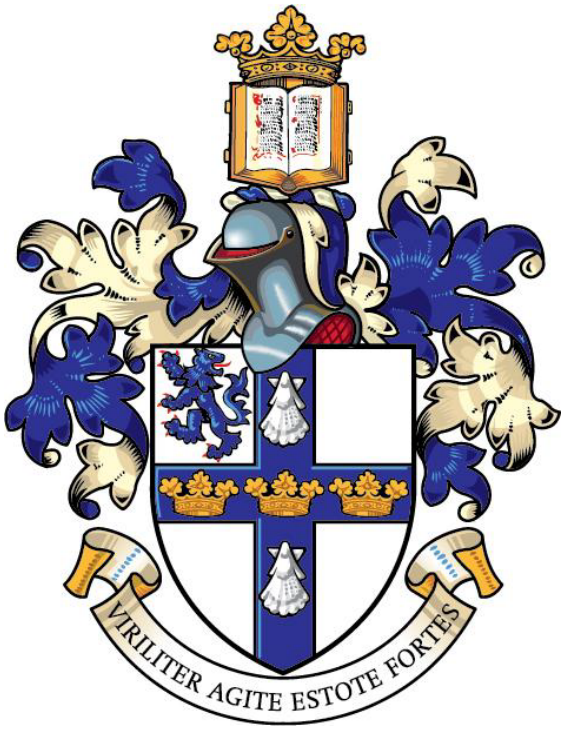


Culford School

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Reviewed: October 2026

V2.0

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1. Introduction

Culford School ('the School') is an independent selective school that has a very clear academic emphasis. It is a caring school where attention is paid to the planning of the curriculum, both to extend the most able and to support the least able. It is a school that aims to meet the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs ('SEN') and disabilities within the mainstream setting. Acceptance of pupils with SEN and disabilities is at the discretion of the Head. The Head will discuss the needs of the individual child with the parents and with the School's Head of Learning Development. If the School is able to meet those needs and if the child meets the entry requirements, then the child may be accepted.

The School is committed to the equal treatment of all pupils including those with SEN and disabilities. This policy works towards eliminating disadvantages for pupils with SEN and disabilities by:

- using best endeavours to ensure that all pupils (including those with medical conditions) get the support needed in order to access the School's educational provision
- not treating disabled pupils less favourably than their peers
- making reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission and education
- ensuring that pupils with SEN and disabilities engage as fully as practicable in the activities of school alongside pupils who do not have SEN and disabilities
- ensuring parents are informed when special educational provision is made for their child and are kept up to date as to their child's progress and development.

In drawing up this policy, the School has had regard to the following:

- ISI Inspection Framework, September 2023 (last updated September 2024)
- ISI Inspection Handbook, September 2023 (last updated September 2024)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, January 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- KCSIE 2025
- The Equality Act and School, DfE non statutory advice (May 2014)
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, last updated January 2024

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Admissions Policy, Expulsion, Suspension and Required Removal Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and the Accessibility Plan, Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Word Processing Policy, Senior, Prep, Nursery & Pre-Prep Educational Policies.

2. Definition of Special Educational Needs

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. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, a child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if 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 others of the same age in mainstream schools or early years providers;
- are under five years old and would be likely to have such difficulties if special educational provision were not made for them.

The expression 'learning difficulty' covers a wide variety of conditions and may include those known as an autistic spectrum condition, dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result from social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The expression may also include those who have problems with their eyesight or hearing.

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. The School's support for those children whose first language is not English is set out in the School's EAL Policy.

3. Definition of Disability

A child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). Long term means that the impairment will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

Not all pupils who have SEN are disabled and not all disabled pupils have SEN but the School recognises that, understandably, there is overlap.

4. Governor and Staff Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for determining school policy and provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities.

The Head is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the School's SEN provision and keeping the governing body fully informed of the implementation of the School's policy in practice.

The Heads of Learning Development are Ottilie Meadows (Senior School), Dominique Scully (Prep School) and Danielle Lomas (Pre-Prep), Lucy Craigan (Culford Nursery). Their responsibilities include:

- determining the strategic development of the SEN and disability policy and provision in the School, together with the Head and governing body
- having overall day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN and disability policy
- coordinating specific provision for children with SEN and disabilities ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the School's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- ensuring that teachers are given any necessary information relating to a child's learning support needs and/or disabilities (if known) so that teaching practices are appropriate
- ensuring parental insights are considered by the School to support their child's SEN and disability
- liaising with the School's medical staff, external professionals and agencies, as appropriate
- ensuring that the School keeps records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

All teachers are responsible for helping to meet a pupil's needs (irrespective of any specialist qualifications or expertise). All staff are expected to understand this policy so that the School can identify, assess and make provision to meet those needs.

5. Identifying and Supporting Pupils with SEN and Disabilities

The School's curriculum, plan and schemes of work take proper account of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. The School regularly reviews pupil progress to help monitor whether children are making expected progress. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN (and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN).

However, where the School reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, for example where there are early indications that a pupil is not making expected progress, the School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents and the pupil (as appropriate) to help determine the action required including whether any additional support is needed.

For Nursery and Pre-Prep pupils, the School coordinates with health visitors and other relevant external professionals where appropriate. Nursery and Pre-Prep use a range of formal and informal assessment methods to identify new and emerging needs, working closely with parents and carers.

The School aims to identify pupils with learning difficulties as early as possible. Pupils in the Pre-Prep above the age of 4 will be screened using the Lucid Rapid assessment on entry to the school and again during the Autumn Term of PP1. In the Prep School, each pupil will be screened using Lucid Rapid on entry, Lower First and again in Lower Third. In the Senior School, each pupil will be screened in Fourth Form using Lucid Exact, Lucid Recall and DASH. Additional new pupils to the School will be screened on a needs-basis. Following screening, pupils with scores of below 90 (low-average or below) will be further assessed by the Learning Development team. We have well-established identification procedures throughout the School and regular monitoring ensures that any pupil who needs help will be offered it. All staff are responsible for ensuring that the Head of Learning Development is made aware of pupils with any learning disabilities or barriers to learning.

The School may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child (such as by an educational psychologist or a medical professional), the cost of which will be borne by the parents. Where parents wish to request a formal assessment from outside of school, they must ensure the School is given copies of all advice and reports received.

If there are significant emerging concerns, or identified SEN or disability, the School will take action to put appropriate special educational provision in place taking into account any advice from specialists. Parents should be consulted and kept informed of any action taken to help their child, and of the outcome of this action. Due weight will also be given to a pupil's wishes (according to their age, maturity and capability).

Arrangements for special educational provision and support are made through the School's graduated approach to SEN support as recommended by the Send Code of Practice (2015):

Assess - Plan - Do - Review

Where progress is less than expected, the first response of the teacher should be high quality targeted teaching at their areas of weakness. If progress continues to be less than expected, evidence is gathered (including the views of the pupil and their parents) and the Head of Learning Development will assess whether the child has

SEN and will work alongside the teacher to offer additional strategies. The School will not delay in putting in place extra teaching or other rigorous interventions designed to secure better progress, where required. The pupil's response to such support can help identify their particular needs.

The stages for special educational provision and support used by the School are 'LD Monitored', 'LD Lessons' and 'EHC plan'.

1. LD Monitored:

If a pupil's progress continues to be less than expected and if an Academic/Pastoral Action Plan has not brought the expected results, the pupil is flagged on ISAMS as 'LD Monitoring'. Pupils at this stage:

- may appear on the LD Register temporarily
- may or may not have SEN
- may or may not have Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
- may have had their SpLD identified by an Educational Psychologist or by a specialist assessor
- must have their needs carefully monitored by the subject teacher / tutor / allocated Learning Development teacher

Pupils at this stage should continue to have their needs met through adaptive teaching in the classroom. The school is acting collectively to meet the individual needs of pupils. The subject teacher as well as the tutor will monitor progress and refer the child back to the allocated Learning Development teacher if there are any concerns.

2. LD Lessons:

If a pupil fails to make satisfactory progress at the LD Monitoring stage, parents are advised that a programme of specialist teaching in the form of Learning Development lessons may be advisable to support their child's needs. The pupil is flagged on ISAMS as 'LD Lessons'.

Learning Development lessons are usually individual but may be small group if considered appropriate. These lessons are embedded in a pupil's timetable or can be arranged before school or, in the case of Senior School pupils, after school. Planned programmes of work are delivered or supervised by specialist teachers to meet the individual's needs, based on the results of diagnostic tests, teacher consultation and parental requests. Detailed records are kept. Parents are kept updated by means of the academic reporting structure and by online or face-to-face meetings at least once a year, with further additional contact as necessary. There is an additional charge for Learning Development lessons. Details of the cost are held by the Finance Department and published to parents annually.

Pupils at this stage:

- may or may not have SEN
- may or may not have Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
- may have had their SpLD identified by an Educational Psychologist or by a specialist assessor
- will have LD provision which is additional to that offered to their peers (LD lessons)
- will have an Information Sheet
- must have their needs and progress carefully monitored by the subject teacher / tutor / allocated Learning Development teacher

At this stage the School continues to act collectively by offering adaptive teaching in the classroom but also provides additional input from specialist staff in the form of Learning Development lessons.

3. Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

The School assesses each pupil's needs to ensure it can deliver the required provision. We actively cooperate with local authorities in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice. However, the School is generally not able to offer the level of provision required to meet the needs of pupils with an EHC plan, except in exceptional circumstances. In addition, we do not employ teaching assistants in the classroom to work with named pupils, except in exceptional circumstances. Our Admissions Policy makes it clear that no part of the School will admit any pupil if it believes it cannot adequately meet their educational needs.

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 is able to cater for.

6. Reasonable Adjustments and Auxiliary Aids

The School is committed to treating all pupils fairly. In light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the School will seek to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils who are not disabled.

The School will do this by making reasonable adjustments and, where appropriate, by providing auxiliary aids and services.

Reasonable adjustments may include changes to policies, criteria and practices (i.e. the way the School does things), or adjustments to arrangements and procedures in order to improve access for disabled pupils.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include:

- Making appropriate arrangements for a child with restricted mobility to attend an interview.
- Allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance examination.
- Providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment.
- Arranging the timetable, where practicable, to allow a pupil to attend an accessible classroom.
- Arranging accessible sports activities, where practicable.

In addition, the School may provide auxiliary aids and services. These are equipment, support, or assistance provided to a pupil to reduce or remove barriers to learning and participation.

There is no fixed definition of an auxiliary aid or service. In general, anything which helps, aids or provides assistance to a disabled pupil or applicant may be considered an auxiliary aid or service.

Examples may include:

- Note-taking support.
- The provision of an electronic reader.
- Hearing loop systems for pupils who use hearing aids.

- Adapted technology, such as large-screen computers.

The School will consider reasonable adjustments and auxiliary aids on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the needs of the pupil and what is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances.

The School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or applicants. Similarly, the School is not required to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with its provision of education and services.

School staff seek to understand the needs of each and every pupil and to ensure that all pupils have the chance to make good progress according to their ability. In practice, making reasonable adjustments can be a daily, iterative process. Adjustments can often be made by staff at short notice or no notice, for example, taking steps to ensure that a child has understood instructions, or that they are seated where they are able to hear and concentrate.

Once any required adjustments have been identified, the School will consider whether they are reasonable adjustments for the School to make by reference to the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the pupil;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- the School's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other pupils (and potential pupils).

The School will discuss the proposed adjustments with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, the Head of Learning Development, and (with the parents' consent) any appropriate third party, which may include, for example, a medical practitioner or educational psychologist. The School will communicate any decision regarding reasonable adjustments with parents and the child (where appropriate).

Parents can assist the School in this process by ensuring that staff are informed of their child's needs, making available any relevant reports, assessments and information and working with the School if appropriate to implement any measures or reinforce any strategies put in place.

Where, despite reasonable adjustments to assist a child's access to educational provision and the other benefits, facilities and services the School provides, a disabled pupil is evidently still at a substantial disadvantage, the School may draw this to the attention of the parents and make recommendations. This might include, for example, seeking further external professional advice, seeking a statutory assessment, additional support funded by the parents or other external sources.

If the parents feel that there are further particular adjustments the School could make, parents may email or speak with their child's form tutor, in the first instance, or the Head of Learning Development. Parents should provide copies of any medical or specialist reports as evidence of the adjustments required.

7. Recording Progress of Pupils with SEND

A pupil is entered on to the Learning Development Register following discussion with the Common Room and parents. A written record of this initial contact is made and the pupil is flagged in ISAMS as 'LD Monitoring' or 'LD Lesson'. The School will record the progress of and any support for pupils with significant learning difficulties or disabilities by way of a Pupil Information Sheet and a Lesson Record / Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

Pupil Information Sheets are drawn up in consultation with the Common Room, the Head of Learning Development, the pupil and their parents. These information sheets outline the particular needs of an individual pupil and the practical strategies to help them in the classroom. They are stored on the Common Room Shared Google Drive and all teachers have access to these. Pupil Information Sheets are updated annually or amended accordingly if the circumstances of the pupil change. Teachers are alerted when mid-year changes are made.

Lesson Records / Individual Learning Plans are stored on the Common Room Shared Google Drive and are accessed by all members of the Learning Development department. These records outline the pupil's areas of need and the planned programmes of work. These are reviewed termly.

The School will measure the overall progress of pupils with SEND at the end of the various key stages to see how much progress they make compared with that of their peers.

8. Further Aspects Relating to SEND Provision

Admissions

The School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs, **provided we can offer them any support that they require and cater for any additional need**s **and that our site can accommodate them**. We aim to ensure that all our pupils, including those with disabilities and/or special educational needs, are provided with a safe and inclusive environment in which to learn.

Where a prospective pupil has any disability, special educational need or formal diagnosis, parents must provide the School with written details and relevant reports on application. If this information is not shared before a place is offered, the School has the right to review the offer or placement to ensure the pupil's needs can still be met accordingly. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, the School may take such advice and require such assessments e.g., Educational Psychologist's report, and recommendations as it regards as appropriate.

Where a prospective pupil is disabled, the School will discuss with parents (and their child's medical advisers, if appropriate) the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if they become a pupil at the School, to ensure that the prospective pupil is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a pupil who is not disadvantaged because of a disability.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School. The School will inform the parents of its decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments it will make or reasons why a place is not to be offered.

The School's Admissions Policy is available on the School's website. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and details how the School supports those applicants with SEN and/or a disability.

Withdrawal

If, in our opinion, the School is unable to meet a child's needs or, in the case of a child with an EHC Plan, we are unable to meet the provisions of the Plan, we reserve the right, following consultation with parents, to request or require the withdrawal of a pupil from the School. In these circumstances the School will support the parents in finding an alternative placement which will meet the child's needs. Any decision to request withdrawal or require the removal of a pupil will be made as a last resort and in line with the terms of the parent contract.

Fees in lieu of notice will not be chargeable in these circumstances.

Entitlements to additional time and/or support in external exams

Children who have been diagnosed as having SEN or a disability may be entitled to support, such as additional time and/or modified provision, to complete external assessments. Exam access arrangements allow examination candidates with special educational needs and disabilities to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. These are strictly regulated by the JCQ on behalf of the examination boards, under the remit of Ofqual, and are administered and applied by the School in accordance with the published guidance and requirements.

The School will ensure that all pupils with potential or diagnosed learning difficulties are assessed for external exam access arrangements from the start of Lower Fifth onwards. The assessment is carried out in school by an appointed qualified assessor and is charged at an additional cost. Details of the cost are held by the Finance Department. Pupils who qualify for additional time and/or support in external assessments are recorded on the Learning Development Register at either the 'LD Monitored' or 'LD Lessons' stage depending on whether they are having separate support lessons. The access arrangements list is made available to staff and is updated regularly.

JCQ agreed exam access arrangements will be applied to mock exams and end of year exams. Where they can be reasonably achieved, they will also apply to classroom-based tests and assessments.

Parents should speak with the Head of Learning Development with regard to any application for additional support as soon as reasonably practicable. The Head of Learning Development will process applications for appropriate examination access**.**

Bullying and behavioural issues

All pupils are taught that any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Pupils are taught through the curriculum, Learning for Life, Collective Worship and House meetings the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with kindness, courtesy and consideration. The School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

The School recognises that disabled pupils or those with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to being bullied. The School's Anti-Bullying Policy makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

The School also recognises that bullying (or other matters such as bereavement) can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN but where there are concerns, an assessment may be undertaken to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues.

The School recognises that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can therefore exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate. The School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy will be followed if there are any safeguarding concerns relating to a child.

9. Three-year accessibility plan

In line with its duty under the Equality Act 2010 the School's three-year Accessibility Plan sets out how the School will:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

A copy of the School's Accessibility Plan is available on the School's website.

10. Parental Responsibility

To ensure that parents and pupils can be given the most appropriate advice and support, it is important that all relevant information and documentation about any possible special educational need and any history of learning support is shared with the School. Parents must provide the Head of Learning Development with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding the child's disability or provide consent for the School to obtain that information. Following the offer of a place, if it is discovered that the School has not received full disclosure of information relating to a child's disability, or where a disability is subsequently diagnosed and the School is not able to make reasonable adjustments, the School may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil. Parents agree to do this when completing the registration form and accepting the terms and conditions of the parent contract.

11. Concerns

The School will listen to any concerns expressed by parents about their child's development and any concerns raised by children themselves. Parents must notify their child's form teacher or Head of Learning Development if their child's progress or behaviour gives cause for concern.

We hope that any difficulty or concern can be sensitively and efficiently handled and resolved informally before it reaches the formal complaints stage. That said, the School's Complaints Procedure (which applies equally in the EYFS setting) is on our website and sets out how parents can raise a formal complaint and how the School will handle it. We will also send parents a copy of the Complaints Procedure on request from the School Office.

12 Useful Policies

- Word Processing Policy
- Blended Learning Policy