



St Mary's School
CAMBRIDGE

Special Education Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Policy

This policy is the responsibility of the Head and is reviewed by the SEND committee.

Last review: May 25

Next review: May 26

Introduction

Values and Principles

At St Mary's School, Cambridge (the School) we are committed to offering a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our students, from EYFS to Sixth Form including boarders.

Every student is celebrated as an individual with an important contribution to make within the School and to the world around them. The School is caring and inclusive, and our Christian ethos grounds students' education, academic success, and future role within society.

Our SEND policy reflects the principles of Equality Act (2010) and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), referred to as 'the Code of Practice', as appropriate for the School. It should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy, Admissions Policy, Curriculum Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Accessibility Plans and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Consistent with the Equality Policy, the School is committed to ensuring, through making all practicable and reasonable adjustments, that each student has equity of access to the curriculum, and the wide range of additional opportunities offered at the School. Each student will be supported to fulfil their promise and potential whatever their ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious background, special educational need and/or disability, subject to any overriding health and safety considerations.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

The expression Special Educational Need and/or Disability covers a wide range of conditions, for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, and communication impairments, for example, autistic spectrum disorders. It may also include those who have physical disabilities, visual or hearing difficulties, or social, emotional, sensory or mental health difficulties.

The Code of Practice states that, 'A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.'

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age.

In accordance with the Code of Practice, students are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because of limitations of having English as an additional language. The Code of Practice states that, 'Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Schools should look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability.' Please refer to the School's EAL Policy for further information.

Disabled children and young people

The Code of Practice says that many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments, for example, those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Additional learning needs

We use the term, 'additional learning needs' if a student has a learning difficulty but their needs can be met in the classroom by differentiated teaching and/or reasonable adjustments.

Aims and objectives

The School aims to:

- provide a broad and balanced education to all students in line with the Code of Practice and the School's aims;
- provide a supportive environment for all students;
- identify the needs of all students in order to support progression and good mental health and wellbeing;
- ensure the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 are fully met through the valuing of each individual and their differences, and to this end, the School will use its best endeavours to ensure that it is accessible and that no-one experiences discrimination, victimisation or harassment;
- ensure that all students are protected from harm and neglect through robust safeguarding procedures;
- ensure that where possible all students with SEND to access the curriculum and wider opportunities organised by the School, by providing adapted/differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, additional resources, and/or additional support where appropriate.

SEND Policy objectives

- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, any student with SEND and ensure that their needs are met with targeted, evidence-based provision.
- To support students' acquisition of independence skills by offering graduated SEND support, when applicable.
- To monitor student progress to help with the identification of need.
- To ensure all staff recognise their responsibility for the continued progress of students with SEND including but not limited to, academic, health & welfare, physical & sensory, independence & employability, social, emotional, communication skills.
- To monitor and evaluate provision regularly.
- To ensure that all parents/carers are informed of their child's special needs and/or disability and provision, and that there is effective communication and partnership between parents and the School.
- To ensure that students express their views and are involved in the decisions which affect their education.
- To promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate to meet the needs of students with SEND.
- To provide support and train staff to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities to students with SEND.
- To ensure pastoral care is available to students with SEND that enables them to build self-esteem by developing in all areas.

Responsibility for the coordination of SEND provision

The Head has overall responsibility for the School's SEND policy. The person responsible for day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy at the Senior School is the Head of Learning Support. They provide professional guidance and support to the Heads of Departments, Subject Teachers, the Senior Tutor, Heads of Year, Form Tutors, Assistant SENCos and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). The Assistant SENCo(s) work closely with the Head of Learning Support and offer professional guidance to colleagues.

The person responsible for day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy in the Junior School is the Head of Learning Support. They provide professional guidance and support to teaching staff and support staff within the Junior School specifically. The Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) works closely with the Head of Learning Support and offers professional guidance to colleagues.

The Governors have responsibility for keeping a general oversight of the School's provision for students with special educational needs. They are advised by the Head of any major changes in policy and resource implications and are reported to on SEND issues and developments via the SEND Committee. The Governance Committee of the Governing Body has responsibility in this regard.

Roles and Responsibilities

Major areas of responsibility are set out below but should not be regarded as exhaustive.

Head/Head of Juniors

- ensure that the school meets its special educational needs responsibilities;
- informs governors of major changes in policy and their resource implications.

Head of Learning Support

- review the Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Policy, together with provision and procedures in this area annually, advising the SEND committee of any major changes required;
- be responsible for overseeing the operation of the SEND Policy;
- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND, including in Exam Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support;
- monitor the progress of students with SEND;
- ensure that the records of all students with SEND are updated on the School's information management system;
- coordinate arrangements for annual reviews for students with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan;
- liaise with parents regarding assessments of SEND;
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning students with SEND and know how to use it;
- promote awareness amongst staff of the importance of addressing students' additional learning needs including those with SEND;
- research and develop provision for students' needs including those with SEND;
- advise the SEND Committee of the need for changes in the policy and provision for students with SEND;
- liaise with the Examinations Officer, Deputy Head (Data and Operations) and Heads of Year to ensure that appropriate provision is made for students eligible for examination access arrangements in internal and external examinations;
- liaise with the Deputy Head (Data and Operations), Heads of Year, Heads of Department, Assistant SENCoS and LSAs in order to facilitate awareness and understanding of issues concerning special educational needs and to ensure that these needs are being met;
- coordinate and contribute to staff INSET on students' needs including INSET on special educational needs;
- communicate with parents regarding provision for students who have or may have SEND;
- liaise closely with the Junior School SENCo about the learning needs and provision for students at the Junior School and to share good practice.

Deputy Head (Pastoral & Boarding)/Head of Juniors

- retain an overview of the progress and performance of students with special educational needs and/or disability through her/his work with Heads of Year. The Head of Juniors works closely with the Junior School SENCo.

Deputy Head (Data and Operations) and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School)

- generate and provide information to facilitate the identification of students who may have special educational needs;

- in so far as it is practicable, endeavour to timetable lessons into teaching areas which are accessible to students who experience environmental barriers (including those with sensory and ambulant limitations) where this is possible.

Examinations Officer (Senior School)

- be aware of the recommendations in special educational needs assessments so that access requirements can be put in place for the students for public examinations, and liaise closely with the Head of Learning Support in this regard;
- ensure that invigilators are aware of any access arrangements for students for public examinations and receive the necessary training.

Assistant SENCos (Senior School)

- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND, including in Exam Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support;
- assist with the assessing of students for examination access arrangements, arrange follow up meetings with the student and their parents, and assist in the completion of Form 8s, Form 9s and Form 8RFs;
- organise the literacy screening of students upon entry to the Senior School and in Years 9 and 12 with the Lucid EXACT, analyse the results and decide, in conjunction with the Head of Learning Support, on any follow up action;
- take the lead for the planning and teaching of Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 students who have support lessons;
- carry out any duties delegated by the Head of Learning Support.

Junior School SENCo

- be responsible for overseeing the operation of the SEND Policy in the Junior School;
- monitor the progress of students with SEND;
- ensure that the records of all students with SEND are updated on the School's information management system and St Mary's Cloud;
- coordinate arrangements for annual reviews for students with an EHC Plan;
- liaise with parents regarding assessments of SEND;
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning students with SEND and know how to use it;
- provide up to date, evidence-based training on the best way to support all students, including those with SEND;
- research and develop provision for students needs including those with SEND;
- liaise with teaching staff, support staff, and Junior School Senior Leadership Team to facilitate awareness and understanding of issues concerning special educational needs and to ensure that these needs are being met;
- coordinate and contribute to staff INSET on students' needs including INSET on special educational needs;
- communicate with parents regarding provision for students who have or may have SEND;
- liaise closely with the Head of Learning Support about the learning needs and provision for students at the Junior School and to share good practice.

Subject Teachers and Junior School Teaching Staff

- familiarise themselves with this policy;

- know the students in their teaching groups and their category of need by referring to iSAMS and St Mary's Cloud;
- undertake their legal responsibility to include adaptive strategies in their lesson plans and teaching to meet the needs of their students with SEND;
- liaise with LSAs to plan strategies and adapt/differentiate the curriculum for students with SEND;
- adapt homework tasks, where appropriate;
- follow the agreed school procedures for assessment and recording carefully, recognising that evidence of their efforts to support a student will be required should they be referred for further help from the Learning Support Department;
- be proactive in seeking help and advice about how to support students with SEND;
- contribute to meetings regarding students with special educational needs as requested by the Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School);
- be vigilant in identifying and reporting students who may have SEND.

Heads of Year (Senior School)

- familiarise themselves with this policy;
- know which students in the year group/s for which they have responsibility have SEND;
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Form Tutors about the needs and progress of students identified as having SEND;
- Head of Year 7 only – liaise with the Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) and Year 6 teachers to ensure that information concerning the SEND of students is known and acted upon as they make the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3;
- Heads of Year work closely with the Head of Learning Support and ensure that parents of students joining the Senior School are involved in decision making about any special provision being put in place;
- Heads of Year liaise with the Head of Learning Support to identify students who are likely to need access arrangements for exams for reasons other than learning difficulties, for example, rest breaks and small group room for students with social, emotional and mental health needs or medical needs.

Form Tutors (Senior School)

- familiarise themselves with school policy and procedure on SEND;
- know which students in their form have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and the category of need and provide appropriate pastoral support;
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Head of Year over the needs and progress of identified students.

Heads of Departments (Senior School)

- familiarise themselves with this policy;
- ensure that adapt for students with SEND is included in all schemes of work and is appropriate;
- encourage staff to adapt appropriately in lessons and homework tasks to ensure that student with a SEND are well supported;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support given to students with SEND within their curriculum area.

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

- be fully aware of the special educational needs of the students receiving support;

- liaise with the Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCOs, Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) and class teachers as necessary to include but not limited to, student approaches and competency, welfare observations, independence skills, social and communication skills, and support strategies;
- undertake training to support their own professional development.

Admissions Team

- Inform the Head of Learning Support, Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School), and Deputy Head (Data and Operations) as soon as they are made aware of any SEND issues regarding a prospective student either by formal comment on the Application Form, receipt of a report/letter or by informal conversation;
- The student will be assessed as outlined in the Admissions Policy.

Support Plans

Support Plans are used in the Junior School. A Support Plan is a working document recording provision that is additional to or different from the usual class curriculum. The student and the student's parents are invited to share in discussion of the student's needs and approaches to address them, and suggestions for parental support will be shared and documented. Teaching strategies and provision are agreed between the Class Teacher and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School). The student's parents are sent an electronic copy of the Support Plan. All staff can access Support Plans for all children through St Mary's Cloud, so they are aware of each student's targets. The Support Plan is monitored by the Class Teacher and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) to ensure students have the support they need, and a review of targets is sent to parents at the end of each term. Reviews will involve looking at outcomes and will result in new targets being set as appropriate.

A graduated response

To support the acquisition of independence skills, the School uses a graduated response to meet the needs of students when appropriate. Class and subject teachers are accountable and responsible for the progress and development of the students in their classes, including where students access support from LSAs or specialist staff. In the first instance, any additional learning needs of the students are met through high quality teaching which is adapted for the needs of individual students.

When students are not making the expected level of progress a further graduated response may be required. Senior School students may require input from LSAs through in-class support, and in a small number of cases, students' needs may be such that they require Learning Support lessons. In the Junior School, small group support lessons are offered.

Students with sensory needs

The School will seek to provide reasonable adjustments to support equity of access for students with sensory needs be they related to, for example, sight, hearing or touch. In doing so and when applicable, the School will engage with specialist sensory support practitioners to ensure it is in an informed position when considering adaptations. Specialists may include, but are not limited to, Teachers of the Deaf, Visually Impaired, Dual Sensory Impairment, Habilitation Officers, Braillists (often provided by the Local Authority) and Occupational Therapists. Parents/Guardians/Carers and other stakeholders are encouraged to contact the Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) should it be felt that a deviation from standard expectations and/or environmental adaptations is necessary.

Students with Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plans

The needs of the majority of students with SEN will be met effectively through the School's SEN support. However, where the student has not made expected progress despite the SEN support in place, parents and the School have the

right to ask the Local Authority (LA) to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC Plan for their child. Parents are asked to consult with the School before exercising this right. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right.

If the LA refuses to make an assessment, parents have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). The School does not have this right of appeal.

Where either a prospective student has an EHC Plan, or a current student obtains their first EHC Plan, the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC Plan can be delivered by the School. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan will need to be charged to the LA if the LA is responsible for the fees and the School is named in the EHC Plan. In all other circumstances charges may be made directly to parents, unless the additional services can be considered to be a 'reasonable adjustment' where no charge will be made, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The School co-operates with the LA to ensure that relevant annual reviews of EHC Plans are carried out as required.

Students with SEND and EAL

If an EAL student does not progress as expected, the SEND Department, in collaboration with the EAL Department and subject teacher observations, may monitor for indications that the student might need additional support. The EAL Department use the Bell Foundation's [EAL and SEND: A Framework for Integrated Provision in Schools](#).

Specialist SEND provision

The Learning Support Department in the Senior School is made up of the Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCOs, and LSAs. The Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCOs and LSAs plan and teach small group Learning Support lessons and the Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCOs carry out assessments for examination access arrangements once an appropriate qualification is held.

The LSAs provide in-class support from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4. Occasionally, individual interventions are also delivered. Subject teachers and Junior School teaching staff can request in-class support for specific students or for classes in general. SEND students are also encouraged to make requests for in-class support where they feel they will benefit from it. The Learning Support Department makes every effort to accommodate requests for support and the timetables of the LSAs are regularly reviewed to provide targeted, individual support to priority students.

Learning Support Lessons take the place of a modern foreign language in Key Stage 3 and GCSE option blocks in Key Stage 4. They are provided for SEND students who need additional support, beyond the adapted curriculum. SEND students in the Sixth Form receive one Learning Support lesson per fortnight on their timetable. Depending on the needs of the student, they may attend all Support Lessons or opt to 'drop in' when they need additional support.

The Equality Act (2010) makes provision for SEND students to receive targeted lessons/activities to address their substantial disadvantage compared to average peers of the same age. Learning Support Lessons are focused on literacy skills, numeracy skills, as well as targeted functional, independence and study skills. In conjunction with teachers, they may also provide overlearning opportunities, assisting with the understanding of mainstream curriculum lessons.

In addition to form tutors, Senior Tutor and Heads of Year, our team of Nurses, School Counsellor and Chaplaincy also provide support to students who may need help with social, emotional, and mental and physical health concerns.

In the Junior School, LSAs run small support sessions for children who need support beyond the adapted curriculum. Class Teachers and the Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) identify students who would benefit from

additional mathematics and literacy support. Class Teachers, with the assistance of the Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) where needed, prepare the work and activities and the LSAs run the sessions. The sessions take place during other subject time, such as languages.

Admissions Criteria

The Schools Admission Policy sets out our admissions criteria. Where a student is known to have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability, parents are required to provide the School with information about the nature of their child's need and any relevant assessment reports. Parents are encouraged to meet with the Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) before their child joins the School, so that discussions can take place regarding the required level of support.

Facilities for students with SEND

The School has a dedicated Learning Support classroom on the ground floor in which small group lessons are taught. Both the Senior School and Junior School have several floors and there are no lifts in their buildings. If a student's access to the environment is temporarily compromised the School will relocate lessons to ground floor classrooms when reasonable and practicable. In Mary Ward House, our boarding house, there are lifts.

The Junior School has a dedicated Learning Support room, 'The Hub', located on the first floor of Acton House. One-to-one and small group lessons are taught in 'The Hub'.

Examination access arrangements

SEND students may be eligible for access arrangements, for example, rest breaks, extra time, use of a word processor, a computer reader/reader or scribe in school examinations and public examinations. In such cases, the School carries out specialist assessments and follows the Joint Council for Qualification's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments rules.

The School is unable to provide full diagnostic assessment reports to obtain diagnoses of Learning Difficulties and/or disabilities. Similarly, it is unable to provide full diagnostic reports required for access arrangements and resources in higher education. Where students wish to continue their examination access arrangements at university and/or apply for a Disabled Students Allowance they should arrange for an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor to carry out an assessment. Commissioning reports from health professionals and external specialists is a private arrangement between the parents and the assessor, and responsibility for any payment rests with the parents.

Identification and assessment of students' needs

As well as information from feeder schools, parents and the students themselves, all new students to the Senior School are assessed on entry using the MidYIS test. Subject teachers and Junior School teachers also assess the abilities of the students in their classes through observation, classwork, homework, and assessments throughout the year. If there is potential evidence for a need, for example if there is a lack of progress or progress is below that expected of the student, parents are contacted and invited to meet with the Deputy Head Data and Operations, Head of Learning Support and another member of staff (subject teacher/form tutor/Head of Year) to discuss the concern and decide on a plan of action. In the Junior School, parents are invited to meet with the classroom teacher and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School). The views of the student are also sought, and they may also attend these meetings.

Sometimes students feel concerned about their own learning and approach the Learning Support department staff. When this happens, the concerns are taken seriously. The Head of Learning Support and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) will liaise with the student's subject teachers to collect information about their learning and progress and take appropriate action.

When parents raise concerns that their child may have a learning need, their views are taken seriously. A meeting with the Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School), and relevant teachers are set up and a plan of action is agreed.

The plan of action from these meetings might include arranging for relevant specialist assessments to take place. These assessments may be carried out by the Head of Learning Support, the Assistant SENCo, an Educational Psychologist, a Specialist Teacher or other relevant professional.

Records of SEND

Students with SEND are identified on the School's information management system. Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) use the Student Register tool to record information on students with SEND, including summaries of assessment reports. They also keep records of meetings with parents and outside agencies, and these are shared with relevant staff. Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) ensure that any follow up action is taken. Confidential records such as Educational Psychologist reports that are received as hard copies are stored in a lockable filing cabinet. All records specifically relating to Exam Access Arrangements are stored securely.

Evaluating the success of provision

The School has a SEND Committee which consists of the Head of Learning Support or Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School), the Head, the Head of Junior School, Deputy Heads, the Head of EAL, the Head of Boarding and a Nurse. The Committee co-opts relevant additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The Committee's terms of reference are to:

- review the School's policies, procedures, and facilities as they are likely to affect students/staff and prospective students/staff who have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability;
- make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of education, in its many aspects, to students or prospective students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
- prepare and review Accessibility Plans;
- ensure the School is able to provide appropriate examination access arrangements for students with Special Educational Needs;
- inform other committees (as relevant) about any relevant information concerning variation to, or additional student services for discussion and recommendation.

In Service Training (INSET)

The School is committed to training staff and updating their skills in relation to SEND. New staff follow an induction programme which includes Learning Support.

Information about the most common types of learning difficulty found at School and suggested ways to support students, is available to staff on the intranet.

Working with parents

The Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCos and Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) make regular contact with parents of students with SEND. This can be through email contact and telephone conversations as well

as review meetings and Parents' Evenings. A record of outcomes, action and support agreed is recorded and updated, and appropriate staff are made aware of relevant information. The views of parents are taken seriously.

Involving students in their learning

Students are actively involved in the learning process. Regular Tracking and Monitoring sessions between all students and their form tutors provides opportunities to discuss progress and for students to set personal targets.

Students with SEND are encouraged to attend and be active participants in review meetings. Their views are taken seriously.

Students are regularly encouraged to talk to their teachers about their learning and to seek support and guidance from the Learning Support Department if this is appropriate.

Links with other schools

The Head of Learning Support liaises with the Head of Learning Support at other local schools and Sixth Form Colleges, where appropriate.

Links to support services

The School is committed to working effectively with support services. The Deputy Head Pastoral and Boarding, Heads of Year, Form Teachers, Nurses, Head of Learning Support, Head of Learning Support / SENDCo (Junior School) and Assistant SENCos co-operate fully with professional services, where appropriate, for example, Social Services, Brookside Family Consultation Clinic, The Phoenix Centre or Specialist Teachers.

Strong working relationships have been built with local Educational Psychologists.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints are handled under the provisions of the School's Complaints Policy and Procedure which is published on the website.
