

## **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.
- 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.
- 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 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 and study support (in Years 7-11) 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.

### **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 matches 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.

### **Admissions**

d'Overbroeck's is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of 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 EHCP) 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) that 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, eg a medical certificate, and any associated correspondence from the student's current school that we consider necessary to make a fair assessment.

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

It is recognised, in line with KCSIE (September 2019), 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 behaviour 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.

### **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.

(i) Years 7-11

In Years 7-11, most students who have additional needs are identified prior to arriving with us. Our vigilant teaching and pastoral staff ensure that any concerns are reported quickly. However we have also introduced a screening process in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

*“Schools should assess each pupil’s current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate.”*

For Years 7-11 we use Lucid Exact. This system allows us to screen for learning difficulties and provide greater depth of information about any individual’s learning profile. This tool is used to provide teachers with excellent information about all of their students; both with diagnosed SEND and without. We will also use it to identify students with special educational needs who may have slipped through the net at their previous school. Lucid Exact provides standardised scores for word recognition, reading comprehension accuracy, reading speed, spelling, writing speed and typing speed to screen for any underlying difficulties.

For students who started the school in 2018 or earlier and have NOT yet been identified as having additional needs, teachers and Pastoral Heads refer concerns to the SENCo. Regular dialogue with Heads of Department highlights any concerns about the progress and attainment of individuals. Individuals are monitored using the school reporting system and assessment cycle. Where there are concerns about an individual the SENCo will administer Lucid Exact screening. The results are evaluated alongside other information, for example the Middle Years Information System (MidYIS) and teacher feedback. Where an underlying difficulty is suspected this will be discussed with parents along with proposed next steps. This could take the form of school support, such as participation in a booster group, or a referral to another professional, such as an Educational Psychologist.

From 2019, all students who start the school (in any year group) will do the Lucid Exact screening within their first term at the school. For most students this will be in September-October but for students starting at the school later in the year it will take place before the next break.

All assessments and investigation are solely for the purpose of understanding the individual. The results will be used only for the benefit of the student. We may decide to:

- monitor the student for a period of time;
- create a Teaching and Learning Profile for the student that will be shared with all of his/her teachers;
- add the student to SEN Register;
- consider access arrangements for exams;
- create an Individual Learning Plan;
- refer the student to a specialist assessor or an Educational Psychologist;
- recommend an adjusted pathway, timetable or intervention for the student.

(ii) Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form, 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. A student can also have a shorter assessment to identify eligibility for exam access arrangements. This can be performed in school by an in house assessor.

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

### (i) Years 7-11

The individual responsible for Special Educational Needs in Years 7-11 is the SEND and Well-being Co-Ordinator who is also the Head of Department for Student Support.

The wording of the SEN Code of Practice (2015) encourages an emphasis on excellent teaching first and foremost, along with knowledge and understanding of the students to strategically plan to drive progress for individuals; this is a deliberate shift towards SEND being a whole school agenda and “every teacher’s responsibility”. (Cheminais, 2014). It is therefore expected that “SENCOs are likely to need to work more closely with class and subject teachers than ever before.” (Robertson, 2012.)

- **Communication of SEND information**

All students who are on the SEND Register have a Teaching and Learning Profile which is available to all teaching staff. These profiles outline barriers to learning, access arrangements, strategies, strengths and aims of these students. They also act as a record of support throughout the student’s time with us.

They are distributed at the start of the academic year and updated at least once a year in line with Parents Evening, where input is encouraged from the student and their parents. The updated profiles are then available on the P-Drive. In addition, year group overviews with two essential strategies for the term are shared with teaching staff at the beginning of each new term. These strategies are carefully chosen to tie in with short-term individual aims or development areas for each student.

Each week a Student Support bulletin is shared with all staff at Leckford to share new information about our students that needs to be communicated outside of the Profile review process.

Teachers are encouraged to consult with the Student Support team to discuss the challenges that they face within their subject and think strategically about their curriculum and how to make it accessible for students with SEND.

- **Provision**

Quality First Teaching is high quality, inclusive teaching that ensures that planning and implementation meets the needs of all pupils, and builds in high expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND. It is about the day-to-day interactions that take place in the classroom and the different pedagogical approaches teachers use to engage and motivate learners which ensure good pupil progress.

*High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. SEND Code of Practice, p.99*

The majority of needs are met successfully within the normal classroom environment. We advocate and achieve inclusive schooling rather than reverting to a model of segregation (removing children with SEND from their peers to be taught separately). The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that “making higher quality teaching normally available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require...additional provision.” This is otherwise referred to as ‘Quality First Teaching.’ QFT will always be our first ‘intervention’ for any student with an additional need. The ethos and approach of d’Overbroeck’s is perfectly suited to accommodating individuals needs within the

classroom; most needs are met simply by the personal approach, caring atmosphere and our knowledge of each individual child.

In addition, we offer a small number of places in the following interventions / provision:

- 1:1 Literacy lessons with a Specific Learning Difficulties Teacher (Years 7-8; occasionally for new starters in Year 9)
- 1:1 Maths lessons with a Specific Learning Difficulties Teacher
- English booster groups (Year 7-9)
- MFL Language Support Pathway (Year 8)
- Supported Study Sessions (Years 9-11)

With the exception of the 1:1 lessons, these interventions / provisions take place during the normal subject timetable so that students do not miss valuable lesson content; English booster groups take place during English lessons, MFL Language Support takes place during language lessons and Support Study Sessions take place when it has been recommended and agreed with parents that a student takes one less subject to allow for these sessions within their timetable.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that *“subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:*

- *is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline*
- *fails to match or better the child’s prevision rate of progress*
- *fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers*
- *widens the attainments gap”*

The Code of Practice 2015 also refers to *“progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life.”*

With this in mind, the Student Support department branches out to link up the support needed by both subject departments and the pastoral system whilst also liaising personally with students and parents who are concerned or who need some support.

As well as the dynamic support available for periods of difficulty, Student Support has a strategic and proactive approach. We know that early intervention means that difficulties are much more likely to be overcome. All students on the SEND Register are monitored in line with the school reporting and assessment cycles and given two opportunities each year to complete a Student Voice questionnaire. Relationships are key to the support that we offer and so we endeavour to maintain at all times an accessible, approachable space with staff to match.

We recognise that different ages and stages require different approaches and so we have developed the following strategic mission statements for each year group:

- Year 7: Everyone identified, everyone understood, everyone thriving
- Year 8: Succeeding, consolidating and building skills for the future
- Year 9: On track and preparing for Key Stage 4
- Year 10: Making progress, meeting potential
- Year 11: Calm, confident and ready for the next step

Support for social, emotional and mental health needs is accessible and available to all of our students. Our practice is proactive and preventative meaning that once in our care, cases rarely escalate even in students with complex disorders. The role of Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) Lead has been developed to focus almost entirely on well-being with an emphasis on early intervention and support. Using Individual Support Plans, pastoral check-ins and working alongside the school counsellors maintains robust and effective support.

(ii) Sixth Form

- **Communication of SEND information**

All SEND information received as part of the enrolment process is communicated by Admissions 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 made available to the DoS, relevant HoDs and teachers through the school Management Information System. 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 six 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. Students may also self-refer.

## **Provision in examinations**

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) require that a student has an assessment by a specialist assessor during their time in d'Overbroeck's. This may be an assessment by the in-house exam access assessor or an external educational psychologist. The Head of Independent Learning in Sixth Form or the Head of Curriculum Support at Years 7-11 will liaise with the parents regarding the needs of the particular student.

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

Students with SEND in any year group will 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. This enables the school to show that these arrangements are the student's normal way of working.

### **(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 in house exam access arrangements assessor or an external educational psychologist who has been approved by the school, together with any relevant documentary evidence from the professional consultant.

Special arrangements commonly include additional time allowances, the use of a scribe and/or a reader. The use of technical support, eg, a laptop, or separate invigilation or rest breaks are 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.

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## **Related policies**

- Admissions policy
- Disability inclusion policy and accessibility plan
- Equal opportunities policy for students
- Curriculum policy
- Policy for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Anti-bullying policy

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