

BLOOMFIELD COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy



Approved by the Board of Governors 22 June 2023

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N.B. *Throughout this policy, the term ‘parent’ refers to those who have parental responsibility for the pupil.*

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Bloomfield Collegiate School's aim is 'Excellence in a Caring Community'; pride is taken in being a community in which each individual is recognised and valued. The School strives to sustain a friendly atmosphere within a culture of strong pastoral care, a climate of concern and trust, and a positive working environment.

The School strives to be a community which promotes learning and the pursuit of excellence in a friendly, challenging and supportive environment. Our overarching values are:

- honesty;
- compassion;
- tolerance;
- courtesy;
- determination; and
- respect for the physical environment.

It is within this context of these values that the work of the Bloomfield Collegiate School in relation to Special Educational Needs is set. This policy is one of a suite of pastoral and curricular policies all of which seek to optimise the learning and teaching of our pupils, within a caring environment.

This policy, revised in consultation with the Board of Governors, staff, parents and pupils, outlines the framework within which the work of the School in relation to Special Education Needs (SEN) operates. The policy draws upon relevant advice and guidance including: The Education (NI) Order 1996; the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 1998); the Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 2005); the Special Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SEND0); the Disability Discrimination Code of Practice (2006). The importance of the participation of the young person, stressed in the 2005 supplement, is recognised within this policy. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "Children who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, maturity and capability of the child." This policy also takes account of Every School a Good School 2009 (DE) and The Good Practice Guidelines 2009 (Interboard).

1.2 RATIONALE

Bloomfield Collegiate School has a supportive ethos; thus, it is recognised that, not only does the School have statutory responsibilities in relation to pupils' learning, but it also carries pastoral responsibility towards all pupils in its care. The School believes that all pupils in its charge have a fundamental right to be educated and the School will seek to do whatever is reasonable to provide an appropriate education.

The School recognises that a variety of special educational needs exists; information on different types of needs can be found in *The Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 1998)* which may be found on the Department of Education website (www.deni.gov.uk/the_code_of_practice).

1.3 RELEVANT PERSONNEL

Persons contributing to the operation of this policy within Bloomfield Collegiate School include:

- the Chairperson of the Board of Governors;
- the Principal;
- the Vice Principal;
- the Learning Support Coordinator;
- Designated Teacher;
- The Heads of Year.

The names of the relevant personnel are listed in the Pastoral Care Policy.

The Learning Assistant, Ms. D. Furphy, provides support for pupils who are unable to pursue a full timetable of subjects for agreed medical, academic or other reasons. Ms. Furphy also assists with pupils who require short periods of withdrawal and support as agreed with Senior Management.

Within subject departments, pupils who experience difficulties may be offered support from a Peer Educator. Pupils who experience difficulties with Literacy and/or Numeracy and/or Study Skills are invited to attend small group support. Peer Educators assist with these activities.

1.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors accepts and will carry out the Roles and Responsibilities as set out in *The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 1998)*; the *Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 2005)*; and the *Special Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005*.

- **The Principal**

The Principal has responsibility for day-to-day management of SEN provision, overseeing decisions made by the Vice-Principal and the Learning Support Coordinator (LSCo). Along with the Vice-Principal, the Principal will inform the Governors of matters relating to SEN provision within the School.

- **The Vice-Principal**

The Vice-Principal works closely with the LSCo to oversee SEN work within the School. The LSCo inform(s) the Principal and Governors about matters relating to SEN.

- **The Learning Support Coordinator**

The LSCo (responsible to the Vice-Principal and through her to the Principal) has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this policy. Thus, the LSCo will for example:

- have responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SEN and Inclusion Policy;
- work closely with the Heads of Year, Form Teachers, Heads of Department, Subject Teachers and Support Staff, as and when appropriate;
- coordinate provision for pupils with SEN;
- liaise with and advise staff on appropriate strategies to support pupils with SEN;
- maintain the SEN and Medical Register and other records relating to pupils included on the Register;
- maintain Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for pupils with SEN;
- liaise with the parents/guardians of pupils who have SEN, including the organisation of and reporting on Annual Review meetings;
- produce an annual report;
- Control the SEN budget;
- compile and allocate resources;
- liaise with the School's Examinations Officer and invigilators regarding special examination arrangements or special consideration, and maintain appropriate documentation;
- liaise with external agencies; and
- organise and contribute to, as appropriate, staff training related to SEN.

- **Teaching Staff**

All teaching staff should be involved in the development and implementation of this policy and be familiar with its procedures. Teachers, as a matter of course, should work in conjunction with the LSCo, Learning Support Teacher (LST), Learning Assistant, and/or Form Teacher regarding individual SEN pupils, monitoring their progress and addressing needs. Teaching staff should communicate with each pupil within their teaching classes who has been placed in the School's SEN Register and, together with the pupil, draw up subject-specific individual targets, taking note of advice contained in the overall PLP. The subject-specific targets should be reviewed with each pupil regularly. Teachers should participate in any in-service training provided by the School and, when appropriate, contribute to Annual Reviews regarding the progress of Statemented pupils. Heads of Department should ensure the implementation of PLPs within their departments.

- **Learning Support Teacher**

Learning Support Teacher (LST) meet as appropriate with assigned SEN pupils to provide support and encouragement. LST consult with the LSCo and/or Vice-Principal regarding the pupil's progress, needs and development as and when necessary. LSTs maintain records of meetings with each SEN pupil and any communication with parents and produce a short summative report on the progress of their pupils at the end of the school year. The contribution of Learning Support Teachers is greatly valued within the school.

- **Heads of Year and Form Teachers**
Heads of Year (HOYs) and Form Teachers should work in conjunction with the LSCo and /or Learning Support Teacher to identify the needs of SEN pupils, set targets for them and maintain records.
- **Support Staff**
Support staff should liaise with the LSCo regarding SEN pupils, as appropriate. Peripatetic teachers should provide an annual report on pupil progress. Classroom Assistants should follow guidance laid out in the Classroom Assistants' Handbook.
- **All Staff**
All members of the school community have a responsibility to act in accordance with: The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 1998); the Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DE 2005); and the Special Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

Bloomfield Collegiate School's objectives in relation to SEN provision are as follows. To:

- follow statutory guidance;
- identify pupils with SEN as early as possible;
- decide upon and provide the appropriate support for a pupil so identified;
- devise effective monitoring systems to facilitate the success of the programmes put in place for such pupils;
- develop and sustain partnerships with parents, pupils and outside agencies to improve the quality of support provided;
- familiarise staff with the statutory requirements concerning SEN and inclusion and, where necessary, to provide training; and
- plan strategically for improving the physical environment of the school to increase the participation of pupils with disabilities, including those who may attend the school in the future.

1.6 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The admission arrangements with respect to pupils with SEN are consistent with the school's general arrangements for all other pupils.

Statemented pupils are placed in Bloomfield Collegiate School at the request of the Education Authority. When seeking to place a pupil with a Statement or specific need, the Boards take into account the:

- ability of Bloomfield Collegiate School to meet the young person's SEN;
- provision of efficient education for other young people in the school; and
- efficient use of resources.

1.7 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

It is the policy of Bloomfield Collegiate School to work closely with parents. Opportunities are provided for parents to meet relevant staff members at Parents' Afternoons or when the need arises.

The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy is made available to the school community through the School Website. Copies are available from the School Office.

Individual Education Plans are created jointly with parents and pupil, and are made available to parents by the LSCo.

Parents and/or pupils will be required to sign Data Protection agreements before application is made to the JCQ for Access Arrangements in external examinations.

1.8 ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

When finance has been provided by the Department of Education for pupils who are on the SEN Register, including those who are Statemented, the School will ensure that these resources are made available to meet the needs of the pupils under the terms of SEN legislation.

1.9 CURRICULUM ACCESS

All pupils, including those with SEN, will be given access to the statutory curriculum and extra-curricular activities. When deemed necessary to ensure pupil safety or the safety of other people within the school environment, a Risk Assessment will be undertaken. The need for reasonable adjustments will be assessed and implemented in accordance with SENDO legislation.

In some cases, it may be advisable for a pupil with Special Educational Needs to be disapplied from one or more subjects. Disapplication will usually be carried out on the written advice of an educational psychologist or a medical consultant. This will be done only with the agreement of the Principal and/or Vice Principal and the pupil's parents and it may be time limited. Such measures may lead to school requesting a Stage 2 referral, with a move

to a Statement of Special Educational Need. Disapplication from some subjects may have career implications and should be discussed with a member of the Careers' Department staff prior to implementation.

SECTION 2: SCHOOL BASED STRATEGIES

2.1 DEFINITIONS

A pupil is regarded as having SEN if she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for her. A pupil may be said to have a learning difficulty if she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; and/or
- has a disability which either prevents or hinders her from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

A pupil is regarded as having a disability if she has a physical, emotional or psychological impairment which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on her ability to carry out normal daily activities.

SEN provision means that which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

2.2 THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS REGISTER

The SEN register includes the names of all pupils with SEN, the steps taken to meet those needs and the progress which has resulted. Records inform the school's approach at each succeeding stage. When a Stage 2 referral is necessary, records are made available to the Education Authority.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A pupil may be identified as having SEN from sources such as:

- admissions information;
- parental notification or concern;
- information from a Primary or other Post-Primary school;
- undergoing Statutory Assessment;
- baseline testing;
- end of year examinations or class tests;
- Psychologists' reports;
- Medical reports / doctors' letters;
- having a Statement of Educational Needs; and
- teacher concern.

If a pupil has already been determined to have SEN on arrival to Bloomfield Collegiate School, the LSCo will be informed. The LSCo will liaise with the pupil, parents and external agencies as required, to establish or confirm the stage of the Code of Practice at which the pupil has been placed and to determine the nature of support to be offered. Teachers will be advised by the LSCo and supported in assisting the pupil in achieving her potential. The LSCo, in liaison with teachers, will review and, if appropriate, modify the provisions made.

A pupil who is identified as having SEN during her education at Bloomfield Collegiate School, will be provided with additional support.

Initial identification of a pupil with a SEN is as follows.

- A concern is raised that a pupil is experiencing academic, behavioural, emotional, organisational, and/or communication difficulty, or that a pupil has a significant medical need which is having an extended, detrimental effect upon her learning.
- The pupil may be interviewed by her subject teacher, Form Tutor or Head of Year to ascertain the nature of and/or reason for the difficulty experienced. Written records are kept on CPOMS.
- Advice, remedial strategies and reassurance are provided in liaison with the Head of Department/Head of Year/ LSCo, as appropriate. Parents may also be contacted, if appropriate. Written records are kept of the action taken.
- If the difficulty persists and it becomes apparent that a pupil fulfils the criteria laid down in the definition of Special Educational Needs, the first of the five stages laid out in the Code of Practice will be implemented.

2.4 THE THREE-STAGE APPROACH AND SCHOOL-BASED PROVISION

Stage 1	The SENCO assesses the pupil's learning difficulty and, with all available information, draws up a PLP which outlines, monitors and reviews the special educational provision made for the pupil. The pupil and her parents are invited to contribute to the PLP, and parents are advised how best to support their daughter. The PLP is shared with staff and those who teach the pupil take on responsibility to produce a SSPLP in liaison with the pupil. The PLP is reviewed at agreed intervals, the SENCo deciding if the pupil remains at Stage 1, progresses to Stage 2, or is removed from the Register.
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Stage 2	The SENCo consults with outside specialists on the need for external assessment of the pupil. If appropriate, a referral form is completed by the SENCo. Following an external assessment, a report on the educational need and the support required is sent to the school and a copy forwarded to parents. The SENCo uses this advice to revise or draw up a PLP and to make special examination provision, if appropriate. The SENCo takes advice from outside agencies as to whether the pupil should remain at Stage 1 be moved to Stage 2, or progress to Stage 3. The Education Authority is informed, if appropriate. Staff draw up and work to subject-specific individual targets.
Stage 3	The Education Authority considers the need for a Statement of Special Educational Need and, if appropriate, makes the Statement and arranges, monitors and reviews provision. A PLP-is written and subject teachers draw up and work to subject-specific individual targets.

The LSCo is responsible for storing securely all Concern Forms and other information related to a pupil. When appropriate, the name of the pupil will be entered on the SEN Register along with a record of her specific educational needs as required by DENI guidance for Schools on SEN categories (2006). Parents/guardians will be consulted and informed of the provisions made. Progression through Stages 2 and 3 is determined by the Education Authority.

Consultation and open discussion between the pupil's parents/guardians, the school, the school doctor or the young person's general practitioner, the community paediatrician and any specialist services providing treatment for the young person will be essential to ensure that she achieves maximum progress and is not unnecessarily excluded from any part of the curriculum or school activity because of her condition, care or treatment.

A PLP will come into action in the following areas, as appropriate:

- Curricular needs;
- Teaching requirements;
- Non-curricular needs; and
- Review arrangements.

It will include:

- the nature of the young person's learning difficulties;
- action - the special educational provision – staff involved including frequency of support – specific programmes/activities/ materials/ equipment;
- help from parents;
- targets to be achieved in a given time;
- external agencies involved;
- pastoral care or medical requirements;
- monitoring and assessment arrangements; and
- review arrangements and date thereof.

The SEN and Medical Register (stored on Teams, SIMS and RM Staff) includes records of pupils with:

- learning difficulties;
- emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- physical disabilities; and
- medical conditions which have an effect upon the pupil's learning.

The Register outlines the nature of the problem, and the stage of each pupil on the Code of Practice. The Register permits both removal and addition.

2.5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAKING AND DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

The Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service (DARS) came into effect on 1 September 2005 as a result of SENDO. It exists to:

- resolve disagreements between the Education Authority/Boards of Governors of schools and parents about the way in which they carry out their responsibilities towards children with special educational needs; and
- resolve disagreements between parents and schools about the provision being made for children with SEN.

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

SENDIST considers parents' appeals against the decisions of Education Authority about children's special educational needs, where parents cannot reach agreement with the Board. Should a parent wish to take a case to tribunal the steps are laid out clearly in the booklet "Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal - How to Appeal", obtainable from the Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19 7PR.

Further information may be obtained from www.education-support.org.uk/parents/special-education.

Reviewing Committee: Education Committee

Dates of Policy Review

Nature of Change	Date of Consultation with Parents and Staff	Date Review Completed	Date Ratified by Board of Governors
Minor Amendments	n/a	September 2016	29 September 2016
Minor amendments	n/a	September 2017	28 September 2017
Minor amendments	n/a	September 2018	22 November 2018
Minor amendments	n/a	October 2019	28 November 2019
Minor amendments	n/a	October 2021	2 December 2021
Minor amendments	n/a	May 2023	22 June 2023

Accessibility Plan

This Accessibility Plan considers:

- physical accessibility to the building;
- accessibility where there are communication difficulties;
- accessibility to the curriculum for all our pupils and
- accessibility to examinations.

Issues of accessibility are ongoing and it is recognised that new issues may arise from time to time. Any new issue of accessibility will be considered as it arises.

The school considers that issues of accessibility are relevant to pupils, staff and visitors.

When deemed necessary to ensure pupil safety, or the safety of other people within the school environment, a risk assessment will be undertaken.

Physical Accessibility

The school is served with lifts in the Gray, Weir and Neill Buildings. Staff trained in using the lifts assist pupils who have long-term disabilities or temporary medical issues.

There is an evacuation chair in the Weir Building and relevant staff have been trained in its use.

Alterations to the building have been made to assist pupils with visual/ physical difficulties, e.g. handrails added to increase stability on steps; steps painted to reduce the risk of falling.

Adult assistance is arranged as required, and provision of classroom or other assistance is flexible, so that those with the greatest need are assisted as best we can.

Designated car parking spaces are set aside for disabled visitors to the school. Appropriate toilet facilities are available in the Gray, Weir and Neill buildings and in the Sports' Hall.

Pupils with difficulties in moving around the school site are assisted in the following ways:

- careful choice of the best routes between classrooms and other areas;
- arrangements to pass through areas not used by other pupils;
- different chairs are used as and when required;
- toilet facilities are flexible when required;

- times of moving between classes are flexible, when pupils need to avoid the crowd at regular times of changing class.

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is created by the First Aid Coordinator when necessary. The PEEP provides an evacuation plan for pupils who cannot evacuate the school building unaided. The information contained on the PEEP is up-dated as required and communicated to the pupil and staff concerned by the First Aid Coordinator. Thus, a PEEP ensures that the correct level of assistance is always available. Copies are made available to staff.

Communication Accessibility

Where required and upon request, application will be made to the Education Authority for interpreters/ translators, so that parents and others can communicate with staff and can participate fully in discussions. Parents may bring their own interpreters / translators to concerts, parents' evenings and so on, if they so desire.

Accessibility to the Curriculum

The school will make every effort to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Exceptions to this may be granted where there are medical, learning or other issues where disapplication from a subject is the best option for a pupil.

As far as possible, the school will take the following measures to ensure optimal accessibility to the curriculum:

- training for all teaching staff in dyslexia-friendly measures;
- use of FM systems where these are advised for any pupil (and when the pupil brings this equipment to class);
- provision of enlarged / enhanced handouts and copies of materials, where required, either in-house, or through the Education Authority Vision Support service;
- a continued increase in the number of interactive whiteboards throughout the school.

Accessibility to Examinations

The LSCo will keep a register of pupils who require Access Arrangements for Examinations.

The JCQ is a membership organisation comprising the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK. The JCQ provides a single voice on issues of examination administration and, when appropriate, qualification and wider education policy. These regulations for schools can be accessed on the JCQ website.

An Examination Access Arrangement is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to examination board approval) in an examination, where a particular need has been identified.

They allow candidates with **special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries** to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

This can be in the form of:

- **Extra time:** students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% (or more in exceptional circumstances) depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Teacher.
- **A reader:** a trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of the 'Reading Section' of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would write the answers themselves but can ask for them to be read back to them.
- **A scribe:** a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers, or may type on a computer themselves with the spelling and grammar check off.
- **Word processor:** for exceptional reasons, a student may be given access to a computer for an examination so they can word process their answers (without the spell and grammar check facility). This **cannot** be because a student types faster than they write or because they prefer it, but must be to account for significant disadvantage.
- **Rest breaks:** where students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the examination and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the examination but not actually using any extra time.
- **Prompter:** where a student has little sense of time or loses concentration easily, a trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

Important Information

There are a number of pieces of evidence that are needed to apply for Access Arrangements to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- A report from the Specialist Teacher (Mrs Waterworth) which notes:
- Evidence of persistent and significant difficulties, which would usually have been identified in Primary school and/or during Key Stage 3;
- Evidence from teachers that this difficulty impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- Evidence that the Access Arrangement is the student's normal way of working in school, i.e. that they routinely take more time to complete work, or always need a scribe to complete written work.
- Educational assessments and tests e.g. reading speed, reading comprehension, writing tests. These are conducted by Mrs Waterworth as the School's Specialist Teacher. JCQ states that '*significant difficulties*' are those which place a student in the bottom 14% of the population, and it should be noted that it is not necessary to have a diagnosis, nor does a diagnosis guarantee Access Arrangements if the student scores above this criterion.
- If Medical issues are the difficulty (and this includes ADHD and ASD) then a letter from a Consultant or a Clinical Psychologist stating the need for extra time is required.

Private Educational Psychologists' Reports

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by Private Educational Psychologists and submitting the reports to Learning Support as evidence that their child should be awarded Access Arrangements.

Often Private Educational Psychologists recommend that children should receive Access Arrangements which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Teacher) recommends. The school will not accept the recommendations of a Private Educational Psychologist reports, but will instead follow the recommendations of the Specialist Teacher as required by JCQ regulations.

JCQ regulations state that 'a privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award Access Arrangements and cannot be used to process an application'

Private reports should only be requested in consultation with Mrs Waterworth. They can be helpful in the case of concerns which cannot be identified by school testing, or if a diagnosis is required. If this is the case, Mrs Waterworth will speak to the Psychologist before the consultation in order to complete the report on the student's background, provide the evidence from teachers and the student's normal way of working in school.

Information from Primary Schools

Baseline testing completed in KS2

Evidence of need gathered during internal examinations and assessments

Parental Referral

Teacher Referral

Individual educational tests conducted at staff or parental request