



12 Courtenay Hill, Newry, Co Down, BT34 2EA
Phone: (028) 3026 2175

ST CLARE'S ABBEY NURSERY UNIT



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Principal: Mrs M Monaghan MEd (Educational Management) PQHNI
E-mail: mmonaghan771@c2kni.net

Definition of Special Educational Needs

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit that Special Educational Needs be defined according to the Education (Northern Ireland Order 1996 which suggests that "A child has Special Educational Needs if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age or a disability which prevents him or her from making use of educational facilities generally provided in ordinary Nursery Units".

Translated into the Nursery Unit situation the child will be deemed to have special needs if they demonstrate a significant delay in the development of cognitive skills, social/emotional skills and communication skills.

Aims of the Nursery Unit

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit that the aims for children with Special Educational Needs are consistent with the general aims of the Nursery Unit. We, as a Nursery Unit, would endeavour to provide a broad, balance, relevant and differentiated curriculum so that all children learn at a pace appropriate to their ability and reach their full potential.

We, as a Nursery Unit, would aim to promote effective communication between Nursery Teacher, staff, parents and, where appropriate, external agencies in order to create a positive learning environment.

It is the policy of this Nursery to integrate as fully as possible children with Special Education Needs.

It is the aim of the Nursery Unit to ensure that they are offered the full Nursery Curriculum, which may be structured or modified to suite their particular needs.

Where it is deemed to be necessary, or appropriate, a child may be encouraged towards certain areas of the curriculum in order to address a specific developmental concern.

Admissions Arrangements

Children with Special Needs are admitted to this Nursery Unit in the same manner as all other children.

The Nursery Teacher's role

The Nursery Teacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Special Educational Needs Policy and she will avail staff of training where possible. The Nursery Teacher will ensure the fostering of appropriate attitudes, set standards, monitor the provision for pupils with Special Needs and provide a pastoral care system. As an experienced teacher, she will demonstrate a positive attitude, good teaching methodology, understanding and compassion. She will work with colleagues to ensure appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs.

It is part of the responsibility of the Nursery team to bring concerns to the attention of parents. These concerns may span a wide variety of areas, from speech, behaviour to age appropriate learning and development. These children will be added to the Register of Concern and parents will be kept informed at each stage.

The Nursery Teacher will:

- Help to identify children with Special Educational Needs, e.g. through observations and WellComm screening.
- Provide support and advice to classroom assistant to ensure effective teaching and learning.
- Maintaining records on pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- Liaising with the SENCO in the main school.
- Managing and developing appropriate resources.
- Liaising with parents, support services and agencies.
- Reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Nursery Unit's policy.
- Ensuring detailed notes, observations and assessments are being carried out by the Class Teacher and any other staff working on a one to one with SEN children.

Support Staff

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit that there will be planned regular opportunities for liaison between support staff and teaching staff. Weekly planning will occur at staff meetings involving the Nursery Teacher and classroom assistant(s).

Full co-operation will be given to all outside agencies and support staff, information made available and facilities provided for peripatetic staff to work with the SEN children within the Nursery Unit.

The Nursery Unit maintains a multi-disciplinary approach and will liaise fully with external agencies.

Identification and Assessment

- Children with Special Educational Needs are identified to this Nursery Unit in different ways.
- The Educational Psychologist has often identified many children prior to the child starting Nursery and, therefore, the Nursery Unit is aware of any Special Needs before the Nursery Unit term begins.
- Children who are identified as having Special Educational Needs after observations and assessments carried out by staff.
- Communication of difficulties/concerns made by parent or carer.
- Staff will monitor and assess all children on a regular basis, with any concerns being acted on at an early stage in accordance with the Code of Practice.

The Structure of Special Educational Provision

It is the normal policy of this Nursery Unit to follow the five stage approach as set out by the Code of Practice (September 1998). However, with the young age of the children being catered by in the Nursery and the short timescale that they attend, it may be that, after consultation with the school SENCO, some of these stages may be shortened in order to obtain the best provision for the child.

Access to the curriculum

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit that pupils with Special Educational Needs should experience teaching and learning in a variety of situations. This will include working with the whole class, in a small group situation and on an individual one-to-one basis. Focus planning and individual educational plans with clearly defined and appropriate objectives will ensure that children with Special Educational Needs enjoy success in learning. The Nursery Unit recognises the importance of providing a broad and balanced curriculum for children with Special Educational Needs. Thus, classroom assistance is used as a support rather than to single out a child and therefore ensure that Special Educational Provision is, as far as possible, made within the classroom setting.

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit for class teachers to have adequate time set aside for discussion with parents, SENCO and outside agencies so that agreed programmes of work may be established. The Nursery Unit will make use of all support available and will initiate contact with outside agencies and set up meetings, as required.

Partnership with Parents

It is the policy of this Nursery Unit to foster an atmosphere in which a partnership between the parent and the Nursery Unit can flourish.