



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

RATIONALE

At Derby Montessori School we believe that all children have equal rights to quality education and childcare; and that all aspects of the curriculum should be accessible to every child regardless of sex, race, religion or ability. This belief forms the core of our mission statement. We strive to provide a series of learning environments where all children delight in every aspect of learning and every child desires to learn more. Every child matters in this school and every child is seen as a unique and diverse individual. The Montessori Method forms the framework which is at the heart of everything we do and which guides ethos, philosophy and practice within our school. The Montessori approach prepares us to support all children whatever their degree of ability. A minority of children have particular learning difficulties either throughout, or at a particular time, during their time with us; by liaising with parents and outside agencies we aim to optimise support for such children. This policy ensures that the needs of children with SEN are identified and provision is made in order for each child to access the full range of the curriculum and thereby fulfil their potential.

DEFINITION

Special Educational Needs (SEN) refers to any circumstances which result in a pupil requiring additional or different help in order to take full advantage of the opportunities offered to others of the same age.

A pupil is deemed to have special needs if she/he:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, and/or
- Has a disability which hinders the use of the educational facilities provided.

AIMS

Working in partnership with the parents of current pupils, we are committed to ensuring that:

- The special educational needs of pupils are identified, assessed and provided for
- Appropriate provision is made for all children in the classroom and around school
- All pupils are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential
- Classroom teachers are given support in teaching pupils with SEN, to ensure that learning is differentiated according to the needs of the pupil.

OBJECTIVES

- To apply a whole school policy to meeting each child's needs following the guidelines of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES 2001) and the Disability and Discrimination Act 2002.
- To identify at the earliest opportunity any children with special educational needs.
- To provide different levels of intervention to match the child's need e.g. Concern level (ICP), School Action Level (IEP) and School Action Plus.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of each child's needs so that such needs may be met in all school settings.

- To consult with both parents and the child at “School Action” level in order to set targets for IEPs and for consistency of support both at home and school.
- To consult with external agencies including educational psychologists and health professionals.
- To ensure that regular reviews of the pupils progress are conducted.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of practice in support of children with special educational needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CO-ORDINATOR

“Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school’s head teacher, SENCO and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities. All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. Teaching such children is therefore a school responsibility.”

(para 5.2 and 6.2, SEN Code of Practice, DfES 2001)

The Special Needs Co-ordinator at Derby Montessori School is Mrs Julia Cudbard. She is responsible for the co-ordination of provision.

The SENCO will:

- Monitor and implement the policy.
- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the school’s SEN policy.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with SEN.
- Advise and support staff.
- Maintain an up-to-date register of identified children.
- Oversee the records of pupils with SEN.
- Liaise with external agencies, including the LEAs, educational psychologists, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.
- Organise screening and assessments.
- Liaise with the parents of pupils with SEN.
- Contribute to in-service training of staff.
- Recommend resources to be purchased appropriate to the needs of the children with SEN.

ADMISSIONS

All applications for admission are considered equally. However, prior to entry parents are expected to disclose any learning support assessment, identified needs, medical condition, behavioural issue or disability, which might need additional support in enabling the child to access fully the educational provision of the school. This allows us time to liaise with parents and other professionals to ensure that the appropriate support and facilities are able to be provided.

ACCESS

The main facilities are all at one level and well lit. All doors into the property are wide. There is a block paved disabled parking bay and block paved area with a gentle incline to the Children’s House door. We have a portable ramp for access in through the Toddler Community entrance. Provision has been made to install a disabled toilet in the cloak room. The outdoor area is on a series of different levels, the lower level has a slight step in the paved area. Raised flowerbeds provide easy access and digging for all children. Derby Montessori School has a Diversity and Equality Plan which includes improving physical access to the setting and the provision of educational equipment and physical aids for pupils within the setting. In line with this the facilities may be adapted or modified, within reason, in response to the assessment of each child’s individual needs.

CURRICULUM ACCESS

We believe that all children with special educational needs should have full access to the curriculum. Arrangements for additional support are monitored by the class teacher and SENCO to ensure that those who need additional support are able to access this in a way that is positive and which does not disrupt their timetable unduly. Improving curriculum access is included in our Diversity and Equality Plan.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Class teachers and/or Key Workers are responsible for the initial identification of a child's needs. Members of staff are asked to "highlight" children that from their classroom observations and assessments begin to show difficulty in a particular area or areas. A teacher will then write an ICP (concerns plan) which will involve target setting by the teacher/ key worker and be reviewed termly. The ICP will be kept in the class SEN file, but photocopied for the School Files. ICPs are not shared with parents or the child as they may go on and off ICPs as targets are met.

If the class teacher feels that a child has failed to make appropriate progress after the regular structured input by the teacher, then the child is moved to "School Action" level where an IEP is written and shared with the parents and child who are required to sign the plan. Again, this is reviewed termly. A child may go straight on the SEN register at School Action level if the class teacher feels that the learning problem requires additional intervention.

School Action Plus involves support from outside agencies. For children under five this will involve a referral to the Early Years Intervention team to access additional support. For older children this may involve working with GP's, speech therapists, educational psychologists, the Support Service for Physical Impairments or other relevant professionals or agencies.

All ICPs and IEPs are shared with other members of staff, including specialist staff. Copies of the ICPs and IEPs are kept in the Special Needs file. However, it is the class teacher/keyworker's responsibility to inform other staff that may be involved in a child's education about any ICPs/IEPs.

LEARNING SUPPORT

In using the Montessori Method across the classes in our school we are able to offer a broad and stimulating curriculum which provides for a wide range in competence and performance. Vertically grouping and individualised targets ensure that support is in general already tailored to the needs of each pupil within each class. Different types of support are available at Derby Montessori School depending on the level and nature of the learning problem. Support may involve extra sessions with the SENCO or another member of staff, time off for specialist support or support from a helper within the classroom.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Should a parent/guardian feel that inappropriate special needs provision is being provided, or if there are any other concerns, then parents should make an appointment to see the class teacher and the SENCO if necessary. If parents are not satisfied they may wish to make an appointment with the Principal.

TRANSITION TO OTHER SETTINGS

When children leave Derby Montessori, a copy of their latest ICP or IEP is forwarded to the child's new school together with the latest Progress Report.

REVIEW

All children identified as having special needs will have their progress reviewed three times a year (in October, February, June). The outcomes of IEPs are signed by the teacher, child and parent and a new updated plan is implemented.