

Elckerlyc International School

Policy for Special Educational Needs

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Policy for Special Educational Needs (Zorgplan)

1. Introduction

The school is legally required to have a policy for Special Educational Needs (SEN). This policy describes how we meet the needs of children who experience barriers with their learning in school.

Elckerlyc International School is a member of MZH, stichting Montessori onderwijs Zuid Holland. The school is located in Leiderdorp. During the school year 2015-2016 there were 145 students, divided in 7 groups. Allied to Elckerlyc IS is a pre school, group 0, in which children are prepared for their first year of schooling. Children can start after their 3rd birthday.

Elckerlyc's SEN is under the directives of the Ministry of Education (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap). We also participate in the Samenwerkingsverband Primair Passend Onderwijs (PPO) region Leiden.

2. The SEN structure of Elckerlyc International School

2.1 Basic conditions from PPO region Leiden

Schools have to comply with certain conditions, before the process of support allocation can start. These conditions have been agreed by the boards of schools within the Samenwerkingsverband. The conditions are:

Condition 1: Needs Based Approach (handelingsgericht werken-HGW):

The NBA consists of 7 main pillars:

1. Most important are educational needs
2. Interaction and deviation
3. The teacher matters
4. Collaborative partnership
5. Focus on strengths
6. Goal directed
7. Systematic and transparent process

The prerequisite for a good system of allocating support is that it signals whether a pupil is developing to the expected level. Use of the NBA will define the required support needed. To put this into practise, the school will follow the principles of NBA. A plan defining the individual's special educational needs will be put in writing and incorporated into the daily schedule.

Parents will be involved in each part of the process.

Condition 2: Inspection framework / basic arrangement:

The school has to adhere to the inspection framework, including its rules and regulations to obtain a basic arrangement.

Condition 3: Good teachers:

For a successful care plan there needs to be a good teacher. Characteristics of a good teacher are amongst other things:

- To be able to reflect on one's decisions and actions systematically and professionally, and take as appropriate external advice and support.
- To be able to initialise required actions and to know which goals to support.

Condition 4: A qualified Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO):

A qualified SENCO provides the first safety net for the teacher who is uncertain on how best to support the student.

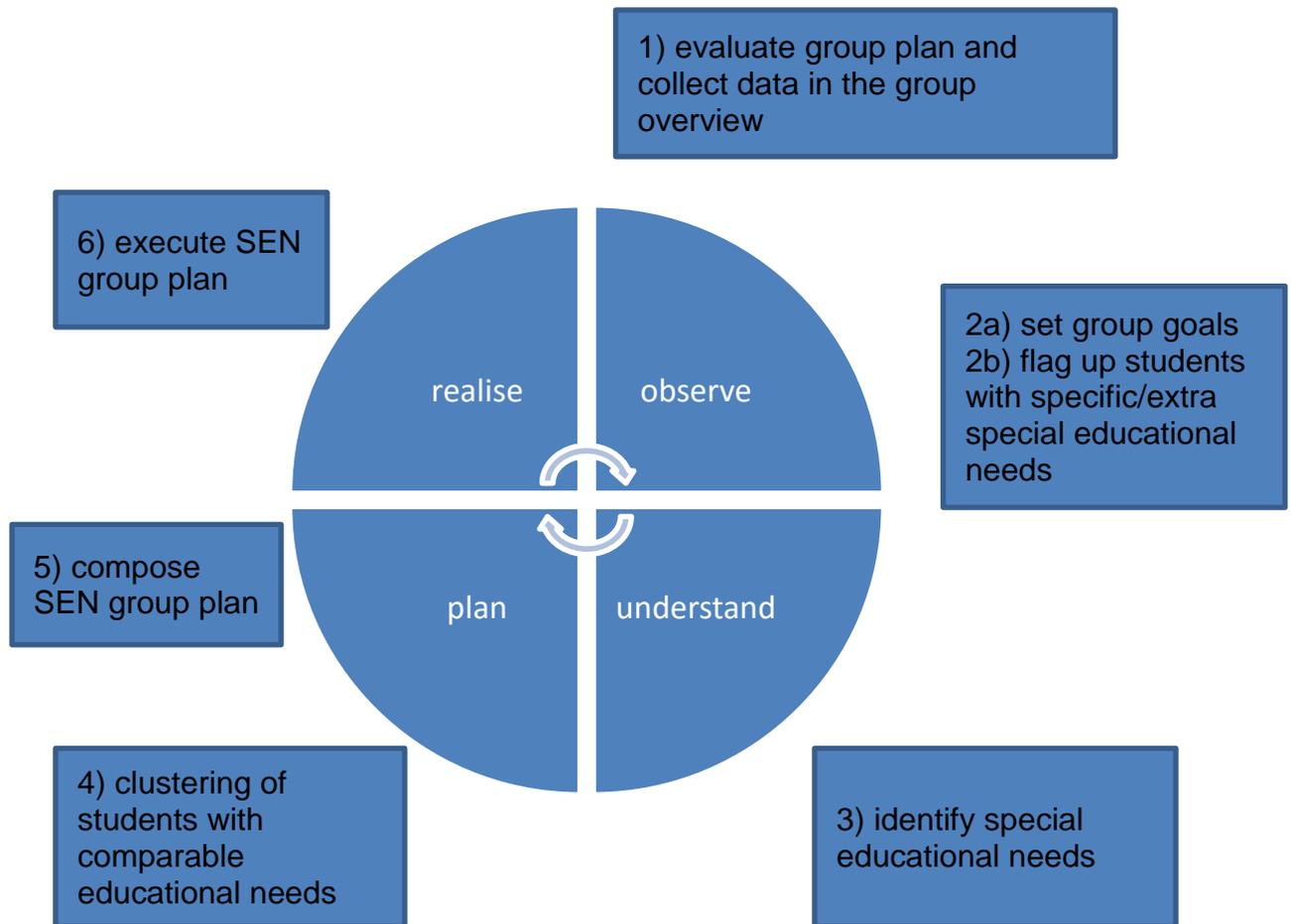
2.2 The support route

The support route indicate steps that need to be taken. This starts at school as well as the Samenwerkingsverband. The process starts with the teacher or parents who highlight the need for extra support. It finishes when tailor made education (passend onderwijs) has been realized.

It is very important that parents share information about the child's previous development when registering at the primary school.

Step 1: Signalling by the parents/teachers

When the parents/teachers recognise that the student has developmental challenges, the process can begin. (See the diagram) Teachers and parents work together to find a solution.



Step 2: Consultation SENCO

If a teacher is uncertain how to support a student, they will have a meeting with the SENCO. The SENCO will conduct an initial assessment of the situation and together they will formulate an appropriate plan. Together they will evaluate the plan. Parents are involved in the process. The SENCO is responsible for the administration and assumes the role of director and facilitator of the process.

Step 3 : Support team (OT) and specialists

The SENCO and the teachers, in consultation with the parents, may conclude that despite current interventions, the child continues to experience significant challenges to development. In this case the SENCO invites the parents, teacher and educational specialists for a Support Team Meeting: an Ondersteuningsteam (OT) meeting. Parental permission for this meeting is required.

Members of the Support Team are, in addition to the teacher, parents and SENCO:

- The school director: Is responsible for completion of the process.
- Advisor from the PPO organisation for the Leiden region: the advisor has teaching experience and is aware of support possibilities within the Samenwerkingsverband. The advisor is an expert on special educational needs and has the expertise to call on the appropriate specialists. The advisor supports the school in sourcing and making the correct arrangements. If investigations are necessary, they will be paid from the school's budget and not by the Samenwerkingsverband.
- The family-specialist (Jeugd en Gezinswerker from the JGT – Jeugd en Gezinsteam): This specialist is part of a Youth and Family team. The specialist gives consultations and advice on parenting.
- The school doctor (Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin): The school doctor gives consultations and advice about physical health.
- If relevant the OT may also include specialists from other organisations that may have a bearing on the child's environment.

The next step depends on the arrangement the Support team has chosen:

- basic support from school
- help from the "expert team" (see appendix)
- referral to a school catering for children with special educational needs.

Step 4a: Basic support arrangement

The basic support includes all possible arrangements up to and including a referral to specialised education. From the schools budget for basic support, the school organises the necessary arrangements. If required, the school will use the team of experts. This team consists of specialists from various disciplines, who can be asked to provide the required support.

Step 4b: Development Plan (DP)

A "Development Plan" is devised when:

- The inspectorate requires that a DP is produced when a student can no longer work at the level of their peers.
- A situation in which a student shows behaviour that disturbs the development and functioning of the whole group.
- Children who do not reach the educational goals for group 7.
- At the request of parents.

Step 4c: Objection

In the case of a disagreement between the school and the parents regarding special support, it is possible for parents to make a complaint. A written complaint can be sent to the advisory officer for complaints of the Samenwerkingsverband (see PPO Regio Leiden www.pporegioleiden.nl regeling uitvoering bezwaaradviescommissie).

Step 5a Meeting with the prospective school catering for children with special educational needs.

When the decision has been made to transfer to a school catering for children with special educational needs, a representative from that school will be invited to attend a meeting. Possibilities will be discussed with parents, including how the school, with its specific expertise can support the child's needs. Possible reintegration to the original school will also be discussed.

Step 5b Deposit "Toelaatbaarheidsverklaring".

After step 5a has been completed, there will be a request for a "Toelaatbaarheidsverklaring" (admission statement).

Step 6 Evaluation

The Needs Based Approach requires a cyclic approach. It is essential to make agreements about evaluation before every arrangement starts. The outcome of the evaluations will be recorded in the student file in Parnassys and will be used for designing another arrangement. Simultaneously, continuous evaluation of all steps in this process will ensure quality provision.

Not every step in the route mentioned above is essential before taking the next step. A flexible procedure, relevant to the situation and students needs', is paramount.

2.3 Meetings to discuss the group

- The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) will meet with each class teacher at least twice a year to discuss the whole group and specifically the students with additional needs. The teacher and the SENCO discuss the situation and if necessary find a solution. To get a clear view on the situation, an observation in the group and/or a diagnostic investigation can take place. A meeting with the parents can give clarity, additional colleagues may also be asked for advice.
- The test results will be discussed during these meetings. Teacher and SENCO discuss notable outcomes and discuss potential adaptations at student and/or group level.
- Group placement will be decided on an individual base. This is in consultation with the SENCO and parents.

2.4 The Internal Care Committee (ICC)

The members of the Internal Care Committee are the director and the SENCO. The ICC discuss and optimise the care plan of students, teachers and wider school. They can ask the representative of PPO and/or the school doctor for advice.

2.5 External contacts

Within the Samenwerkingsverband (Partnership of Primary schools in Leiden, Oegstgeest, Leiderdorp, Zoeterwoude, Voorschoten, Kaag en Braassem and Wassenaar) the director meets with other external directors. The SENCO meets 3 or 4 times a year with SENCO's within Leiderdorp Gemeente.

3. Student development monitoring

From Group 3, the students of Elckerlyc International School take part in tests called GL Assessments in Mathematics, Spelling and English. These tests are taken in October. Group 5 and 7 also take part in the CAT test, (Cognitive Ability tests). The results of these tests are in the student tracking system: which shows the level of cognitive development of the student. These results will be discussed in the group meetings. (see 2.3)

Individual tests and further diagnostic examination will be done by the RT/SENCO or other specialists.

The speech therapist screens all 5 year old students. They can also be asked for advice and/or support when it concerns speech or language development. Additional referral for screening is always possible.

Parental approval is needed before any external consultation.

4. Administration SEN

4.1 Planning:

In the medium term planning of each group, specific learning needs of students are documented. Children with similar needs are clustered and differentiated work planned. Evaluation shows whether specific support and differentiation will be continued.

4.2 Group overview:

Each group has a group overview which contains the current school year's test results, the strengths and weaknesses of the student, where support is given and by which member of the team. This includes extension programmes for gifted students.

4.3 Individual Education Plan/leerarrangement

For students who need extra support, an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) will be written by group staff and/or SENCO. The IEP is a short term plan to help the student reach their target with the help of group staff, parents and if necessary external contacts. After a period of 6-8 weeks, the IEP will be evaluated against the objectives achieved. If more support is needed, the IEP will be continued for an additional period.

Parents need to sign the IEP and this will be kept as both hard copy and on Parnassys.

4.4 Student dossiers

The student dossiers in Parnassys contain:

- Student tracking system (yearly test results of GL Assessment tests in Mathematics, Spelling and English, as well as the CAT test results)
- Termly assessments
- Reports of examinations, former schools, observations meetings with parents and external agencies
- Educational reports
- Individual Educational Plans
- Any other confidential information

The student dossiers are the responsibility of the SENCO, including the uploading of data. Every student has a dossier in Parnassys.

Appendix

Expert team:

There are 10 types of special schools in the Netherlands. They can be categorised into 4 groups known as Clusters 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Each Cluster has its own Special Schools, that mainstream schools can access for individual pupils who are experiencing challenges within a specific Cluster.

These Clusters are:

- Cluster 1:** Visual handicap.
- Cluster 2:** Deaf children, children with hearing problems, children with speech and language problems.
- Cluster 3:** Children who have a mental handicap, physical handicap, are long term sick or have epilepsy.
- Cluster 4:** Children that due to their behaviour, psychiatric problems or other limitations have problems within education.

Each Cluster is overseen by an Expert team. The Expert team advises the most appropriate way forward for each individual. Help may be offered in the following ways:

- A member of the Expert team can advise the school how to support the needs of a student.
- A member of the Expert team can support school and/or the student to fulfil their needs.