

# Special Educational Needs – Policy Statement

## Part 1.

### BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROVISION AT ST. JOHN'S

This SEN policy details how this school will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them. The school will use its best endeavours to ensure that teachers in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs to allow pupils with special educational needs join in the activities of the school so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated.

The school will have regard to the **Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2002** when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs.

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. The school recognises that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of children with special educational needs will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

Children and young people with special educational needs often have a unique knowledge of their own needs and their views about what sort of help they would like to help them make the most of their education will be ascertained. They will be encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition processes.

### MISSION STATEMENT

**St. John's School and College is committed to providing a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum. The curriculum is seen as a critical element in increasing knowledge, skills and competence, creating a climate for positive behaviour and improved self esteem. Young people who leave St. John's will demonstrate increased personal responsibility, social competence and intellectual curiosity.**

## Objectives that secure our Mission Goal

- The provision of a broad, balanced relevant and differentiated curriculum.
- A curriculum that challenges all our pupils to achieve intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and personal growth. Pupils will be encouraged to face and overcome physical challenges.
- The development, through the 24 hour curriculum of a structured programme and positive ethos that encourages and enables pupils to display good behaviour and improve their self esteem.
- The provision of a Personal and Social Education programme for all pupils and students in the school designed to provide pathways to independence.
- Close working relationships between the school, parents, professionals and the child or young person in achieving comprehensive but accurate planning and realistic but challenging targets.

## Criteria for Admission

Pupils and students will be admitted to St. John's on the following basis: -

- A learning difficulty to a degree that requires a pupil to have a statement of special educational need maintained by a Local Education Authority.
- A learning difficulty to a degree that requires a student over 16 years to seek a placement through the support of the Learning + Skills Council.
- Pupils/students admitted from outside Great Britain are unlikely to have a statement of special educational need but will meet the other criteria for admission listed below.
- Pupils/students will be between the ages of 7 (NC Year 3) and 19 (Year 14).

The learning difficulties supported by St. John's School will normally fall into the range described as moderate. However the additional needs experienced by most pupils/students referred to St. John's will mean that their needs are complex in nature. No clear parameters exist for pupils/students with complex learning needs but it is possible to define some needs that the school is unable to meet. St. John's would not be able to meet the needs of pupils or students who:-

- have profound and multiple disabilities (PMLD);
- are unable to use stairs or manage steep slopes;
- are unlikely to develop either spoken language or signed communication skills;
- are unlikely to become continent;
- have sensory impairments that require specialist input on a daily basis;

- have disturbed, difficult or challenging behaviour to such a degree as to endanger themselves or others.
- Pupils are likely to have an additional problem, including medical, speech and language, behavioural and social problems that are overlaid on their learning difficulty. Pupils and students will be placed at St. John's if local and appropriate provision within the maintained sector is unavailable or if local provision does not compete on a 'value for money' basis.

In addition, for resident pupils and students:

A clear reference in the child or young person's statement to a need for residential provision;

In addition, for day pupils and students:

The provision by St. John's of an educational programme suitable for that pupil/student and not available within educational provision found locally.

Pupils and students will be admitted to St. John's on the basis of the following procedures: -

- receipt from the referring LEA of the assessment reports that contributed to the most recent statement and/or annual review;
- the initial agreement of senior staff concerned that the referral falls within the parameters of our admission criteria;
- discussion with the parents and pupil/student about the programmes on offer at St. John's, the needs of the pupil/student and the willingness of the parents and pupil/student to enter into a partnership in regard to future educational and care programmes;
- discussion with the school or unit from which the pupil/student is coming (this may well include a senior member of the St. John's staff observing the prospective pupil/student in their 'sending' school);
- agreement by senior staff at St. John's that there is an appropriate peer group (socially and intellectually) into which the pupil/student can be placed.

A detailed flowchart outlining our admission procedure may be found in an appendix to this policy.

## **Provision**

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 and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities. All staff are teachers of children with special educational needs. Teaching such children is therefore a whole school responsibility.

At the heart of the work of every teaching and care group is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing which takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children. The majority of children will learn and progress within these arrangements.

## Facilities for meeting the needs of pupils and students placed at St. John's

- An experienced and qualified staff for who further professional development is an on-going commitment.
- Teaching and residential facilities that are designed to meet the needs of our pupils and students and which are the subject of regular review in relation to quality and suitability.
- Recreational facilities and resources.
- Planning and review procedures that ensure staff are working to appropriate targets and in a consistent and coherent manner.
- Individual pupil and student support from specialist staff where appropriate.
- Regular access to computer assisted learning through the school's Integrated learning System;
- Medical oversight at a level appropriate to individual needs.
- Speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy at a level appropriate to individual needs.
- Access to the services of the School Counsellor / Psychotherapist.
- Access to services within the local health authority that support the medical or psychiatric needs of pupils and students within the school.

## Staffing

The Governors of St. John's School shall appoint a SENCO to develop, review and implement the whole school policy for pupils with special educational needs. In addition the SENCO shall assist with the integration of the school's special educational needs policy with other whole school policies. The appointed person will assist the Governors and Headteacher in the following ways:

- To be well informed, provide active leadership and set high expectations for what can be achieved by staff and pupils.
- To have the expertise, opportunity and support needed to influence practice.
- To have the desire to secure high standards through the dissemination of effective teaching and learning methods throughout the school.
- To maintain the school's SEN Log and take action where necessary in response to particular patterns of referral or movement between graduations.
- To be responsible for the co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational need and the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN Policy.
- To monitor information gathering and action prior to a pupil being placed on school action and to take a lead in managing provision for pupils at school action onwards

- To monitor the provision made for pupils with special educational need including the quality of IEP's, quality of planning and delivery of the inclusive curriculum.
- To advise on implementing the four strands of action to meet pupils special educational needs
- To ensure that for pupils with statements staff are aware of the recommendations of the statement and make provision accordingly
- To co-ordinate monitor and review the work of SEN teaching assistants working in the school in consultation with other staff
- To act as a focal point for collating information coming into and going out from the school concerning pupils with special educational needs.
- To plan and co-ordinate school's arrangements and strategies for identifying all pupils with SEN
- To advise and where appropriate carry out more detailed observation and assessment as needed including the views of the staff parents and pupil.
- To co-ordinate the drawing up of IEP's and group programmes of appropriate teaching help in collaboration with staff, parents and pupils
- To develop, maintain and oversee an efficient system for monitoring and recording the progress of pupils with SEN
- To contribute to annual review procedures for pupils with statements
- To promote partnership between the school and the parents/carers of pupils with special educational need to involve parents in reviews, to provide them access to information and records, and to ensure parental views and concerns are recorded.
- To promote pupil participation in target setting and IEP reviews
- To liaise with and manage visits by the support services, the SPS, EWO, and other outside agencies.
- To be involved with senior management in advising the Governing Body on the effective allocation of support for special educational need including the provision for pupils with statements.
- To liaise with SENCO's from local schools to share expertise to encourage the dissemination of good practice.
- In setting clear realistic targets for raising standards, to be a part of a manageable plan for achieving them including evaluation arrangements.
- To actively contribute to the professional development of all staff involved in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs including clearly identifying the role of teaching assistants in their work.
- To ensure that all staff are familiar with the graduated response to special educational need and the way in which information about pupil's needs and views are recorded and co-coordinated.

- To provide help and advice to all staff on teaching strategies and approaches to behavior management for pupils with SEN.
- To promote inclusion and enable access to the curriculum through curriculum development and differentiation including the use of ICT and other equipment/materials.
- To assist with identification of the training needs of school staff and to contribute to whole school INSET.
- To disseminate information, advice and good practice to both parents and Governors of the school; and to monitor the policy and provision for pupils with special educational need and evaluate its effectiveness.

The school will appoint a number of teaching assistants that will support the learning needs of all children and particularly those for whom intervention is being undertaken. Teaching assistants shall be deployed to provide the following;

- Inclusion support
- Class based support
- Individual support

Support for individual pupils will be met in the following ways:

- Individual and small group work supported by teaching assistants both within the classroom and withdrawal.
- The use of ICT hardware and software particularly through the acquisition of new software .
- The opportunity to record work in a variety of ways.

Further policy information on the role of the teaching assistant will be found in an Appendix to this policy.

The school will assess each child's current levels of attainment on entry in order to ensure that they build upon the pattern of learning and experience already established. If the child already has an identified special educational need, the SENCO and the child's class teacher will use this information to

- Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum.
- Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class.
- Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties.
- Ensure ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning.
- Involve parents in implementing a joint learning approach at home.

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English, requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual child teachers will look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the language that is used there or arise from special educational needs.

In order to help children who have special educational needs, the school will adopt a graduated response that recognises there is a continuum of special educational needs and brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. The school will record the steps taken to meet the needs of individual children. The SENCO will have responsibility for ensuring that the records are kept and available as needed. If schools refer a child for a statutory assessment, they should provide the LEA with a record of their work with the child including the arrangements they have already made.

### **The role of the SENCO in St.John's School**

The SEN Coordinator (SENCO) responsibilities will include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy.
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs.
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers.
- Managing teaching assistants.
- Overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs.
- Liaising with parents of children with special educational needs.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Liaising with external agencies including the LEA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.

## Part 2.

### THE ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AT ST. JOHN'S

#### Arrangements for assessment

Many pupils and students who are admitted to St. John's will have undergone a range of assessments before entry and some will have had regular assessments for a variety of reasons throughout their life. There is no need to duplicate assessments that have current validity and continue to offer useful information on which the school can construct meaningful programmes and set realistic targets.

Assessment of pupils and students at St. John's will be carried out for the following reasons: -

- diagnostic information may be needed in order to identify more effective learning programmes and teaching methods or to apply effective behaviour management strategies;
- baseline information on current levels of competence is needed in order to set realistic goals for future achievement;
- to measure the extent of an individual's progress against targets set;
- to fulfil statutory obligations (for instance end of key stage assessments);

On admission to St. John's pupils/students will be assessed using all or some of the following strategies depending on the needs of the child and the usefulness of the information that arrives with them:-

- informally assessed on their performance within the curriculum;
- formal assessment using standardised tests;
- diagnostic testing in order to gain information about learning styles; areas of strength and weakness in literacy, numeracy and thinking skills;
- extended periods of observation;
- any assessments made by the medical or therapy staff;



## **Annual Review and Target Setting Individual Education Plans**

Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will include information about:

- the short-term targets set for the child
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- outcomes (to be recorded when IEP is reviewed).

The IEP will only record that which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum and will focus upon three or four individual targets that match the child's needs and have been discussed with the child and the parents. The IEP will be reviewed at least twice a year and parents' views on their child's progress will be sought. Wherever possible, the child will also take part in the review process and be involved in setting the targets.

### **Annual review of a statement of special educational needs**

All statements must be reviewed at least annually with the parents, the pupil, the LEA, the school and professionals involved invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's needs or to the special educational provision specified in the statement. The annual review should focus on what the child has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved.

At the review in year 5, the aim should be to give clear recommendations as to the type of provision the child will require at the secondary stage. Where it is considered desirable it will then be possible for the parents to visit local secondary schools and to consider appropriate options within the similar timescales as other parents. Where return to mainstream is considered to be a viable option for the child, the SENCO of the receiving school should be invited to attend the annual review of pupils with statements, to allow the receiving school to plan an appropriate IEP to start at the beginning of the new school year and enable the pupil and the parents to be reassured that an effective and supportive transfer will occur.

The annual review held in year 9 will be particularly significant in preparing for the pupil's transition to employment, the further education sector, work-based training, higher education and adult life. The aim of the annual review in year 9 and subsequent years is to review the young persons statement and draw up and review the Transition Plan. This must involve the Connexions Service. (Details 9:45 Code of Practice 2001)

## **Allocating resources**

All pupils and students attending St. John's enjoy the benefit of small class groups. The size of class and teaching groups varies between 4 and 12 depending on the needs of the group and the subject being taught.

Some pupils and students may from time to time need the additional support of 1:1 adult help, either from a specialist teacher, special support assistant, a speech therapist or physiotherapist, educational psychologist or from an external agency. Where necessary such additional help will be provided on the basis that the need has been identified either through the statement or annual review or from the results of internal assessment.

Some pupils and students will need greater access to information technology and this will be allocated on the basis that the need for greater access to technology has been identified either through the statement or annual review or from the results of internal assessment.

The distribution of resources both human and physical will be under the direction of the Heads of Education.

## **Reporting to parents**

The school will report to parents on the progress of pupils and students in the following ways: -

- through a combined curriculum and care report issued at the end of the summer term;
- through the reports attached to the annual review and through the annual review conference;
- through informal and formal contact with parents at open days held twice a year;
- through interim reports associated with Behaviour Management Reviews;
- through copies of Individual Education Plans and Individual Care Plans;
- through reviews called by other agencies, e.g. social services and health authorities;
- through regular letters of commendation linked to the good behaviour of their child;
- through occasional home visits by school staff;
- through home-school contact books

### Part 3.

## THE ORGANISATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AT ST. JOHN'S

### Organisation of classes

The school and college operate from different sites; the college being situated in Brighton and the school in Seaford.

Pupils and students will normally be placed in classes according to their appropriate National Curriculum year group.

In the secondary department subject specialists will increasingly deliver the curriculum. However it will be necessary to balance the need for specialist teaching with the preservation of extended contact with the year group coordinator.

Further information may be found in the prospectus

### Graduated response

St. John's will adopt a graduated response to meeting special educational needs that requires the initial use of classroom and school resources before bringing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a pupil is experiencing. When a young person is identified as having special educational needs, the school will intervene as described below at **School Action and School Action Plus**. Such interventions are a means of helping the school and parents match special educational provision to individual pupil needs. We will record the steps taken to meet the needs of individual children.

When the child is admitted into the school, the head teacher, SENCO, Heads of Education, departmental and pastoral colleagues will:

- use information from the previous school to provide an appropriate curriculum for the pupil and focus attention on action to support the pupil within the class
- ensure that ongoing observation and assessment provides feedback about pupil's achievements to inform future planning of the pupil's learning
- ensure opportunities for the pupil to show what they know, understand and can do through the pastoral programme
- involve the pupil where appropriate in planning and agreeing targets to meet their needs
- involve parents in developing a joint learning approach at home and in school.

## Early Identification

Assessment is a continuing process that can identify pupils who may have special educational needs. The school will measure children's progress by referring to:

- evidence from teacher observation and assessment
- their performance against the level descriptions within the National Curriculum at the end of a key stage
- their progress against the objectives specified in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Frameworks
- standardised screening or assessment tools.
- annual monitoring of value added points

## English as an additional language

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual, the school will look carefully at all aspects of a pupil's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the language that is used there or arise from special educational needs.

## Monitoring pupil progress

Teachers may conclude that the strategies they are currently using with a pupil are not resulting in the pupil learning as effectively as possible. In these circumstances, they will consult the SENCO to consider what else might be done. The starting point will always be a review of the strategies being used and the way in which these might be developed. Evaluation of the strategies in place may lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the particular class or subject. Consideration should then be given to helping the pupil through School Action. The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance, be progress which:

- closes the attainment gap between the pupil and the pupil's peers
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less
- than that of the majority of peers
- matches or betters the pupil's previous rate of progress

- ensures access to the full curriculum
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- demonstrates improvements in the pupil's behaviour
- is likely to lead to appropriate accreditation
- is likely to lead to participation in further education, training and/or employment.

### **School Action**

When a pupil is identified as having special educational needs, school will provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. This intervention will be described as School Action. The triggers for intervention through School Action could be concern, underpinned by evidence, about a pupil who, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a pupil's identified area of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

If school concludes, after consulting parents, that a pupil may need further support to help them progress, they will consider their reasons for concern alongside any information about the pupil already available to the school. The school SENCO will support the assessment of the pupil, assisting in planning future support for the pupil in discussion with colleagues and monitoring the action taken. The pupil's subject and pastoral teachers will remain responsible for working with the pupil and for planning and delivering an individualised programme. In some cases outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. In such instances it is good practice for these professionals to liaise with the school and keep them informed of their input. If these professionals have not been working with the school, the SENCO, with the parent's permission, will contact them.

## Nature of intervention

The SENCO and the pupil's teachers should decide on the action needed to help the pupil to progress in the light of their earlier assessment. This might be: -

- to provide different learning materials or special equipment,
- to introduce some group or individual support,
- to devote extra adult time to devising the nature of the planned intervention and to monitoring its effectiveness
- to undertake staff development and training aimed at introducing more effective strategies.
- access to LEA support services for one-off occasional advice on strategies or equipment or for staff training may make it possible
- to provide effective intervention without the need for regular or ongoing input from external agencies.

## School Action Plus

**School Action Plus** is characterized by the involvement of external services such as special needs advisory teachers, educational psychologists etc. A request for help from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the SENCO and colleagues, in consultation with parents, at a review of the child's IEP. At School Action Plus external support services will usually see the child, so that they can advise subject and pastoral staff on new IEPs, with fresh targets and accompanying strategies, provide more specialist assessments that can inform planning and the measurement of a pupil's progress, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide support for particular activities. The triggers for School Action Plus could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support, the pupil:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of pupils of a similar age
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with their own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits, providing direct intervention to the pupil or advice to the staff, by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

When school seeks the help of external support services, those services will need to see the pupil's records in order to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have been set and achieved. The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the pupil directly. The resulting IEP for the pupil will set out new strategies for supporting the pupil's progress with the strategies specified in the IEP, implemented, at least in part, in the classroom setting. Delivery of the IEP will remain the responsibility of all teachers.

If the SENCO and the external specialist consider that the information gathered about the pupil is insufficient, and that more detailed advice must be obtained from other outside professionals, then the consent of the pupil's parents will be sought.

### **Planning and the delivery of support**

After a period of initial observation and assessment all pupils and students will have an Individual Education Plan and all resident pupils and students will have in addition an Individual Care Plan. Education and Care plans will seek to set appropriate but challenging targets of three types: - short (half termly or termly), medium (annual) and long term (over a key stage). Plans will also identify strategies for individual support and the necessary resources to achieve the targets set.

Some pupils/students will benefit from extra teaching support delivered on an individual basis. Individual learning programmes will be devised to improve pupil/student performance in the areas of literacy, numeracy or thinking skills. Pupils will be selected for such programmes on the basis of the need for such a programme has been identified in the statement. The Individual Learning Programmes are delivered on a withdrawal basis and so are only used to support those pupils/students where such a programme has specific requirements that cannot be delivered through the normal individualised and differentiated class lessons.

The provision of speech therapy, occupational therapy psychotherapy and physiotherapy. Pupils and students at St. John's may well need support from the speech therapist, occupational therapist, psychotherapist and the physiotherapist. Pupils will be selected for such programmes through two separate routes.

1. The need for support from a therapist has been identified in the statement.
2. The class teacher has referred to the therapist for assessment and possible support.

Support from either therapist may be delivered in class alongside the class teacher, in small groups by withdrawal or in 1:1 sessions. Wherever possible therapists will aim to minimise the effects of withdrawing children from curriculum time.

## **Inclusion**

In the recent past the school and college have been able assist a significant number of pupils and students to be re-integrated into mainstream schools and colleges. This has been achieved by enabling the young people to gain positive experience through supported attendance at local schools and FE colleges. It is not unusual for around 20% of our school and college population to be involved in some form of attendance in mainstream provision at any one time.

Encouraging our pupils to attend a variety of clubs and societies in the local community further supports this. Many of our pupils attend cubs, brownies, scout, guides, and church youth groups, army cadets amongst others. Additionally great use is made of the local communities through regular shopping trips and leisure activities such as cinema and theatre visits.

Where such potential is apparent, progression plans are constructed at the annual review with the full support of parents and local education authorities. We believe that having a clearly defined plan will enable those students for whom inclusion is a distinct possibility to realise long-term goals in preparation for adulthood.

## **Evaluating success**

All staff at St. John's are regularly reminded of the need to be accountable for the progress of pupils and students to the young people themselves, their parents as well as the LEA's who fund the placement. It is important that all staff have some meaningful way of judging the effectiveness of our work and assessing whether the school is providing value for money. The following are performance indicators that help the school know how well it is doing: -

The progress made by pupils. This can be measured from base line assessments made soon after admission or by referring to the targets set by the child's statement of special educational need or by the last annual review.

Measures of progress can include: -

- goals accomplished by annual review dates;
- targets achieved by half termly or termly review;
- progress made in small steps programmes;
- progress made through schemes of work;

Progress made by pupils and students and recognised in annual reports to parents and through Records of Achievement.



The satisfaction of pupils in their placement with St. John's. Indicators of this could include;

- a low percentage of unauthorised absences;
- record of involvement in the 24 hour curriculum;
- willingness to take on 'homework' etc.

The satisfaction of parents with the placement of their children at St. John's. Indicators of parental satisfaction could include a low level of complaints; letters of appreciation etc.

Other indicators will include;

- Movement of pupils and students, as part of a natural progression, to appropriate and less 'exclusive' onward placements.
- The achievement of pupils as measured by the number gaining recognised and properly accredited qualifications.
- The success in pupils sustaining academic, leisure or vocational placements in 'normal' settings outside St. John's School.
- The progress made by pupils and students along the dependence to independence pathway as demonstrated by regular negotiated assessments and/ or through nationally accredited awards.

### **Complaints from parents**

Parents have a right to have their concerns and complaints listened to carefully and in a professional manner.

The school has a policy for dealing with complaints from parents and is to be found in the school prospectus

## Part 4.

### STAFF DEVELOPMENT

#### The provision of INSET

St. John's School is committed to staff training and development. We wish to provide the opportunity for all staff to develop their own interests and expertise as they relate to the needs of the whole school. All staff will have right of access to professional development. St. John's will commit itself to the Investors in People Award.

A Staff Development Policy was first agreed in June 1994 and is reviewed on an annual basis. St. John's School and College is a registered NVQ Centre

#### Support for staff

All newly appointed staff will receive an induction programme suited to their individual needs this will include:

- Awareness training on school policies and operational practice.
- The appointment of a staff mentor.
- Initial feed - back on performance and access to an on-going appraisal system when the appraisal scheme is operational.
- Provision of an induction pack designed to familiarise newly appointed staff with the school prior to and immediately after taking up coming into post.

All staff should operate in a clear line management structure that will offer a 'first line' of personal and professional support. The Headteacher, Heads of Education and Heads of Care offer an 'open door' policy to staff in need of additional personal and professional support. In addition the school 'buys in' the services of an educational psychologist who is able to devote a proportion of her time to supporting staff.

All staff including the Headteacher take part in a scheme of fortnightly supervision.

## Part 5.

### PARTNERSHIP WITH GROUPS OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

#### Partnership with parents

The school is committed to developing effective partnerships with parents. The needs of our children and young people will be most fully met where effective partnerships exist. The school has the following strategies for encouraging and supporting contact with parents: -

- the annual review process which encourages parental contribution to both the review of progress and target setting for the coming year;
- regular (often twice termly) newsletters;
- open days when parents can visit the school and talk either formally or informally to staff;
- an 'open door' policy that welcomes parents to the school at all reasonable times;

#### College links

The school has developed excellent links with two local Colleges of Further Education (Brighton and Lewes). At present our Year 11 pupils spend a day a week at Lewes Tertiary College on Link Course and students in the St. John's FE Unit spend a day a week at Brighton College of Technology on a similar course. The school extended its use of Brighton College and Lewes College to include access onto mainstream courses for some of our students.

#### Links with Health Service, Social Services and Voluntary Organisations

The school has a responsibility to maintain good working relationships with all the departments across the country that have a responsibility or a desire to support pupils and students at St. John's School. In particular we have strong local links with the following services: -

East Sussex Social Services (support for local children and young people where needed; inspection);  
Brighton & Hove Social Services;  
East Sussex Careers Service (with whom St. John's has a contract);  
Carousel (a service promoting the visual and performing arts for young people with special needs) & other arts groups;  
Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance services;  
South Downs Health Authority (Child & Adolescent Psychiatry; Hospital and Consultant Services);  
The Outlook Foundation (which supports the residential and vocational needs of young adults of 19 - 25 with learning disabilities);  
Seaford Baptist Church and Brighton and Hove Town Mission  
6th Seaford Scout Group  
6th Seaford Guides and Brownies

Elm Court and Mercread Youth Centres

**8th Revision September 2002**  
**Don Kent, Headteacher**

Appendix A

## THE ROLE OF LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE CURRICULUM

The effective deployment of staff raises issues for teachers and their helpers about the best use of other adults when children are being taught as a whole class. OFSTED has commented on the apparent waste of learning support assistants who are left without a role when the teacher is leading from the front. No one wants to waste expertise. The purpose of this appendix is to suggest constructive roles for additional adults.

The paper contains the following sections:

- Oiling the wheels
- Behaviour management
- Resource management
- Teaching assistant
- Supervision
- An extra pair of eyes

Σ  
In general...

### Σ **Oiling the wheels**

Even when the teacher is leading from the front, there is a role for the learning support assistant in oiling the discussion by:

- drawing in reticent pupils - the children who are too timid to put up their hand and answer a question, e.g. "I think Jamie has an idea"; "Kelly has a good example"; "Go on, Lisa!"
- starting the ball rolling when children are slow to contribute, e.g. "I can see something that starts with that sound on your desk"; "I think we were talking about one of these the other day."

- supportive (silent) behaviour towards less able or less confident children, drawing them in to the lesson, e.g. nodding, smiling encouragement, “hmmmm”, eye contact
- making contributions - as long as it doesn't pre-empt pupils joining in with Show Me activities, songs, recitation, choral reading, etc.

These activities can be useful because:

- they model for pupils how to make contributions, e.g. the tone, length and manner of participation
- they prevent the lesson from becoming too teacher-dominated
- they encourage wider participation, especially among pupils who are shy
- they keep discussion going when it flags or when pupils are stuck

### **Behaviour management**

Although the teacher has responsibility for behaviour management, learning support assistants can help to prevent and manage incipient behaviour problems by:

- sitting alongside a difficult child so they can be settled and involved
- focusing the attention of inattentive pupils on the teacher, by directing them to look, answer or apply themselves to questions as appropriate, e.g. “Have you seen the book, Simon? Do you know the answer? Go on, put your hand up!”
- eye contact, by sitting at the front rather than the back, so facial gestures can be seen
- learning support for children who need specific help to access the lesson, e.g. visually impaired children who need enlarged text on the knee

### **Resource management**

The use of props and resources is set to increase as the NLS and NNS promotes greater interactivity in whole class time. Recent training has promoted the use of whiteboards, flashcards, postboxes, marker pens, overheads, magnetic letters and more, aimed at encouraging all pupils to apply themselves and get involved in the lesson.

Learning support assistants may well have a role in storing and maintaining such resources, and in the lesson itself can:

- prepare, distribute and collecting pupil resources, e.g. handing out white boards, pens and cloths so that the lesson moves briskly and the teacher has more time for teaching
- help pupils use resources, e.g. encouraging the right grip on the marker pens, prompting pupils to hold up cards so the teacher (or other pupils) can see them

- support the effective use of teacher's "props", e.g. changing OHTs, reading a part in a play, operating equipment.
- Some assistants also manage the transition from whole class teaching to group time, whilst the teacher moves straight into guided time.

## Teaching assistant

Confident learning support assistants may move into a more pedagogical role in helping the teacher deliver the lesson. Examples might be:

- echoing the teacher by repeating, rewarding or refining teaching points, e.g. repeating or rephrasing instructions for pupils who are slow to respond: "That's right - look for the speech marks"; "See where Mrs Goodwin is pointing"; "Remember what you've been told about sounding words out."
- directing attention, e.g. pointing at the feature in the big book under discussion; running a finger beneath a script during reading aloud taking part in a double act, e.g. working the puppet in phonics games
- acting as demonstrator, e.g. modelling how to scan a passage for the teacher, showing how to use a dictionary on a regular basis, demonstrating how one works out a spelling - a living exemplar
- playing the "devil's advocate", e.g. raising questions or problems, pretending not to understand so the teacher can go through step-by-step tuition
- playing Box and Cox - where the topic can be listed or staged in simple steps, taking turns with the teacher to explain each step, and thus helping maintain pupils' attention
- acting as the teacher's memory bank: e.g. "Stephen's turn next"; "John's not had his hand up for a while"; "We said we'd go back to..."; "I have a dictionary here..."

## Supervision

Within the whole class time, there will be spells of independent work in which learning support assistants can be used to support slow or less-able pupils. In "time out" or "thinking time" discussion - when pupils are asked to brainstorm, discuss or develop a point to feed back immediately to the whole class - there is considerable pressure to respond in a short time.

An assistant can help slow and less-able pupils to formulate a response, and alert the teacher that they are able to make a contribution. Thus less-able pupils can be guaranteed a secure and risk-free opening to contribute.

When pupils are asked to work on whiteboards individually or in pairs, an additional adult can circulate to check first attempts and prompt pupils to think again before they show their effort to the teacher.

An additional adult can take on a "troubleshooting" role, e.g. responding to queries about the task, sorting out minor disagreements within groups, getting latecomers up to speed.

## An extra pair of eyes

The most obvious benefit of learning support assistants is the presence of an extra pair of eyes (and ears) for:

- observing individual pupils - but always knowing what to be looking for and how to record it.
- Behaviour, level of participation and recording specific responses are the easiest behaviours to observe. It helps to have an agreed simple format for written notes, especially if there's little time for post-lesson discussion.
- noting who "can" and who "can't" - recording the names of those pupils who can't do a particular task is a useful form of assessment, e.g. noting which pupils have difficulty in applying a spelling rule, identifying the adjectives in a list or making the correct final sound in a word.
- picking up emergent issues - by keeping a weather eye open for pupils who are struggling with a topic or exhibiting new behaviour
- comparing notes and giving feedback to the teacher - offering a personal perspective on why, for example, some pupils failed to grasp the main point, or giving another perspective on why a particular child has become restless

In general...

Learning support assistants are entitled to know the objectives of each part of the lesson have a clear role in each part of the lesson agree ground rules with the teacher:

- assistants must be actively engaged in the lesson
- have sight of or copies of planning sheets
- sit in the best place to fulfil the role
- know the content of IEPs
- feed back any significant observations
- have an agreed method or format of feeding back

Assistants could take on responsibility for:

- revisiting the key points later with a group of pupils in need of consolidation work
- contributing to forward planning
- keeping a record of significant observations to share with the teacher

- planning to develop their own skills and role

**As a result of reading this appendix, you could**

- go on to audit what skills and approaches are already in use in your class
- discuss other approaches
- consider what new skills are needed
- find ways of seeing, sharing and developing practice
- develop a whole-school policy for the participation of classroom assistants

**Don Kent**  
**Principal / Chief Executive**

**Reviewed: October 2004**