

## Special Educational Needs Policy and Disability Access Plan and Guidelines

### Rational

Understanding the child with special needs requires a genuine knowledge of the child in their own right and not that aspect of medical diagnosis which confirms their label. Every human being is an individual and each individual is unique. Children with special educational needs should not be deprived of full participation, responsibility, choice and freedom. Decisions should not be imposed without due regard for dignity or individuality. The School's statement of aims reflect a philosophy which views handicap and disability as a person's medical condition, but which does not, or should not, pre-determine the quality of that person's life. Our staff are highly skilled and experienced and demonstrate a wide variety of strengths, interests and sensitivity in dealing with each child's individual needs. It is important that our work is characterised by effective communication and team work and a shared understanding of each child, their preferences and achievements.

Our pupils experience a wide range of learning difficulties; therefore, our job is to assist them to learn how to learn, to promote development, enhance achievement and encourage the acquisition of personal autonomy and enhance the quality of life and to provide opportunities and experiences so that genuine learning may occur.

To develop a positive attitude to learning in a safe, rich, stimulating, happy and challenging environment.

To develop an understanding of sharing and caring in a 'community' where self-esteem and the dignity and abilities of the individual are recognised and valued.

To enable pupils to take part in the communities in which they live and to achieve an understanding of the world around them. We are committed to the principles of integration appropriate to the needs of individual children. To promote knowledge and understanding of our work in the island community.

### Aims

To promote an effective and mutual partnership with parents. The two-way involvement between staff and parents should be 'informative', practical and mutually supportive.

To promote interdisciplinary collaboration and partnership with parents, multi-professional colleagues, support agencies, pupils and our local community.

To ensure that every learner, parent/carer and member of staff can make a positive contribution in an environment in which they have equal access and are kept and feel safe and valued through the promotion of health, achievement and enjoyment.

### Principles

- \* Each pupil will have equal access to a curriculum designed to meet individual needs.
- \* Provision for all children is based on a developmental and needs driven model.
- \* Every member of the school community will be treated with respect and valued as an individual.
- \* The curriculum will address the needs of the whole child.
- \* Realistic and achievable objectives will be set for each child in partnership with parents/carers.
- \* The mutuality of parents/carers and staff as educators is acknowledged and valued.
- \* The school will provide a happy, safe and secure learning environment to support the whole curriculum and the development of each individual pupil's potential.
- \* All staff will be provided with equal opportunities to extend their knowledge, skills and expertise in order to meet the aims of the school.
- \* There will be clear channels and opportunities for discussion and communication throughout the school community.
- \* We will seek opportunities for our pupils to integrate into the wider community.
- \* We aim to provide support to the Island community.

### How We Teach:

We aim to present a considered and informed view of the breadth and depth of the whole curriculum appropriate to the needs of our pupils and of the levels of achievement which are potentially possible.

Our pupils' individual learning needs remain a priority in determining the 'whole' curriculum delivery throughout the School.

We work towards defined priorities to facilitate children's learning.

We strive for our pupils' success; our work is characterised by a positive approach.

We present selected and sharply focused learning opportunities to maximise success.

Assessment is a continuous process which begins at the point at which the child is currently at. Constant observation and evaluation ensures that our work is appropriate and relevant to the needs of the individual.

We place great emphasis on the development of personal qualities such as self-esteem, self-awareness, adaptability etc. Such qualities enable our children to use their skills in a variety of settings.

We work closely with parents and professional colleagues so that a consistent approach is achieved and a common policy established.

Liaison and involvement with the variety of island schools ensures that our children gain knowledge, experience and understanding of the island community in which they live.

To facilitate effective learning for all pupils we maintain a holistic approach, focusing on the needs of the whole child through:

- the provision of appropriate information technology hardware, software and peripherals
- the correct use of positioning and mobility aids
- a total communication environment featuring signs, symbols and tactile cues
- strategies to alleviate sensory impairments
- the consistent and sensitive approach of behaviour management programmes to moderate challenging behaviour

### **Admissions Criteria**

Medina House is a day special school catering for children who experience severe, profound and complex learning difficulties. The majority of pupils will be operating at developmental levels considerably in deficit or delay to their chronological age and their mainstream school peers. The school currently accommodates up to 66 pupils aged 2 - 11. An Outreach Service operates to support particular children in mainstream settings.

All pupils admitted to Medina House will have or be in the process of receiving a Statement of Educational Need. This Statement is completed by the Local Education Authority following a multi-professional assessment. During this process the LA will fully consult with parents at all stages. Placements to Medina House are made on behalf of the Director of Education and with the agreement of the professionals involved, parents and school. Children under 5 may be admitted on an assessment basis pending a full multi-professional assessment for the Statement of Educational Need.

Nursery aged pupils attend on a part-time basis only. This placement is increased with agreement of parents and school depending on the age of the pupil.

### **School Organisation**

Our current role of sixty four children is organised according to developmental age and need in the following way:

- Class 1 Profound and Multiple Needs
- Class 2 Severe Learning difficulties
- Class 3 More Advanced Class
- Class 4 Profoundly Autistic
- Class 5 Severe Learning Difficulties
- Class 6 Profound and Vulnerable
- Class 7 Profoundly Autistic
- Class 8 Severe Learning Difficulties
- Class 9 More Advanced Class
- Class 10 Life Skills

This model ensures that each child is provided with a learning environment and an approach which matches their individual needs. There may be occasions when, a child joining 'in year' or whose primary needs change in the course of an academic year, may be provided with a 'best fit' or contingency provision. Their needs would however be included in the model for the next academic year.

### **Curriculum**

The Curriculum is approved by the Governing Body of Medina House School and as detailed in the school's Curriculum

Policy . Our aim is to provide appropriate and stimulating learning environments and teaching methods which stimulate the holistic growth and development of each individual child.

The range of our 'whole curriculum' framework encompasses:

- Areas of learning (including the National Curriculum and R.E.) informed by QCA and Equals Schemes of work and a Developmental Curriculum.
- Curricula themes and dimensions
- Sensory and therapeutic approaches
- Planned but specific school determined priorities and initiatives such as 'Healthy Schools'

Our pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant to their present and anticipated future needs and is identified through their :

- Statement of Special Educational Need.
- Annual Review
- Baseline Assessment
- Benchmark progress
- Individual Education Plan

The main purpose of our curriculum is to enhance the quality of life of our pupils and to provide them with functionally useful skills, knowledge and understanding.

Medina House is a unique provision on the Island. We are developing particular practice and opportunity with our three neighbouring schools and actively seeking to network with colleague schools on the mainland. The school has an established profile on the Isle of Wight and is an active participant and partner in the process of raising achievement in Island schools. The school is represented in many county wide strategy groups, forums and committees, both within the Education Department and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

The school's integration policy facilitates a positive partnership with island mainstream schools particularly in the Primary Sector. In addition the school has developed a role as a training provider for many High School and College students on work experience or course placements.

The school also provides Outreach Support to mainstream schools.

The school has a long and successful tradition of working collaboratively and imaginatively with staff from Social Services and the Health Authority, in joint initiatives and, in some instances, with joint funding arrangements.

### **Assessment Recording and Reporting**

All pupils are baseline assessed on joining the school. This ensures that our youngest pupils are assessed in areas of language and numeracy skills or pre-skills and in personal and social development. Older pupils are assessed in all curriculum areas. Assessment is based on teachers' own observations against set criteria. Other assessments will be made according to need, these may include Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy or Occupational therapy. This is supported by a multi-disciplinary assessment initiated when a child is four to identify his or her needs and future educational provision. This assessment will result in a child receiving a Statement of Educational Need.

By law, Statements have to be reviewed annually. This provides the opportunity to formally consider a pupil's needs and re-prioritise or focus our teaching objectives as determined in each pupil's individual education plan.

Careful and detailed classroom records and each pupil's record of achievement provide ongoing curriculum assessment evidence that supports a profile of a pupil's achievement and informs the teaching and learning planning process.

The National Curriculum Key Stage Assessments for 7 and 11 year old pupils (SATs) may provide further evidence of pupil achievement. These 'tests' are administered in a modified, flexible and sensitive way to ensure relevance to individual pupil's needs and abilities, and only when they have reached the level requirements. Most children at Medina House will not meet the minimum requirements to sit these tests, instead Teacher Assessments will be made in each subject using B'squared materials. Reading Tests and PEP R.

Further assessment advice is obtained (as appropriate) from other professionals such as Educational and Clinical Psychologists, Physiotherapists, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Advisory Specialist Teachers for some children mainland assessments from SCOPE, Ace Centre, may be appropriate.

### **Helping Pupils Achieve**

Parents are a child's first and enduring teachers. They play a crucial role in helping their children learn. As a school the

principle of working in close partnership with parents is well established, highly valued and supported. Strong links do exist between school and parents and in addition to the many opportunities to involve parents. The school has a growing Parent/Teacher Group which discusses aspects of school life, gives mutual support and work on particular initiatives.

### **Staffing**

The school's most valued and important resource is its staff. Many of our pupils will only make significant achievements if they receive considerable adult support. Class sizes are between two and ten pupils, class teams provide a ratio of around two children to each member of staff but some classes may require ratios better than 1:1.

Head teacher

Deputy Head teacher

3 Senior Teachers

3 Class Teachers

4 Unqualified Teachers

3 Therapy Assistants

26 Teaching Assistants

1 ICT Technician

School Nurse

1 School Business Manager

2 Clerical Assistants

5 Mid-day Supervisory Assistants

1 Premises Manager

1 Assistant Caretaker

1 Family Support Worker

### **Professional Development**

The school has made explicit its continuing commitment to training and development and has been successful in being awarded the Investors in People standard. The school has introduced an induction framework for all new staff including a mentoring scheme.

### **Resources**

The Governing Body receives a delegated budget from the Local Authority and has full responsibility for all financial decisions associated with the school. The annual budget allocation received by the school is on a formula funded basis in accordance with the Isle of Wight scheme for the local management of special schools.

Governors set and agree a Budget Plan for each financial year and consider the continuing resource needs of the school such as staffing costs and the targets outlined in the school's development plan.

The Budget Plan provides a broad framework through which major resource demands can be structured and the Governing Body delegate its day to day administration to the Head teacher and Administrative Officer and monitoring by the Bursar and the Resources Committee.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Medina House School provides a high quality education support to its pupils. We welcome comments and solutions about the service we provide.

All complaints are viewed as positive and are seen as an opportunity for the school to evaluate its own performance

If you wish to complain about any aspect of the services at the school, you should, in the first instance contact your child's Class teacher. If you feel the issue is unresolved, the Head teacher will be happy to discuss the matter further. Your complaint will be acknowledged promptly and you will receive a response within five working days.

If the school is unable to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, then you should contact the Chair of Governors and then finally, if all else fails, contact the Education Officer for Special Needs at County Hall (Tel:01983 823412).

Reviewed April '08

Signed:

## Accessibility Plan

### Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

### Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

### Key Objective

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

### Principles

- Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;
- The school recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):
  - not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
  - not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
  - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
  - to publish an Accessibility Plan.
- In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002);
- The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality;
- The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges
  - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

### Activity

[This section outlines the main activities which the school undertakes, and is planning to undertake, to achieve the key objective (above).]

#### a) Education & related activities

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LEA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals.

*[See checklist provided on page 29 DfES Guidance "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils"]*

#### b) Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

*[See checklist on page 30 of DfES Guidance, and HCC schools self-audit questionnaire circulated in January 2002.]*

c) Provision of information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LEA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

[See checklist on page 30 of DfES Guidance.]

**Action Plan**

See attached (Appendix 2)

**Linked Policies**

This Plan will contribute to the review and revision of related school policies, e.g.

- school development plan
- staff improvement plan
- building and site development plan
- SEN policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- curriculum policies.

**Appendix 1**

Date of Plan : April 2007

Date of Review : April 2008

Member of staff responsible: School Nurse / Head Teacher

Governor(s)/Committee(s) responsible: FGB

This plan was drawn up by

[a working group comprising] : The Healthy Schools' Team

The following were consulted on the draft plan:

- parents date: .....
- .....to be updated..... date: .....
- ..... date: .....

The plan was last approved by the governing body on: Sept '06.

The plan is also available in the following formats, on request to

[the headteacher]: (e.g. e-mail; enlarged print version; etc.....)

**Appendix 2 Access Plan**

	Objective	What	How	When	Goal Achieved
1	Ensure compliance with DDA and Code of Practice	Staff and governors informed of requirements and obligations of DDA, and of the Accessibility Plan	Staff meeting Governors meeting	Summer Term '08	<i>School complies with requirements of DDA and Code of Practice ?</i>
2	Improve availability of information in alternative forms.  Ensure effective communication at	All staff be able to use augmentative communication systems	Rolling programme of training and induction for all staff. To be provided through SLT and Therapy Team	Academic Year 07/08	School able to deliver information to all pupils and parents with disabilities.  Each child will be supported by a 'raft' of

	all stages of child development and with all types of disability.				communication systems, strategies and resources.
3	Improve working environment for pupils with visual impairment	Incorporate appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing, and install blinds on windows	Seek advice from LEA building surveyors Therapy Manager to engage in RNIB training and liaise with VI teacher to ensure assessment and monitoring of VI pupils	On going	VI pupils will not be disadvantaged
4	Improve provision for children with Autism and related disorders	Develop staff's knowledge and skills in managing children with Autism etc. Provide 'chill out' areas in those classes which provide for children with profound autism  Review curriculum and its relevance for Children with ASD	Staff training day, led by EP, for teachers and LSAs Rolling programme of whole school training in : Structured teaching methods (TEACCH) provided by Priors Court and Picture Exchange Communication system by Pyramid Use devolved capital to fund classroom adaptation Identify those key skills required to ensure an appropriate curriculum identify and develop schemes and units of work Improve assessment for children with Autism	Spring/ summer 2004  On going  On going  On going  2008/2009  2008/2009	Staff have increased confidence and skills in working with children with ADHD and related disorders. Provision for all children is based on a developmental and needs driven model.  Improved learning environments for children with Autism   A curriculum for Autism will be developed  PEP R resources purchased. Staff trained in use and assessment process developed
5	Improve provision for children with profound and multiple needs	Provide bespoke learning environments and curriculum for children with developmental ages below 3yrs	Identify suitable classrooms and staff to provide for this area of need. Build this into Sept '06 model. Identify suitable curriculum and request multi disciplinary support to deliver a developmental curriculum Work collaboratively with other schools using this curriculum	2006/2007  2006/2007  2008/2009	Class 1 established providing bespoke education for developmentally young children with profound and multiple needs. A developmental curriculum supported by a multi disciplinary team is in place. Dev Curr will begin to be cross referenced with P'levels
6	Improve access to all ground floor teaching areas	Ramped access to main entrance of both teaching blocks. Attention to be given to all fire	Planned use of devolved capital allocation, as part of planned refurbishment	2004/2005 2005/2006 2006/2007	All ground floor teaching areas accessible. All fire exits and routes suitable for wheelchair

		exits and routes to ensure swift and safe evacuation for all		2007/2008	users
7	Improve disabled toilet facilities	Adaptation of existing disabled toilet to improve functionality and update	Devolved capital. Consult building surveyor and others on feasibility and cost	Summer 2009	Significant improvement in standard of provision and ease of use
8	Ongoing improvement to all play areas to ensure activities suited to all needs	Each play area to include opportunities for wheelchair users and visually impaired  Sensory Garden to be developed	Healthy Schools Team / PTA / Student Council to collaborate and produce a plan and recommendations.  Specialist playground providers to be consulted and plan agreed - installation to take place following new mobile build  Bids to be submitted, site and partners to be identified. Work to be initiated	2006/2007  2007/2008  2008/2009  2008/2009	New equipment installed and in use. All children will have play opportunities  New adventure playground in place to include additional DDA features  Sensory Garden development will be in progress