



Exeter Steiner School *Policy for children with Special Educational Needs*

Introduction

This policy has been written in line with the expectations and guidelines of the SEN Code of Practice. Exeter Steiner School provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to the diverse learning needs of the children.

It is accepted that some children have barriers to learning which mean that they have special needs and require particular action by the school. Teachers take account of the special educational needs presented by the children they teach and make provision to support individuals or groups of children through their planning, ensuring that all children are able to access and participate fully in the curriculum.

Some children may require additional or different help from that given to other children of the same age. Children may have special educational needs at any point during their school journey. These may last throughout the time a child is in school, or may present for a given period of time, after which, often as a result of strategies employed to support the child, no particular action is required. Teachers take account of the type and extent of the difficulties experienced by individual children in their short term planning.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To create an environment which meets the educational needs of all children;
- To ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- To make clear the expectations of all stakeholders in the process;

Definition of Special Educational Needs

A pupil has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A pupil has a learning difficulty if they:

- i. Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age/class; or
- ii. Have a disability which prevents or hinders the pupil from making use of educational facilities provided for pupils in that age group in the school

Special educational provision means:

Educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision generally made for other pupils of the same age.

A Graduated response

In line with the SEN Code of Practice, Exeter Steiner School uses a graduated response to pupils with SEN:-

Initial response

If a teacher or parent has a concern about a pupil's behaviour or learning abilities, or the class readiness checks highlight any concerns, the initial response would be to raise the matter at the weekly teachers' meeting. The discussion at this point may lead to the child becoming the subject of a child study. The SENCO is always part of the weekly meeting and has input into the child study. Because the School has a very small number of staff, we may ask, after consultation with parents, for an assessment/advice from one of a number of external advisors.

Further action - internal

The outcome of the initial response will decide on the most effective action. In most cases this would take the form of internal actions, such as:

- A consistent approach by all staff involved – usually with significant input by the SENCO in the form of the drawing up of I.E.P.'s etc.
- Therapy and/or medicine and/or counselling;
- (Internal) assessment for specific learning difficulties by the qualified professionals called in by the School;
- Learning Support Lessons (usually following the assessment mentioned above);
- Other Support.

Further action - external

Part of the recommendation may be for a pupil to be seen by a specialist outside the school. Occasionally this may happen immediately a problem is identified, but usually it will be when it is clear at the child study or review stage that not enough progress is made and more expert help is needed. This route will involve consultation with one or more of the following:

- The child's GP
- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist
- Child Psychiatrist
- Social Services
- LEA (e.g. in the case of a school or parental referral/request for statutory assessment)
- External Special Needs expert or therapist
- Other

The School considers all children as having individual needs and aims to meet these needs as best as possible taking into consideration the child's age, developmental stage and other circumstances.

The Admissions policy ensures children with SEN are only accepted when a) the child's needs can be met, and b) their acceptance to the school does not adversely affect the education of the pupils already in our care.

At Exeter Steiner School the pupils are educated in two distinct phases:

- i. Early Years - Ages 3 – 6 (U5s & KS1)
- ii. Lower School - Ages 6 – 12 (KS1, KS2, KS3)

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has given the responsibility for Special Educational Needs to the SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO), who works cooperatively with the Teaching Group.

The SENCO is Dimitra Liakou, Class teacher

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the SEN policy;
- Liaising with, and advising, all members of staff;
- Coordinating provision for children with SEN;
- Maintaining a SEN register and overseeing records on children with SEN;
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN or ensuring that other teachers do so;
- Contributing to training and keeping all members of staff informed of new developments and issues;
- Liaising with internal specialists (see under School Action above);
- Liaising with external agencies (see under School Action Plus above).