

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy will ensure that Tonbridge School is an educationally inclusive School where the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every boy matter. Tonbridge School provides an inclusive curriculum, which is designed to meet the needs of all its boys including those with physical disabilities (within the physical constraints of our environment), those with special educational needs (including social, emotional and mental health needs), those from all cultural backgrounds and boys with English as an additional language. Boys may have additional needs at different times and therefore a wide variety of strategies is used to meet these needs as they arise. Learning diversity is recognised and planned for, any barriers to learning and participation will be challenged and removed where possible and all boys will be provided with equality of opportunity. Parents will be fully informed when special educational provision is made for a boy.

### A DEFINITION

According to the SEN & D Code of Practice (2014)

*“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 them.*

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

- a) have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or*
- b) have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.*

*Where a child has a disability or health condition that requires special educational provision to be made, they are covered by this definition.*

*A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he or she will be taught.”*

January 2015 (6.5)

*“The identification of SEN should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.”*

Disabled children and young people without SEN are provided for in legislation by the Children Act 1989, the Equality Act 2010, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

**This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following School Policies and documents:**

- **English as an Additional Language Policy**
- **Teaching and Learning Policy**
- **Curriculum Policy**
- **Accessibility Plan**
- **Admission Policy**
- **Disabled Persons (the Treatment of) Policy**
- **Examinations Policy 3: Use of Word Processors in Examinations**
- **Examinations Policy 4: Main Examinations Policy**

- **Examinations Policy 6: Disability policy for Examinations**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Tonbridge School follows the advice, guidelines and principles of many professional bodies such as the British Dyslexia Association and The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists to develop good practice in the early identification of boys with learning difficulties.

The Learning Strategies Department pays due regard to the principles embodied in the SEN & Disabilities Act 2001, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the revised Code of Practice for SEN Jan 2015 for identification and assessment, in order to support all boys with learning difficulties. We also adhere to any further adjustments in the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The revised Code of Practice puts emphasis on the fact that every teacher of children and young people with SEN & D is responsible for them reaching their full potential. The Learning Strategies Department will support Tonbridge teaching staff in this role, helping them with identifying, and differentiating their teaching of, these boys within the classroom.

We believe that boys at Tonbridge have the right to an education that is appropriate to their individual needs. It is our aim to provide learning experiences that are differentiated to take account of the needs and attainment abilities of the individual boy. In doing this, we intend to minimise the challenges and difficulties that some boys may experience in the teaching and learning environment and in co-curricular and pastoral settings. We also acknowledge that some boys will need special consideration and provision, including reasonable adjustments in lessons and examinations. Tonbridge School supports the use of enabling technology to promote learning independence.

We adhere to the legal requirements of boys who attend Tonbridge School with an Education, Health and Care Plan, co-operating with outside agencies, putting in place special requirements and paying due attention to all their welfare and educational provision. The Local Authority reviews EHCPs at least once a year to evaluate the success of the specified interventions and to update or adapt targets. The decision to discontinue an EHCP can only be taken as a result of an Annual Review. This would happen when the boy made such progress that they no longer need such a high level of support.

Learning difficulties can be demonstrated across the ability spectrum and our objective is to help all boys achieve their potential, by improving their learning opportunities and to provide a safe, secure and inclusive environment where support is considered as a response to a boy's diverse needs. This should enable all boys to participate in the life and activities that Tonbridge School has to offer to the best of their abilities, whatever their need or diagnosis.

We consider parents to be partners with the School in their son's educational progress, and recognise that they have a crucial bearing on their son's learning and on the effectiveness of School intervention and support. We aim to keep parents informed about their son's progress during Parents' Evenings, review meetings and at any other necessary time.

There are many reasons that can cause a boy at some stage of his School life to require support for learning, aside from being diagnosed with a long-term learning difficulty. The Learning Strategies Department works closely with Housemasters, Tutors, subject teachers and support staff to put in place the appropriate graduated response for boys according to the level of need.

## **THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES CO-ORDINATOR (SENDCo)**

Provision for boys with special educational needs is a matter for the School as a whole. The Headmaster, the SENDCo and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities. All teachers are teachers of boys with special educational needs. Teaching such boys is therefore a whole school responsibility. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator is responsible for the co-ordination of provision. The SENDCo's core responsibilities are:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the School's SEN & D Policy;
- co-ordinating provision for boys with special educational needs and disabilities;
- liaising with, and advising, teaching staff;
- overseeing the records of all boys with special educational needs and disabilities;
- liaising with parents;
- contributing to the in-service training of staff;
- liaising with external agencies and specialists such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists and Specialist Teachers;
- liaising with the Examinations Officer in relation to access arrangements and the collection of evidence as required by JCQ or other external bodies.

### **AREAS OF SEN & D**

Includes boys with a formal diagnosis as well as those with learning profiles consistent with a diagnosis:

#### **1) Communication and Interaction (ASD & Language Disorders)**

Boys may have one or more of these difficulties, affecting learning (including literacy), socialisation and emotional development:

- *Developmental Language Delay*: for example, a delay in language comprehension, expression or interaction. Progress, however slow, follows a 'normal pattern' of development.
- *Developmental Language Disorder*: for example, development in language comprehension, expression or interaction will show an uneven or unusual pattern.
- *Phonological/Speech Difficulty*: this refers to the boy's ability to produce intelligible speech and will include those with specific difficulties including verbal dyspraxia and dysarthria.
- *Receptive Language Difficulty*: the boy may have particular difficulty attaching meaning to words and developing concepts or have difficulties understanding complex grammar or implied meaning.
- *Expressive Language Difficulty*: the boy may have difficulty accessing vocabulary, using complex grammar, organising ideas, structuring sentences and conveying intended meaning.
- *Autistic Spectrum Conditions/Disorders*: autistic conditions are now generally regarded as developmental patterns linked to neurological factors, affecting social interaction and relationships, language and imagination with (typically) restricted and repetitive patterns of self-chosen behaviour.

#### **2) Cognitive and Learning (Dyslexia, DCD, Dyscalculia)**

Boys with general learning difficulties have academic attainment levels that are significantly below those of their peers due to a slower rate of learning. They will have difficulty acquiring and applying basic literacy, numeracy and language skills. Additionally, they may have difficulty with concentration, memory, social skills and self-esteem. Some boys may have specific learning difficulties in reading, writing, spelling or manipulating numbers, which are not typical of their cognitive ability or general level of performance. They may gain some skills quickly and demonstrate a higher level of ability orally,

yet may encounter sustained difficulty in gaining literacy or numeracy skills. These difficulties may sometimes be associated with significant problems with:

- sequencing and short-term memory;
- verbal recall or significant delays in language functioning (e.g. word retrieval difficulties);
- visual and auditory perception;
- developmental co-ordination difficulties (dyspraxia);
- frustration and self-esteem

### **3) Social, Emotional and Mental Health (ADHD, Emotional Difficulties, Anxiety)**

Boys with significant behavioural, emotional and social development difficulties will show evidence of emotional instability or disturbed behaviour that may be significantly different to that of their peers. They may be hyperactive and have difficulty concentrating and applying effective study skills to their learning. They may appear withdrawn or isolated, be disruptive and may also have issues with low mood or low self-esteem. The impact of their behaviour may affect their academic achievement and the co-morbid features of their diagnosis may have wider impact across their School life.

### **4) Physical and Sensory (including medical conditions)**

The sensory range extends from profound and permanent hearing or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may only be temporary. Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; others may lead to more complex learning and social needs; a few boys will have multi-sensory difficulties, some with associated physical difficulties. For some, the inability to take part fully in School life causes significant emotional stress or physical fatigue. The School will always consider a boy's physical and sensory needs when planning for SEN & D provision and wider School activities.

### **5) More Able, Gifted and Talented (MAGT)**

At Tonbridge School it is recognised that boys should be educated in a way which enables them to work at the highest level concomitant with their ability and interest, both for the good of others and for their own satisfaction.

There are a variety of opportunities that have been designed to challenge More Able, Gifted and Talented (MAGT) boys to achieve their very best. Boys should be educated in a way that enables them to work at the highest level in accordance with their ability and interest, both for the good of others and for their own satisfaction.

We define 'More Able' as those with a significantly faster learning speed than the overall curriculum affords, 'Gifted' as being highly able academically and 'Talented' as being of high ability in practical subject areas such as Sport, Music, Drama, Art, and Technology.

Much of this provision is common ground to different curriculum subjects with examples including:

- Fast tracking in academic studies;
- School mentoring so that other pupils can benefit from the MAGT boys;
- Trips/events focused on increasing aspirations to attend Russell Group and Oxbridge universities;
- More specific curricular and extracurricular projects such as extended reading lists to stretch the most able (English) and participation in National Maths and Science Challenges, such as Olympiads;

- Learners are also able to pursue further opportunities through links with other Eton Group schools and our partner schools.

Each academic department is able to provide more detail on the extension and enrichment opportunities they provide to boys at Tonbridge School.

## **IDENTIFICATION, SCREENING AND INTERVENTION**

The School will work closely with boys and their parents to identify any specific barriers to learning and hence to identify what support is needed.

- All boys are screened during their Novi Visit using a bespoke screening programme, with boys undertaking further cognitive testing where appropriate. The School uses the Lucid Rapid and Exact Screening Tests either during the Novi Visit or during the Michaelmas Term as part of the Novi Learning 2 Learn Programme. We also assess the speed and legibility of boys' handwriting via timed writing samples (supplied by the English Department each Michaelmas Term) and the DASH Test (usually conducted at the start of the Lent Term each academic year with the Novi).
- All Novi sit MidYIS testing during the Michaelmas Term at the School; an asymmetric profile in the four skill areas may indicate a possible learning difficulty, which can then be evaluated further if deemed appropriate to do so, in light of the other centr-based evidence available to the School at the time.
- Boys with SEN & D will usually be assessed for examination Access Arrangements from Michaelmas Term onwards from the start of their 2nd Year, although this may happen at any point during an academic year if the rationale to do so is sound.
- Tutors and teachers may raise a concern about a SEND issue with the Head of Learning Strategies by using the Referral Form. Boys may also self-refer and parents should feel free to contact either their son's Housemaster or the SENDCo if they have any concerns.

Liaison with SENDCos at feeder schools is led by the Head of Learning Strategies prior to a boy's entry to Tonbridge where possible, to establish the likely level of support required on transition to the School and to support the transition process for the boy and his family.

## **A CONTINUUM OF PROVISION**

The graduated approach cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, and Review' is used to identify, process and evaluate provision.

Once a boy's rate of progress has been identified as inadequate, despite having appropriate learning experiences, differentiated learning opportunities should be provided within the classroom setting. Regular and frequent monitoring of the boy's progress by the subject teacher and tutor will show whether the provision is effective.

If the review of this support highlights the need for greater intervention, targets and strategies are drawn up by the Learning Strategies Department in liaison with subject teachers, the boy's Tutor and Housemaster, parents and the boy himself.

In the event that this level of intervention does not enable the boy to make satisfactory progress, further advice may be sought from the Internal Assessor at Tonbridge or from external agencies. Following additional assessment, a higher level and type of intervention may be identified as being needed and therein acted upon. Interventions are reviewed consistently and adapted accordingly with the boys, parents, subject teachers, Tutors, Housemasters and the Learning Strategies team.

For the majority of boys with special educational needs, teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that their learning needs are being met within the classroom through differentiated teaching and acting

upon the advice of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator (SENDCo). In many cases, this action taken will mean that the boy's needs are resolved. Only for those boys whose progress continues to cause concern should additional action be taken.

The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. There should not be an assumption that all boys will progress at the same rate. A judgement has to be made in each case as to what is reasonable to expect a particular boy to achieve. Where progress is not adequate, it will be necessary to take additional or different action to enable the boy to learn more effectively. Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It may, for instance, be progress which:

- Closes the attainment gap between the boy and his peers;
- Matches or betters the boys' previous rate of progress;
- Ensures access to the full curriculum;
- Demonstrates an improvement in behaviour, self-help, social or personal skills.

### **SEN & D PROVISION AT TONBRIDGE SCHOOL**

Provision for boys with specific learning difficulties and disabilities at Tonbridge School is extensive and may include the following:

- 1-to-1 or collaborative intervention lessons in the Learning Strategies Department with a specialist teacher;
- Participation in the School's tiered Learning Mentor Programme.
- The Novi Learning to Learn (L2L) study skills programme. All Novi are taught a study skills programme, rooted in metacognitive theory, by Learning Strategies teachers in their first term
- Revision workshops and seminars.
- Access to multimedia learning resources (via Firefly), and 'Study Skills' and 'Organisation' support groups.
- Study Skills sessions - available to all boys during Pursuits periods on Mondays and Fridays in the Learning Strategies Department. Tiered mentoring support and specialist teacher help available at all times.
- Personal Learning Strategies Mentors – Sixth form pupils trained in study skills and coaching techniques who support subject specific needs of individual SEND pupils. Mentors are selected carefully and allocated to boys with a particular subject need. There were 56 in 2023-24.
- The SEND List – a comprehensive database and CRM system for tracking and managing boys' needs, targets and current Access Arrangements. The list offers teaching and study guidance for teachers and key information on the boys they teach.
- Five terms per academic year, SEND Enhancement Sessions are delivered to the Common Room (and to other staff members as appropriate) to ensure professional development in SEND is maintained, is current and relevant to the needs of boys at Tonbridge with neurodiverse profiles. There is a standing item on each departmental meeting agenda for SEND issues to be discussed and to provide an opportunity for teachers, with their Head of Department, to discuss matters relating to SEND provision and Quality First Teaching strategies. The School has an obligation to ensure that information is cascaded to teaching staff and to demonstrate how we meet our duties towards boys with special educational needs and disabilities. It is also the School's responsibility to provide support based on the changing needs of the boys and to do this we need to work in partnership with teaching staff, the boys and their families.
- Teaching staff need to demonstrate they are experienced and knowledgeable about how to recognise barriers to learning and progress. The standing item agenda, and the ensuing dialogue initiated by it, is key to this, alongside ongoing PD and an awareness of the SEND Code of Practice and The Equality Act.

- The Head of Learning Strategies, along with the Deputy Head Academic, has responsibility for monitoring the progress of all boys on the SEND List and for raising concerns with Housemasters, Tutors, Heads of Department, and subject teachers as appropriate. The progress of these boys is regularly discussed at Parents' Evenings, which the Head of Learning Strategies and other members of the LS department attend.

## **IN SUMMARY**

Our core SEN & D Policy objectives are:

- To ensure that boys with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are given the opportunity for access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We aim to provide the flexibility and support to suit individual needs so that all boys have an equal opportunity to receive an education that is appropriate to their needs.
- For all boys to achieve their full potential across the whole curriculum.
- To provide a supportive and caring environment where their self-esteem and confidence can grow.
- That boys are respected as individuals, whatever their race, gender, religion, culture, disability or ability.
- To screen, identify and assess boys needing support from the Learning Strategies Department when they join the school or as soon as possible, using information from a wide range of sources.
- To use the Learning Strategies budget to provide appropriate resources to support the individual requirements of boys needing support and intervention from the Learning Strategies Department.
- To develop a partnership with parents in order that their knowledge, views and experience can assist us in assessing and providing for their sons, thereby encouraging positive and active parental involvement.
- To consider the views of the boys concerned in order to provide more effectively for them.
- To liaise and collaborate with outside agencies where appropriate, keeping accurate records and ensuring parents are fully informed.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities towards boys with learning difficulties and are supported by training, information and advice to enable them to differentiate effectively within their teaching.
- To continue to develop a system of recording and communicating information so that all staff, agencies, and parents of boys receiving support from the Learning Strategies Department are informed of changes and progress.
- To monitor our effectiveness in achieving the above objectives.
- The day-to-day co-ordination of SEND provision and tracking is delegated to the Head of Learning Strategies.