



HOLY CROSS R C PRIMARY SCHOOL

INCLUSION POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Spring 2003

Introduction and Context

A brief summary of relevant legislation to date.

1993 The Education Act 1993

- general principle that children with Special Educational Needs should, where this is what parents wanted, be educated at mainstream school after satisfying a series of conditions:

- child must receive educational provision for their learning difficulty,
- peers must have efficient education ensured,
- resources used effectively.

1994 UNESCO World Conference at Salamanca (Spain)

- a call to all Governments to “adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise”.

1997 ‘Excellence For All Children – Meeting Special Educational Needs’

- highlighted the significant educational, social and moral benefits of inclusion.

1998 ‘Meeting Special Educational Needs – A programme of Action’

- reviewed the statutory framework for inclusion in conjunction with the Disability Rights Task Force.

1999 ‘From Exclusion To Inclusion’ report of the Task Force

- recommended “ a strengthened right for parents of children with statements of special educational needs to a place at a mainstream school”.

2001 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act

- delivered a strengthened right to a mainstream education for children with Special Educational Needs. The Act has amended the Education Act 1996 and transformed the statutory framework for inclusion into a positive endorsement of inclusion.

November 2001 – Inclusive Schooling. Children with Special Educational Needs

- this document provides statutory guidance on the practical operation of the new statutory framework for inclusion. It states clearly that the guidance “ **must not be ignored.**”

Rationale

The Green Paper 'Excellence for all Children' identified the significant issues and proposed a programme for action and improvement in the area of special educational needs. One of the key areas identified was that of increasing inclusion, an area we feel very well equipped to embrace at Holy Cross. We feel that,

“ The goal of Inclusion is not to erase differences,
but to enable all students to belong within an educational
community that validates and values their individuality.”

Stainback, Stainback, East
and Sapon-Shevin 1994

How this policy was formed

This is the first draft of the policy, produced initially by the SENCO, in the light of recent Government legislation to;

“...increase the level and quality of inclusion within mainstream schools,
while protecting and enhancing specialist provision for those who need it.”
Excellence for all Children (DfEE – Oct 1997)

This first draft is for presentation and consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils to assess and evaluate current thinking, attitudes and practice within our school and examine the possibilities for moving towards even greater inclusion.

We have found that children can and do learn in an inclusive setting if the right level of *effective* support is also in place. It is important that this policy is developed as a collaborative document to include a set of beliefs on inclusive practices. Together, through the use of the 'Index for Inclusion' the staff will be encouraged to share and build on their existing knowledge and experience, and examine the possibilities for increasing learning and participation for all their children. Resulting from this research this policy will detail how needs could be met and the strategies put in place to implement inclusion so as to ensure that real (not superficial) inclusion is visible in classroom practice as a reflection of our whole school ethos.

As a clear indication of our school's full commitment to inclusion, we have a Governor designated for Special Needs and the school has employed a SENCO (who does not have responsibility for a class as well).

OFSTED has found that ;

“ Effective schools are educationally effective schools... The most effective
schools do not take educational inclusion for granted.”

Evaluating Educational Inclusion, OFSTED

This is evident, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos and their willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. This ethos is already well established in our school and gives us very solid foundations on which to develop this policy further.

Therefore this policy will be an on going, working document used to assist and advise present staff and parents, and inform for the future. Parents, teachers, pupils and governors must all be involved in the planning, on going monitoring and evaluation of this policy to ensure its successful implementation.

The School's Mission Statement

Holy Cross is committed to the promotion of equality, dignity and a love of learning through following Jesus.

- We aim to provide a lovely learning community based on the Gospel Values where children feel happy and secure and have a positive self image.
- We encourage the children to achieve their highest academic standard and equip each child with confidence, knowledge and skills to perpetuate their own learning.
- We believe that this learning should take place in a stimulating environment with well defined guidelines in which parents, parish and local community have important roles to play.

Inclusion Guidelines

The special educational needs provisions of the SEN and Disability Act 2001 take effect from 1st January 2002. This is designed to link to the introduction of the revised SEN Code of Practice. It strengthens the right to mainstream education for children who have SEN to be included successfully within mainstream education. The change clearly signals that where parents want a mainstream education for their child everything possible should be done to provide it. The new statutory framework for inclusion requires that:

- * pupils with special educational needs, but without a statement, must be educated in mainstream schools except in exceptional circumstances: this has always been the case;
- * pupils who have a statement must be educated in a mainstream school unless this is against the wishes of the child's parents or is incompatible with the efficient education for other children.

Parental preference for mainstream education can only be denied on the grounds that the child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children, if there are no reasonable steps the LEA or maintained school could take to prevent the incompatibility.

What is Inclusion?

Educational Inclusion

Inclusion is a term that expresses our commitment to educate each child with his or her peers in our school. It therefore involves bringing the support services to the child rather than moving the child to the services. It is not just a matter of placement within a mainstream school. It is a practical recognition that:

- *All children can be educated.
- *All children belong within their community.
- *All children are different.
- *All children have the same right to an equitable education.

This ethos within our school is affirmed by the way we welcome all children and make adaptations to suit the individual requirements of each pupil.

Special Needs Education in itself incorporates proven methods of teaching from which all children can benefit; it assumes human differences are normal and that learning must be adapted to the needs of the child, rather than the child fitted to the process. We recognize that treating pupils as equals is not the same as treating them the same.

At Holy Cross we are committed to the principles of inclusive education as expressed by UNESCO that;

“Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities.”

Social Inclusion

Inclusion should be seen not only as an educational issue, but as a social one too, encompassing those children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBDs).

Since the end of the Second World War our society has battled against those attitudes which have led to groups in our society being segregated and discriminated against. UNESCO argue that schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating such discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities and building an inclusive society. There may be many factors beyond our control in attempting such change, but there is certainly a role for us to play.

It is in this area most where children's needs will prove more difficult to meet and more complex than those of other pupils whose difficulties or special needs are highly specific or of a more physical nature. An inflexible one-size-fits-all approach is even less appropriate for these children as each child's needs must be viewed individually. Prior knowledge of a child, adequate resources and appropriate support must be available to have any realistic level of success.

Inclusion; Key Principles and Practice

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The National Curriculum is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers are able to modify the National Curriculum programmes of study to provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage.

Three key principles are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum:

- 1) Setting suitable learning challenges**
- 2) Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs**
- 3) Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils**

This policy is based on an adherence to these Key Principles;

1) Setting suitable learning challenges

a) Teachers should aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. They should teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit their pupils' abilities. Work should be taken from earlier or later key stages so that individual pupils can make progress and show what they can achieve.

A similarly flexible approach will be needed to take account of any gaps in pupils' learning as a result from missed or interrupted schooling (e.g. travellers, refugees, children in care or those with long-term medical conditions.)

b) For pupils whose attainment falls significantly below the expected levels at a particular key stage, a much greater degree of differentiation will be necessary whereby the teacher may use the content of the programmes of study as a resource.

c) For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected level of attainment teachers will need to plan suitably challenging work.

2) Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs

- a) When planning, teachers should set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Teachers need to be aware that pupils bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way in which they learn. Teachers should plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively.
- b) Teachers should take specific action to respond to pupils' diverse needs by:
 - i) **creating effective learning environments**
 - ii) **securing their motivation and concentration**
 - iii) **providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches**

- iv) **using appropriate assessment approaches**
- v) **setting targets for learning**

i) Teachers create effective learning environments in which:

- the contribution of all pupils is valued
- all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately
- stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others
- pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours
- all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged
- pupils are enabled to participate safely in clothing appropriate to their religious beliefs, particularly in subjects like science, technology and physical education

ii) Teachers secure pupils' motivation and concentration by:

- using teaching approaches appropriate to different learning styles
- using a range of organisational approaches, such as setting, grouping or individual work
- varying subject content and presentation
- planning work which builds on their interests and cultural experiences
- planning appropriately challenging work for those whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language skills
- using materials which reflect social and cultural diversity and provide positive images of race, gender and disability
- planning and monitoring the pace of work so that they all have a chance to learn effectively and achieve success

iii) Teaching approaches that provide equality of opportunity include:

- ensuring that boys and girls are able to participate in the same curriculum,
- taking account of the interests and concerns of boys and girls by using a range of activities and allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes
- avoiding gender stereotyping when organising pupils into groups
- enabling the fullest possible participation of pupils with disabilities or medical conditions by making provision to facilitate access to activities with appropriate support

iv) Teachers use appropriate assessment approaches that:

- allow for different learning styles
- are familiar to the child
- use materials which are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- provide clear and unambiguous feedback to pupils to aid further learning

v) Teachers set targets for learning that:

- build on pupils' knowledge, experiences, interests and strengths to improve areas weakness and demonstrate progression over time
- are attainable and yet challenging, helping pupils to develop their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn

3) Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

a) Pupils with special educational needs

Curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs must take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. Teachers should, where appropriate, work closely with representatives of other agencies who may be supporting the pupil. Teachers should take specific action to provide access to learning for pupils with special educational needs by:

- i) providing for pupils who need help with communication, language and literacy**
- ii) planning, where necessary, to develop pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences**
- iii) planning for pupils' full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities**
- iv) helping pupils to manage their behaviour, to take part in learning effectively and safely**
- v) helping individuals to manage their emotions**

i) Teachers provide for pupils who need help with communication, language and literacy through:

- using visual and written materials in different forms
- using texts that pupils can read and understand using ICT
- using alternative and augmentative communication, including signs and symbols
- using translators

ii) Teachers develop pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences, by:

- using materials and resources that pupils can access through sight, touch, sound, taste or smell
- using word descriptions and other stimuli to make up for a lack of first-hand experiences
- using ICT, visual and other materials to increase pupils' knowledge of the wider world
- encouraging pupils to take part in everyday activities such as play, drama, class visits and exploring the environment

iii) Teachers plan for pupils' full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities through:

- using specialist aids and equipment
- providing support from adults or peers
- adapting tasks or environments
- providing alternative activities, where necessary

iv) Teachers help pupils to manage their behaviour, take part in learning effectively and safely by:

- setting realistic demands and stating them explicitly
- using positive behaviour management, including a clear structure of rewards and sanctions
- giving pupils every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with a partner or a group
- teaching pupils to value and respect the contribution of others
- encouraging and teaching independent working skills
- teaching essential safety rules

v) Teachers help individuals manage their emotions through

- planning short-term, easily achievable goals in selected activities
- providing positive feedback to reinforce and encourage learning and build self-esteem
- selecting tasks and materials sensitively to avoid unnecessary stress for the pupil
- creating a supportive learning environment in which the pupil feels safe
- allowing time for the pupil to engage with learning and gradually increasing the range of activities and demands

b) Pupils with disabilities

Not all pupils with disabilities have special educational needs. Teachers must still take action to ensure that these pupils are enabled to participate as fully and effectively as possible. Teachers should take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities by:

- i) planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for the completion of tasks**
- ii) planning opportunities for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum**
- iii) identifying aspects of programmes of study and attainment targets that may present specific difficulties for individuals**

i) Teachers plan appropriate amounts of time to allow pupils to complete tasks through:

- taking account of the very slow pace at which some people will work
- being aware of the high levels of concentration necessary for some pupils
- allocating sufficient time, opportunity and access to equipment for pupils
- being aware of the effort required by some pupils to follow oral work

ii) Teachers create opportunities for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum through:

- providing adapted, modified or alternative activities or approaches to learning in physical education

- providing alternative or adapted activities in science, art and design and DT for pupils who are unable to manipulate tools or equipment
- ensuring that all pupils can be included and participate safely in school outings

iii) Teachers overcome specific difficulties for individuals presented by aspects of the programme of study and attainment targets through:

- using approaches to enable hearing impaired pupils to learn about sound in science and music
- helping visually impaired pupils to learn about light in science

Pupils who are learning English as an additional language

Pupils for whom English is an additional language have diverse needs in terms of support necessary in English language learning. Planning should take account of such factors as the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and skills in other languages. Careful monitoring of each pupil's progress is essential to confirm that no learning difficulties are present.

Aims

The key principles will be delivered through the following aims;

- To place the educational needs of the child at the centre of all school development;
- To work collectively as a school 'community' for inclusion to be embraced and practiced by all;
- To fully utilize the expertise in our school and other service providers in promoting inclusion;
- To work in close partnership with a range of multi-disciplinary professionals and parents to promote a greater understanding of inclusion and a shared commitment to raising standards;
- To advise staff on appropriate professional development opportunities to increase their skills, abilities and expertise in developing effective inclusion;
- To ensure access for all children to a broad, balanced curriculum;
- To work with other schools to develop inclusive practices and monitor our own development, through use of the 'Index for Inclusion';
- To continue to monitor and evaluate our Inclusion Policy involving staff, governors, parents and pupils.

Developing an Inclusive Ethos

Schools that are successful at including pupils with Special Educational Needs meet those needs in a positive and proactive way. They have used tools like the *Index for Inclusion* to identify and remove the barriers to learning and participation. Schools that have adopted this sort of approach have seen standards rise for all of their pupils.

Index for Inclusion

The Index is a set of materials to support schools in a process of inclusive school development. It is about building supportive school communities which foster high achievement for all pupils.

Summary of the Three Main Dimensions;

Dimension A: Creating Inclusive CULTURES

This dimension is about creating a secure, accepting, collaborating, and stimulating community in which everyone is valued, as the foundation for the highest achievements of all students. It is concerned with developing inclusive values, shared between all staff, pupils, governors and parents/carers that are conveyed to all new members of the school.

Dimension B: Producing Inclusive POLICIES

This dimension is about securing inclusion at the heart of the school development, permeating all policies, so that they increase the learning and participation of all pupils.

Dimension C: Evolving inclusive PRACTICES

This dimension is about making school practices reflect the inclusive cultures and policies of the school. It is concerned with ensuring that classroom and extra-curriculum activities encourage the participation of all students and draw on their knowledge and experience outside school.

The above is supported by a detailed set of indicators and questions which require schools to engage in a deep, and challenging exploration of their present position and the possibilities for moving towards greater inclusion.

OFSTED

OFSTED inspectors will monitor how inclusive a school is. In order for a school to be satisfactory or better it must be “inclusive in its policies, outlook and practices.”

Inspections will also assess how well a school reaches out to all its learners and the practical steps schools are taking in and out of the classroom in order to take account of pupil’s varied life experiences and needs.