St Mary's School
CAMBRIDGE

Special Education Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Policy and Accessibility Plan

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

Last review: May 26

Next review: May 27

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.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

The expression Special Educational Need and/or Disability potentially incorporates a wide range of 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. Please refer to the School's EAL Policy for further information. Additionally, a diagnosis of a Learning Difficulty, disability or medical complaint does not demand adjustment or support in-of-its-self.

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 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;
- using its best endeavours, ensure that all students with SEND have equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum and wider opportunities organised by the School, in line with the Code of Practice and School aims. Thia may be achieved by providing reasonable adjustments, including but not limited to adapted/differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, Examination Access Arrangements, 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 cognition and learning, health & welfare, physical & sensory, independence & employability, social & emotional, and communication & interaction 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 medical and pastoral care is available to students with SEND.

Responsibility for the coordination of SEND provision

The Head has overall responsibility for the School's SEND policy. The Heads of Learning Support are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy at the Senior School and Junior Schools.

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 SENDA Committee. The Governance Committee of the Governing Body has responsibility in this regard.

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.

Deputy Head (Pastoral & Boarding)/Head of Juniors

- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND as applicable to Pastoral;
- monitor the progress of students with SEND as applicable to Pastoral Support and Medical;
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support to ensure that the records of all students with SEND are updated on the School's information management system as appropriate;
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning students with SEND as applicable to Pastoral, and know how to use it.

Deputy Head (Data and Operations)

- 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 barrier.

Head of Learning Support (Senior School)

- review the Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Policy, together with provision and procedures in this area annually, advising the SENDA committee of any major changes required;
- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND as applicable to Learning Support, including in Examination Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support;
- take the lead for the planning and teaching of Year 12 and 13 students who have Support lessons;
- co-ordinate the literacy screening of students upon entry to the Senior School and in Years 9 and 12 with the Lucid EXACT assessment battery, analyse the results and decide on any follow up action;
- with the Head of Learning Support at the Junior School, interpret external reports relating to Junior School pupils with SEND and liaise closely to ensure that the learning needs and provision for students at the Junior School are met and good practice is shared;
- co-ordinate arrangements for annual reviews for students with an Education, Health, and Care Plan;

- monitor the progress of students with SEND as applicable to Learning Support;
- ensure that the records of all students with SEND are updated on the School's information management system;
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning students with SEND, including Examination Access Arrangements, and know how to use it;
- promote awareness amongst staff of the importance of addressing students' additional learning needs and offer professional guidance in this regard;
- coordinate and contribute to staff INSET on students' needs including INSET on special educational needs;
- ensure Learning Support Firefly content is accessible, informative, transparent and accurate;
- communicate with parents regarding provision and assessment for students who have or may have SEND.

Head of Learning Support (Junior School)

- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND as applicable to Learning Support, including resource and technological support;
- ensure that the records of all students with SEND are updated on the School's information management system;
- monitor the progress of students with SEND as applicable to Learning Support;
- co-ordinate arrangements for annual reviews for students with an Education Health and Care Plan;
- 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 and offer professional guidance in this regard;
- co-ordinate and contribute to staff INSET on students' needs including INSET on special educational needs;
- communicate with parents regarding provision and assessment for students who have or may have SEND;
- liaise closely with the Head of Learning Support at the Senior School and the Head of Year 7 about the learning needs and provision for students at the Junior School. This will include supporting a timely and effective pupil transition from Year 6 into Year 7 that features robust and transparent data on the School's information management system, and sharing of good practice.

Assistant SENCos (Senior School)

- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEND, including in Examination Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support;
- take the lead for the planning and teaching of Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 students who have Support lessons;
- research and develop provision for the needs of students with SEND;
- 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;
- 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 and offer professional guidance in this regard;
- communicate with parents regarding provision and assessment for students who have or may have SEND;

- provide information, advice and guidance to staff on SEND matters;
- ensure Learning Support Firefly content is informative, transparent and accurate for their Key Stage responsibility;
- carry out any duties delegated by the Head of Learning Support.

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 at the Senior School in this regard;
- ensure that invigilators are aware of any access arrangements for students for public examinations and receive the necessary training;
- Ensure that the Word Processor Policy is reviewed annually.

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 at the Senior and 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 at the Senior School 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 examinations for Pastoral reasons, for example, rest breaks and small group room for students with social, emotional and mental health needs or medical needs.

Heads of Departments (Senior School)

- familiarise themselves with this policy;
- ensure that adaptations/differentiation for students with SEND is included in all lesson planning and schemes of work and is appropriate;
- ensure that Examination Access Arrangements for students are implemented in their subject areas;
- encourage staff to adapt appropriately in lessons and homework tasks to ensure that student with a SEND are well supported;
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Assistant SENCos to ensure that curricula and schemes of work meet the needs of students with SEND;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support given to students with SEND within their curriculum area.

Subject Teachers and Junior School Teaching Staff

- familiarise themselves with this policy;
- know the students with SEND in their teaching groups;
- undertake their legal responsibility to include adaptive strategies in their lesson plans, teaching and homework setting to meet the needs of their students with SEND;

- liaise with LSAs to pro-actively plan strategies and support for students with SEND;
- follow the agreed school procedures for the identification of SEND, 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 and/or Examination Access Arrangements;
- 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 at the Senior or Junior School.

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 at the Senior School and Head of Year over the needs and progress of identified students.

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

- be fully aware of the special educational needs of the students receiving support;
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support at the Senior/Junior School, Assistant SENCos (Senior School) and class teachers as necessary to include but not limited to, student approaches and competency, cognition and learning, welfare observations, independence skills, social and communication skills, physical and sensory needs, support implementation challenges and appropriate support strategies;
- support the Head of Learning Support by delivering small group interventions as directed.

Admissions Team

- Inform the Head of Learning Support at the Senior/Junior School and Deputy Head (Data and Operations) as soon as they are made aware of any SEND declarations 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.

Identification and assessment of students' needs

Students with SEND may be identified via information from feeder schools, parents, the receipt of reports and the students themselves. In addition, all new students to the Senior School are assessed on entry. 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 at the Senior School, 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 of Data and Operations, Head of Learning Support and/or another member of staff (subject teacher/form tutor/Head of Year) to discuss the concern and decide on a plan of action as appropriate. In the Junior School, parents are invited to meet with the classroom teacher and Head of Learning Support. The views of the student are also sought. This is usually done through a 1:1 discussion with a Learning Support Assistant or the Head of Learning Support, using an age-appropriate pupil voice form to support reflection and discussion.

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 at the relevant school will liaise with the student's teachers to collect information about their learning and progress and take appropriate action.

When parents or a third-party professional raise concerns that a student may have a learning need, their views are taken seriously. A meeting with the Head of Learning Support at the relevant school, and relevant teachers are setup 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 & SENCo, Assistant SENCo, a Psychologist, a Specialist Teacher or other relevant professional.

Following identification of a SEND, confirmation email is sent to parents – usually when first enrolled or when or as assessments are concluded/external reports are received.

The Senior and Junior School's information management system holds key information about students with SEND. A coloured star appears next to the name of a student that is suspected of having or has additional learning needs.

Support is prioritised according to the star rating:

- Grey star : following receipt of information related to a SEND referral or concern, the needs of the student are being monitored by class teachers, supported by the Learning Support department, or the student has a diagnosis but does not require SEND intervention.
- Yellow star : the student is likely to need differentiation/adaptation in class and/or receive examination access arrangements.
- Blue star : the need of the student is such that they have timetabled Learning Support lessons and/or Learning Support interventions outside of classes.
- Red star : outside agencies are involved or there is a very high level of concern. SEN Register Notes provide teachers and LSAs with a general student profile of need upon identification and is updated periodically.

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 at the relevant school before their child joins the School, so that discussions can take place regarding the required level of support.

SEND provision

The Learning Support Department in the Senior School is made up of the Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCos, and LSAs.

Small group 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, and are focused on the acquisition 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. Students with SEND in the Sixth Form receive one Learning Support lesson per fortnight.

In addition to form tutors, Senior Tutors 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.

Subject teachers and Junior School teaching staff can request in-class support for specific students or for classes in general. Students with SEND 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.

In the Junior School, the Learning Support department is made up of the Head of Learning Support and LSAs. LSAs deliver targeted support sessions for students who require support beyond the adapted curriculum under the supervision of the Head of Learning Support. Support may be provided through small group interventions and, where appropriate, targeted 1:1 support, depending on individual need. Class Teachers and the Head of Learning Support identify students who would benefit from additional support in areas such as numeracy, literacy and social communication. LSAs support Class Teachers and the Head of Learning Support to plan, adapt and deliver support, drawing on agreed targets and strategies. Support sessions typically take place during non-core lessons, such as languages, where appropriate.

Support Plans and Pupil Profiles

Support Plans (APDR) are used in the Junior School. A Support Plan is a working document that records provision which is additional to or different from the usual classroom curriculum and support. Support Plans follow an Assess–Plan–Do–Review (APDR) cycle, ensuring that a student's needs are identified, appropriate strategies are planned, support is put in place and progress is reviewed regularly. The student's parents are invited to contribute to discussions about the student's needs and the approaches used to address them, and suggestions for parental support are shared and documented. Teaching strategies and provision are agreed between the Class Teacher and the Head of Learning Support at the 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, ensuring they are aware of each student's targets. The Support Plan is monitored by the Class Teacher and the Head of Learning Support to ensure that students have the support they need. Targets are reviewed as part of the APDR cycle, with a review of outcomes shared with parents twice yearly and new targets set as appropriate.

Pupil Profiles are used at the Senior School. A Pupil Profile is a working document recording strategies and provision that is additional to or different from the standard support and adaptations available. The student and/or the student's parents are invited to review and contribute before dissemination to staff by a member of the SENCo Team. All staff can access Pupil Profiles Plans for all children through St Mary's Cloud. The Pupil Profiles are working documents that are reviewed at least annually by a member of the SENCo team to ensure the needs of students are current and can be met. Pupils Profiles form part of an ADPR cycle in meeting the needs of students with SEND.

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.

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 and/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 at the relevant school should it be felt that a deviation from standard expectations and/or environmental adaptations is necessary.

A graduated response

To support the acquisition of independence skills, the School uses a graduated response to meet the needs of students when appropriate. 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. Further support may include accessing Subject Surgeries. Following this, additional support may be sought from the Learning Support department that may include 1:1s with the SENCo or Assistant SENCos, in-class support, Support lessons and/or short term, evidence-based interventions as appropriate.

At the Junior School, support may be provided through a combination of small group interventions and, where appropriate, targeted 1:1 support. This may include phonics, literacy and numeracy interventions, as well as support for social, emotional and organisational skills.

Consent to assess

Students aged 16 and over are legally presumed to have the capacity to make decisions about their own education and support. In line with this, the school requires the student's own informed consent before carrying out an examination access assessment if 16 years or older. While parental permission is routinely sought before an EHCP Access Arrangement Assessment or EHCP application takes place, consent does not need to be obtained from parents/carers once the student has reached the age of 16. The school will ensure that the purpose of the assessment, how information will be used, and any potential outcomes are clearly explained to the student, that consent is given freely and without pressure and a written record of the consent and rationale for information to be withheld from parents is uploaded to the school's information management system.

Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)

The needs of the majority of students with SEND will be met effectively through the School's SEND support. However, where the student has not made expected progress despite the SEND support in place, parents and the School have the right to ask the Local Authority (LA) to make an 'EHC Needs Assessment' with a view to drawing up an EHCP for their child. Parents are asked to consult with the School 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) or a mediation service. The School does not have this right of appeal.

Where either a prospective student has an EHCP, or a current student obtains their first EHCP, the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (should the opportunity be offered) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHCP can be reasonably delivered by the School. Any additional specialist services and/or resources that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHCP will need to sourced, organised, funded and managed by the LA. In all other circumstances charges may be made directly to parents.

The School co-operates with the LA to ensure that provision continued to meet the student need and that Annual EHCP Reviews of EHCPs are carried out as required.

Examination access arrangements

SEND students may be eligible for access arrangements. If a Specific Learning Difficulty is suspected, the School may carry out specialist assessments from the summer term of Year 9, and follows the Joint Council for Qualification's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments rules. If a medical difficulty is suspected, medical evidence will be required from a suitably qualified and registered medical professional.

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 a Psychologist, Specialist Assessor or other professional 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 selecting a suitably qualified and registered professional. Any payment rests with the parents.

Records of SEND

Students with SEND are identified on the School's information management system. The Head of Learning Support at both the Senior and Junior schools use the Student Register tool to record information on students with SEND, including copies of meeting notes and assessment reports. The Head of Learning Support ensures that any follow up action is taken. Confidential records such as Educational/Clinical Psychologist and/or Specialist Teacher reports that are received as hard copies are scanned and uploaded to the school's information management system with the hard copy stored in a lockable filing cabinet. All records relating to Exam Access Arrangements are also stored securely.

Evaluating the success of provision

The School has a SENDA Committee which consists of the Head of Learning Support at both schools, the Head, the Head of Junior School, Deputy Heads, the Head of EAL, the Head of Boarding, Assistant SENCos 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 and training is ongoing via INSET opportunities and the CPD and the School's Staff Appraisal policies.

Information about the most common types of learning difficulty found at School and suggested ways to support students, is available to staff on the school's information management system.

Involving students in their learning

Students are actively involved in the learning process. At the Senior School, 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 including an Annual Educational Health and Care Plan review and meetings associated with an ADPR cycle. 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. In addition, students that access Support lessons are encouraged to evaluate the provision on an annual basis, and those with Exam Access Arrangements are also requested to evaluate their provision after each examination series.

The pupil voice is also gathered as part of the APDR process.

Links with other schools

The Head of Learning Support at both schools can liaise with the Head of Learning Support at other local schools and Sixth Form Colleges, where appropriate, and feedback to the Admissions department and the relevant Head of Year at the Senior School directly and/or via the Open Apply Application.

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, Heads of Learning Support 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.