



## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS / LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY**

Changes to the arrangements for Special Educational Needs came into force in September 2014 with the implementation of provisions from the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2014 (SEND Code 2014). Whitgift aims to duly observe the new SEND Code as it applies to this school.

Whitgift School's SEN 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 or person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him.

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 SENCo, Heads of Upper and Lower School, 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 a statement of need/EHC Plan, the school will ensure the objectives within it are met and reviewed at least annually.

### **Admission arrangements:**

Students with SEN 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.

### **Arrangements for Co-ordinating provision for Students with SEN:**

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

All staff are responsible for supporting students with SEN 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 at School Action (monitoring) level.

The SENCo/Head of Learning Support is responsible for co-ordinating assessment and provision at SEN support level and beyond.

The SENCo 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 SENCo, 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/ SENCo holding the Hornsby Diploma in SpLD and National Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators.

kir@whitgift.co.uk, 02086889222 ext 2217

Mrs Glenin – HLTA – OCR Diploma in SpLD

Mrs Hope - HLTA – OCR Diploma in SpLD, CPCAB Level 2 Counselling

Mr Powell – HLTA

Mr Vieira – HLTA

Miss Colman – HLTA

Miss Alexander - HLTA

## **Identification of SEN**

The SENCo, Head of Admissions and/or Head of Lower School will liaise with feeder schools where students have previously been identified as having SEN. During the first term at Whitgift, students with or without identified SEN are observed by the Head of Year, Subject Teachers and the Learning Support 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.

The School will continue to monitor student progress in order to identify any SEN 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 SENCo.

Concerns expressed by parents will be acknowledged by the Head of Year and SENCo. The SENCo will then decide whether an assessment is required. 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.**

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

Name, tutor group, stage on the SEND Code of Practice (Sept 2014), need type, description and provision if applicable.

**SA- (MONITORING)** – 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.

**SEN Support-** 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 pupils of the same age. They are supported by their class teacher as well the Learning Support Department.

**Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)/ Statement (ST)** – the student has an EHCP or a statement of need.

## **Assessment of and Provision for SEN**

**We operate a graduated approach, in line with the SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 guidance (SEN 2014).**

When a concern is expressed, the SENCo 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

- 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 SENCo with regard to students presenting ongoing difficulties or underachievement.

The Head of Learning Support/ SENCo 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 Parent Evenings and through informal communication by phone. Annual reviews are held for those students with a Statement or those with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

## **Special Arrangements**

A Special Arrangement can be used for students whose Special Educational Needs are such that their performance may be impaired in assessment situations. Some examples of the type of Special 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 or submission of a transcript where the student's writing may be illegible, specially adapted papers (enlarged script, Braille etc) **or text to speech, speech to text technology.**

Any application for Special Arrangements will require supporting evidence/information. A learning difficulty in itself does not justify a Special 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 a Special 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 Special 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 **whom MUST seek advice from the school in order to complete any assessment.** **The school must collate ongoing evidence on need to compliment any assessment.**

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

HODs and HOYs may refer students to the SENCo for assessment for Special 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 Special Arrangements should have the opportunity to pilot them prior to the public examinations. **JCO recommend that most Access Arrangements should be in place at the beginning of the course being followed.**

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

## **Professional development**

The SENCo is a member of the Independent Schools SENCo 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 keep 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 Learning Support Co-ordinator: June 2016

Next review: June 2017