



# Sydenham High School

G D S T  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) & Learning Support Policy Whole School: Prep School/Senior School

### Aims and objectives

This policy complies with the statutory requirement set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice 0-25 (2015), Part 3. It refers to the following guidance and documents:

- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, Joint Council for Qualifications (2023/24) [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (February 2013)
- Schools Guide to the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice, DfE (September 2015)
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)
- [The GDST Inclusion Policy](#)

Sydenham High aims to observe the principles described in the SEND Code of Practice (2015). These include:

- delivering a whole Senior School approach to SEND, with teachers at the heart of the SEND support system, supported by the Head of Learning Support;
- taking into account the views of the pupils and their families and enabling them to participate in decision making;
- collaborating where necessary with partners in education, health and social care to provide support;
- identifying the learning needs of the pupils and offering high quality provision to meet these needs;
- focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning;
- developing independence and helping the pupils to prepare for adulthood;
- enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential and to maintain self-esteem in the process.

This policy applies to, but is not restricted to:

- Pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils with disabilities
- Pupils whose first/home language is not English
- More able and talented pupils (MAT)

## Special Educational Needs and Additional Learning Needs defined

Special Educational Needs are defined in the Children and Families Act 2014 as follows:

- 20.1 A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- 20.2 A child of compulsory school age or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
  - a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
  - b) has 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.

Sydenham High Senior School is broadly selective and has a proportion of pupils who would be considered to have special educational needs as defined by the Act. We recognise that there will be a greater proportion of pupils who will be hindered in accessing the full curriculum and fulfilling their potential without tailored recognition of their needs and individual provision, which is usually a natural feature of high quality teaching and personalised learning in the classroom. These pupils are considered to have Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Learning Needs fall into the following broad areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical needs

Needs may cut across some or all of these areas and may change over time. Children may have SEND either throughout or at any time during their school career, and may have SEND in one or in many areas of the curriculum.

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. These children however, are likely to have additional needs of a different kind and may, on rare occasions, require additional support for their language development.

The school's SEND policy and provision will be informed by the Special Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015. In the event of admitting a pupil with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), Sydenham High will follow the guidelines set out by the ISI regulatory requirements (Sept 2019).

## Disability defined

Disability is defined under the Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability if s/he "has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

Pupils may have either a disability or SEND or both, and actions taken to comply with the Equality Act should complement the support already provided by schools' SEND procedures where relevant. Not every pupil with SEND will qualify as disabled under the statutory definition; this will depend on the severity or extent of her needs.

Provision for pupils with disabilities is also covered by the Equal Opportunities (Education) Policy.

## More Able and Talented

Students may be more able and talented across the curriculum or in a specific area such as Mathematics, Music, Sport, Art or Drama. As with learning difficulties the initial input will be through quality first teaching within the classroom. In addition a wide range of enrichment opportunities and programmes are available to all students. See policy for More Able & Talented pupils. [More Able & Talented Policy](#)

## Admissions

Sydenham High is selective at entry with clear entry requirements and places great importance on the nurture and development of each individual pupil and we measure success by the development of each individual. We adhere to the guidelines of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) with respect to exam access arrangements. We will work with parents in order to make reasonable adjustments to our admissions procedure for any candidate with SEND and for whom there is appropriate evidence of need and normal way of working. A copy of an educational psychologist's report or a medical report is required to support a request for special arrangements. Evidence should also be provided that any request made for access arrangements in the 11+ are reflective of a candidate's normal way of working in their current setting. Any access arrangements facilitated for the 11+ will be subject to review if the candidate joins the school as a year 7 student. For further information on supporting evidence for students with additional needs, please see our Admissions Policy on the school [website](#).

Where parents are seeking a placement at Sydenham High School for a child with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), careful consideration will be given to whether or not Sydenham High School is the right educational setting for the young person in order to meet their needs as fully as possible. We expect that parents/guardians will consult with their Local Authority caseworker as part of the application process and that all documentation is shared with the school as part of the application process, to assist in the consideration of our response. In all cases, candidates with an EHCP will still be expected to meet the academic entry requirements of the school.

Where any relevant information is not shared with the school as part of the application process, but then support is requested based on this information following an offer and acceptance of a place, the school has the right to reconsider the application. Parents should be aware that provision may not be able to be put in place post acceptance.

## Identification and assessment of SEND

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that SEND support should include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education. New applicants to Sydenham High are asked to submit any information such as records of previous learning support, copies of assessments undertaken by previous schools, or reports from educational psychologists and/or medical consultants or other external professionals. If appropriate, the Registrar or Head of Learning Support may liaise with the previous school to ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made.

Monitoring takes place throughout the year to identify pupils who may need learning support and the pastoral team meet regularly to monitor progress. We use a range of screening and assessment tests at certain points in the school year. These may include MIDYIS, and other specialist assessments. Results may be used to monitor progress, identify support needs and interventions. Pupils may be referred to the Head of Learning Support at any time by members of staff. Parents and pupils are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have regarding learning support with the Head of Learning Support.

In identifying a pupil as needing additional support, the Head of Learning Support works with the teachers to carry out a clear analysis of the learning needs. This draws on the teachers' assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment as well as their development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experiences of the parents, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services.

## **The Learning Support Register**

Once a pupil is identified as having additional needs, she is placed on the Learning Support Register, which records the nature of her additional needs, her examination access arrangements and details any reasonable adjustments. All teachers have access to the Learning Support Register and it is regularly updated. Individual Education Plans are created for pupils on a case by case basis, taking into account their individual needs.

## **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) prepared by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and the school has agreed that it can meet the needs of the student sufficiently thereby resulting in the school being named on the EHCP, we will work with the LEA to ensure that the provisions of the plan are addressed and the relevant documentation is prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. The Head of Learning Support will work with the LEA to ensure that a full, annual review takes place in line with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

## **Staff training**

Where necessary, training is provided to staff on particular issues relating to SEND so that each teacher can provide high quality, differentiated teaching that is tailored to suit an individual pupil's learning needs and style.

## **Expectations**

In order to deliver a high standard of educational provision for pupils with SEND, disabilities and/or additional needs, the school has:

- Highly qualified and experienced learning support staff in both the Senior and Junior School.
  - Mrs Charlotte Pascal - Senior School Head of Learning Support
  - Ms Deliwe Elliott - Prep School Head of Learning Development
- A full time nurse and links to GP and specialist NHS facilities;
- Highly qualified School Counsellors with experience and expertise in a wide range of social, emotional and mental health issues;
- A named member of staff at senior level, Adam Rout , Director of Finance and Operations, with designated responsibility for oversight and monitoring of accessibility plans;
- Registers and policies covering provision for students with SEND, EAL, Pastoral and other additional needs.
- A 3 year accessibility plan in line with the GDST Accessibility Strategy, showing how it will increase access for pupils with disabilities to the curriculum, the physical environment of the school, and to written information in alternative formats;
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, as outlined in the Equal Opportunities (Education) Policy;
- Taken account of inclusion issues in the school's self-evaluation, development planning processes and any review of other relevant policies;
- Taken account of inclusion issues in admissions procedures;

- Zero tolerance of the bullying, harassment, or victimisation of any pupil with SEND, disabilities, or other needs, and will take steps to combat this if it occurs;
- In terms of educational provision for pupils, the school will:
  - Adopt strategies for the early identification of additional needs;
  - Provide a broad, balanced and suitably differentiated curriculum in support of pupils with additional needs;
  - Encourage all teachers to set personalised learning challenges and respond to pupils' diverse needs, acknowledging and catering effectively for different learning styles, abilities and preferences, and adopting an increasingly personalised approach to support where required;
  - Be alert to the emotional and social needs of pupils with additional needs and provide appropriate pastoral support for their well being;
  - Expect all staff to promote equality, mutual respect and appreciation of diversity and difference through the curriculum, the PSHE programme, other school activities and their relationship with pupils, parents, other staff and members of the wider community; and to actively challenge barriers to inclusion such as discrimination, stereotyping, and indifference;
  - Maintain appropriate records of pupils with additional needs, track and monitor their progress, and ensure information is appropriately communicated to all relevant parties;
  - Be alert to any pattern in the progress and levels of achievement of pupils with additional needs, and take appropriate action if necessary;
  - Provide training where required to ensure staff develop the necessary skills and confidence to cater for pupils with additional needs;
  - Facilitate inter-agency collaboration;
  - Celebrate neurodiversity by partaking in Neurodiversity Week activities.

## **The role of the Head**

The Head takes overall responsibility for the school's policies and procedures in relation to areas SEND and Learning Support, ensuring that these accord with the principles and aims of the Trust, and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area.

## **The role of the Learning Support Department**

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of relevant policies and managing provision. This will encompass:

- Overseeing identification, referral and assessment of additional needs;
- Developing and coordinating support systems including the learning support;
- Managing the budget and other resources;
- Maintaining records and ensuring relevant information is communicated to other staff, particularly at transition points;
- Tracking and monitoring pupil progress;
- Advising and supporting non specialist staff in the development of strategies to support personalised learning in the classroom;
- Working with the Examinations Officer to ensure appropriate access arrangements are in place for external assessment;
- Working with parents;
- Liaising with external agencies;
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of policy and provision;
- Keeping up to date with relevant legislation, research and current good practice, and revising policies and procedures as necessary;

- Working closely with the Head and SLT to advise on policy development and relevant aspects of whole school planning.

## **The role of other teaching and support staff**

All teaching and support staff are expected to provide for diverse pupils' needs, maximising their access to the whole curriculum. This will involve:

- Being involved in the development of the school's policies relevant to inclusion and fully aware of the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with additional needs;
- Being aware of which pupils in the school have additional needs;
- Having a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND/ALN, those of high ability, those with EAL, and those with disabilities, and be able to personalise their approach in order to overcome barriers to learning and engage and support them;
- As practitioners, being responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their class, planning and delivering an individualised programme / differentiating their teaching and resources to take account of additional needs;
- Assessing and monitoring the progress of pupils with additional needs and recording and reporting relevant information.

## **Partnership with pupils**

Children with additional needs have a unique knowledge of their own needs and circumstances. Their views will be sought and where possible they will be included in all the decision-making processes that affect their education. The ethos, organisation and culture of the school support pupil participation, which encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Partnership with parents**

The relationship between the school and parents has a crucial bearing on the progress of pupils, particularly those with additional needs. The school will actively seek to work with parents as partners and value their contribution. Teachers, Head of Learning Support (senior), Head of learning development (prep), pastoral and other staff all have an important role in developing positive and constructive relationships with parents. The school has developed clear and flexible strategies for working with and encouraging parents to play an active role in the education of their children.

## **Related policies and procedures**

The school operates a range of other policies which reflect inclusion issues. These include:

- Equal Opportunities (Education)
- Accessibility
- Safeguarding
- Admissions
- Exclusions
- More Able & Talented

## **Legislative and National Policy Framework**

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014

- Special Educational needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- SEND and Disability Code of Practice 2015

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy**

The implementation of this policy will be reviewed, monitored and evaluated via:

- Pupil progress, engagement and wellbeing;
- The outcomes of school inspection;
- Monitoring of ethnic origin data in relation to the application and admission process;
- Periodic review of schools' complaints and bullying logs;
- Periodic audit in consultation with Heads and assigned post holders with responsibility for areas of inclusion.
- Pupil, parent & staff surveys

## **Intervention at Prep School**

Teachers are expected to differentiate their lessons and resources to accommodate the pupils' learning needs. In addition the prep school offers:

- Online support for Reading and Spelling (Nessy)
- Maths and Literacy support for children with specific learning difficulties (SpLD)
- Social Skills groups for pupils with difficulties in communication and interaction
- One to one Maths & Literacy support with a Specialist Teacher
- Individual Education Plans for pupils with diagnosed learning difficulties or disabilities
- Sensory and Motor support booster groups

## **Intervention at Senior School**

Teachers are expected to ensure their lessons are planned to cater for the diverse range of needs that their students present. Teachers will be familiar with the needs of the individual students and follow the guidance provided by the Head of Learning Support with regards to making reasonable adjustments where practical and possible.

In addition the senior school offers:

- Study skills class for all year 7 pupils as part of the PSHE curriculum;
- Supported Library lessons for year 7 pupils, with regular opportunities to meet with the Head of Learning Support;
- Student neurodiversity panels
- Tailored curriculum loads for certain pupils on the Learning Support Register;
- One to one and small group tutorials for pupils in key stages 4 and 5
- Exam access arrangements in accordance with the JCQ guidelines

## **Review**

Pupils at the senior school sit yearly exams and termly tests. The results will be analysed to track pupil progress and provide evidence for exam access arrangements. The senior school also recognises the importance of communication with the pupil and her parents and the recommendation of external agencies where appropriate.

## **Access Arrangements for Examinations**

Standards from the Joint Curriculum and Qualifications Authority (JCQ)

Access Arrangements are reasonable adjustments for students who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, a temporary injury or a special educational need that significantly affects them in exams.

Decisions to apply for Access Arrangements will always be made by the school acting for and on behalf of the GCSE, IGCSE and GCE awarding bodies. They will be guided by reports produced by specialist teachers or psychologists, the SENDCO and the school teachers' own knowledge of the candidate's needs and normal way of working both in school and at home.

## **Access Arrangements**

A number of Access Arrangements are available. Their use depends upon the student's needs, their normal way of working, the type of exam and the current JCQ regulations. This means that different arrangements might be allowed in different examinations.

The main access arrangements granted for pupils at SHS include:

- The use of a word processor
- Supervised rest breaks
- Up to 25% extra time

This list is not exhaustive and other appropriate access arrangements may be considered on a case by case basis. Access arrangements can only be granted by the Head of Learning Support and are subject to current JCQ regulations and guidance.

Where necessary, applications for Access Arrangements are made online to the JCQ and the school will hold copies of all the supporting evidence. Access Arrangements must comply with the current regulations from JCQ. It should be noted that there may be different access arrangements in place for different subjects.

Parents who wish to seek an external assessment of learning needs and who then wish to use this as evidence for extra time in examinations and assessments must engage in dialogue with the Head of Learning Support before any engagement of an external assessor is made. The school adheres exactly to the JCQ regulations regarding the use of external assessors and, if parents do not engage with the school prior to the engagement of an assessor, it is not permissible for the assessment report to be used to request extra time from the JCQ.

A temporary application for Access Arrangements may be made to cover personal injury or a change to the candidate's circumstances which will affect their ability to sit the examination. The appropriate supporting documentation must accompany the application.

### **Awarding Extra Time**

As stated above, extra time will be awarded only following a process of thorough investigation & assessment as stipulated by the JCQ. Students must meet the criteria for extra time based on one of the four categories of need: cognition & learning; social, emotional & mental health; physical & sensory (and sometimes medical) and social communication & interaction needs. **Extra time is not automatically issued upon receipt of a diagnosis of additional needs.**

### **Awarding the use of a word processor**

Use of a word processor may not be awarded on the sole basis that a student is able to type more quickly than writing by hand or because they prefer to type. The use of such a device as a student's normal way of working must be considered and awarded in line with regulations and guidance as set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Each request for typing from a student will be considered on a case by case basis. The permission for all students to bring their own device to



school does not qualify a student to type in examinations and assessments. For more information see Appendix.

### **Alternative Access Arrangements**

Access Arrangements different to those outlined above will be considered in line with the regulations and guidance as set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications. However, it may not be possible to facilitate some access arrangements due to the nature of the setting.

Appendix:

## **Policy regarding use of word processors in public examinations and internal assessments**

All students have access to a laptop or other device for use in lessons. Some students may choose to use their device when directed to do so by the teacher, for specific activities, whilst others may choose to record their work electronically. The fact that a pupil uses a laptop to record work in lessons does not necessarily qualify that pupil to use a laptop (word processor) in examinations and/or school based assessments. The majority of students will still be expected to complete tests and examinations by hand, with only a small number of students qualifying for use of a word processor in examinations and assessments. The latter is based on specific criteria, set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

The JCQ states:

*A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because she uses a laptop at home.*

School staff, in conjunction with the student and her parent(s), will determine whether or not the student meets the criteria for use of a word processor in examinations and assessments. The JCQ cites the following reasons as to why a student may be eligible for use of a word processor in examinations and assessments:

- *A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;*
- *A medical condition;*
- *A physical disability;*
- *A sensory impairment;*

It may be necessary for the school to request further evidence to support the use of a laptop in examinations. If this is the case, parents / guardians will be informed.

In addition, a student may also present as having *planning and organisational problems when writing by hand* or *poor handwriting*. These issues may be supported by school-based evidence and will be reviewed over time to determine if the issue is persistent and ongoing. Alternative strategies and/or examination access arrangements may be offered by the Head of Learning Support or other key staff members in the first instance, to try and improve the student's performance when writing by hand, before it is decided to permit the use of a laptop in examinations and assessments.

**If use of a word processor is granted for examinations and assessments**, it must be noted that this does not automatically qualify a student for any additional access arrangements such as extra time. In some cases, extra time may be removed if a laptop is being used. The use of a word processor must be a candidate's normal way of working in lessons. The school retains the right to withdraw the use of a word processor in any subject's assessments or examinations if it ceases to be the candidate's normal way of working in that particular subject.

A word processor can be used as a candidate's normal way of working in any area, for example: classwork, homework, coursework, controlled assessments unless the exam board/specification does not permit this. It is possible, within an assessment, to type the answer to certain questions

e.g. those requiring extended drifting, and handwrite others such as single mark question answers. It is understood that not all subjects lend themselves well to the use of a word processor and students often prefer to handwrite in subjects such as DT, Maths and Science. Some students also prefer to handwrite in Modern Foreign Languages as they find it easier to manage accents and symbols when writing by hand.

Candidates will not be permitted to use their own laptops for public examinations and other key assessments, using school laptops instead. The student will log into a secure account, created especially for examinations. Candidates will be given clear instructions in advance of examinations and again at the start of any assessment regarding what programme they will be using and how they should save and/or print their work. All spelling and grammar checks will be disabled, as will any connection to the internet. During the assessment, students should save their work regularly.

For year 11 students, all requests for a student to use a laptop in public examinations should be sent to the Head of Learning Support by the last working day in September, to allow for this request to be reviewed in advance of the year 11 mock examinations. For year 13 students, this request must be submitted by the last working day in November. A student will not be permitted to use a word processor in their public examinations in the summer if they have not done so in the mock examinations. The only exception to this is if there is a last minute request for a word processor on temporary grounds, such as a hand injury that prevents a student writing by hand.

Any request for a student in years 7-10 & year 12 to be considered for use of a word processor in examinations and assessments should be submitted in advance of the Easter break in order to allow appropriate time for the request to be reviewed in advance of the summer assessment period.

In all cases, it is vital that a student is familiar and comfortable with using a laptop when working under timed conditions, and so last minutes requests will not be accepted.