

## **POLICY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)**

### **Principles**

- The starting point of the school's statement of Aims and Ethos is that 'our overriding aim is to enable all of our students, throughout the age and ability range, to achieve to the best of their potential, both academically and personally'. We believe that all of our students should be given equal opportunities to develop their talents and abilities to their full potential, and this applies every bit as much to those who may have a learning difficulty or a disability as it does to everyone else.
- We believe that achieving these aims is a collective responsibility shared by all staff. Being aware of the special educational needs and/or disabilities that some of our students may have, and addressing these in a positive and effective way, rests on a whole-school approach in which teaching staff take responsibility for meeting the individual needs of all students through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to meet the individual needs of students.
- Teaching staff at d'Overbroeck's are committed to, and experienced in, providing a classroom environment which enhances the learning opportunities of all students.
- We take the view that young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities often have a uniquely valuable perspective on their own needs. Students are encouraged to contribute to the assessment of their needs and of the techniques and approaches that they would find most helpful.
- We are also keen to involve parents in the process, to share information with them and to take into account their views, suggestions and feedback.
- As a school, we encourage students to aim high and are proud of the fact that our track record with those of our students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been consistently strong over many years. Many have achieved considerable academic success; and the feedback from the students and their parents has been that they have found the staff helpful and supportive, and that they have gained the self-belief, the study skills, the enjoyment of academic work and the qualifications necessary to enable them to progress to the next stage of their lives, be it in higher education or a more vocational pathway.
- It is the school's current policy not to charge additional fees for learning support lessons whether these take the form of Curriculum Support (in Years 7-8), Study Support (in Years 9-11) or Independent Learning Skills workshops (in the Sixth Form). Where the school proposes to charge for any form of additional support, this will be subject to the school complying with its equality obligations.

## **Definitions**

In keeping with the definition given in the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, January 2015) students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty and/or disability which requires special education provision to be made for them, namely provision different from, or additional to, that normally available to students of the same age or at the same stage of education.

Learning difficulties are defined as constraints or barriers which prevent access to the curriculum. A student has a learning difficulty or disability if:

- S/he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students in the same age group both at this school and nationally, or
- S/he has a disability which prevents or hinders her/him from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

A student will be considered disabled if s/he has a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her or his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

The policy also encompasses those with special educational needs and/or disabilities such as medical problems, emotional problems and includes students identified as being gifted and talented.

## **Admissions**

d'Overbroeck's is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of, for example, a candidate's gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

We welcome students with special educational needs provided that we are satisfied that we can offer them the support they need – and, of course, that they meet our normal academic entrance criteria. We will usually arrange an interview and assessment in order to decide whether we can provide the required support and will need to see any relevant documentation (for example educational psychologists' reports or EHC) prior to such interview and assessment.

We are happy to welcome students irrespective of any disabilities. We will do all that is reasonable to comply with the Equality Act 2010 so that we may accommodate the needs of disabled applicants for which, with reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately. We will be guided by the principles set out in our Disability Inclusion Policy wherever these are relevant.

Applications from students with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, disordered eating or self-harm will be considered provided that we are satisfied that the student is well enough to be in school; that we are able to offer both the kind and amount of support (including in light of the school's equality obligations) we believe the student would need in all aspects of school life, including boarding where relevant; that the student is receiving sufficient and appropriate support outside of school where we believe this to be necessary; and, of course, provided that s/he meets our normal academic entrance requirements.

We may also request further information, such as a medical certificate, and any associated correspondence from the student's current school that we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The processes set out in this policy are designed to:

- Aid the identification, assessment and provision for any students with SEND through baseline testing, internal assessment and pastoral care.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of these needs so they can allow for them in their teaching.
- Ensure that the attainment of students with SEND fully match their potential.
- Promote the most effective approach to learning in the classroom and to the physical nature of the learning environment.
- Provide additional support as appropriate for those students who need it so that all students have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- Value and encourage students by ensuring that they have opportunities to develop and feel that their skills and qualities are recognised and supported.
- Celebrate success and share good practice by recognising and valuing a diverse range of achievements in addition to conventional academic success.
- Ensure that the school liaises with parents about any learning difficulties and staff maintain an open dialogue and offer clear and well-informed advice over any concerns.
- Ensure that the school provides suitably for any students with an EHC plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- Ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Work in partnership with parents and students to enable them to make an active contribution to the student's education.

## **Identification and assessment**

- On application to the school, parents are required to disclose any history of recognised learning difficulties and/or disabilities and any formal assessment that may already have taken place. The Enrolment Form contains a section where such information is formally requested. If not already submitted, copies of educational psychologist reports and any statements of special educational needs / EHC plans must be appended to the Enrolment Form.
- All students in Years 7 and 8 are given standardised reading, spelling and reading comprehension tests soon after they join the school. The differences between students' spelling and reading ages and their chronological age are noted. The Head of Curriculum Support for Years 7-11, who marks this test, identifies those students who may require additional support. MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) and SOSCA (Secondary On Screen Curriculum Assessment) information can also help with such identification.
- Evidence of a suspected learning difficulty not previously identified may come to light during a student's time at d'Overbroeck's. Where this is the case, it will be discussed with parents and the student and we may recommend that a full assessment be carried out by a clinical/educational psychologist who has been approved by us. The assessment should help inform the school as to what support could be put in place for the student.

## **Safeguarding and children with special educational needs and disabilities**

It is recognised, in line with KCSIE (September 2016), that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can present additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: barriers to communication; assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration; children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without necessarily showing outward signs. It is important, therefore, to be particularly sensitive and alert to these issues when considering any aspect of the welfare and safety of these children.

The school's Anti-bullying policy makes clear that bullying behavior of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously. Where staff have any safeguarding concerns, the school's safeguarding procedures must be followed. These are set out in detail in the school's policy on Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children.

## **Supporting students with medical conditions**

The school recognises that students with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. In the case of a student with a disability, the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Some students may also have SEND and may have a statement / EHC plan, which brings together health and social care needs as well as their special educational provision.

The school will support students with medical needs in the light of its own policy and of relevant DfE guidance.

## **From principles to practice – meeting the needs of students with SEND**

### **(I) Years 7-11**

#### **Responsibility**

Although effective provision requires the active involvement of all staff, the key individual in developing, implementing and monitoring Curriculum Support provision in Years 7-11 is the Head of Curriculum Support.

#### **Communication of SEND information**

Each academic year starts with a staff meeting at which individual students, their needs, and how best to respond to them is a major topic of discussion. The provision and review of IEPs and pre-term staff meeting discussions also help to disseminate current information and practice for SEND students through the year.

#### **Provision**

It is expected that most students' needs will be met within the classroom through the provision of planned and differentiated learning opportunities which are carefully matched to the needs of the individual child. However, a small number of students may have needs which are additional to/different from the majority of their peers. These should continue to be addressed, wherever possible, in the classroom setting through a graduated response with subject teachers maintaining

day-to-day responsibility for the design and delivery of the curriculum but with increasing levels of involvement from the Head of Curriculum Support as appropriate.

- In brief, the school can offer a graduated, personalised approach to intervention, but the majority of provision is within the classroom.
- Once identified and assessed as having a learning support need, students in Years 7-11 may be furnished with an IEP (Individual Education Plan), which is distributed to all staff to aid them with their planning and provision of differentiated learning opportunities. Appropriate tuition is offered in Years 7-8; students in Years 9-11 have the option of continued Study Support if they need it.
- It is vital that such support is not seen as something that happens for a session or two a week in the LS department – all staff need to be aware of how to provide a holistic response to an individual's needs within the normal classroom environment. IEPs are central to this provision.
- The Head of Curriculum Support circulates a list of students with SEND at the start of each year detailing students' individual needs and best practice in answering those needs.
- IEPs are updated each year so that students can continue to have the appropriate curriculum support.
- Students' reading and spelling ages are tested each year.
- Any medical or emotional difficulties, whether short or long term, will be supported according to need. It is likely that the pastoral staff may be involved.
- There may be instances where, after consultation with parents, help is sought from outside agencies. Parents and students will be consulted where external agencies are likely to be involved.
- The Head of Curriculum Support will monitor and review any such support.

### **Individual Education Plans**

Each child in receipt of curriculum support in the Lower School has an IEP. An IEP is:

- a 'live, working document' for all staff, parents and the student with special educational needs which is updated each year;
- a planning, teaching and reviewing tool;
- a plan for teaching and learning that highlights the 'additional to' and 'different from' activities and provision;
- a document that is understood and accessible to all involved, including the student and parents / carers.

### **Monitoring student outcomes**

Effective provision requires effective monitoring of the progress made by each student. This is carried out through:

- progress against IEP targets ;
- progress against statement objectives at annual review;

- subject staff recording reporting and assessment;
- summative subject assessment;
- student self-assessment;
- parental feedback;
- individual provision mapping;
- individual assessments;
- behaviour, emotional, and social patterns;
- external agency assessments and reports.

For the majority of students with SEND the IEP will be central to any assessment of progress. The progress of students with a Statement of Special Educational Need / EHC plan is monitored through the Annual Review and throughout the year to ensure the student is making progress and to help identify any additional or different support that may be needed.

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## **(II) The Sixth Form**

### **Communication of SEND information**

All SEND information received as part of the enrolment process is communicated by Registry to the Head of Independent Learning.

Shortly before the start of the academic year, the Head of Independent Learning is responsible for producing a summary of all SEND information on students. This information is passed to the student's Director of Studies (DoS) and to the relevant heads of department (HoD) and subject teachers. Strategies are discussed and agreed with each of the students concerned in one-to-one meetings which normally take place in the first fortnight or so of the academic year.

New or updated SEND information that may come to light after the start of the academic year is communicated by the Head of Independent Learning to DoS, HoDs and subject teachers as promptly as possible.

### **Additional support where needed - the Independent Learning Skills workshops**

By the time they have reached the Sixth Form, students with SEND are likely to have received a significant amount of learning support over a number of years. Our small classes and the emphasis that we place on teaching to every student in the class mean that, in the majority of cases, we are able to cater for the needs of Sixth Form students with a learning difficulty in normal classes without the need for additional learning support sessions.

However, where we feel a student would benefit from such support, and this applies whether or not the student has been identified as having a specific SEND issue, the student will have the opportunity to attend the Independent Learning Skills workshops. These sessions, which currently run in four different timetable slots, are designed to help students to identify the learning skills and techniques that work most effectively for them and to develop the ability to use these independently to aid their own learning at A level, at university and in their working lives beyond that.

As the title suggests, the aim of these sessions is to enable students to become effective independent learners – rather than to breed a dependence on on-going learning support. For this reason, a student will usually attend the ILS workshops for a period of a few weeks, though they are always free to return for a further period at a later stage if they need to.

Directors of Studies, usually following discussion with the relevant Head(s) of Department, are responsible for recommending attendance at the ILS workshops for those of their students who they think would benefit from them.

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## **Provision in examinations**

### **(i) Internal examinations**

Students with SEND in any year group will generally receive the same consideration in internal examinations as they would in a public examination. This could mean the allocation of extra time, the use of a laptop or the provision of a scribe and/or reader as appropriate.

### **(ii) Special arrangements in public examinations**

Applications for special arrangements in public examinations are made by the school's Examinations Officer as early as possible in the academic year and well in advance of the deadline set by the examination boards.

In applying for such arrangements the school will submit a Form 8 completed by the school, the SENCO / Head of Independent Learning and an educational psychologist who has been approved by the school, together with any relevant documentary evidence from a professional consultant.

Special arrangements commonly include additional time allowances, separate invigilation, rest breaks or the use of a scribe and/or a reader. The use of technical support, e.g. a laptop, is approved within the school provided it can be demonstrated that this is a student's usual way of working.

Parents are asked to discuss such arrangements with the appropriate members of staff well in advance of the start of the examination session to ensure that there is plenty of time for the necessary process to be gone through.

Please note that the school may make an additional charge for special arrangements in public examinations. Please see the Statement of Fees on the school's website for more detail.

## **Related policies**

- Admissions Policy
- Disability Inclusion Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy – Students
- Curriculum Policy
- Policy for Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children
- Anti-bullying Policy

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