition through the three-staged assessment process occurs in sequence.

However, in exceptional circumstances, pupils may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a move to a higher stage of need is necessary immediately.

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, 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 and is carried out by the principal, Mr Seán Dillon or SENCO, Mrs Siobhán Murphy.

THE WAY AHEAD

The school will continue always to look for ways to enhance and maximise children's support services.

The school will proactively plan special educational needs in readiness for full SEND implementation. SEN will remain a priority in School Development Planning throughout the change in regulations with SEN provision and the delivery of the new SEN Framework.

The school will continue to seek innovative ways of delivering special needs, including through ICT, support strategies and intervention programmes.

The school will develop further purposeful individual target setting.

We will develop and extend support programmes such as Speech & Language Support

We will provide training opportunities for staff to support them in meeting the needs of all children.

The school establish best practice in all activity related to its Specialist Provision Classes.

Complaints & Concerns

All complaints regarding SEN in Primate Dixon will be dealt with in line with our school's existing complaints procedures.

If you have any queries in relation to special educational needs of a child with a Statement or who is currently being assessed for a statement of special educational needs, you can contact your local EA Office. Please contact your SEN Link Officer in the first instance. Contact details should be on the EA documentation issued to you alongside your child's statement.

Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS)

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) provides an independent, confidential forum to resolve or reduce the disagreement, in relation to special educational provision, between parents and school/Boards of Governors or the EA for pupils who are on the Code of Practice where previous attempts to do so have been unsuccessful.

Parents can contact the service which is provided by Global Mediation.

Involvement with DARS will not affect the right to appeal to the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) considers parents' right to appeal against the decisions made by the Education Authority about their child's special educational needs whenever an agreement cannot be reached.

This service also addresses claims of disability discrimination in school.

Monitoring and evaluating the SEN Policy

The SEN policy will be reviewed annually. It will be amended as appropriate in light of changes in legislation or practice following targeted consultation with all staff members, parents, and external agencies. This policy will be brought to the Board of Governors for final approval.

Schedule for Managing the Code of Practice	
Through the year	• Continuous updating of pupil SEN files to record actions taken throughout the year. • Liaise with Educational Psychologist/Autism Advisory & Intervention Service/ RISE /Literacy Service/ Health Professionals etc. • Attend relevant SEN training and organise pertinent training for other staff. • Liaise with EA Stage 2 Support Services periodically regarding pupils currently receiving support. • Maintain staff training record. • Meetings with parents, SEN adult assistants & teaching staff as needed. • Organise, schedule, and set agenda for Multi-Agency Support Team Meetings where required • Coordinate Risk Assessment and Risk Management Planning • Review and update SEN Policy annually • Ongoing informal exchange of advice and feedback with adult assistants. • Carry out individual assessment and testing as appropriate. • SENCO will liaise with Educational Psychology Service throughout the year, including completing online SAR1 & Educational Advice as appropriate. • Complete appropriate documentation including SAR1, Paediatric Report Requests, SNAP Ratings, HSCT Diagnostic Questionnaires • SENCO will review and update the Special Needs Register & Medical Register. • SENCO Team will lead ongoing evaluation of Code of Practice and report to School Management Team

July - August	• Receive feedback/reports from Educational Psychologist, pass on information to class teacher • File Individual Education Plans/PLPs • Complete SAR1 & Educational Advice as appropriate • Induction of newly appointed adult assistants/teaching staff. • Discuss and agree timetabling of adult assistants according to pupil needs. • Complete analysis of data. Identify SEN pupils using agreed criteria. • Review last year's SEN Action Plan and draw up plan for this year based on current needs in line with the School Development Plan. • Devise annual schedule for completion of Education Plans/PLPs and Reviews. • SENCO will share Statements/Educational/Medical/Other Advice with teachers for information/planning • Time set aside for Teachers to meet with Classroom Assistants to discuss pupils, class routines, planning, etc. • Nursery and Year 1 teachers will indicate needs relating to new pupils for registration. • Staff to meet and exchange information relating to pupils in their class. • Discussion focus on the needs of children and a review of EP's/Care Plans from previous year. • Medical Register Review • Teachers review Code of Practice files/information at this time for pupils in their class.

September - October	• Pupil Care Plans will be reviewed and agreed with parents, copies to be retained in teachers' desk folder. • Staff/SENCO Consultation on children to be included/taken off/remain on register. • Update register and SIMS accordingly and in preparation for DENI census returns. • Prioritise children for consultation with the EP. • Offer advice and support re PLPs, especially to new staff. • IEP/PLPs devised by teachers in consultation with adult assistants and pupils. • Ensure that all adult assistants are aware of current targets for pupils they are supporting. • Initial Consultation with Educational Psychologist takes place. Consultations referrals for assessment as appropriate agree and schedule assessments for the coming year. • Begin Sensory Motor Group support and interventions in Literacy and numeracy, where applicable. • PLP completed on SIMS and discussed with parents at PLP meeting. • School based INSET on SEN policy/procedural changes/capacity building to meet current pupil needs. • Begin Transfer Review documentation for any statemented P7 pupil and distribute forms to relevant parties.

November - December	• Complete P7 transfer review meetings. Submit documentation to the EA. • Teacher/Parent meetings. Teachers will discuss pupils' needs and progress with parents. • Teachers will analyse pupil's progress, including outcomes of class and other tests • SENCO will begin preparation for Annual & Nursery Transfer Reviews. SENCO will review all statements and indicate any need for review as appropriate. Request advice for pupils whose needs may have changed significantly. • SENCO will review & update Special Needs Register
January - April	• Review Term One PLPs. Collect evidence to support this. • Class teachers complete Phase Two PLPs and meet with parents to share targets and strategies. • Amend SEN Register as necessary and update on SIMS. • Principal/SENCO will carry out Nursery Transfer & Annual Review Meetings with parents and report feedback to teachers. • Monitor additional support for pupils. Review/adjust groups as necessary. • Consultation with all class teachers to monitor progress of children on register. • SENCO carry out cognitive and literacy testing for EALS referral screening (Primary 3)

May - June	• Review SIMS data recorded for Year 7 pupils, update as necessary before CTF release to Post Primary schools. • PLPs will be reviewed and updated; PLPs will be passed to SENCO. • SENCO will carry out review of additional support including pupil progress, attendance and other issues. • SENCO will agree updated lists of pupils for additional support. • SENCO/Principal will carry out standardised testing in Literacy and Numeracy. • SENCO will carry out review and update of Special Needs register. • Collection, recording and analysis of test data (Assessment Manager) • Time set aside for teachers to meet with special needs learning assistants. • SENCO will prepare report to Governors. • Begin analysis of standardised scores for pupils on SEN register. Discuss this with staff. • Identify children with significant discrepancies. • Consultation with teachers individually to reflect on overall progress of SEN pupils and highlight any potential SEN pupils currently not on register. • Prepare for transition of new Primary One pupil intake. Meet with pre-school staff and relevant parents.

WORKING WITH PRIVATE REPORTS/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND RELATED MATTERS

Primate Dixon PS policy and practice reflects EA guidance on Dealing with Private Reports/Requests.

Our key principles include

1. Working always to meet the needs of children
2. Recognising the professionalism of staff in Primate Dixon
3. Working in partnership with parents and carers
4. Working in consultation with statutory agencies, for example, Education Authority and HSC Services
5. Sharing children's information in appropriate ways only with those entitled to information
6. Being mindful always of our responsibilities in respect of GDPR regulations.

As the EA guidance notes, schools have experienced an increase in respect of private assessments and reports diagnosing medical conditions and Special Educational Needs.

Our school has experienced this increase, particularly relating to requests for teachers to complete connected reports and questionnaires.

We will complete reports/questionnaires that have come to us from the Education Authority and statutory agencies – these must be agency written requests.

COSTS

One reason for increasing requests is long waiting lists for children to be seen by EA and other statutory staff. We are conscious of the costs to parents seeking to act in the best interests of their child.

Private practitioners receive substantial payment, school staff receive no payment for any additional work.

REPORTS/QUESTIONNAIRES FROM NON-STATUTORY 'PRIVATE' PRACTITIONERS

For similar requests from private practitioners, along with any request the school should be provided with practitioner or organisation details including their qualifications/registration with their professional body.

Where the school is completing such a report, this will be forwarded to parents to forward as they wish.

We will not forward responses to any private practitioner or organisation.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

The school will not respond to any request for report/questionnaire completion for a private individual, for example, a tutor or anyone working with children privately.

We will never provide any information such as pupil reports, medical information to any private individual.

NO PRIVATE PRACTITIONER OBSERVATIONS/MEETINGS IN SCHOOL

The school will not agree to any private practitioner carrying out observations/meetings in Primate Dixon.

DEALING WITH PRIVATE REPORTS

SENCos have reported a high rise in the number of private assessments/reports coming into schools diagnosing both medical conditions and other areas of SEN. Many of these are related to the transfer tests or for examination concessions at Post Primary. Schools should always be mindful of the credentials of any private practitioner and whether they are qualified or registered with a professional body. Post primary schools also need to be fully compliant with the JCQ regulations regarding the awarding of access arrangements.

Some private assessments ask for the school to provide information through completing questionnaires. Schools should be mindful of their duties around confidentiality in light of the provisions of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 and ensure that the questionnaire is accompanied by signed consent provided from the parent (and the child themselves if appropriate), prior to sharing any information on the child. In the EA's view, best practice would be to return the form to the parent to forward on to the assessor. It is also a matter for the parent to provide the assessor with copies of any recent school reports or a copy of the pupil's statement.

The final assessment and/or report provided to the parent may be helpful in informing the work being carried out in school and should therefore be carefully considered and placed in the pupil's file. However, the school is under no obligation to follow any advice or recommendations in private reports which in the teacher's professional opinion and the schools experience of working with the child, are not appropriate for the child and/or conflict with the presentation of the pupil in school.

Nor is the school obliged to permit any private assessor into the school to undertake an observation, this is at the discretion of the principal and each situation needs to be considered on an individual basis.

Determining needs in the school context

Private practitioners and others from outside the school setting, are not always aware of school policies and what is normally available in and to a school. Whilst they may make recommendations, many of which can appear useful, it is important that these do not raise unrealistic expectations or damage the important relationships between the parent and the school when the internal school assessments do not concur with the private practitioner.

NOTES