

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 has been written to reflect St Catherine's provision in the context of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 0-25 (2015), as well as the Equality Act 2010.

This policy was updated in September 2022 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule. It was previously updated in 2016 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 was similarly renamed. In the Senior School, the SENCo is named Head of Academic Mentoring.

This Policy has regard to the following:

- Admissions Procedure – refers to disability
- Disability (Non-discriminatory) Policy; including Accessibility Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum Policy
- Educational Visits Policy and Guidance
- Medical Policy
- Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Introduction and Aims

This Policy provides information about support at St Catherine's in the broadest sense. It lays out the provision available to pupils with learning difficulties and SEND.

St Catherine's is a school with high academic standards and entry is by academic assessment. We welcome all pupils who can make the most of the wide range of opportunities on offer and who can blossom under our care. Every girl at St Catherine's is an individual and we welcome those with SEND and EAL providing that they demonstrate the appropriate level of academic ability and the school feels it can meet their needs and support them in the context of its overall aims and daily provision.

At St Catherine's, we encourage a whole school approach to supporting children with SEND. All teachers and leaders, as well as pastoral and boarding staff, alongside the Academic Mentoring team, work together to provide encouragement, understanding and support of every aspect of a pupil's school life.

The aims of the Academic Mentoring Team include:

- To work closely with all members of the teaching staff to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to actively and positively support those with SEND.
- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, any pupil with SEND.
- To gather and analyse disclosed pupil information in order to identify their key needs and support strategies.
- To ensure there is support and training for teachers to meet the learning needs of all pupils in the classroom to help them achieve their potential.
- To work closely with the Pastoral Team to provide necessary support for all pupils with SEND where there are co-occurring pastoral needs.
- To ensure that girls' records include information relating to their individual needs together with interventions that have been suggested and their outcomes.
- To conduct regular reviews of pupils' progress.
- To liaise with external agencies/professionals and implement their recommendations where appropriate.
- To maintain close links with parents/carers/guardians regarding their child.
- To include the girls themselves in decision making about the type of intervention and targets they feel would be appropriate and achievable.
- To ensure pupils with SEND receive the appropriate support at transition stages either when they join or leave the school. This is important in helping settle in as early as possible in their new environment.
- To scrutinise any information sent in by prospective parents regarding their child's SEND and advise/support accordingly

The Head of Academic Mentoring reports to the Headmistress via the Director of Studies as line manager, who is a member of the Senior Management Team and has responsibility for the provision, assessment and tracking of all pupils with additional needs and/or EAL. The Academic Mentoring department comprises a full time Head of Academic Mentoring and a part-time Specialist Teacher Assessor/Exam Arrangements Officer.

At St Catherine's, the SEND Code of Practice's main principles are applied in the following ways:

- Pupils with SEND should be able to access a broad and balanced education.
- The needs of the majority of girls with SEND will be met within the classroom setting, without statutory assessment or Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP). These pupils will be educated alongside their peers.

The school has applied the Code of Practice to its individual setting, defining a pupil with SEND as one who has a learning difficulty or other additional need which requires provision to be made beyond that which is commonly available to all (e.g., examination access arrangements) and/or a diagnosed medical condition (e.g., ADHD, ASD).

The Academic Mentoring department's SEND Pupil List records information on all pupils with diagnosed SEND and/or Access Arrangement. The department meets weekly to discuss pupils and reflect on processes and provision to ensure an efficient and effective practice is being implemented.

The Department also routinely scrutinises the minutes of all subject departments to note any girls of concern who either already have an identified SEND or who may be emerging as having one.

Definition of SEND

The School adheres to the requirements contained in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

“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 he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- 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.”*

(Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, 2015. DfES, p.15)

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 and Equality Act 2010 make it clear that:

“Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.”

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Head of Academic Mentoring reports to the Director of Studies and is responsible for the overall monitoring and support of pupils with SEND.
- The School Nurse has responsibility for pupils with diagnosed medical conditions.
- The Senior Housemistress along with the Senior Boarding Housemistress has responsibility for pupils with social, emotional, mental health or pastoral difficulties and they have oversight of the counsellors working in school. The School Psychologists report directly to the Headmistress.
- Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including pupils with SEND. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to these pupils.

Admissions

Any pupil wishing to come to St Catherine’s, including those with SEND, will need to participate in the standard admissions process, as outlined in the Admissions Policy. Prior to entry, if a girl has already been diagnosed with SEND, parents are asked to share any professional reports that support this e.g.: Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Medical professional, Behavioural Optometrist, Hearing Specialist We also encourage them to discuss their child’s requirements with us before participating in our admissions process so that we make sure St Catherine’s is the right environment for them to grow and thrive in and that we can meet their needs and provide appropriate support from the entrance assessment onwards.

Identification of SEND

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) identifies four areas of need:

1. Communication and Interaction
2. Cognition and Learning
3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or Physical needs

At St Catherine’s we understand that early identification together with effective provision gives the best long-term outcomes for pupils. St Catherine’s identifies SEND by:

1. reviewing the entrance exam assessment papers of all applicants, together with liaising with feeder schools and parents of new pupils identified as having SEND.
2. undertaking new girl literacy screening using standardised testing. Girls causing concern following this are monitored and the information is shared with teaching staff and their parents.

3. liaising with subject teachers and pastoral staff when they flag concerns.
4. meeting regularly with the School psychologists to review pupils where there are co-occurring needs.
5. listening to and working with parents who raise concerns themselves.
6. monitoring pupils through various school wide tracking systems, including at key assessment and reporting points.
7. listening to the concerns of pupils themselves.
8. Undertaking assessments in School where applicable.
9. referring pupils for assessment by other professionals when applicable.

A Graduated Response to Intervention

At St Catherine's we employ progressive levels of intervention, using the Code of Practice's Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle:

Stage 1

In most cases a pupil's needs can be met by targeted quality first teaching through an appropriately differentiated curriculum. This is the first response offered to support a pupil. Any concerns raised at this point are logged in the Academic Mentoring department's monitoring system. Where there are known needs, these are available to all staff on Sims, together with a Teacher Summary where appropriate.

Stage 2

If a teacher feels that a pupil is not making expected progress given the Stage 1 differentiated curriculum, they can refer them to weekly subject clinics, small catch-up groups and/or give them individual 1:1 sessions. In addition, subject teachers at this point, may also seek the advice and support of the Academic Mentoring department. This may result in tailored support strategies and preliminary investigations as to whether the pupil may have SEND. The Academic Mentoring department may also speak with the pupil and their parents to gain a broader perspective and offer specific advice. A block of 1:1 Study Skills block may also be recommended, which is billed termly.

Stage 3

Where the needs of the pupil are not met in Stages 1 and 2, and she continues to make less than expected progress in relation to her underlying academic potential, a formal assessment may be suggested better to understand her profile. This assessment is usually undertaken by our in-house assessor in the Academic Mentoring department, or a referral will be made to a trusted external agency or specialist with whom the school has an established relationship. The cost of the in-house assessment is met by the school. Where more specialist assessment (e.g.: ADHD, ASD, Dyspraxia, Sensory impairment) is required, the cost will be borne by the parents. Parental consent is always sought before proceeding. In most cases, after the assessment, a teacher summary of the report will be shared with teaching staff which will include specific strategies to employ in the classroom context to support the pupil.

Staff Development and departmental communication

All teachers are supported in their teaching of pupils with SEND in the following ways:

- Information is given by the Academic Mentoring department to staff, via Sims/EduLink or email, on individual pupils to aid planning, differentiation and teaching. Teacher Summaries are available for most SEND pupils, as are the full reports.
- Information and training are given at the weekly Staff Briefings, formal Staff INSET Day sessions, Heads of Department meetings, Senior Housemistresses' meetings, ad hoc attendance at Departmental meetings.

- In-class observations of pupils with learning difficulties and subsequent feedback to the Form or subject teacher where necessary.
- Continuous development of teaching staff by the Academic Mentoring team through 1:1 discussion about individual pupils.
- Through assistive technology and IT provision with support from the IT department.
- Informal discussions between staff and members of the Academic Mentoring team take place daily.

Access Arrangements

The key responsibilities of schools and examination boards in making decisions about access arrangements (such as extra time) in public examinations are to ensure that no child is unnecessarily disadvantaged in an examination by a disability or learning difficulty, but also to ensure that unfair advantage is not given by the award of a concession. Schools must consider the individual needs of pupils, but also their responsibilities as examining centres in maintaining fairness.

Where concerns result in an assessment, the process is a positive one and enables us to identify the pupil’s strengths, as well as any barriers she is experiencing. This may or may not lead to the awarding of access arrangements, which are then put into place stringently following the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) and CIE guidelines, which are updated annually.

External assessments undertaken by parents whilst a pupil is at St Catherine’s, without consultation with the Academic Mentoring department, can no longer be used as stand-alone evidence for access arrangements. Granting access arrangements is a process that should be managed by the School at every stage. If you have a concern regarding such concessions, the first step should always be to contact the Academic Mentoring department.

Final decisions about examination concessions for internal and public examinations rest with the School, in its capacity as an examination centre. Whilst we welcome information from parents and will request whatever we need in order to make a fair decision, the access arrangement decision itself can only be made by the School.

Working with parents

St Catherine’s actively encourages the involvement of parents in their child’s education. This is particularly relevant for the parents of a child with SEND where research clearly shows that their support, encouragement and understanding can be crucial in the child achieving success. In addition, the Academic Mentoring department is available to meet with parents at parents’ evenings or other times by arrangement. By establishing a close partnership with parents in support of the child, and working closely with colleagues, the Academic Mentoring staff can work to ensure that each pupil with SEND has every opportunity to reach her potential during her education at St Catherine’s.

Elizabeth Ryan
 Head of Academic Mentoring
 September 2022

Denise Osbourne
 Access Arrangement Coordinator

Headmistress of Senior School:
 Mrs Alice Phillips

Date