

Bell's Brae Special Department

Autistic Spectrum Disorder Policy

Revised June 2006

BELL'S BRAE SPECIAL DEPARTMENT ASD POLICY

This document has been developed in collaboration with parents and professionals and draws extensively on experience and practice to date. It sets out the policy of Bell's Brae Special Department in relation to pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

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1. AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Children with an autistic spectrum disorder exhibit to a greater or lesser degree a triad of impairment which is the defining characteristics of autism:

- Language impairment across all modes of communication: speech, intonation, gesture, facial expression and other body language.
- Rigidity and inflexibility of thought process: resistance to change, obsessions and ritualistic behaviour.
- Difficulties with social relationships, poor social training, lack of social empathy, rejection of normal body contact, inappropriate eye contact.

Those who receive a diagnosis of ASD have many important similarities to one another, especially in the areas of social interaction, communication, perservation and conceptualisation. These common characteristics have important implications for educational programmes and provision and will be the major focus of this policy.

Pupils with overlapping, but different diagnosis (Aspergers Syndrome, ASHD) will share enough common characteristics that they will probably benefit from some of the educational strategies described.

Children with autistic spectrum disorder have an increased likelihood of also having one or more specific learning difficulties: Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Disorder, ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and secondary mental health problems.

The diagnosis of ASD is for health professionals – Clinical Psychologist and Consultant Paediatrician, however education staff contribute on request to the diagnosis process at CDI case conferences.

It is expected that there will be some children who have not been diagnosed as having ASD but who will show autistic features. Where this is the case, department staff will respond to the child's needs and the response will not be constrained by the presence or absence of a diagnosis.

2. POLICY

The principles which underpin the Department's practice with regard to children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder are:

- Partnership with parents.
- Interagency working.
- Early identification and intervention.
- Appropriate provision for individuals including outreach support.
- Educational and social inclusion.
- Staff training and support.

3. THE CONTEXT

The Law

As most of our pupils have educational needs which are pronounced specific or complex and which require to be kept continually reviewed, they mostly have Records of Needs. With the implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004, these will become Coordinated Support Plans.

Some of our pupils with severe autistic spectrum disorders are properly described as disabled. Where this is the case, parents and carers will be advised and supported in their application for disability allowances.

National Developments in Education

The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) has issued extensive guidance in relation to good practice for pupils with additional support needs.

‘A Manual of Good Practice in SEN’ 1998, sets out good practice in relation to collaborative working, decision making and providing an appropriate curriculum for children and young persons with additional support needs. Bell’s Brae Special Department supports the recommendations in this manual.

During 1999 SEED issued initial guidance in relation to setting targets for pupils with additional support needs. Department staff strongly supports this initiative.

Both these documents make reference to preparation and maintenance of IEPs for children with significant ASN. All children with a diagnosis of an ASD who attend Bell’s Brae Special Department or who have outreach support will have an IEP and their progress will be kept under continuing review.

Authority Policy

Shetland Islands Council is committed to the principle that all pupils are entitled to an appropriate educational and social experience. The Council will support the rights of individual pupils in Shetland by ensuring that:

- All pupils with special needs have the greatest possible opportunity to have their needs met within a local mainstream setting.
- Highly specialised national provision is made available where the needs of an individual child cannot be met within the Education Authority.
- All staff are offered training in the general area of Support for Learning.

The Department

a) Pupils

Currently the Special Department supports the needs of 35 children with difficulties on the autistic spectrum.

Ages range from 3-14.

Within this group the range of abilities vary from severe autism with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour to able pupils with some autistic characteristics.

The broad range of abilities and needs across the spectrum is recognised and is taken into account by Department Staff when considering pupils placements, adaptations to the environment and support strategies to access the curriculum.

b) The Environment

Within the Special Department we provide a secure environment which aims to match facilities to the needs of the pupils.

Class 3 has been adapted to accommodate the most challenging pupils who require a secure, distraction-free environment where resources can be stored and presented in a controlled fashion and there is space for individuals who find prolonged group activities too challenging.

Classes 2, 4 and 5 also cater for pupils with ASD but also pupils with a range of other needs. Individual work stations have been provided for those who require them as well as chill-out space and space for group activities.

The need to keep the environment clutter free with well organised resources is recognised.

Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder are all included in the mainstream dining hall and make use of other facilities in the school and local environment as appropriate.

The school has several playgrounds which children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder make use of and a secure playground for those pupils with no danger awareness and who find it difficult to cope with larger crowds.

The Nursery classes are used as the main provision for younger pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Here early inclusion is established with additional support provided as necessary.

The department also has 4 smaller rooms where individuals can be withdrawn for specific tasks or at times of additional stress.

Staff from the Special Department are also involved in supporting pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in mainstream settings where they advise on and assist with adaptations to teaching style, lesson organisation and delivery, classroom layout etc to accommodate pupils' learning style, decrease anxieties and increase understanding.

c) Staffing

There are 5 Additional Support Needs Teachers, 1 Depute Head Teacher, ASN, 22 ASN Auxiliaries a part time music instructor and 0.5 of a PE Teacher. Regular input from Health Board therapy staff (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Learning Disabilities Nurse).

Classes are staffed according to need. On occasion a pupil will require 3:1 support in order to keep everyone safe.

Generally the department is well staffed. Currently 1 child is deemed to require 2:1 support at all times, this is under constant review.

Certain situations and teaching approaches will require more intensive staffing, e.g, initial teaching of PECS.

High staffing levels are required to make mainstream inclusion meaningful and successful. It is recognised that staff support needs of pupils may not remain static and is therefore kept under review.

4. APPROPRIATE PROVISION FOR INDIVIDUALS

All children with an ASD are individuals with their own strengths, interests and needs.

In order to accommodate the range of needs of children with ASD a range of educational provision is required. The Department aims to provide this by adopting a flexible approach which truly looks at the needs of the individual and provides an environment that enables the child to learn and which works towards enabling the child to function in a more inclusive environment.

The following range of teaching approaches are used:

Symbolise the Environment

Pictorial timetables and objects of reference are widely used.

Pupils who require a more pictorial approach have access to writing with symbols;

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is used effectively with many of the non-verbal pupils.

TEACCH

A TEACCH type approach is adopted for those pupils who are recognised only to succeed when a more structured approach is in place. The physical structure of the classroom is considered. Schedules are used consistently and a clear work system is developed which allows the pupils to understand the sequence of events - what work they are to do, how much work, how they are making progress, what happens when the work is finished.

Multi Disciplinary Approach

It is recognised that to address the wider needs of our pupils it is important to develop a co-ordinated multi-disciplinary approach. Bearing this in mind staff at the Special Department have close working relationships with Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Learning Disabilities Nurse, Specialist Teams, Respite Services, Mainstream Teachers, parents and pre school staff.

Communication

(see also Bell's Brae Special Department Language and Communication Policy)

As all pupils with ASD have difficulties with some aspects of communication there are clearly implications for how the curriculum is delivered.

Staff recognise that language skills diminish when pupils are stressed.

Approaches used to encourage meaningful interaction at the earliest level include signing (Makaton), PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System).

Staff recognise that pupils with ASD have restricted interests. It is important that the child's special expertise is included but not allowed to become the only thing in their life. Staff try to use a child's special interest to develop skills in other areas.

Children with Autism tend to take things literally. We recognise the need to keep language simple, direct and unambiguous. Common idioms should be taught. Staff set very clear goals and make sure the child is clear about what is expected.

Pupils with ASD have difficulty with inference, verbal reasoning and following instructions, listening, knowledge of listener needs, turn taking, initiating conversations, body language, tone/volume.

To teach them aspects of social communication, social communication groups are being developed.

Pictorial timetables and a multi-sensory approach to communication are encouraged - verbal and drawing, verbal and objects/pictures, written instructions.

Social Stories are written for individual pupils for specific situations which they find difficult.

Personal passports have been prepared for most pupils.

Mini passports – pupil profiles are also in place for some pupils.

All pupils have had Speech and Language Therapy referrals and have specific Speech and Language Therapy targets set. These targets have been incorporated into the daily learning plans for each of the pupils. The Speech and Language Therapist liaises regularly with class teachers regarding individual pupils and also provides more formal staff training on topics such as PECS and Social Stories etc.

Training

Signing Classes are held weekly within the Department for all staff. Although signing is rarely the main means of communication for pupils on the autistic spectrum we have found that some pupils do make effective use of a few signs, e.g. to ask for items or request more. Other Training includes, ASD Level 1, Stories Socials, Comic Strip Conversations.

Awareness Raising

Older, more able pupils are helped to understand their difficulties by following PSD projects such as "I Am Special".

Staff from the Special Department are asked to provide awareness raising for staff and pupils in outreach settings.

Often this will happen as part of the planning process for inclusion. At other times a request for awareness raising will come as part of the PSD curriculum of the mainstream pupils.

Topics discussed

- Individual difference
- Physical/Sensory
- Signing
- Awareness of the difficulties and needs of an individual
- Visits to Special Department.
- Regular Reverse Inclusion

It is recognised that many pupils with ASD find the freedom of the playground more difficult to manage than the structure of the classroom.

With this in mind we hope to develop a Buddy System in 2005-2006 here at Bell's Brae as part of the development plan. This system is already successfully developed at some outreach settings.

Self Evaluation

All pupils are encouraged to think about their performance and to be as aware as possible of their targets.

- Pupils are involved in target setting
- Pupils complete the 'My Meeting Booklet' for reviews
- Pupils have reward charts for good behaviour completion of work etc.
- All About Me Booklet

Assessment

Early identification of difficulties and assessment of need is valuable and welcome. Pupils with more severe difficulties, especially when accompanied with learning difficulties, are usually noticed during their pre school years. The department works closely with the Pre School Home Visiting Service.

More able children may start school before difficulties are recognised.

Pupils are referred to the Child Development Initiative (CDI) for diagnosis.

Within the school setting the following assessment tools are used to plan IEP's.

- PEP-R
- 5-14 Elaborated Curriculum
- Formal and informal Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy Assessments.
- National Tests (where appropriate).
- Ongoing observation by staff who have a thorough knowledge of autistic spectrum disorder, the triad of impairments and the nature of Asperger's Syndrome.
- Observation Profile Checklist – Aspergers Syndromes and Autism in the Early Years, Practical Guides for Teachers by Val Cumine, Julia Leach and Gill Stevenson, as recommended by Janet Stirling.

Such assessments can take account of functioning in:

- Social interaction
- Social communication
- Social imagination, flexible thinking and play
- Cognitive ability
- Attention control, language levels, fine and gross motor functioning and independence skills
- Ability to follow instructions and compliance.

Curriculum Administration

a) Co-ordinated Support Plan?

On 14th November 2005, the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 finally became law. This Act is the most significant and far-reaching change to education law in Scotland in over 20 years.

A co-ordinated support plan is the rough equivalent under the new rules of a record of needs. While it is not a direct replacement, the co-ordinated support plan is the only statutory document of this type which exists under the 2004 Act - just as the record of needs was under the 1980 Act.

Section 2 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 sets out the criteria for eligibility to a co-ordinated support plan. There are four:

1. An education authority must be responsible for the child's or young person's school education (i.e. no CSPs for pre-nursery age children, nor for those educated by parental choice at home or in independent schools);
2. The child's or young person's additional support needs must be likely to continue for more than a year;
3. The additional support needs must be caused by one or more complex factors or by multiple factors (hint: don't worry too much about the distinction as both boil down to whether or not there is or is likely to be a "significant adverse effect" on the school education of the child or young person);

4. Crucially, significant additional support must be required from education as well as at least one of the following:

5.

- social work (or another, non-education, council function) services;
- a Health Board; and/or
- another local authority.

The Scottish Executive and education authorities have been planning the implementation of the Act on the basis of approximately 1% of pupils requiring a co-ordinated support plan. This is around half the number of pupils who had a record of needs.

What does a Co-ordinated Support Plan look like?

A co-ordinated support plan must include the following sections:

- factors giving rise to additional support needs;
- educational objectives;
- additional support required;
- persons providing the additional support;
- nominated school;
- additional support provision co-ordinator; and
- parental advice and information officer on the co-ordinated support plan.

.. and additionally ..

- the name, address, contact telephone number, date of birth, gender, preferred language or form of communication, school currently attended and the date of entry to that school of the child or young person;
- the name, address, contact telephone number, relationship to the child or young person and preferred language or form of communication of each parent of the child or young person;
- a profile of the skills and capabilities of, and any other relevant information relating to the child or young person;
- any views expressed by the child / young person / parent(s) on the plan; and
- the review timetable for the plan in accordance with the statutory time limits.

<http://www.additionalsupportneeds.org.uk/index.htm>

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/>

<http://www.enquire.org.uk/>

<http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/>

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b) Individual Education Programmes

An IEP is:

- A dynamic response to individual needs
- Rooted within the planning for all pupils within the class
- A programme which provides opportunities for a balanced range of experiences
- Social in context
- Positive in tone' (SIC Support for Learning Teachers Manual)

All pupils who attend the Special Department will have an IEP.

For most of our pupils targets will be set for all areas of the curriculum.

For a few of the children who are in split placements targets will be set only for some areas of the curriculum.

IEP's should ideally be written in conjunction with all those involved in a child's education. In practice we have discovered that the class teacher must take the lead role. It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure that the IEP is kept up to date.

The IEP should be a guide for the use of anyone involved in teaching the pupil. It is a working document which will give specific guidance on:

- Personal details
- Diary of contacts with parents and other professionals
- Members of staff responsible for IEP – agencies involved etc
- Aptitudes and abilities
- Aims
- Long term targets
- Short term targets which will include teaching and learning resources and teaching and learning strategies
- Assessments
- Relevant documents – reports, minutes,
- Samples of work
- Evaluation

Who sees the IEP?

Parents, pupils, teachers, auxiliary staff, other professionals

Points to note

- Records should be kept in a secure place
- Confidential information must remain so. Information must only be shared on a need to know basis
- The working part of an IEP / daily plans should not be locked away but should be in daily use

Further information on Individualised Education Programmes can be found in

- EPSEN , SOEID
- Assessing our Children's Educational Needs, SEED
- Manual of Good Practice, SOEID
- Support for learning – Teachers Manual, SIC
- Support for Learning, SCCC
- Raising Standards :Setting Targets A handbook for Schools and Education Authorities, SEED

c) Setting Targets

Key Principles

“All young people in our schools have the right to receive an education of the highest quality which is appropriate to their needs and aptitudes. They should have every opportunity”:

1. to develop skills which will help them contribute effectively to an increasingly complex and changing society
2. To achieve their full potential, regardless of special educational needs, social or other background factors
3. Have their achievements recognised”

Raising Standards – Setting Targets, Support Pack: SEN, Booklet 1, SEED

The setting of targets is recognised as a major component in providing appropriate, interesting and challenging programmes of work for our pupils.

Target setting is an integral part of the cycle of assessment, planning, teaching, recording, reporting and evaluating.

In recognition of the major role in the coordination of the target setting process played by class teachers in the Special Department one morning Non-Class-Contact-Time has been granted at the beginning of each session for class teachers to plan long-term targets. Where possible parents and members of the interdisciplinary team should be consulted regularly. It is possible to consult with SALT most Thursday afternoons. In recent years it has proved more difficult to have regular access to physiotherapists and occupational therapists. However the importance of such contact is fully recognised and advice will be sought from those agencies when necessary. Liaison time between class teachers and specialist teachers (VI, HI, PE, Music) should also be arranged when necessary. Class teachers should bear in mind that advice can be sought from the Learning Disabilities Nurse, the Dietician, the Community Children's Nurse, Social Workers and respite carers.

All targets which are set should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed.

The school is obliged to report to the authority annually on the number of targets set and the number of targets achieved in the curricular areas of Language and Communication, Maths/ Understanding and Relating to the Environment and Personal and Social Development on forms TSEN/1 and TSEN/2

Prior to setting targets teachers must assess the pupil's needs.

- This can be part of an ongoing process if the pupil is already well known to the teacher
- May involve a period of observation assisted by checklists to ascertain a baseline assessment
- May include administering standardised tests
- Will involve assimilating advice from others – parents, therapists, specialist teachers

Within the Special Department the following procedure will be followed for setting targets

- Brainstorming - Identify broad Aims for each area of the curriculum for each pupil
- SMART long-term targets (usually should be achievable within a school session) will be set for each curricular area as necessary. Limit the number of long-term targets set in each area of the curriculum. The recommended number is four but this may vary slightly according to individual pupils needs and abilities
- SMART short-term targets are formulated and, if overtaken, will ensure that the associated long-term target is achieved. Short-term targets should be monitored throughout the year and must be reviewed termly. Short term targets must include success criteria

For further advice on target setting see also:

- Elaborated 5-14 Curriculum and Associated Programmes of Study
- Support for Learning, SCCC
- SIC Support for Learning - Teachers Manual
- A Manual of Good Practice in Special Educational Needs – SOEID
- Success for All – Raising Standards Setting Targets, SEED / Northern College

d) Daily Planning

Short-term targets inform daily planning. Daily planning formats will vary slightly from class to class according to teaching style and pupil need. However, class teachers must ensure that their daily planning style allows for enough information to be passed on to pupils and auxiliary staff. Space must be provided for staff to comment on outcomes on a daily basis

Examples of target setting/ daily planning documentation are available for consultation.

e) Recording, Reporting, Advice on what to do at a Review & Consulting With Pupils

Recording

Within the Special Department we recognise the need for and aim to keep meticulous records of our pupils progress.

• Daily

On the daily planning sheets all members of staff should routinely note the outcome of lessons and activities for the pupil or group of pupils they are responsible for at that time. At times a brief note or even a simple tick may be sufficient. At other times much more detailed description may be necessary

We also record as necessary – accidents, incidents, medicines administered, toilet use, gastrostomy feeds, concerns, rewards for positive behaviour...

• Weekly

Class teachers should routinely crosscheck daily learning outcomes with Short Term Targets. This is an essential part of on going assessment and planning.

• Termly

Termly (with certain groups or individuals more regularly)

Pupil progress in theme work is recorded and forward planning of the next theme is carried out.

Short Term Targets are reviewed and those achieved recorded. New Short Term targets are set in the process of addressing the agreed Long Term Targets

• Annually (or sometimes more frequently if there is sufficient change or need)

Long Term Targets must be reviewed in June each year and set in September.

Reporting

Within the Special Department reporting is an important ongoing process which consists of both informal interchange of information (on a daily basis where necessary) and regular formal reviews and written reports.

Reporting serves several purposes:

- It should offer parents a format within which to receive and give useful feedback on success and progress and to discuss concerns and next steps
- It should include other professionals in a collaborative and mutually supportive way which affords opportunity for staff development and ensures that a holistic approach is developed
- It should involve parents, respite carers and the wider interdisciplinary team in helping pupils to generalise knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Written reports are prepared for parents by the class teacher (other professionals may also provide a written report) . These reports cover all aspects of the curriculum and are given to parents before the annual Record of Need Review. Teachers should use their professional judgement to decide if they should take time to go over a

written report with parents prior to the review. They should always do this if requested.

A good report should:

- Comment concisely and clearly on strengths and development needs in each area of the curriculum
- Reports should be written positively and sympathetically but must be accurate and realistic
- Avoid jargon and judgemental opinion
- Provide a response sheet which enables parents to react to the report and raise their own points for discussion

At the Review a written minute will be taken by Mrs Linklater. This minute will be circulated to those involved with the child's education and social care.

Advice on what to do at a Review

At a review meeting the class teacher will be expected to talk knowledgeably about the child's current programme of work, learning style, and progress made since the last meeting. They will also be expected to contribute tactfully to discussion of concerns and difficulties. The teacher will be expected to contribute to discussion of what needs to be done in the future to ensure that the pupil's needs continue to be met. Discussion of the targets which have been set will be part of this process but so will consideration of behaviour management strategies, placement, equipment, staffing levels and services which would be necessary to achieve the targets.

Although the review process is a legal requirement and at one level a formal process we aim to keep the atmosphere relaxed, friendly but efficient. Parents should always be treated with respect and consideration. Their opinions and those of fellow professionals should be valued.

Auxiliary staff may also be asked to attend a review. This can be of particular value if the pupil is in a split placement and the auxiliary supports the child in both settings.

Auxiliaries will be expected to comment on what they do with the pupil and how he responds and comment on successes and strategies used to achieve certain skills. The auxiliary might be asked to comment on how the pupil relates to others, his behaviour, likes and dislikes. The auxiliary could also be expected to comment on equipment used and needed.

Consulting with Pupils

The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 states that an authority shall have due regard, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the views (if they wish to express them) of children or young persons in decisions that significantly affect them, taking account of their age and maturity.

At the Special Department we wish to give our pupils a voice at their reviews. Pupils will have the opportunity to attend their review meetings and will be enabled to take part by being prepared. This could include completing 'My Meeting' booklet beforehand. For our least able pupils staff could prepare a 'PowerPoint' presentation using digital photos to allow the pupil to show activities they enjoy, difficulties they are having with seating, places they like to visit etc.

When setting targets teachers should ensure that pupils have the opportunity to have as much input as possible.

Behaviour Management

(See Personal and Social Development Policy and guidelines for staff who provide intimate care).

This policy includes:

- Positive rewards system – Golden Time and Personal Rewards Systems.
- Structured curriculum to meet needs without causing stress or feelings of lack of worth.
- Consistent approach.
- Physical intervention.
- Risk Assessment.
- Behaviour Plans.
- Incident Reporting.
- Sanctions – including mainstream detention when appropriate, loss or delay in rewards, and withdraw from group or activity.

Particular difficulties faced by pupils with ASD difficulties which lead to behaviour difficulties:

- Decoding people – mind reading.
- Encoding self – understanding self.
- Lack of imagination.
- Rigid rule-bound behaviour.
- Exclusive interest and obsessions.
- Compulsive behaviour.
- The need for perfection.
- Inability to generalise.
- Sensory integration difficulties.
- Poor motor control.

Multi-Agency Links

Links with Adult Services

- **Erik Gray Resource Centre:** Some of our older pupils are in split placements between school and the EGRC. Placements are devised according to individual need and are part of the transition into adult services. Placements are regularly reviewed, all members of the interagency teams are invited to review meetings.
- **Independent Living:** Social Care support an independent living scheme for adults with learning difficulties. Some of our pupils may in the future wish to be part of this scheme.
- **COPE:** COPE workshops provide training and employment for a number of adults with moderate learning difficulties. Visits can be arranged to COPE. These visits can be useful in demonstrating to the children that many of the skills they are learning will be useful for future employment

Local Authority Service Level Agreements

The Local Authority has service level agreements with the following:

- Sally Miller, CALL Centre, Edinburgh University - Alternative and Augmentative Communication
- Struan House - Independent School supporting children on the Autistic Spectrum
- RNIB - Advice to the VI service
- SENSE Scotland - Charitable organisation to support those with sensory impairment and additional complex learning difficulties. SENSE in the past has been called upon to advise on individual cases and on provision
- SALT- Local Speech and Language Therapists
- Harmaney School, Midlothian

Links with Parents

‘Effective primary schools and departments invest heavily in establishing good relationships with parents. ‘ EPSEN

Parents have a right to be involved in their child's education. Special Department staff acknowledge the vital role of parents as partners and have in place many tried and tested consultative and collaborative mechanisms to involve parents in decision making and to strengthen home / school links.

These include:

- Home school daily diaries
- Newsletters – two per session
- Telephone contact
- Regular informal face to face contact
- Home visits
- Parent observing in class
- Links with home through escort
- Links with home through respite service
- Written reports provided to parents in advance of review meetings
- Annual report for Record of Needs review
- Videos of children doing activities
- Sharing targets
- Inviting parents to interdisciplinary liaison meetings regarding their child
- Reporting incidents
- School Based Reviews / planning meetings
- Parents' Handbook
- Record of Need Reviews
- Parents' Evenings / Open Evenings – November and April
- CDI Case Conferences
- Christmas Concerts, sports days, swimming gala
- Fund raising events
- Signing Classes / joint training
- Information on social outings / permission slips
- Parents' Action Group Meetings
- Access to information on particular conditions, agencies, parent support groups etc

Contact with parents / guardians / other agencies should be noted by class teachers and by the AHT Additional Support Needs

Concerns

It is our belief that if the needs of a child are to be fully met, it is essential that parents, school staff and other professionals work in true partnership. The basis of this partnership is the acceptance by school staff that parents are responsible, that they know their own child and they have much to contribute to a discussion of their child's needs.

We have many points of contact with the parents of our pupils and in our experience this level of contact and openness ensures good working relationships and almost eliminates misunderstandings and grievances.

At all times parents' concerns and enquires should be dealt with promptly. In this way concerns will be expressed and resolved before they become complaints or difficulties.

Teachers should keep a brief note of any discussions with parents. If a parent has expressed concerns to a teacher or other member of staff, that member of staff should ensure that the deputy head teacher is made fully aware of the situation immediately.

In the event that a parent does have a complaint to make regarding the department, the deputy head teacher and staff will be willing to listen and consider the nature of the complaint. We would hope that any problem that does arise could be overcome in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

"If parents are not satisfied with the provision that a school makes to meet their child's special educational needs, they can complain to the school and the education authority."

In certain circumstances, where other avenues to resolve any disagreement have been exhausted, they can complain to the Scottish Ministers (Section 70, Education (Scotland) Act 1980) about any aspect of school education including special educational needs.'

Enquire – Children in Scotland Oct 2002

When A New Pupil Is Enrolled In The Department

- Usually Mrs Linklater will have had contact with other agencies, which have knowledge of the child. She will relay any information to class teachers. Parents will be reassured that interagency working is the norm and that information from therapists, previous schools etc will be valued and built on
- Parents will have been invited to the department, shown around, given the opportunity to ask questions and meet staff and sometimes pupils who will be in contact with their child and given the school handbook
- It is essential that staff take a sensitive, thorough approach and reassure parents by demonstrating that they understand, and are capable of meeting their child's needs
- Teachers will reassure parents by emphasising that the school will keep in frequent contact with them and that their concerns and opinions are valued

Links With Other Schools

- Inclusion
- Outreach support
- Awareness raising
- Transition

Referrals

Referrals to the Special Department at Bell's Brae School come from four main sources:

1. The pre-school Home Visiting Service
2. The Principal Educational Psychologist
3. The ASN Advisory Service
4. Direct from a Mainstream School

Procedure Before Enrolment

- Information gathering
- Review meeting
- Parents fully involved
- Staff and space identified
- Roles clarified

Inclusion

Current National and Local guidelines state that whenever possible pupils with Additional Support Needs should be educated with their peers at their local mainstream school.

However, for many of our pupils with severe and complex difficulties and for a few pupils with moderate learning difficulties, it is felt that all of their educational needs cannot be best met in a mainstream setting. On occasion a pupil will be enrolled wholly in the Special Department but more usually a Split Placement will be set up between the Special Department and a mainstream setting where staff, resources and ideas are shared in drawing up and delivering an IEP to meet the needs of the pupil concerned.

Split Placements

Principally a mainstream setting with /without auxiliary support

- Special Department class teacher will have input into IEP's / target setting
- The mainstream class teacher will have the lead role in managing the IEP
- Most of the IEP will be delivered in the mainstream setting but the pupil may come to the Special Department for specific lessons which cannot effectively be delivered in the mainstream setting
- The mainstream setting referred to in this instance may or may not be in Bell's Brae School

50:50 split

- Outreach support probably provided from the Special Department i.e. a member of staff from the Special Department will support the pupil in both settings
- Special Department class teacher will have major input into IEP's / target setting
- The mainstream class teacher and the Special Department teacher will share the management of the IEP. Time to liaise will be timetabled
- The split of time will be agreed according to the needs of the pupil, to some extent the availability of staff and the practicalities of transporting the pupil between the two settings
- The mainstream setting referred to in this instance may or may not be in Bell's Brae School

Principally in Special Department

- Outreach support probably provided from the Special Department i.e. a member of staff from the Special Department will support the pupil in both settings
- Special Department class teacher will have major input into IEP's / target setting
- The mainstream class teacher and the Special Department teacher will share the management of the IEP. Time to liaise will be timetabled
- The split of time will be agreed according to the needs of the pupil, to some extent the availability of staff and the practicalities of transporting the pupil between the two settings.
- The time the pupil spends in mainstream will be identified as a time where the pupil will have best opportunities for quality social inclusion, where the pupil will have the opportunity to demonstrate an ability to transfer skills and where good links with the local community can be made
- The mainstream setting referred to in this instance may or may not be in Bell's Brae School

Almost wholly Special Department

- Outreach support will be provided from the Special Department
- Special Department teacher will have major input into IEP and target setting
- Inclusion will be mostly on a social level
- The time the pupil spends in mainstream will be identified as a time when the pupil will have best opportunities for quality social inclusion, where the pupil will have the opportunity to demonstrate an ability to transfer skills and where good links with the local community can be made
- We have discovered over the years that for some pupils very effective links with the local community can be made with quite brief periods of inclusion e.g. one hour per week, one afternoon per fortnight
- The mainstream setting referred to in this instance may or may not be in Bell's Brae School

Reverse inclusion

- From time to time decisions will be made that the most effective way to provide for the needs of all pupils will be to set up reverse inclusion. Pupils based wholly in mainstream will for short regular periods accompany their peers with learning difficulties into their Special Department class.
- In the past this has included: kitchen activities, social outings, maths activity groups, Christmas concert rehearsals, rainy playtimes etc
- Reverse inclusion opportunities will be set up with agreement of the mainstream staff, parents and Special Department staff
- Criteria for considering reverse inclusion are the short term needs of mainstream pupils, PSD of mainstream / special department pupils, request of pupils

Management of Split Placements

- Parents will always be kept informed of developments
- Awareness raising opportunities will be offered to mainstream pupils and staff. These will include staff training, pupil and staff visits to the Special Department, Circle Time activities provided by staff from the Special Department include awareness of individual differences, awareness of specific sensory / learning difficulties
- Roles and responsibilities will be clarified before placement commences
- Key staff from both settings will be invited to reviews
- A flexible child centred approach will be developed in which needs, timetables, levels of support, successes and difficulties will be considered regularly
- Transport - the DHT ASN will contact the Transport Manager and make him aware of transport needs
- It is recognised that for some split placements to succeed a multidisciplinary effort will be required e.g. the advice of the occupational therapist may be essential if the needs of a child with physical difficulties are to be fully met.

Outreach support

- Staff from the Special Department support a small number of children who are not enrolled at the Department and who do not at any time attend the Special Department. We refer to this as outreach support.
- The support can be on a regular basis where a teacher will visit a school and work with the pupils and liaise with staff to support the IEP.
- Support for some children will involve infrequent visits. The member of staff from the Special Department will observe the child and discuss needs and options with parents and staff from the school.
- Staff providing outreach support should keep a record of visits on the Record of Outreach Visits form
- At times more formal reports will be required

Transition

Then main transition times are:

- Home/ preschool support to Special Department
- Nursery to Special Department
- Nursery / Primary / Special Department
- Transfers within school – mainstream / from one teacher to another in Special Department
- Special Department / secondary provision
- Moving to a new area
- School to post school provision

In order to make effective provision for children and young people with additional support need, carefully planned transition arrangements need to be made.

These arrangements include:

- Excellent lines of communication / regular review
- Early planning and gathering and sharing of information
- Sharing targets
- Involvement of parents and pupil throughout
- Involvement of other professionals and agencies as appropriate
- Visits to the Special department by parents
- Meeting the pupil informally
- Discussion with teachers / other professionals who have had contact with the pupil
- Additional visits to get to know the pupil better
- Arranging visits to new provision

5. TRAINING

Over the years staff based at the Special Department have been fortunate to undertake a range of training.

Although some of these members of staff have subsequently moved on, information gained on the courses has been shared with other members of staff and become recognised procedure within the department.

2000	Poppy Miller - PECS
2000	Sheila Peterson - Building Behaviour Support Plans
2003	Geraldine Edwards - TEACCH
2005	Gwynneth Houston - TEACCH
2003	Susan Linklater - PEP-R, Networking
1997-2004	Sandra Irvine - Networking, TEACCH, Social Stories, NAS Challenging Behaviour, Aspergers Syndrome.
2003	Niki Thomson - TEACCH – in USA
	Joanne Dryburgh ?

Local Inservice for all Department Staff and Outreach Staff:

2003	TEACCH, Behaviour Management, PEP-R.
2004	Janet Stirling – Aspergers Syndrome.
2005	School Based - Social Stories, Derbyshire Language – Keyword Levels.
2004	Dining Hall Staff - Awareness raising on individual pupils.

6. RESOURCES

Title	Author
Children with Aspergers Syndrome	
Living With Autism - learning to sleep	
PEP-R Teaching Activities for Autistic Children (blue book)	
Toilet Training for Individuals with Autism and Related Disorders	
Teaching Children with Autism to Mind Read	
Teaching Young Children with ASD to Learn: A practical guide for parents and staff in mainstream schools and nurseries x 2	L Hannah
PECS Training Manual	
Autism in Secondary Schools - Crisis or Challenge?	
Living With Autism - learning to dress	
Aspergers Syndrome: A Practical Guide for Teachers x 3	V Cumine/J Leach/G Stevenson
Scottish Conference on Autism	
Behavioural Intervention for Young Children With Autism	
My Brother is Different	
I Am Special: Introducing Children & Young People to their ASD	P Vermeulen
Able Autistic Children	
National Autistic Society: Focus on the Family Pack (booklets 1-5)	
National Autistic Society: Focus on the Family Pack (booklets 1-5)	
National Autistic Society: Focus on the Family Pack (booklets 1-5)	
National Autistic Society: Focus on the Family Pack (booklets 1-5)	
National Autistic Society: Focus on the Family Pack (booklets 1-5)	
Fighting Autism Together	
Autism Folder	
Living With Autism - learning to be clean	
Living With Autism - learning to eat and drink	
Living With Autism - learning to use the toilet	
My Brother is Different	
COSPPA Living With Autism	COSPPA
What is Aspergers Syndrome	National Autistic Society
What is Autism	National Autistic Society
Classroom and Playground: Support for Children with ASD	National Autistic Society
Autism: Information, Advice and Support	National Autistic Society
Play With Me - including children with autism in mainstream primary schools	National Autistic Society
The New Social Story Book (Illustrated Edition)	Carol Gray
Comic Strip Conversations	Carol Gray
Autism and Learning: A Guide to Good Practice x 2	Stuart Powell/Rita Jordan
TEACCH Notes	

The Autism Handbook	NAS
PEP-R Profile Revised	
National Autistic Society	NAS
Accessing the Curriculum for Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (using the TEACCH programme to Help Inclusion)	Gary Mesibov & Marie Howley
Teach Me Language - A Manual for Children With Autism, Aspergers & Related Developmental Disorders	S Freeman
Autistic Children - Teaching, Communication and Research Approaches	B Furneaux
Early Childhood Autism	J K Wing
Living With Autism	P Gabony / F Gassion
Understanding and Teaching Children With Autism	R Jordan / S Powell
More Than Words: Helping Parents Promote Communication & Social Skills in Children with ASN	Fern Sussman
Practical Ideas That Really Work for Students with ASD	K McConnell / G Ryser
Sensory Motor Issues in Autism	Johnanna M Anderson
Individual Assessment and Training for Autistic Children	
Autistic Children	
My Social Stories Book	C Gray / A Leigh White
Understanding and Teaching Children with Autism	R Jordan/S Powell
Autistic Spectrum Disorders: Practical Strategies for Teachers & Other Professionals	Elizabeth Nolan

7. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Class 4 Environment
Catalogue / Display of Resources
Buddy System
Outreach Teacher
Further Training