

# Belfast Model School for Girls

*Achievement for All*



## Special Needs Policy

Agreed by Board of Governors: May 2010

To be reviewed: May 2013

### 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.

### Purposes

- 1) To give all pupils the opportunity to develop as fully as possible their abilities, aptitudes and interests by providing additional support for those who are disadvantaged.
- 2) To develop self esteem and confidence in those pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties for whatever reason.
- 3) To ensure that those pupils with learning difficulties gain access to the required 'broad and balanced' curriculum.
- 4) To enable staff to meet identified pupil needs through appropriate support and in-service training.

### Guidelines

Special Needs provision in school pays due regard to the recommendations of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of pupils with Special Educational Needs and the SENDO 2005. All staff have received training on the implications of the SENDO legislation and a whole school approach to inclusion is central to all SEN provision.

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. Eleven 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Those pupils experiencing most difficulty are withdrawn to attend the Learning Support Unit for tutorials where programmes of support are drawn up to meet their needs.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 at least 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 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*

*Examinations Policy*

*Inclusion Policy (from Jan. 2007)*