



# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

*Reviewed and updated autumn 2023 | Next review autumn 2024*

## Introduction

The School is committed to the equal treatment of disabled pupils (including prospective pupils) and those with special educational needs and its policy is to work towards eliminating disadvantages for such pupils. The School's aims are to improve accessibility to the curriculum, premises and written material through the development and implementation of an accessibility plan.

## Overview

A pupil is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long-term adverse effect" on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity' (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

A pupil has a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which means that they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age;
- have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of their age in Schools within the area of the local authority; or
- are under five years old and would be likely to have such difficulties.

Children will not be 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.

Not all pupils who have a learning difficulty are disabled.

The School recognises that disabled pupils or those with special educational needs or learning difficulties may be at risk of being bullied. The School has an Anti-bullying Policy which makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

## Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- afford opportunity to pupils who are disabled;
- ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010;

- have regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission "What equality law means for you as an education provider: Schools";
- detect and manage learning difficulties whilst having regard to the Department for Education 'Special Educational Needs Code of Practice' or any substituting or amending code of practice as issued from time to time;
- take account of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **Admissions**

The School has created over many years an ethos of educating and developing each pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by other pupils, in order to create a confident, happy, well-educated and well-rounded individual. In order to maintain that ethos and the educational standards for which it is known, the School will assess all pupils for admission on the basis of its standard selection criteria from time to time.

The School's admissions policy aims to eliminate from the admissions process, as far as possible, any significant disadvantages which may be encountered by disabled applicants.

The School will treat every application from a disabled pupil or a pupil with a special educational need in a fair, open-minded way.

In accordance with the School's terms and conditions, parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties or other circumstances which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School.

The School will seek input from parents and may require a report to be obtained from a consultant or specialist medical adviser so that the School may consider what reasonable adjustments can be made.

If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School is unable to adequately cater for the needs of those children with disabilities, parents will be informed why an offer will not be made.

If an applicant's disability becomes apparent after admission, the School will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in order to allow the child to continue at the School. If, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School is unable to adequately cater for and meet the needs of the pupil, the Head may request parents to withdraw their child. Fees in lieu will not payable in this circumstances and the acceptance deposit will be returned.

The School's Admissions policy can be found in this Parent Handbook and is available on the School's website. It applies equally to all potential pupils.

## **Support for Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Details on curriculum support, pupil profiles and target setting can be found in the School's Curriculum policy.

The School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents about their child's learning difficulties and/or disability and ensure that teachers are given any necessary information so that the teaching practices are appropriate. Where the School reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, the School may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child by an educational psychologist or specialist teacher (the cost of which will be borne by the parents).

It is important that parents recognise that they have overall responsibility for taking decisions about the management of their child's learning difficulties. Parents may wish to request a formal assessment from an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher should consult the School in the first instance to ensure that the most appropriate assessor and/or type of assessment is sought. Parents must ensure that the School is given copies of all advice and reports received. If the assessment is for GCSE access arrangements parents **must** consult with School in the first instance. The School cannot award Access Arrangements without a Form 8 being completed by the School SENCo prior to the assessment. The School will provide names of specialist assessors who satisfy JCQ requirements.

The School recognises that some pupils with a SEN may also have a disability.

The School will do all that is reasonable in order to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can adequately cater. Reasonable adjustments typically include, for example, provision of larger print exam papers for pupils with a visual impairment. The School is not legally obliged to make physical alterations as part of their duty to make reasonable adjustments (although the accessibility of the School will form part of the School's Accessibility Plan). When considering a potential adjustment, the School will consider a number of factors such as whether the adjustment would overcome the substantial disadvantage caused to the pupil; practicability; cost; health and safety requirements and the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting or other standards.

The School will be required to provide auxiliary aids and services to those disabled pupils who require them where it is reasonable to do so to avoid putting the disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage. Where it is necessary to provide auxiliary aids or support for pupils which goes beyond a reasonable adjustment then the cost of this will usually be passed on to parents and will be agreed with them in advance. What is a reasonable adjustment will be a context specific judgement for the School in relation to the needs of each disabled pupil and the resources available to the School at the relevant time.

If parents are not happy with a decision regarding reasonable adjustments, parents may use the School's Complaints Procedure.

The School also recognises that they have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for the public where services are provided to the public e.g. parents' evenings and School concerts.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The School monitors progress of those pupils in the EYFS so that specific help, if needed, is provided to those pupils whose progress is inadequate to enable them to learn more effectively.

The School will discuss with parents any concerns they may have about a pupil's needs and/or progress.

## **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator**

The School has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, details of which are available from the School office. The Head and the SENCO meet on a regular basis.

The role of the SENCO, in collaboration with the Head, is to:

- take day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy and co-ordination of the provision made for individual pupils with SEN, working closely with staff, parents and other professionals as appropriate
- coordinate provision for pupils with SEN and ensure appropriate pupil profiles are in place which are regularly reviewed
- advise and support members of staff at the School
- ensure that the School has all the relevant background information about pupils with SEN

One member of the School's governing body will be nominated as EYFS champion at any given time with the additional responsibility of SEN.

## **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) formerly known as a statement**

Parents have the right to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC Plan under the SEN code of practice January 2015 in accordance with Children and Families Act 2014 and Education Act 1996). The School also has the right (under s 329A) to ask the Local Authority to arrange an assessment and will consult with parents before exercising this right. If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber). The School does not have this right of appeal.

Where a prospective pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the School will consult the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHCP can be delivered by the School.

Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHCP may need to be charged, either directly to the parents, or to the Local Authority if the Authority is responsible for the fees and/or reasonable adjustments and the School is named in the EHCP. This is subject to the School's duty to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils when it is reasonable to do so to avoid putting the pupil at a substantial disadvantage.

## **Accessibility**

The School is aware that difficulties may be experienced from time to time by the need for pupils to move around the site and as a result of the School buildings.

The School's accessibility plan will consider ways in which accessibility may be improved, subject to planning and budgetary constraints. Accessibility will always be a factor when planning new buildings.

## **Access Arrangements for Public Examinations**

For girls in **Year 9** upwards, the School is unable to accept recommendations from privately commissioned reports, which use an external professional. These reports do not satisfy the JCQ criteria 7.4.1, 7.5.1, 7.5.2 and 7.5.3 for Access Arrangements i.e. the Centre **MUST** complete a Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed

by a nominated Special Assessor who is designated by the School and used on a regular basis. The School must hold evidence of the assessor's qualifications for inspection purposes.

## **Withdrawal**

Where, after all reasonable adjustments have made, the School feels that it cannot reasonably accommodate disabled pupils or meet their needs the School may require parents, after appropriate consultation, to withdraw their child. Fees in lieu of notice will not be chargeable in these circumstances and the acceptance deposit returned.

Parents who are dissatisfied will have the right to use the School's Complaints Procedure.

## **The Senior Management Team**

The School sees accessibility as a key element and has therefore integrated it into the duties of the Senior Management Team (SMT) which meets every week.

The Senior Management Team will have oversight:

- to review the School's existing policies and procedures (including admissions procedures) to ensure that the needs of disabled pupils are taken into account;
- to recommend new policies or procedures where they are necessary to ensure that disabled pupils are not discriminated against or where the introduction of a new policy would constitute a reasonable adjustment;
- to instigate a programme of training for all staff and to monitor and evaluate that training;
- to develop an accessibility plan to:
  - increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
  - improve the physical environment of the School for disabled pupils; and
  - improve the delivery to disabled pupils of written information which is available to non-disabled pupils;
- to oversee and monitor the implementation of the accessibility plan;
- to review this SEN and Disability Policy at least annually and update where necessary;
- to report to the School Governors annually on its activities.

Nominations for additional members of the Governing Body, with relevant experience, are always welcome and should be made to the Head.

## **Review**

The School will review this policy on an annual basis to ensure the School meets the needs of those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.