

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS / LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Changes to the arrangements for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) came into force in April 2015 with the implementation of provisions from the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years (SEND Code 2015). Whitgift aims to duly observe the new SEND Code as well as the Equality Act 2010 as it applies to this school.

Whitgift School's SEND Policy is designed to support students with learning difficulties, whatever their nature, which hinder their educational development, thus preventing them from reaching their potential.

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

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

It is the policy of the School that students who have Special Educational Needs will have access to the whole school curriculum. Exceptional circumstances which may affect such access will be dealt with on an individual basis in consultation with the SENDCo, Directors of Junior Year, Middle Years and Sixth Form, Head of Year, parents and student. We are committed to all students being fully integrated into the School and due regard will be paid to individual needs, in consultation with parents, teachers and external agencies. If a student has an Education Health and Care Plan, the school will ensure the objectives within it are met and reviewed at least annually.

Admission arrangements:

Students with SEND should have equal opportunity to join Whitgift if they satisfy the School's selection procedures. Parents may be asked to contribute to any special resources. If exam concessions are requested for the entrance exam, eg. a scribe, a reader, use of a laptop and extra time, evidence should be submitted to demonstrate this is their usual way of working and there are up to date assessments to support this.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating provision for Students with SEND:

The School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator is responsible for overseeing arrangements for the implementation and co-ordination of the SEND policy. The SENDCo/ Head of Learning Support is Mrs Kirstie Richardson.

All staff are responsible for supporting students with SEND in their learning within the classroom setting. Strategies may be sought in consultation with the Head of Learning Support and the staff in her department.

All teaching staff are involved with the identification of students who are clearly having difficulties accessing the curriculum, through their own departmental assessment procedures.

The SENDCo/Head of Learning Development is responsible for co-ordinating specific assessments and provision in the wider school.

The SENDCo in conjunction with the Head of Year will co-ordinate outside agency support.

Allocation of Resources

In the allocation of resources, priority will be given to those students who are identified as having the greatest need following consultation with the SENDCo, external agencies, parents and teachers.

Currently the Learning Support Department has the following staff in charge of supporting student learning:

Mrs Richardson - Head of Learning Support/ SENDCo holding the Hornsby Diploma in SpLD and National Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. PGCE, BA (Hons). kir@whitgift.co.uk, 020 8688 9222 ext 2217

Mrs Glenin - HLTA/Specialist Teacher – OCR Diploma in SpLD

Ms Kemp - HLTA/Specialist Teacher

Mr Powell - HLTA

Ms Cook - Learning Skills Mentor

Mr Arnold - Learning Skills Mentor

Mrs Kelly - HLTA/Specialist Teacher – OCR Diploma in SpLD

Identification of SEND

The SENDCo, Head of Admissions and/or Head of Lower School will liaise with feeder schools where students have previously been identified as having SEND. During the first term at Whitgift, students with or without identified SEND are observed by the Head of Year, Subject Teachers and the Learning Development Team to identify need and appropriateness of provision.

Early identification of a student's special educational need is considered essential if progress is to be maintained or enhanced. It is important parents alert staff to any concerns as students can mask difficulties in many ways.

The School will continue to monitor student progress in order to identify any SEND which has not been recognised by the previous school or may have developed since joining Whitgift. Staff should report any concerns regarding students and their ability to learn to the student's Form Tutor, Head of Year and the SENDCo. The SENDCo may complete assessments to

ascertain a difficulty. Results will be shared with parents and a plan for support discussed thereafter.

Concerns expressed by parents will be acknowledged by the Head of Year and SENDCo. The SENDCo will then decide whether an assessment is required, following liaison with their teachers. Results from any assessment will be shared with parents, Head of Year and Form Tutor. **Parents should always liaise with the school prior to having an external assessment completed, not doing so could invalidate the assessment. External assessments are taken as advisory and will be used to inform the school's knowledge of a student but there is no obligation to follow through on recommendations if they do not match the school's profile of a student.**

Students who have been identified as having a Special Educational Need or/and Disability will be added to the School's SEND register. The SEND register will be shared confidentially with all staff (teaching and non-teaching) via Firefly and iSAMS, so that the individual student's need is recognised and addressed appropriately and effectively. The register will give the following information:

Name, tutor group, need type, description and provision if applicable.

Blue Star – monitor - student has previously had SEND involvement. Students have an identified need which may or may not have been diagnosed by a specialist. They are supported in class by their subject teacher through differentiation as required. Staff may seek additional advice from the Learning Support department.

Yellow Star – intervention and need - students have an identified need, which may or may not have been diagnosed by a specialist, that requires provision different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age. They are supported by their class teacher as well the Learning Support Department.

Red Star – the student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Students will be supported by their class teacher as well the Learning Support Department, as directed by the EHCP and in liaison with the LA.

Assessment of and Provision for SEND

We operate a graduated approach, in line with the SEND and disability code of practice: 0-25 guidance (SEND 2015).

When a concern is expressed, the SENDCo will be informed and will arrange for consultation and an initial assessment to be made.

Based upon this assessment, one of a number of possible outcomes will result, leading to the conclusion that:

- No special help is needed, but teachers will be made aware of the concern and the student will be monitored.
- Teachers are advised of strategies they may employ in the class to support the student.

- The student may be invited to join a small group to address the specific difficulty through a structured teaching programme. This will be reviewed on a termly basis and progress monitored.
- A student may be provided with a specific mentoring programme to support their emotional, organizational and learning needs. This will be reviewed on a termly basis and progress monitored with HOY.
- In consultation with parents, further advice may be sought from external agencies.
- Additional help may be offered during lunchtimes or after school.
- Parents may be encouraged to support their child with specific tasks at home.

In exceptional cases, the School, in consultation with parents, may recommend a modification of the curriculum or a restricted timetable.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluation

Individual subject teachers undertake monitoring of student performance in line with department and school policy by marking of classwork, homework and tests, together with formal assessments and examinations in their subject area. Subject teachers keep records to demonstrate student progress and produce written reports with targets and advice for the students. HODs and HOYs review student progress and liaise with the SENDCo with regard to students presenting ongoing difficulties or underachievement.

The Head of Learning Support/ SENDCo reviews the progress of students following the structured programmes offered, by informal and formal assessment to ensure progress. Written reports are included in the formal twice-yearly reporting system to parents. A review of progress is given formally at Parents' Evenings and through informal communication by phone. Annual reviews are held for those students on an Education, Health and Care Plan in addition to regular phone or email contact.

Access Arrangements

An Access Arrangement can be used for students whose Special Educational Needs or Disability are such that their performance may be impaired in assessment situations. Some examples of the type of Access Arrangement that can be granted include an additional time allowance and/or rest breaks, the use of a reader, a scribe, use of a laptop, specially adapted papers (enlarged script, Braille etc) or text to speech, speech to text technology.

Any application for Access Arrangements will require supporting evidence/information. A learning difficulty in itself does not justify an Access Arrangement, and evidence has to be submitted to prove that the difficulty would unfairly impair the student's performance while being assessed. Where evidence suggests that an Access Arrangement would be unjustified, the School reserves the right not to submit a request. The exam boards have strict criteria to adhere to when requesting Access Arrangements and evidence and recommendations must be provided by specific professionals holding qualifications to do so for example: Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Specialist Teachers holding qualifications recognised by JCQ and IB whom MUST seek advice from the school in order to complete

any assessment. The school must collate ongoing evidence of need to compliment any assessment.

The School's Examinations Officer in liaison with the SENDCo will co-ordinate the Access Arrangements procedure.

HODs and HOYs may refer students to the SENDCo for assessment for Access Arrangements, however this needs to be done as early as possible, so that evidence can be submitted to the exams boards well in advance of the final exam. Students deemed eligible for Access Arrangements should have the opportunity to pilot them prior to the public examinations. JCQ and the IB recommend that most Access Arrangements should be in place at the beginning of the course being followed. It is therefore important that teachers, students and parents highlight difficulties early on to enable us to follow the correct protocol.

Updated assessments should take place in the Third Form (Year 9) ready for IGCSEs, similarly early in the Lower Sixth (Year 12) for AS/A2 and IB. These students will mostly have had these arrangements as their normal way of working in earlier internal examinations and in lessons.

Students must sign a data protection sheet to confirm agreement that their information can be shared with a third party for this purpose.

Professional development

The SENDCo is a member of the Independent Schools SENDCo forum and meets annually in the area cluster to share knowledge, expertise and good practice. The department has active membership to PATOSS and NASEN and continually keeps up to date through CPD with recent educational developments. Whitgift staff are given frequent opportunities to develop their knowledge of SEND.

Reviewed by:

The Assistant Head (Academic) and the Head of Learning Support: June 2021

Next review: June 2022