

**Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School**

*The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day school or schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.*

## **SENIOR SCHOOL ACADEMIC MENTORING AND MONITORING POLICY**

This policy was updated in September 2016 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule which ensures that all policies are kept up to date, and was renamed the Academic Mentoring and Monitoring policy. It was formally known as the Study Skills Policy (reviewed in May 2014); the Learning Support Policy (reviewed in 2009) and the Special Educational Needs Policy (reviewed and minor amendments made in Spring 2006 to recognise the development of Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision from September 2005 in the appointment of separate Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in the Senior and Preparatory Schools). The Preparatory School Policy has similarly been renamed in September 2016.

In the Senior School the SENCO is named the Head of Academic Mentoring and such additional support classes as she offers are known as Study Skills lessons. These can be offered all girls requiring special guidance on how to make the most of their education.

### **Introduction and Aims**

Our Academic Mentoring and Monitoring Policy is part of our whole school learning and teaching strategy which aims to provide equality of opportunity and a wide and varied curriculum for each pupil in order that she may attain her potential as far as possible. It is an integral part of all teaching and it is important in all our policy statements. We aim to identify pupils with additional learning needs of all kinds, from those struggling to complete their work because of a learning issue to those needing additional support as very able pupils, as early as possible and support them thus enabling them to access the curriculum fully.

The Head of Academic Mentoring in the Senior School is Mrs Caroline Warren and in the Preparatory School, Mrs Tish King-Fretts. They work closely with all subject leaders, tutors, the Director of Studies and the Scholars' Mentors.

### **Entrance Requirements (Please see also Admissions Policy)**

St. Catherine's is a school with high academic standards where the majority of girls take nine GCSE subjects in Year 11, with two being taken in Year 10 (ICT and RS short course). Entrance up to 14+ is by St. Catherine's own entrance examination supported by school reports. In the Sixth Form, entry is on the basis of school reports, entrance examinations (VR and subject specific papers), an interview and G.C.S.E results (at least 5 subjects at Grade A/B). All new students are given a series of baseline tests on arrival by the Academic Mentoring Department and any possible learning issues identified and information provided to staff so that they can be well supported. Parents of new pupils are informed of the outcome of these assessments where issues are identified.

It is important to note that St. Catherine's is sympathetic to admitting girls with **SEND** if their verbal reasoning and/or perceptual reasoning score indicates that they will be able to cope with the broad curriculum without undue stress.

If a girl has already been diagnosed as having an **SEND** upon entry to the school, for example, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Asperger's, a full report from an outside agency is required, together with a report from the previous school.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years**

As it states in the Policy, (January 2015), "A pupil has **SEND** where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, that is, provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age."

We have adapted the Code of Practice to meet our individual school circumstances and we retain the main principles which may be summarized as follows: -

- The needs of pupils with **a Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)** are addressed and there is a continuum of needs and a continuum of provision.
- Children with a **SEND** require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education.

The Head of Academic Mentoring advises subject teachers on the best way to assist pupils with additional learning needs in the day to day environment of the classroom. This can take the form of delivering whole staff INSET from time to time or offering one-to-one guidance to a teacher of a particular girl.

However, provision for girls with is a matter for the School as a whole. It is therefore important that all staff appreciate our individual roles in fully and successfully implementing the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs.

### **Identifying **SEND** in our School**

In the January preceding entry to Upper Three, students applying for a place at St Catherine's Senior School take a Verbal Reasoning Paper and three core subject papers: English, Maths and Science. These papers are scrutinised by the Head of Academic Mentoring to identify whether or not a student may have **SEND**. This may be indicated in a number of ways, for example, a timing issue or failing to complete any or all of the papers, a particularly low score in the mental arithmetic section of the maths paper, misreading of questions, spelling difficulties, poor comprehension on the English paper, or messy handwriting, etc. This information is collated and shared with the Headmistress, Director of Studies and the Senior House Mistress. Where an offer is made, the Headmistress will if necessary meet the parents and discuss any issues which have been identified as a result of scrutiny. At this stage, the parents will also meet with the Head of Academic Mentoring to discuss the most appropriate course of action for the child during her first year in the School.

For entrants to the School at points other than Year 7, entrance papers are also scrutinised where this is requested by those marking them, and the same procedure would apply if any potential issues are detected.

## **Transition for:**

### **a) New Joiners from the Prep. School into Year 7**

In the summer term preceding the September entry to Upper Three, the Heads of Academic Mentoring from the Prep and Senior Schools meet to discuss students making the transition from the Prep to the Senior School. At this stage the Head of Academic Mentoring in the Prep School discusses students who have had or are currently having support, as well as those students whose parents are considering an Educational Psychology report once their daughter has settled into senior school.

### **b) New Joiners from other Prep, Junior or Primary Schools**

The Head of Academic Mentoring reads the reports on students coming from other educational establishments, and where additional information would be useful, will contact those schools. We operate an 'open door' policy where parents are encouraged to contact the department, should they have any concerns. All reports are saved into the SEN area on our school management system (SIMS) to ensure accessibility for teachers. Parents of girls applying to the School are strongly advised to share any Educational Psychology reports or school based assessments already undertaken in the best interests of their daughter's transfer.

## **Screening Upon Entry to Upper Three (Year 7)**

Upon entry to Upper Three (Year 7), all students are screened; our approach is inclusive so screening includes those who have already been identified as having **SEND**. As part of this screening process a range of informal assessments is used, together with two standardised tests.

The following areas are informally assessed: copying from the board, listening to instructions, working memory and visual memory. The following areas are assessed using standardised tests: spelling and handwriting speed.

In addition, the English Department conducts a spelling and vocabulary assessment which is graded, and students are given a creative writing task to do and this too is marked and graded.

This information is collated, and sent to the Head of the Senior School, the Director of Studies and the Senior House Mistress and her team as well as the Heads of Department to inform the best possible management of the individual girl's learning by her teachers.

## **Screening Upon Entry to years Lower 4 (Year 8) to Lower 6 (year 12)**

All students new to the school in years Lower Four to Lower Sixth are also screened using informal and standardised assessments. This information is collated and disseminated to Heads of Department and the pastoral team.

## **Action after Entrance Screening**

The Head of Academic Mentoring sends a letter to the parents of students who have been identified as a result of this screening process, inviting them to meet with her at the next parents' evening (in the Autumn Term for Years 7 and 8)) or by an appointment for those in other year groups. At this time, a decision is made as to whether to monitor the child until half-term or the end of term or whether to proceed with a more in-depth assessment, either

internally by a Specialist Teacher or externally, using an Educational Psychologist. Parents are encouraged to discuss and involve their child in the decision making process as identification of a learning issue often empowers a young person to regain control of her academic work with greater confidence.

### **Monitoring Process throughout the Academic Year**

We monitor the learning needs of our students on a regular basis throughout the school in the following ways:

- School Housemistresses' Meetings – Attended by School and Boarding housemistresses and key senior pastoral staff. Agenda Item weekly: Girls Causing Concern
- Heads of Department Meetings – the Head of Academic Mentoring attends all HoDs meetings to report on SEN matters.
- Subject Department Meetings - Minutes of these meetings are emailed to Head of Study Skills for reference to the agenda item, Girls Causing concern,
- HoDs meetings and Senior School Staff Meetings – Girls Causing Concern are raised at these meetings and where appropriate, followed up by the Head of Academic Mentoring, i.e. if it is perceived to be an academic concern or a behavioural concern which may be the result of an underlying academic concern.
- Head of Academic Mentoring attends English Department meetings on a regular basis and where this is not possible, liaises closely with the Head of Department;
- The Head of Academic Mentoring meets regularly with colleagues teaching Study Skills to cross refer on individual pupils and share best practice.
- Feedback from students' academic reports, from SHM, student and Head Teacher.
- Feedback from term time assessments where timing or other issues may be relevant to identifying a girl with SENDs.
- Summer examination paper scrutiny. Where staff have concerns about a girl, examination papers are called and initially scrutinised across three subject areas; English, History and Biology. If there are signs of an SEND, a further raft of papers will be requested. Scrutiny is written up and outcomes distributed to HoDs, pastoral staff and SMT for information. Parents may then be contacted, meetings arranged and actions recommended, such as an in-house assessment undertaken by one of the Study Skills teachers/in House Specialist Teacher or an Educational Psychology Report if applicable.
- Assessment - St Catherine's Assessment Grades - students have regular assessment across all subject areas - i.e. at least once a term. This system allows teachers to monitor pupil progress and identify pupils who are not making progress as expected.

As it states in the Code of Practice lack of progress might manifest in the following ways:

Progress which:

- “is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.”
- “fails to match or better the child’s previous rate of progress.”
- “fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers.”
- “widens the attainment gap.”

Staffs are fully aware that persistent or disruptive behaviours do not necessarily mean that the child has SEND. However, where concerns about behaviour or the emotional state of the student are raised, this is always considered and information from screening and examination scrutiny is collated. In a high achieving School where behavioural issues are minimal, behaviour is often a significant clue that a girl is finding work a struggle for some reason, despite her best efforts to succeed and frustration mounts. If it is felt that an undiagnosed learning difficulty might be causing these difficulties then an in-house, Specialist Teacher Assessment is advised.

When a student has experienced bereavement or difficulties in her social interactions with another student or students, this information is shared with the pastoral team and the whole school staff as appropriate.

### **English as an Additional Language**

The Head of Academic Mentoring is sent a list of overseas students upon their entry to the school. All girls undertake an examination prior to entry to assess their proficiency and ability to access the curriculum and for year 12 entry a SKYPE interview is arranged to ensure that spoken English is such that the girl will be able to access the curriculum in the Sixth Form. New girls with a native language other than English are encouraged to read good books in English before joining the School and to listen to English news broadcasts to prepare for the pace of spoken English in School. A member of staff keeps in dialogue with these girls over the summer prior to entry to encourage the reading. They are also advised to immerse themselves in school life, while care is taken to respect their cultural identity. (See also the School Policy on the Integration of Overseas Boarders).

In exceptional circumstances, in close liaison with the Head of Boarding and the Head Teacher, and after a serious difficulty is identified by teachers, specific EAL lessons can be arranged. However, where a student is having difficulty accessing the curriculum, care is taken to collate information to assess whether it is SEND or EAL issue.

### **Partnership with Parents and Student**

Parents are seen to be vital and active partners and are involved in the process of identifying, assessing and meeting pupils’ special educational needs.

Parents are encouraged to feel they can approach the school about any concerns they may have about their daughter’s progress. The wishes and feelings of pupils are represented in the arrangements that are made to meet their needs. This involvement is essential for the effective implementation of the Study Skills Plan.

Prior to the implementation of the Study Skills Teaching Plan (SSTP), the plan is emailed to the parents and child for them to approve and, if appropriate, request alterations. The teaching plan is discussed with the student prior to the commencement of lessons to ensure that she feels that the aims and objectives will meet her learning needs. Study Skills lessons are not

undertaken if the child is resistant and/or feels that the lessons will not be beneficial. In this case, we will continue to monitor the child and maintain close communication with parents. Further discussion will be undertaken with the student in order to ensure that effective support is in place, either through additional lessons or in terms of the classroom environment.

When a student has had an internal assessment or an assessment from an external agency, the Head of Academic Mentoring will meet with the parents to discuss the content of the report, the way in which the information will be shared with staff, intervention if advised and the monitoring process. Wherever possible, the student is invited to attend the meeting together with the School Housemistress.

In addition to these meetings, parents have the opportunity to meet subject teachers every other term. When there is not a parents' evening the parents are provided with subject reports together with a sheet enabling them to comment upon content and raise any concerns. Girls in the Sixth Form are provided with a Grade Card at the end of each term which provides details of their current working grade. If a girl is having Study Skills lessons in School, she will also receive a termly written report from the specialist teacher.

### **Method of Intervention**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015) advises that SEND support "should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised" in order to enable the student to make good progress and achieve her full potential. **This involves Assessment, Planning, Doing and Reviewing.**

#### **1. Assessment**

Assessment takes place through examination scrutiny of entrance exams and screening via baseline assessments – as outlined above.

In addition, where a student is being monitored as a result of concerns raised by staff, student, or parents, information will be sought from her subject teachers through an internal report - this may relate to attainment, attitude or behaviour or all three.

At this stage, a further, in-depth assessment may be conducted either by a Specialist Teacher within the Academic Mentoring Department or by an external agency, e.g. an Educational Psychologist. We have a list of Educational Psychologists who are happy to come to the school to conduct an assessment. Prior to any in-depth assessment, parental consent is always sought.

Assessment by the Head of Academic Mentoring or the Specialist Teacher of Study Skills) might include:

- **GORT-5 – Reading Comprehension and reading rate, fluency and accuracy.**
- **WIAT-T-UK - Spelling**
- **TOWRE 2.** Test of word reading efficiency
- **Detailed Assessment of Handwriting Speed (DASH)**
- **WRAML – Working memory.**
- **CTOPP – phonological memory and rapid naming.**
- **WRIT (to assess verbal and non-verbal reasoning)**
- **British Picture Vocabulary Scale (B.P.V.S).** (A test which measures receptive language).
- **Maths Assessment - standardised**

## **2. Plan**

Once the report has been produced, parents (and where possible, the student) meet the Head of Study Skills to discuss the recommendations contained within the report. A decision is made as to whether or not these recommendations can be met within the classroom, with support from home. Where appropriate, Study Skills lessons are offered. There is an additional cost for these lessons; they take place on a weekly basis. These lessons usually focus upon a range of study skills which include: planning and structuring, using evidence from the text, use of topic and transition sentences, question reading, reading strategies, reading comprehension monitoring strategies, revision strategies and examination technique.

## **3. Do**

Each Study Skills Teaching Plan contains two to three targets which are agreed with the parent and child. The Plan is emailed to parents and to the child and if they are happy with the plan and feel that it meets their needs then the plan is implemented. Where appropriate, alterations may be made in the light of comments made by parents and/or the student. Teaching lists are compiled each half-term and emailed to Heads of Department and the pastoral team. These lists include information pertaining to teaching targets contained within the Plan. The Study Skills Plan is reviewed half-termly or at the end of a course of lessons. The date of starting and completing the plan is included on the plan, together with success criteria.

If it is felt that the needs of the student can be met within the classroom, then the Head of Academic Mentoring may advise on resources and an approach that will benefit the student. Generally, the strategies implemented are designed to complement and support all learners to foster inclusivity.

We are an iPad school so students who have difficulty writing information down are encouraged to use their iPad to take pictures of the board. All prep tasks will also be posted on Google Classroom which makes the information readily accessible and via which resources can be shared electronically so that the student may annotate. Students who need additional support to access information because of their **SEND** are provided with the necessary equipment, e.g. Read, Write, Gold, Dragon Naturally Speaking.

## **4. Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions are evaluated by the Head of Study Skills, parent and child at the end of the Study Skills Teaching Plan. In addition, the views of teachers are sought and comments made on the child's subject report. At this point a decision will be made about whether further lessons are appropriate. We encourage the student to implement the strategies she has been taught. On occasion, the student will return for further one to one tuition as she progresses through the school and the work becomes more challenging.

**Requesting an Education, Health and Care Assessment**

Currently there are no students within the school who require an EHC Plan. However, the school is aware that this may be considered where, despite intervention from the school, the student has not made the expected progress.

C Warren  
Head of Academic Mentoring  
Academic Mentoring Department

Senior School Headmistress's signature: .....

Date: .....

**THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED IN 2019/20**