

ST ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL  
LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY



## OUR AIMS AND VALUES

We at St Anne's believe that the following aims and values underpin Learning and Teaching in our school:

### AIMS

What do we want our children to be?

We want our children to be:

- Happy
- Confident
- Kind, caring and respectful of others
- Caring and respectful of their environment
- Literate and numerate
- Inquisitive
- Enthusiastic and eager to learn
- Prepared for learning
- Focused
- Successful
- Courageous
- Creative
- Socially aware
- The best they can be
- Healthy in mind and body
- Spiritually healthy
- Good citizens
- Peace-makers
- Flexible and adaptable
- Mannerly
- Tolerant of diversity: cultural, ethnic, religious, (dis)ability
- Ambitious
- Emotionally mature
- Life-long learners

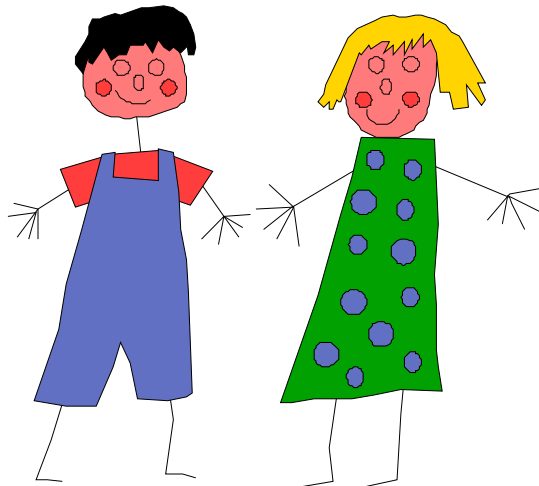
## St Anne's Learning and Teaching Policy

AIMS:

What do we want our children to be able to do?

We want our children to

- ❑ Become independent learners
- ❑ Analyse and problem-solve
- ❑ Transfer knowledge and skills acquired in one area of learning to other areas of learning
- ❑ Express their opinions confidently
- ❑ Use their time productively
- ❑ Develop relationships with peers and adults
- ❑ Realise their own potential
- ❑ Recognise their own talents and use them
- ❑ Communicate successfully – with skills in listening and talking
- ❑ Interact and co-operate socially
- ❑ Contribute positively to society
- ❑ Live their faith
- ❑ Show initiative
- ❑ Debate appropriately
- ❑ Explore, investigate, research
- ❑ Reflect on and evaluate their own learning
- ❑ Select and use different strategies for different tasks
- ❑ Take responsibility for their own behaviour
- ❑ Share
- ❑ Be aware of their own learning styles
- ❑ Make the links between school, home and real life



## VALUES

What basic values and principles do we believe underpin learning and teaching?

We believe that

- All children can learn
- Learning is for life – not just school
- Children have different talents and abilities
- Children have individual learning styles
- Children have multiple intelligences
- Children's needs are constantly changing
- Children can learn from their peers
- Children benefit from constructive feedback
- Each child is an individual
- Children have different home and family circumstances

Children learn best when:

- They are happy
- They feel secure
- The environment is motivating and stimulating
- Work is matched to ability
- Concepts are presented in an interesting way
- Learning is assessed, evaluated and reinforced
- Teaching recognises and provides for different learning styles
- Teaching is broken into small steps
- Previous learning is reviewed and built upon
- There is good home/school support
- There are opportunities to relax
- Work is well-planned and directed
- The planning incorporates progression
- They feel valued, are encouraged and experience praise
- They are actively involved
- Work is varied
- There are incentives and rewards for effort
- Learning is fun
- Learning is practical

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- The learning outcomes are shared with them
- They are involved in setting their own goals and targets
- They know that it is alright to make mistakes
- They see the relevance of the learning
- They are well rested and well nourished
- They are encouraged to ask for help
- They experience success
- The learning environment is well ordered, well lit, well ventilated and well resourced
- We have appropriately high expectations of them



## DEVELOPING THE AUTONOMOUS LEARNER

At St Anne's we intend to develop autonomous learners.

Autonomous learners:

- ☀ Know how to learn
- ☀ Have the disposition to learn
- ☀ Can identify the problem, analyse its components and solve it
- ☀ Have a sharp curiosity
- ☀ Can reflect on what they have learned
- ☀ Can explain the processes of learning and its outcomes with their peers
- ☀ Can make connections between one aspect of what they are learning and other aspects
- ☀ Are aware of their intelligences (know how they learn best)
- ☀ Know when it is best to work alone and when in a team
- ☀ Are confident in themselves due to secure relationships and high self-esteem

In order to develop the autonomous learner, St Anne's will provide:

- ☀ conditions which facilitate the different learning styles: auditory, visual, kinaesthetic
- ☀ challenge and reinforcement suited to pupils' needs
- ☀ verbal and written feedback that is positive and specific
- ☀ nurturing of self-esteem
- ☀ regular success for all: academic and non-academic
- ☀ lessons of varied duration
- ☀ respect for the working pace of individual children
- ☀ respect for children's ideas and variety of expression
- ☀ learning tasks which are not over-repetitive or mechanical
- ☀ opportunities to work independently
- ☀ opportunities for co-operative group-work
- ☀ examples in context, which broaden views rather than providing rigid formulae: freedom to choose different methods
- ☀ a culture of seeing problems as positive opportunities: there are lots of solutions
- ☀ freedom to experiment: take a chance!

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- ☀ trust in the learners
- ☀ clear parameters
- ☀ high, clear expectations
- ☀ cross-curricularly and opportunities to make connections in learning
- ☀ further challenge, not "more of the same"
- ☀ creative situations following learning of skills and knowledge
- ☀ assessments which make the learning better
- ☀ assessments which children want to do
- ☀ the involvement of parents
- ☀ frequent 1:1 teacher / pupil talk
- ☀ regular positive class discussion of peers' work

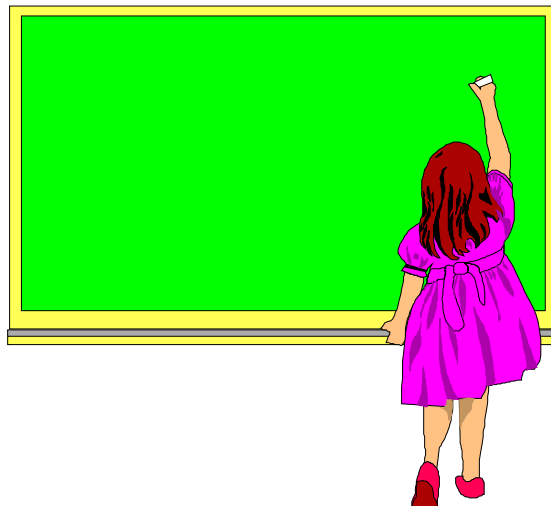


## St Anne's Learning and Teaching Policy

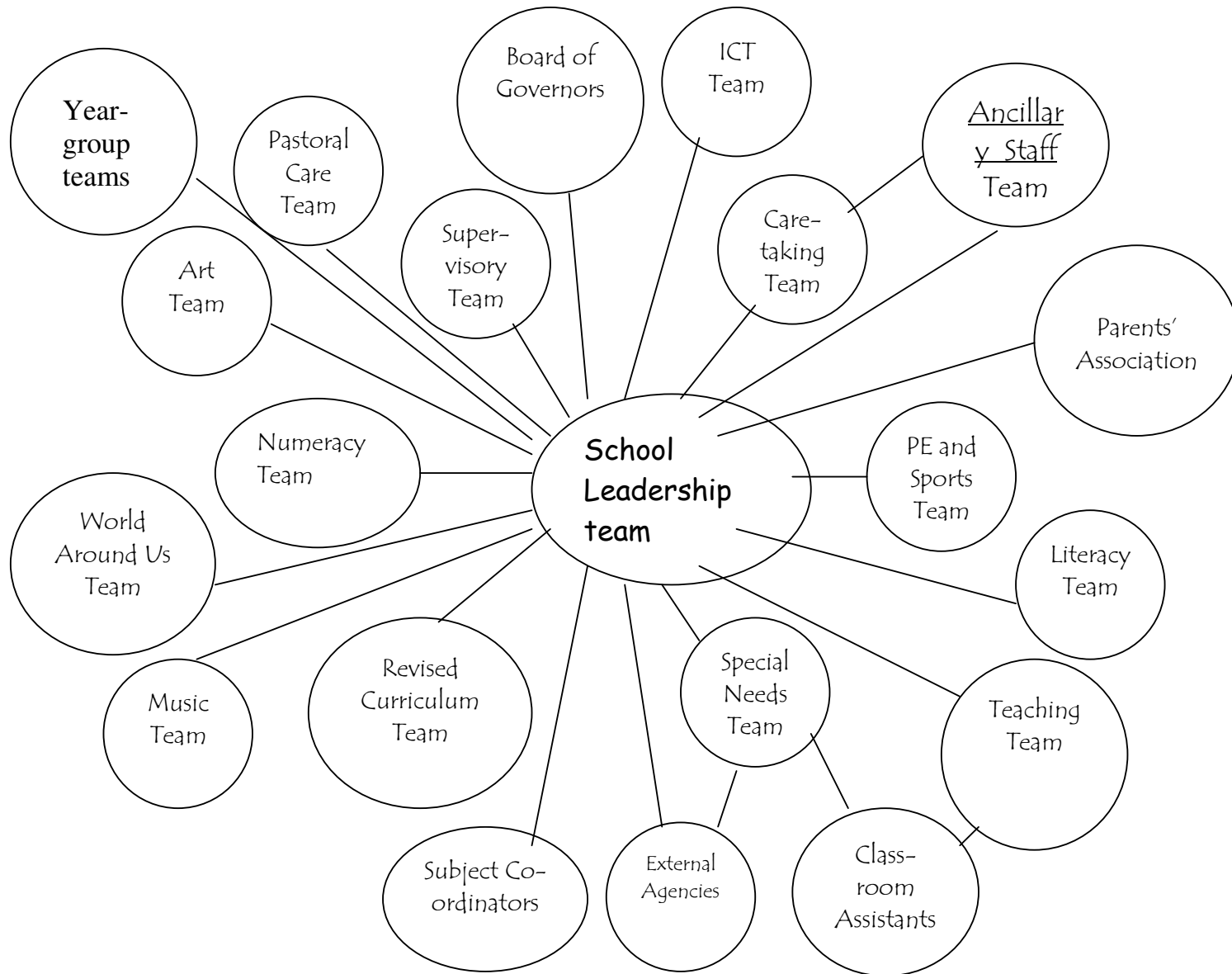
### CREATING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR PUPILS AND STAFF

In St Anne's, we will endeavour to provide a learning environment

- Which is warm and welcoming, where children, staff and parents will come with pleasure
- Which is stimulating and in which pupils will be informed and excited by what they experience; where curiosity and enquiry are nurtured; where self-motivation is encouraged and self-discipline is promoted
- Where expectations are high
- Where relationships are positive and encouraging, respectful, supportive and sympathetic
- Where classroom and school displays celebrate pupils' achievements; are presented with care and imagination by teachers and pupils; reflect a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities and provide focal points of interest, as well as informing the whole school community
- Where positive behaviour exists to enhance the opportunities for learning, to care for and protect all pupils and staff and to ensure that pupils have the best opportunities to gain life skills
- Where staff have opportunities for on-going professional development
- Where pupils develop their spiritual, personal, academic, emotional and social competencies
- Where tolerance and respect for other cultures, faiths and races is promoted



### Management Structure



## RANGE OF LEARNING STYLES

We receive and process information through all five senses. However, an individual child may learn better through one system than through others.

Therefore the teachers in St Anne's provide access to as many different teaching methods, materials, activities and experiences as possible, in order to ensure that children have the opportunity to learn through their preferred learning style.

### VISUAL LEARNERS

Visual learners respond well to:

- The written word
- Diagrams
- Pictures
- Charts and posters
- ICT
- TV / video

### AUDITORY LEARNERS

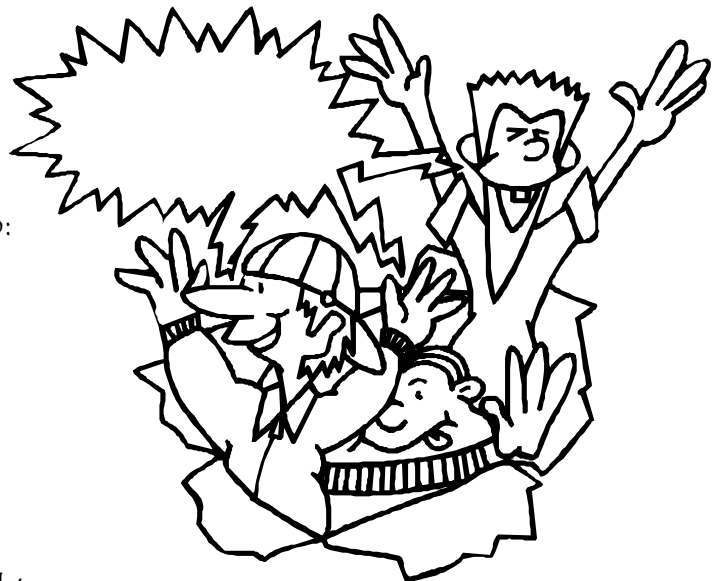
Auditory learners respond well to:

- The spoken word
- Lectures
- Discussion
- Audiotapes
- Sound effects

### KINAESTHETIC LEARNERS

Kinaesthetic learners respond well to:

- Hands-on experiences
- Practical activities
- Movement
- Design / creative activities
- Role-play / drama



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### CLASSROOM ORGANISATION, TEACHING APPROACHES and RESOURCES

In St Anne's we provide an environment where quality learning and teaching is nurtured. We adopt the following teaching approaches and forms of classroom organisation to encourage the development of the autonomous learner and to cater for the different learning styles of our pupils:

#### Organisation:

- ❖ Whole Class
- ❖ Small group (by ability, by gender, by learning style, by mixed ability, by mixed gender, by mixed learning style, by friendship etc.)
- ❖ Pairs
- ❖ Individual
- ❖ Task board
- ❖ Support from classroom assistant
- ❖ Withdrawal support
- ❖ Buddies

#### Teaching approaches:

- ❖ Open-ended investigations
- ❖ Research and independent learning
- ❖ Problem-solving
- ❖ Multi-media learning

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- ❖ Creative tasks
- ❖ Role play
- ❖ Teacher-led lessons
- ❖ Pupil-led lessons
- ❖ Reflection on learning
- ❖ Circle Time
- ❖ Practical activities
- ❖ Group discussion
- ❖ Questioning
- ❖ Topic-based, where appropriate
- ❖ Exposition and explanation
- ❖ Field trips / educational visits

### Resources:

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Classroom assistants
- ❖ The Peripatetic and Outreach support services
- ❖ The Special Needs Advisory services
- ❖ The advisory services of the BELB and the CCMS

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- ❖ ICT resources (Tape Recorder, CD player, Radio, Overhead Projector, Video, Television, Computer, Roamer etc.)
- ❖ Printed materials (text books, pictures, diagrams, worksheets, work cards, posters, writing frames, greetings cards, catalogues, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines etc.)
- ❖ The school and class libraries
- ❖ Practical equipment (for science, geography, maths, history, P.E., Art, music etc.)
- ❖ The school grounds
- ❖ Educational visits (to the local library, swimming pools, sports facilities, historical houses, museums, the zoo, scientific projects, other schools, the City Hall, music events, nursing homes, the German exchange programme, etc.)
- ❖ The Comenius project (working with schools in other European countries)
- ❖ External competitions (art, creative writing, poetry, sports, the Irish language, music, quizzes, the environment)
- ❖ Visitors to the school (parents and grandparents, the school chaplain, experts in subject fields, story-tellers, poets, writers, dramatists, sports coaches, artists, road-shows, the fire brigade, the pioneer association, the police service, the road safety association, zoologists, the electricity board, instrumentalists, business people, medical students etc.)
- ❖ Structured play resources (in classrooms, in communal areas, outdoors)
- ❖ The ICT suites

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In St Anne's we recognise the need for us to monitor and evaluate the learning and teaching in our school, in order to ensure appropriate provision for our pupils and to raise standards.

We have agreed this range of strategies for the process of monitoring and evaluation. We will select the strategy to suit the area of focus. Monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the Board of Governors, the Principal, the School Leadership Team, Subject Co-ordinators, the Teachers.

Strategy for Monitoring and evaluation of ...	Learning	Teaching
Assessment Units (if required)	√	
Audit leading to School Development Plan (SDP)	√	√
Benchmarking	√	√
Reporting to Board of Governors	√	√
Book Calls	√	√
Circle Time	√	
Classroom observations		√
Co-ordinator observation and feedback		√
Co-ordinators files		√
Dissemination of good practice: visit other schools / classes		√
ELB guidance		√
Evaluation of the Action Plans of the SDP		√
Feedback from other professionals		√
Feedback from parents	√	
Individual evaluation of progress against planning	√	√
Inspections	√	√
Liaison with previous teacher	√	
Marking of work	√	√
Monitoring by Leadership Team	√	√
Outside agencies' assessments e.g. behavioural, medical, educational psychologist	√	
Parent meetings	√	

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Strategy for Monitoring and evaluation of ...	Learning	Teaching
Peer support / team teaching		√
Plenary sessions	√	
Professional Review Staff Development (PRSD)		√
Pupil feedback	√	√
Pupil interviews	√	
Pupil profiles (if required)	√	
Pupil self-evaluation	√	
Pupil's response to comments	√	
Questionnaires: parents, pupils, parents, teachers, governors	√	√
Record keeping	√	
Reporting by teachers in year-group meetings		√
Reviews of Education Plans	√	
Reward systems	√	
Sharing of good practice		√
Sociometric tests	√	
Standardised tests	√	
Target setting and review	√	√
Teacher's self-evaluation		√
Tests: weekly / monthly / termly	√	
Transfer Procedure	√	
Use of level descriptors	√	
Wall displays and classroom environment	√	√



## AGREED FORMAT FOR PLANNING

Whole-school planning is contained in the three-year School Development Plan. It is broken down into one-year Action Plans, and these are evaluated against their success criteria. (See Action Plan exemplar, Appendix 1.)

What children learn is central to our work in St Anne's. Therefore our subject planning format focuses on Learning Outcomes. To serve these Learning Outcomes, we plan our teaching content, resources, cross-curricular themes and assessment instruments. (See planning exemplars, Appendix 2.)

Subjects are planned in half-termly blocks, and at the end of these blocks the plans and outcomes are reviewed and evaluated. The evaluation then serves the preparation of subsequent planners.



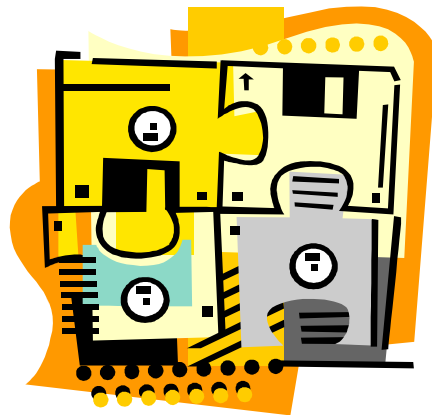
## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The quality of learning and teaching at St Anne's is enhanced through our strong community partnerships with:

- ⊕ **Parents** (formal and informal meetings with teachers; curricular meetings; open days for P1 and Nursery intakes; reporting to parents, oral and written; the school newsletter, *The Acorn*; monthly Nursery Newsletter, regular information notes sent home;
- ⊕ **Our Parents' Association** (which organises fund-raising events and our wide range of after-school clubs)
- ⊕ **Our Parish** (sacramental rites, preparatory meetings with parents)
- ⊕ **Sports Organisations** (providing coaching during and after school)
- ⊕ **Professional coaches** (in the varied after-school clubs in art, sports, ICT, French etc)
- ⊕ **The School Medical Service** (providing assessments and advice)
- ⊕ **Local libraries** (coming into school and hosting visits by our P3 to P7 classes)
- ⊕ **Other Schools** (our EMU partners, Finaghy Primary, Strandtown Junior School, Sydenham Primary)
- ⊕ **The YMCA** (leading our EMU programme)
- ⊕ **Other countries** (the Comenius links with Germany, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden; our P7 pupil exchange programme with the Augustinerschule, Friedberg, Germany)
- ⊕ **The Primary Language Initiative** (which co-ordinates the teaching of French in some classes)
- ⊕ **Charities** (fund-raising for Trocaire and for a mission in South America)

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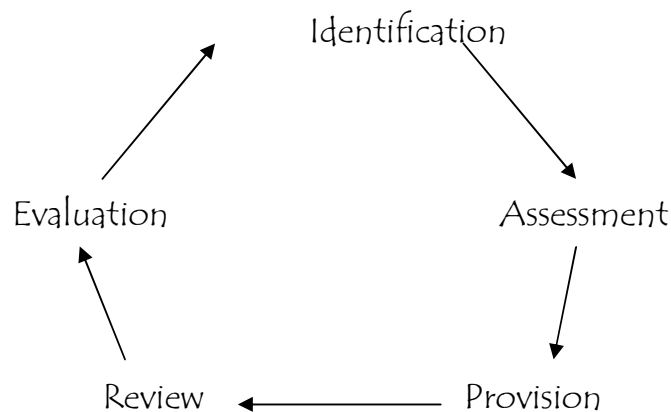
- ✦ Local artists (musicians, writers, poets, dramatists and theatre groups who give talks and workshops on their area of expertise)
- ✦ Business Organisations (Young Enterprise Scheme, Business Matters)
- ✦ Local Nursing Homes (carol-singing at Christmas)
- ✦ Local Businesses (Carol-singing; participation in their competitions, collecting and redeeming their tokens)
- ✦ The Belfast School of Music (providing instrumental tuition and preparation for public music examinations)
- ✦ Community Utilities and Services (Pioneer Association, Fire Brigade, Road Safety Organisation, the Police Service, the Electricity Board, all of whom advise and guide our pupils on how to keep themselves safe and how to act as responsible citizens)



### STRATEGIES FOR PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

In St Anne's we recognise that children have different learning style, different rates of learning and different needs. We endeavour to provide for the needs of all our pupils, irrespective of their abilities, disabilities, strengths or difficulties. At all stages, children experiencing learning difficulties are supported by their class teachers.

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) and the related Codes of Practice we seek to identify as early as possible, to assess and to provide for our pupils with Learning Difficulties.



- ⊕ Initial identification is by the class teachers, in consultation with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)
- ⊕ Learning Difficulties are assessed in the course of normal class work. Standardised screening tests are also carried out (in Numeracy, for P2 to P7, once per year in May; in Literacy, for P3 to P7, twice per year in October and May). In some cases diagnostic tests can be carried out.
- ⊕ Results are analysed by the teachers, the Special Needs Team and the SENCo, and a decision is made as to whether to make special provision or not.

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- ⊕ If it is considered that a child has Special Needs, this is recorded on the Special Needs Register, which also records actions taken and progress made
- ⊕ Special provision at Stage 1 is in the form of additional support in class, differentiation and the use of appropriate teaching approaches and materials
- ⊕ If required, from Stage 2 upwards, special Literacy Support is provided three times per week for pupils in P2 to P6, through the "Reading Club" (small group teaching by the Special Needs Literacy teachers.) Materials and resources are suited to the child's age and ability and target the raising of self-esteem as well as standards.
- ⊕ From Stage 2 on, Education Plans are drawn up, with specific targets to be achieved within a stated timescale, usually one term. Education Plans are shared with parents. They are reviewed at the end of the stated period and a decision is made as to whether to remain at Stage 2, revert to Stage 1, come off the register, or move to Stage 3.
- ⊕ At Stage 3 the pupil's needs are assessed by the Educational Psychologist, who gives advice on appropriate provision, which may include intervention by specialist outside agencies (e.g. the Peripatetic and Outreach Services, the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Advisory Service)
- ⊕ Where a child's needs are more complex or severe, or where it is considered that (s)he will need the support of a dedicated classroom assistant, we move to Stage 4 and make application to the BELB to consider assessing the pupil for a Statement of Special Educational needs. At Stage 5, the BELB issues a Statement, identifying the child's needs and the special provision that has to be made.
- ⊕ St Anne's has, within its budget, funds for the support of children with learning difficulties. These are used to provide specialist teaching, materials, equipment and additional adult support.

More details of the provision for children with Learning Difficulties can be found in the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

### EXTENDING GIFTED and TALENTED PUPILS

At St Anne's we recognise that some pupils have gifts (the ability to achieve at an academic level in advance of their peers) and/or talents (special abilities in creative and expressive subjects).

Teachers cater for gifted children by providing differentiation and enrichment, including extension activities and independent study tasks, which challenge such pupils at their level. Pupils enter in-school and public competitions in writing and poetry, art, environmental initiatives, Gaelic speaking etc.

We

- ⊕ facilitate individual instrumental music tuition by the Belfast School of Music and participation in public examinations
- ⊕ encourage musical talent through our school choir, traditional group and instrumental performances

Through our excellent and varied after-school clubs the school caters for gifted and talented children by offering professional coaching in

- ⊕ ICT
- ⊕ Arts and crafts,
- ⊕ French
- ⊕ A wide range of sports
- ⊕ Body and Mind

In particular we:

- ⊕ develop sporting excellence, including participation in inter-school competitions. Children are assisted in taking their skills to a higher level by recommending them for representative places on higher teams, for example on county Gaelic teams

# APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Action Plan for School Development Plan  
Appendix 2: Half-term Planning Templates





**Action Plan**

**No**

**Issue/Focus:**

**Date:**

Present position Baseline	What we want to achieve	What we will do? Actions	How we will know if we are succeeding?	When will it be done?	Who will do it? Staff	What do we need? Resources	How we will check that progress is being made?
Baseline	Target	Actions	<b>Success criteria</b>	Time	<u>Staff</u>	Resources	<b>Monitoring strategies</b>

Action plan compiled by:

APPENDIX 2

KEY STAGE 1 HALF-TERM PLANNER:

ENGLISH

YEAR GROUP

Date:

From

to

Year:

AT2 READING	LEARNING OUTCOMES	RESOURCES
a) Decoding skills:  b) Comprehension skills  c) Library / study skills:  d) Reading for enjoyment / fluency		
AT3 WRITING: specific style / genre(s)		
AT3 WRITING: support skills a) Grammar:  b) Spelling:  c) Handwriting:		25

**St Anne's Learning and Teaching Policy**

<p>AT1 TALKING AND LISTENING</p> <p>a) Talking</p> <p>b) Listening</p>	<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES</p>	<p>RESOURCES</p>
<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>AT1 TALKING AND LISTENING</p>	<p>AT2 READING</p>	<p>AT3 WRITING</p>
<p>SPECIAL FOCUS</p>	<p>Cross-curricular themes:</p>	

