

# Belfast Model School for Girls

## *Achievement for All*



### Special Needs Policy

Agreed by Board of Governors: June 2013

To be reviewed: June 2016

#### **Rationale**

In the Belfast Model School for Girls the term educational support is seen in its widest context. Our aim is to cater for the individual needs of every pupil within the caring yet challenging community of the school.

We believe that all pupils have the same entitlement to the full range of the school curriculum. However we recognise the need for specialised provision to ensure access to all aspects of the curriculum for all pupils without suffering disadvantages as a consequence of academic, social, physical or emotional difficulties.

We acknowledge the vision of the NI Department of Education in the document Count, Read: Succeed that every school must “ensure that every learner fulfils her or his full potential at each stage of their development”.

#### **Purpose**

*The purposes below reflect those outlined in the Count, Read, Succeed Document (Dept. Education 2011)*

- a. raising standards for all - to give all pupils the opportunity to develop as fully as possible their abilities, aptitudes and interests
- b. closing the performance gap, increasing access and equity, by providing additional support for those who are disadvantaged.
- c. developing the education workforce - to enable staff to meet identified pupil needs through appropriate support and in-service training.
- d. improving the learning environment by ensuring those pupils with learning difficulties gain access to the required ‘broad and balanced’ curriculum.
- e. developing self esteem and confidence in those pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties for whatever reason.

#### **Guidelines**

Special Needs provision in school pays due regard to the recommendations of the following documents:

- Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Supplement to the Code of Practice 2005
- SENDO 2005

- Every School a Good School SEN and Inclusion (2009)
- Count, Read, Succeed Document (Dept. Education 2011)
- A Resource File for SEN (2011)

Pupils with special educational needs are taught in mainstream classes where the curriculum and teaching methods are tailored to meet their needs. Each subject department has a representative on the Special Needs Committee who co-ordinates special needs provision within their subject area and liaises with the Special Needs Co-ordinator.

Team-teaching, support-teaching, paired reading and peer-tutoring are examples of the strategies used in school to enable pupils with learning difficulties to have access to the curriculum. Twelve classroom assistants work with a variety of classes in school. They also work in the Learning Support Unit supporting individual pupils with a wide range of special educational needs including physical, emotional and learning.

Those pupils experiencing most difficulty are withdrawn to attend the Learning Support Unit for tutorials where programmes of support are drawn up to meet their needs. Teaching staff, classroom assistants and outside agencies work with these pupils individually or in small groups. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also supported on a regular basis in the Learning Support Unit where they are helped to settle into school, improve their written and oral English and to access the curriculum. Individual Education Plans are drawn up for every pupil who receives support and these plans are reviewed twice a year. Pupils attending the Learning Support Unit are identified as being at Stage 2 or above of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs.

Pupils who are identified as being at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs receive regular support from Park Outreach Support or Secondary Pupil Support Service. A number of pupils receive support from the B.E.L.B. Peripatetic Service for Pupils with Hearing or Sight difficulties. Oakwood ASD Support Service also provides regular support for those pupils with Aspergers syndrome.

Provision for statemented pupils who are Stage 5 of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs is co-ordinated by the SENCO in liaison with the Educational Psychologist. This provision is formally reviewed on an annual basis following the B.E.L.B. guidelines.

Procedures and practices for the Educational Support Unit are detailed in the Special Educational Needs Department Policy Handbook.

***These policy guidelines are translated into action through other policies and procedures, for example:***

*Curriculum Policy*  
*Pastoral Care Policy*  
*Child Protection Policy*  
*Assessment Policy*  
*FSES Policy*  
*Examinations Policy*  
*Literacy Policy*  
*Numeracy Policy*