



SEN Transition Policy

- *Approval by the Board of Governors: **JUNE 2022***
- *The implementation of this policy will be monitored by: Senior Leadership Team*
- *This policy will be reviewed annually*

Rationale

Ballycastle High School supports the belief that every child regardless of intellectual ability or social background should have a rewarding educational experience. Our aims are personal excellence and that every pupil should achieve his or her full potential. This takes place in a context which encourages the involvement of pupils, parents, and staff.

It is recognised by Ballycastle High School that although transitions are a regular process rather than a single event in school life and can be exciting for some pupils with special educational needs (SEN); others will find the experience of moving between the various phases more challenging and will require extra support to enable them to make progress within their education.

Therefore, this transition policy will outline the roles and responsibilities involved in ensuring a whole school approach which is designed to support pupils with SEN in adapting to their new learning environment, so that they can show progress in all aspects of their learning.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy, transition will be defined as the “means by which children experience a smooth passage from one setting or stage to another” (Department of Education, 2015).

Policy Aims

This transition policy aims to outline the high quality teaching, learning and assessment strategies identified through whole school planning and advice received from external agencies where appropriate, to support the unique challenges that may be faced when trying to meet the individual needs of pupils with SEN at the following phases:

- primary school to Year 8;
- year group to year group;
- newly-enrolled pupils with SEN throughout the school year; and
- preparation for leaving school.

A successful experience of transition at each of these distinct stages will help children with SEN to settle well into the routines and organisation of school life at Ballycastle High School.

The pace and quality of the teaching delivered will ensure that children continue to build upon their prior knowledge and experience so that they can make progress in all aspects of learning and reach their potential.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

At Ballycastle High School, the views of the pupil with SEN, their parents and staff regarding their thoughts and concerns about transition are actively sought, acknowledged and valued.

By involving pupils and taking into account the individual needs of the pupil from their perspective, as well as information obtained from parents, school staff and other agencies, a well-planned and co-designed transition process will help to outline what is expected of them ahead of transition to the next chapter in their learning. This will provide an opportunity to help the pupil to develop independence and confidence in their ability to manage change within a supportive environment.

Staff at Ballycastle High School are committed to listening to and working in partnership with parents, to support them in preparing their child with SEN for either beginning or leaving school as well as the movement into the next year group. This will facilitate better home-school communication links so that the parents can feel confident about expressing their views and knowing who to speak to if they have any concerns about their child.

Since transition is a process that may pose additional challenges and barriers for pupils with SEN, teachers at Ballycastle High School use their professional judgement, skills and expertise in assessing, planning for and using a range of strategies and activities in the best interests of the child. Information, including medical or social service reports, is shared with staff, in a sensitive manner and in the strictest of confidence. Transfer of information will be in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Additional adult assistants are also included in the development of the transition processes and policy as they play a valuable role in supporting the individual needs of pupils with SEN.

Transition Activities

Staff at Ballycastle High School in conjunction with pupils, parents and other professionals where appropriate, have identified the following activities as the best practice that they can offer to support the transition for pupils with SEN at each of the key phases of transition which are outlined below:

Primary School to Year 8

Lead responsibility – Mr Liam Kearney (Head of Year 8) & Mr Rhodri Gabe (Assistant SENCo)

This phase of transition is important in creating a positive experience for children with SEN who are starting their post primary education at our school.

Parents are encouraged to talk to their child about their feelings regarding school in a constructive manner. They are also advised to help their child set good routines in order to establish independence in preparing for school each day, completing homework and revision so that they enjoy a better school/life balance.

The following activities put the child with SEN at the centre of assessing and planning to build upon the learning experiences that pupils have brought with them from primary school:

- Head of Year 8 and Principal visit feeder Primary schools to talk to Primary Seven teachers and pupils.
- Open night/day- opportunity for pupils and parents to visit subject departments, SEN provision mentioned within the Principal's address.
- Taster days - e.g. sports, art and crafts, STEM events to assist familiarisation process.
- Post Primary makes initial contact with Primary school regarding Year 8 intake and to obtain information on any pupils with additional needs that should be addressed.
- Year 8 talk for parents of new pupils held in June. Principal, Vice-Principal, Head of pastoral Care, Year Head, Form Teachers and SENCo/Assistant SENCo to be introduced to parents at this time.
- Provide information packs which give details on subject curricula, extracurricular activities, resources, school procedures, etc. Simplified version for students also.
- Virtual tour of the school provided on school website to support pupils needing extra familiarisation in order to transition.
- SENCo uses CTF file that is transferred from primary school to identify initial concerns and follow up on these where necessary.

- EA correspondence with school regarding pupils with statements.
- If applicable, meet individually with parents of statemented pupils to discuss transition needs, provision, and plan to be followed.
- Transition photo booklet forwarded in June to parents of all pupils. This booklet uses photographs to familiarise pupils with the school environment and relevant staff members.
- With consent, contact services who are already involved with pupils who are enrolling in September for information on level of needs.
- Complete Risk Assessments/Environmental Audit of the school in relation to individual pupil needs.
- Key staff are made aware of the objectives of pupil statements where applicable.
- Staff capacity building and training is arranged as appropriate to support SEN pupils.
- Provide pupils with a statement of SEN and others who are on the Code of Practice if required, an opportunity to visit the school in June, and/or at the end of August.
- School passports are put in place for those who need them.
- Year 8 pupils will attend their first day at school with a reduced number of other year groups to allow pupils a chance to become accustomed to the school environment.
- Provide pupils with a map of the new school building. Highlight important areas such as the canteen, toilets, assembly hall and form class.
- Use diaries for organising homework and to keep in touch with parents. • Senior Prefects (Year 14) assigned to each Year 8 class to provide social support to pupils.
- A member of staff is assigned to act as a “mentor” to help SEN pupils in times of crisis. Pupils will be given the opportunity to identify who their go-to person will be.
- Procedures explained for designated time-out/chill-out space.
- Pupils will be introduced to a range of clubs and activities available during non-class time.
- Parents are invited to attend the Year 8 Parents’ afternoon/evening (usually October). This is an opportunity for them to meet their child’s teachers and discuss progress and any concerns.

Year group to year group

Lead responsibility – Mr James McPeak (SENCo), Mr Rhodri Gabe (Assistant SENCo), & specific Head of Year

Transitioning to the next class group in September can be a time of anxiety and worry for many pupils with SEN as they need to get used to new routines, change in some members of staff and the increasing level of difficulty in the work provided as well as expectations about how work should be completed or behaviours accepted within the classroom setting.

The following activities aim to build upon the knowledge of the pupil and consolidate their attainments to ensure that they enjoy continued success in their learning:

- A meeting is held in August involving the pupil's current year head, form teacher, SENCo & Assistant SENCo, and the teachers for that year to discuss support strategies and provision. Potential areas/situations that are concerning for individual pupils e.g. peer relations, classroom layout, seating arrangements, issues with completing tasks, following instructions, lining up, et cetera are identified.
- All subject teachers provide tracking and assessment data about the pupil's attainments and needs as well as their progress towards meeting the targets on Individual Education Plans. This information, which is collated by the SENCo helps to inform the process of planning for and setting targets for the following year.
- Information on the Pupil Passport which outlines the reasonable adjustments considered necessary for the pupil is updated if necessary following consultation with the pupil, their parents and staff.
- Pupils meet their new form teacher at the end of June.
- The pupil will help to identify a person that can act as their 'go-to person' if they are experiencing any difficulties.
- Parents are informed about the changes to the daily routine and are encouraged to speak to the Form Teacher to highlight any concerns that they may have.
- Pupils with a statement of SEN will be invited to attend their annual review. In the event that the outcome of the Annual Review process carried out by the school recommends ceasing the statement, the decision to do so is made by the EA. In this case, a school passport may be completed to pass on to subject teachers. This will highlight the pupil's strengths as well as any successful strategies that have been identified to meet their needs.

Newly enrolled SEN pupils throughout the school year

Lead responsibility – Mr James McPeak (SENCo), Mr Rhodri Gabe (Assistant SENCo), & specific Head of Year

Ballycastle High School offers a warm welcome to pupils with SEN and their parents who choose to join our school throughout the year.

The following activities aim to provide a supportive environment so that the pupil feels included and happy about coming to school and parents will feel confident in the knowledge that their child will be encouraged to reach their potential:

- An initial meeting is held between the principal, SENCo, parents and the pupil (if appropriate) to be enrolled.
- Individual tours of the school are offered to incoming parents and pupils.

- Parents are provided with a copy of the school prospectus.
- Pupils are given time to settle into their new routines. They will be observed and assessed as necessary by the subject teacher or SENCo.
- Parental permission to access pupil records from previous school is sought.
- SIMS data passed on from previous school (CTF file).
- Pupil meets with new class and Form Teacher.
- A “buddy” is identified to help the new child to integrate.
- Consent is sought to follow-up with any services currently involved with the child or to make an onward referral for advice and support. Parents will be made aware of the purpose and expected outcome of each request.

Preparation for leaving school

Lead responsibility - Mr James McPeak (SENCo), Mr Michael Rafferty (Head of Careers), & specific Head of Year

At Ballycastle High School, we recognise that some of our pupils with SEN will face additional challenges in the preparation for leaving school.

The following activities aim to guide the pupils with SEN through the process as effectively and efficiently as possible so that any concerns can be addressed in a timely manner:

- Pupils with SEN participate in Learning for Life and Work as part of the curriculum.
- Pupils from Year 12 attend a Careers event in Coleraine. We have established close links with a range of training opportunities, further and higher education colleges and universities that our pupils have previously transferred to once they finish their post primary education at our school.
- For pupils with a statement of SEN (Stage 5 of the Code of Practice), the Education Authority will allocate a Transition Co-ordinator during Year 10 who will support the pupil and their parents to help prepare them for making positive choices for the future.
- During Year 12, Set 3 pupils will have the opportunity to undertake ‘work experience’. Staff will work closely with SEN pupils to support them in seeking out an appropriate placement. If deemed appropriate, information about how to support the pupil will be shared with consent with the prospective employer.
- Pupils with SEN will be given additional support if necessary to help them complete application forms and their personal statement.
- In Year 12, the careers co-ordinator will provide extra support and guidance sessions if required to assist with interview preparation for jobs and courses of further study that the pupil with SEN may decide to pursue once they finish their compulsory education.

- At the end of Year 12 or Year 14 if the pupil decides to pursue post-16 qualifications, a report is compiled in addition to the annual school report which details the academic and non-academic achievements of the pupil. Pupils will be invited back to school for a Prize Giving Evening during Term One of the following academic year.

Link with other policies

This transition policy links with the following school policies:

- Accessibility
- Admissions
- Assessment
- Child Protection
- Data Protection
- Examinations
- Learning and Teaching
- Pastoral Care
- Special Educational Needs

Monitoring and review

At Ballycastle High School, members of the teaching staff have been allocated key responsibilities for each phase of transition. They will collaborate with Mr McPeak the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and additional adult assistants, to ensure that the processes are supportive and enable transition for pupils with SEN to be as smooth as possible.

The transition policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis or sooner if required by the senior leadership team to ensure that it reflects examples of best practice in meeting the needs of the pupils with SEN.

Where reasonably possible, the views of the pupil with SEN and parents as well as school staff will be sought to highlight areas that are working well together with those which may need strengthened.

Useful Publications/Resources

Ballycastle High School found that the following publications and resources were useful in the development of this transition policy:

Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

- [Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 Transition Guidance \(2015\)](#)

Department of Education

- [The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational \(1998\)](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order \(SENDO\) \(NI\) \(2005\)](#)
- [The Supplement to the Code of Practice \(2005\)](#)
- [A Resource File for Schools to Support Children with Special Educational Needs \(2011\)](#)
- [Guidance on Induction and Transition in Pre-School Education and Year One \(2015\)](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability \(NI\) Act \(2016\)](#)

Education Authority

Education Welfare Service

- [Moving Forward](#)

SEND Implementation team

- Transition training (2019)
- Seeking the View of the Child (2019)

The SEN Transition policy will be reviewed annually. It will be amended as appropriate in light of changes in legislation or practice. This policy will be brought to the Board of Governors for final approval.

Policy Date: __/__/____

Signature of Principal:

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors:

Review Date: __/__/____