



## ST MARY'S SCHOOL GERRARD'S CROSS

### POLICY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

**The School refers to all staff and students in St Mary's School which includes: the Early Years/Foundations Stage (EYFS), the Preparatory Department (Years 1-6), Senior House (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form.**

This Policy was reviewed in July 2018

This Policy is due to be reviewed in September 2019

#### **AIMS**

At St. Mary's School the Preparatory Department and Senior House, working in partnership, are committed to providing a quality education in a caring and stimulating environment. We value each student and encourage each one to reach her full potential within all aspects of school life. We have a whole school approach to meeting the educational needs of the girls. Students with individual learning needs have a high priority within all areas of the curriculum. The principles of our inclusion policy are based on equal access of opportunity for all students. Our aim is to meet the individual needs of all students within the school, in partnership with the young people themselves and their parents. We recognise that some will need special provision during their time at school. The type of provision will vary greatly between individuals.

#### **SEND**

The St Mary's SEND Policy has been written in response to the SEND Code of Practice: for 0-25 (2014) and the Children & Families Bill (2014), and outlines the School's practices and procedures. It also has regard to the Equality Act (2010), regarding discrimination and the definition of disability, the DCSF guidance on Every Child Matters (2003) and the SEN & Disabilities Green Paper (2011).

St. Mary's School recognises the DCSF definition of Special Educational Needs: 'Children have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.' (The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2014)

According to the Education Act (1996) a person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- Has a disability which either prevents or hinders him or her from making full use of the educational facilities available within the school;

- Is under school age and falls within the definition above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for the child

A student is not regarded as having learning difficulties solely because the language of the home is different from the language in which he/she will be taught.

The term 'learning difficulty' (also known as 'learning difference' or 'neurodiversity') can reflect a range of needs or diagnosed conditions, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, as well as processing difficulties or other learning issues resulting from emotional/behavioural issues, mental health or medical conditions. A student with a disability does not necessarily have SEND, but if they do, they will be able to access the same support as students with SEND.

## **SCHOOL OBJECTIVES**

St Mary's School undertakes to ensure the following:

- To recognise the need for an identification and assessment procedure, so that all students may receive an appropriately differentiated curriculum and support to suit their individual needs
- To follow the guidelines as set in The Code of Practice 2001/2014
- To build on a student's strengths, to use these to support her areas of need
- To promote an ethos of equal opportunity
- To ensure that each student has full access to the broad and balanced curriculum to which she is entitled
- To work in open collaboration with students, parents, teachers and other agencies
- That there is a designated governor for SEND, responsible for maintaining an understanding of the operation of the Learning Support department
- That appropriate assessment procedures will be used to consider the needs of those applying to the school
- To monitor the learning experience and progress of all students with learning differences, to ensure they are able to access the curriculum

## **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

'Provision for children with special needs is a matter for everyone in the setting.' (SEN Code of Practice 1:29).

The Head of Learning Support is responsible (in conjunction with the Head of the Preparatory Department and the Assistant Heads and assisted by other members of the Learning Support Team) for the implementation of the SEND Policy by:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the policy
- Organising and coordinating the additional Learning Support provision as appropriate for students with learning difference

- Maintaining the Learning Support Register and alerting staff when changes are made
- Working with the students to ensure they are accessing the curriculum
- Preparing and/or verifying Provision Passports as necessary
- Ensuring that IEPs are in place where necessary
- Supporting and advising staff in matters of differentiation
- Liaising and consulting with staff where there are concerns about students with individual needs
- Ensuring that students' needs are monitored, evaluated and reviewed through liaison with staff, students and parents as necessary
- Maintaining accurate records for the purposes of inspection
- Assessing students' needs and making access arrangements applications as necessary
- Liaising with the Examinations Officer to ensure compliance with JCQ Access Arrangements Regulations
- Attending relevant training to maintain professional standards
- Identifying/providing staff development opportunities when necessary on matters of SEND

All teachers at St Mary's are responsible for the educational provision for students with individual needs within their classes/subject groups by:

- Bringing to the attention of Heads of Department any cause for concerns about students experiencing difficulties in their subject, through Departmental meetings
- Liaising with the Head of Learning Support where there are any concerns about students with individual needs
- Regularly referring to the Learning Support Register held on the School system
- Reading and implementing the differentiation recommendations listed on the student's Provision Passport and/or IEP
- Referring to Access Arrangements documentation prior to administering an assessment
- Providing the Head of Learning Support with copies of students' completed examination scripts to act as evidence for Access Arrangements
- Completing Student Needs Audits as requested, as evidence for Access Arrangements
- Maintaining confidentiality in all SEND matters
- Attending development sessions when necessary in order to develop understanding of SEND issues

The Headmistress has overall responsibility for the admission and assessment procedures in the school. Together with the Governors, she will support the SEND Policy and ensure the school implements the objectives set out within it.

## **IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT**

St Mary's is committed to the early identification of SEND as it can:

- Minimise the overall impact of the difficulties encountered

- Support teachers to provide appropriate individualised learning opportunities
- Maximise the opportunities for the student to respond positively to support
- Empower the student in their learning
- Enable the student to become a more independent learner
- Allow the opportunity for further interventions to be considered

Referral can come from a variety of sources including:

- information at application (disclosure)
- transfer information from previous school
- student request
- subject teacher request
- parental request
- SLT request
- GP request
- Admissions testing
- Diagnostic testing

St Mary's takes a staged, partnership approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of its students.

Disclosure at application is encouraged, so that Access Arrangements can be put in place, where appropriate, for any admission assessments being administered. A meeting can be held prior to entry to discuss needs and support provision. Disclosure does not adversely affect the student's application; instead it enables the School to consider her more closely as an individual and determine whether our Learning Support Team can offer them the support they require.

Should a prospective student have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education & Healthcare Plan (EHCP), the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) in order to determine whether the identified provision as detailed in either of these documents can be honoured by the School. We will cooperate and liaise with the Local Authority as required in order to carry out statutory reviews. Should any additional services be required to meet the details of support specified in the Statement or EHCP, these will be charged to the Local Authority (if the LA is responsible for the fees and St Mary's is named in the plan), otherwise charges will be made to parents for services outside what is deemed to be 'reasonable adjustments' (no charge will be made for these).

Where a pre-existing need is identified (for instance, the student has previously been assessed), the information regarding the student's needs will be requested and considered. Further information will be gathered through conversations with the student and her parents, along with feedback from subject teachers where necessary. Support arrangements, where possible, will be agreed in partnership with student and parent.

Regardless of the age of the student, the school takes a graduated response to concerns surrounding a student's progress and the support provided to them. Should a concern be

raised by a member of staff, a parent or the student themselves in relation to the progress or achievement of a student, an investigation will take place.

The Head of Learning Support and the Head of the Preparatory Department meet regularly to discuss individual students and to plan for learning support as appropriate. Liaison occurs between class teachers and the Head of Preparatory Department and the Head of Learning Support, to review the support and redirect it as necessary; this happens on a termly basis. At KS2, tests in numeracy and literacy skills are administered in October. Where concerns are raised from these and other teacher assessments, the results are discussed with the Head of Learning Support. Where necessary, advice on differentiation strategies is given and a programme of support can be set up, if appropriate, on an individual or small group basis (this could be a short or long term initiative). Continuous assessment throughout the year means that support can be directed to students as necessary at the time.

In Senior House, information drawn from regular assessments and tests is used to identify areas of individual need as well as everyday class work. This data is used to help identify girls who might need teachers to differentiate for them in lessons and their progress will be monitored. Teachers will raise concerns to their Heads of Department through Departmental meetings and if difficulties persist they will then consult with the Head of Learning Support. This might initially include discussions between teachers and the Head of Learning Support, then subsequently the collecting of evidence through observations carried out in class by teachers or the Learning Support Team, reviews of and advice on strategies for differentiation. If appropriate, after a screening process and in consultation with parents, students will be further assessed by one of the Level 7 qualified Specialist Assessors in Learning Support; this will be billed to the parents directly. Information / feedback will be collected from subject teachers, plus the student will also have the opportunity to discuss matters with the Specialist Assessor. When the information has been fully collated and a diagnostic report has been written, it will be decided how the student's needs will be best met, where necessary. In exceptional circumstances, the school may seek advice from outside agencies. At present, priority for support will depend on the impact on the student's learning and the current stage of education (i.e. the proximity of public examinations in Senior House).

If a concern about a student is raised by parents, investigations will be carried out as explained. If there is found to be insufficient evidence from these investigations and assessments, parents retain the right to go ahead with an external assessment. However, St Mary's discourages the private commissioning of assessments with an Educational Psychologist. This is because the JCQ Regulations in relation to Access Arrangements states that such reports may not be used as evidence in applications for Access Arrangements. Should a parent provide a privately commissioned report as evidence for Access Arrangements, the School will not be able to accept it. Assessments must be carried out in School by one of the Level 7 qualified Specialist Assessors. It is at the discretion of the parents should they wish to consult with an Educational Psychologist, in such an instance the School can organise for an appropriate Educational Psychologist (with an established working relationship with the School) to visit the school at the parents' cost, although this report can not be accepted for Access Arrangements.

It is the responsibility of the Headmistress to decide whether or not a report may be accepted.

## **PROVISION**

Within our setting, we aim that every student with identified SEND will have a programme of support to meet their needs and the majority of students have their needs met by the School with the help of outside agencies and other specialists where necessary. This provision is “additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made for pupils in their year.” (Code of Practice 2014) St. Mary’s recognises that SEND is a continuum and thus the Learning Support provision required will vary between individuals as their needs will be different.

A member of the Learning Support Team will draw up a Provision Passport for students with a learning difference; this will detail recommendations for strategies that teachers can use to support the students to access the curriculum effectively. This will be sent through the internal communications system to all relevant staff and details will be stored on Schoolbase. Students receiving support or being monitored will go onto the Learning Support Register. Where necessary a member of the Learning Support Team will set targets with students and create an IEP.

A student’s individual needs may best be met in the class within curriculum subjects, through appropriate differentiation; all subject teachers are responsible for catering for these needs and for supporting and monitoring progress accordingly. Teaching staff are supported in their lesson planning by the Learning Support Team and the student’s Provision Passport and/or IEP. They are aware of individual needs and appropriate reasonable adjustments through the Learning Support Register, Schoolbase and the internal communications systems.

Sometimes it might be deemed appropriate to withdraw students in Years 7-9 from class (specifically a MFL) to attend instead additional learning support lessons. Such a withdrawal can only be authorised by the Headmistress.

Small group Learning Support is offered to students in Years 7-9 who have an identified specific learning difference. These are run as a lunchtime ‘club’, usually in half termly blocks and focus on specific study skills and multisensory learning strategies. Students can attend this session in addition to their learning support lesson, or if it is not appropriate to withdraw a student from a lesson, in place of a support lesson.

Students in Years 10 and 11 may be offered a one to one Learning Support lesson onto their timetable (usually during one of their study periods) in order to help them develop their study skills and learning habits in preparation for their public examinations. Students in Years 12 and 13 will be offered a one to one Learning Support lesson in exceptional circumstances, otherwise they are invited to attend the weekly Learning Support ‘Drop In Clinic’ on an ad-hoc basis, should they need extra help with something. Should students

have concerns at other times, they are able to contact a member of staff and make an arrangement to see them. Some students' needs may be met by a regular 'check-in' slot.

Should there be concerns about a student's social, emotional and/or mental health, the appropriate member of the Pastoral Team may become involved and work alongside the Head of Learning Support to ensure the appropriate support is put in place for the student. This takes many forms but could include involvement in specific clubs intended as a means of developing communication skills.

Access Arrangements for examinations will be applied for and put in place, in accordance with the JCQ Access Arrangements Regulations, where there is sufficient, appropriate evidence.

Students and parents of students with individual needs may decline the offer of Learning Support. These students will remain on the Learning Support Register and will be provided with a differentiated curriculum and will be monitored in the same way.

Where a student makes sufficient progress against their targets, they can exit their additional learning support lessons. This decision will be made in consultation with the Head of Learning Support, the student and her parents.

Regular consultation and liaison occurs between the Learning Support Team and relevant parties where a student is to transfer between Key Stages; particularly from Preparatory Department to Senior House and between Key Stage 3 and 4. Members of staff with responsibilities for the relevant Key Stages are involved in communications with Learning Support so as to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Where a student is transferring from a different school, Learning Support will seek to liaise closely with the feeder school, so as to support the transition of the student and ensure they are supported appropriately on arrival at St Mary's.

## **PARENTAL LIAISON & INVOLVEMENT**

Along with the student voice, the Parent voice is important to the process of ensuring the correct support for students with learning differences. St Mary's will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents about their daughter's learning difference. They will be sufficiently informed so as to be able to understand the actions the school is taking to support their daughters. This is particularly relevant during the assessment stages and support planning. When reviewing support, contributions from the parent(s) and the student will be sought and valued. Parents are involved through informal communication with teachers and through formal procedures such as Parents' Evenings and scheduled review meetings. Where necessary, parental consent will be sought in consultation with relevant health professionals and/or outside agencies.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

St Mary's School anticipates that its additional support provision will satisfactorily address the needs of the individual students with learning differences or disabilities beyond the standard curriculum offered. If a student or parent were to be dissatisfied with this provision, they are invited to follow the School's complaint procedure.

This policy is subject to annual review.

September 2018.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Examinations Policy

Complaints Policy

Admissions Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy