

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

CONTENTS

MONITORING AND REVIEW	1
AIMS.....	1
WIDER REFERENCES	2
RELATED INTERNAL POLICY.....	2
SEND.....	2
OBJECTIVES	2
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
Headmistress and Governors	3
Senior Leadership Team	3
LEAPS Team	3
Teachers.....	4
IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT.....	4
PROVISION	5
PARENTAL LIAISON & INVOLVEMENT	7
EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE PLAN	7

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Staff Responsible	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Reviewed by	SLT
Approved by	SLT
Frequency of Review	Annually
Date of Last Review	September 2024
Date of Next Review	September 2025

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 (Years 12-13).

The term 'parent' refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.

AIMS

At St Mary's School we are committed to providing a quality education in a caring and stimulating environment. We value each student and encourage everyone to reach her full potential within all aspects of school life. We have a whole school approach to meeting the educational needs of the students, which includes EYFS, Prep, Senior House and the Sixth Form. Students with individual learning needs have a high priority within all areas of the curriculum. 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.

WIDER REFERENCES

This policy operates within a wider national framework. It operates with due regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- SEND Code - SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years (2015)
- Children & Families Act (2014)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (2013)

RELATED INTERNAL POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Teaching, Marking and Assessment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Examinations Policy
- Bullying Policy
- Relationships and Sex education (RSE) Policy
- Behaviour Policy

SEND

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) defines the SEND categories as Communication/Interaction, Cognition & Learning, Social, Mental & Emotional Health, Sensory and/or Physical. St Mary's School recognises the Department for Education 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'* (SEND Code of Practice 2015). A student will receive SEND support if they require provision in addition to the curriculum and are not making expected progress. Special Educational Needs does not refer exclusively to students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plan).

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 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. At St Mary's School, the Learning Enhancement And Personalised Support (LEAPS) Team facilitate the integration of, and support for, learners with such additional needs.

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 develop learners' metacognitive skills in order for them to increase in confidence
- To promote an ethos of equal opportunity
- To ensure that each student has full access to the appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled

- To work in open collaboration with students, parents, teachers and other agencies
- That there is a designated governor for SEND
- 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

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

'Provision for children with special needs is a matter for everyone in the setting.' (SEN Code of Practice, 2015).

Headmistress and Governors

The Governors are responsible for determining school policy and provision for pupils with SEND. The Headmistress has overall responsibility for the admission and assessment procedures in the School and is responsible for all aspects of the School's SEND provision and keeping the Governing Body fully informed of the implementation of the School's policy in practice. Together with the Governors, she will support the SEND Policy and ensure the School implements the objectives set out within it.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for supporting the implementation of the SEND Policy through their capacity as line managers of academic and other departments.

LEAPS Team

The Head of Support for Learning (LEAPS), and the Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition, with the LEAPS Team, are responsible for the implementation of the SEND Policy by:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the policy
- Coordinating the additional Learning Support provision as appropriate for students with a learning difference or difficulty
- Maintaining the Learning Support Register
- Liaising with, and providing guidance to, teaching staff, such as on differentiation or adaptation strategies for individual students
- Liaising with parents and external agencies as necessary
- Working with the students to ensure they are accessing the curriculum
- Maintaining accurate records for the purposes of inspection and the smooth running of the department
- 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
- Monitoring progress of students on the SEND register

Learning support provision is also provided by members of the LEAPS team e.g. Specialist Teachers, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and the LEAPS Administrator.

Some interventions may also be delivered by other members of staff in the Prep Department and Senior House.

Teachers

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

- Developing and adapting plans and schemes of work to take proper account of the needs of all students, in terms of ability, need and aptitudes
- Delivering high quality teaching that is adaptive in order to meet the individual needs of the majority of learners
- 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 LEAPS Team where there are any concerns about students with individual needs
- Regularly referring to the LEAPS Register held on the School system
- Reading and implementing the support recommendations listed on the student's Provision Passport
- Referring to Access Arrangements documentation prior to administering an assessment
- Completing Student Needs Audits as requested, and providing other evidence for Access Arrangements
- Maintaining confidentiality in all SEND matters
- Attending development sessions when necessary in order to develop understanding of SEND issues

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

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

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 raising concerns at their Departmental meeting and a referral made to LEAPS
- Parental request
- Head of Year or other pastoral team member's request

Disclosure at application is encouraged, so that Access Arrangements can be put in place, where appropriate, for any admission assessments being administered. As outlined in the Admissions Policy, we advise parents of students with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before they sit the entrance examination so that we can make adequate provision for them for the examination in terms of, for example, extra time or other special arrangements.

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. Where the child is already known to an outside agency, such as health or social care, we work in a multi-agency way to ensure that we have the right information so that the best possible provision, intervention and support can be put in place as early as possible. Further information will be gathered through conversations with the student, her parents, and her previous/current school. 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. Teachers and support staff are skilled at identifying the needs of learners in our setting and understanding how their development should progress. 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, which may include:

- Review/discussion of the strategies in place
- Recommendations of new strategies for adaptive teaching
- Classroom observations
- Teacher questionnaire
- Learner interview/feedback

Where a concern is raised, some initial investigations will take place to gather feedback from teachers and the learner themselves. Where necessary, the LEAPS Team may arrange some initial assessment; then if appropriate, and in consultation with parents, the student can be referred for a full diagnostic assessment, to get a broader picture of their strengths and challenges by one of the school's associated Educational Psychologists.

If there is found to be insufficient evidence from the initial 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 external assessor. 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, it is the responsibility of the Headmistress to decide whether or not a report may be accepted. Assessments for Access Arrangements must be carried out in School by one of the Level 7 qualified Specialist Assessors.

PROVISION

Within our setting, we aim that every student with identified SEND will have appropriate support to meet their needs, 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 2015) St. Mary's recognises that SEND is a continuum and thus the LEAPS provision required will vary between individuals as their needs will be different.

Appropriate support may include:

- Support from a pastoral leader or mentor e.g. tutor or Head of Year
- Session(s) with a School Counsellor
- Detailed Provision Passport

- Individual/small group intervention delivered by our specialist SEND staff: Priority is given to students with EHC Plans and to students in exam years in Key Stage 4.
- Specialist equipment
- Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) or Teaching Assistants within classes
- Specialist teaching/support from outside agencies

In order to ensure that students with SEND are appropriately supported by their teachers in lessons, training opportunities are provided to staff to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required to differentiate appropriately. SEND training is given during the New Staff Induction process when staff join the School, and bespoke training from LEAPS or from outside agencies, specific to the student that they support, is provided where relevant.

A student's individual needs may best be met in the class within curriculum subjects, through appropriate, high quality, adaptive teaching: 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 LEAPS Team and, where appropriate, the student's Provision Passport which gives recommendations for appropriate strategies that can be used in their lessons. This is reviewed and updated at each Key Stage, unless an update is required earlier.

The Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition, and the Head of the Prep Department, regularly liaise regarding learners who may need support, and also liaise with class teachers, on a termly basis, to review the support in place and adjust or redirect it as necessary.

The Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition works closely with Head of Pre-Prep/teachers in EYFS to ensure regular monitoring and review of progress throughout the early years, in addition to the two specific points for formal assessment. A graduated response to needs takes the form of a four-part cycle: assess, plan, do, review (as above), with a focus on early help, if appropriate, as well as strategies and provision aimed at removing barriers. On occasion, it may be necessary to seek specialist help or request an EHC-Needs Assessment. Parents are involved throughout this process and kept fully informed.

It is sometimes deemed appropriate for learners to have a reduced curriculum, thus they are exempt from a specific subject/s. In those lessons they may receive additional learning support, work independently to complete tasks/work as directed or be given time for supervised private study. Prior to a learner being exempt from a subject, there must be consultation with the class teacher, Deputy Heads, LEAPS, and parents, before final authorisation can be sought from the Headmistress. Learners with additional needs will be supported during the GCSE Options process, in order to identify a suitable pathway for them at KS4.

Students in Years 10 and 11 may be offered (subject to timetabling/availability) a one-to-one or small-group LEAPS lesson in order to help them develop their study skills and learning habits in preparation for their public examinations. Learners in KS5 usually find that the small class sizes allows the opportunity for individualised subject-specific support from the class teacher. They may be offered a one to one LEAPS lesson in exceptional circumstances, Should students have concerns at other times, they are able to contact a member of subject staff and arrange to see them. Some students' needs may be met by a regular 'check-in' slot.

At St Mary's we value the use of Assistive Technology to support learning and to help learners develop independence. Depending on their needs, learners in Senior House and Prep Department may be recommended to use the online learning platforms Lexia (a specialist programme to support literacy development), Dynamo Maths (a specialist programme to support numeracy development)

and Century (providing overlearning opportunities for the core subjects). The learners should access the programme regularly to see the best outcomes and this will be facilitated in school wherever possible. Learners in Senior House may be given the opportunity to use the text-to-voice software 'TextHelp Read & Write', to support their reading and studying; they are encouraged to use it in the classroom as well as their independent study and where appropriate they will be granted access to this in examinations, should they qualify for a Reader as part of their Access Arrangements. There may be a charge for specific interventions; any charge is clearly communicated to parents.

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 LEAPS, for students in Years 9-13, and the Director of Learning Support: Prep & Transition, for students in Nursery Year 8, to ensure the appropriate support is put in place for the student.

Access Arrangements for examinations will be applied for and put in place, in accordance with the current JCQ Access Arrangements Regulations, where there is sufficient, appropriate evidence. Learners in Senior House will be assessed by one of the Level 7 qualified LEAPS Team at the start of each Key Stage. Access Arrangements assessments for KS4 are usually started when the learner is in Year 9.

Students and parents of students with individual needs may decline the offer of LEAPS support. These students will remain on the Learning Support Register.

Regular consultation and liaison occurs between the LEAPS Team and relevant parties where a student is to transfer between Key Stages so as to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Where a student is transferring from a different school, LEAPS 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.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE PLAN

Should a prospective student have an Education & Healthcare Plan (EHC plan), the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) in order to determine whether the identified provision, as detailed in the documentation, can be met 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 EHC plan, these will be charged to parents, who may then seek to be reimbursed by Local Authority via a personal budget award. This is notwithstanding any services deemed to be 'reasonable adjustments' and ordinarily available provision.

The School will record the support and progress of students with EHC plans for significant learning difficulties or disabilities and ensure that the students' needs are taken into account in relation to admissions, discipline, examinations and arrangements for school trips.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The SEND leads within the school will work alongside the Deputy Head to quality assure SEND provision and the successful implementation of the SEND policy. This will be done using a number of mechanisms such as:

- Learning Walks and lesson observations to look at the standard of SEND provision in the classroom
- Audits of staff knowledge and skills in relation to SEND, in order to inform future training needs
- Analysis of the progress of each student with SEND