

**This policy is currently
being reviewed and will
be available to parents
in the Autumn term
2024**



**ALDERLEY EDGE
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY POLICY

Whole School

Reviewed: May 2024 (HB/CM)

Governor Review: May 2024

Next Review: Sept 2024

Introduction

Alderley Edge School for Girls is an independent school and is committed to encouraging all pupils to reach the highest academic standards and their individual potential. It is our aim that every student participates fully and confidently in school life. Alderley Edge School for Girls is committed to building partnerships which encourage the participation of all of our students and their parents in making coproduced decisions. We aim to support our pupils with special educational needs by making reasonable adjustments whilst maintaining high expectations.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- EAL Policy
- Special Educational Needs Examinations Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Disability Access Plan.

This is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for developing effective practice in the delivery of support for children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. These are referred to as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This Policy takes account of the following related School Policies:

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Children and Families Act 2014 defines Special Educational Needs as follows:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

- A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- are under five and fall within the definitions above or are likely to do so when of compulsory school age if special educational provision was not made for the child.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the *language or form of language in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language or form of language which is or has been spoken at home.* (Section 20(4) Children and Families Act 2014). Alderley Edge School for Girls celebrates its cultural and linguistic diversity. Whilst some students speak other languages with their families, they may not require additional support to enable them to achieve at a level commensurate with their cognitive skills. (See EAL Policy).

Physical Accessibility

Alderley Edge School for Girls recognises that physical disabilities can affect access to learning. Copies of the Accessibility Plan shows how the buildings and facilities are accessible to pupils, parents and visitors with physical disabilities.

Leadership and Management

The SENDCo, Mrs Heather Beecham, is responsible for co-ordinating all SEN/provision within the school. Her line manager is the Deputy Head, Academic, Mrs Catherine Millar.

Categories of Need

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2014), a pupil has a special educational need when their learning difficulty or disability calls for “special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.” Special Educational Needs can be categorised according to four areas of need:

- (i) Communication and Interaction
- (ii) Cognition and learning
- (iii) Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

(iv) Sensory and/or physical

Some young people with a special educational need may have a disability under the Equality Act (2010) which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These may include medical conditions such as hearing and eyesight impairment, diabetes and epilepsy. The School Nurse will maintain records of individual medical conditions. She will work with the SENDCo to advise on any support needed to assist the student's learning needs.

In line with the **Equality Act (2010)**, reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that disabled children are not at a disadvantage compared with their peers. Those students requiring specific intervention or with learning needs above and beyond what can be reasonably catered for in the course of a normal lesson will be issued with a Pen Portrait. This is a one-page profile which details strengths and barriers and strategies for teaching and learning.

A child who finds a particular subject difficult does not necessarily have a "learning difficulty" in the legal sense of that expression; there will often be disparities in the speed with which children learn, in their skill at solving problems and in their general acumen. We provide additional study sessions which children can choose to attend if they need particular help with one or another aspect of a subject.

Categories of Special Educational Need

The Code of Practice recognises that students' needs and requirements fall into four broad areas:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Sensory and Physical
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The SEND Code of Practice makes it clear that all teachers are responsible for the progress and attainment of students with special needs and, in collaboration with the SENDCo, will ensure that those students requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. Assessment is the process by which students with SEND can be identified. Whether or not a student is making adequate progress is seen as a significant factor in considering the need for additional provision.

Three stages have been clearly identified in the current Code of Practice:

- **School Monitor**
- **SEN Support**
- **EHCP**

Our whole approach to the teaching of all girls is to follow the “assess, plan, do, review” approach as outlined in the Code of Practice. This is known as the Graduated Approach.

Assess

The School's procedures for the identification of pupils with a SEND takes into account the following:

- The entrance examinations
- All Y7 pupils are screened for literacy difficulties, as are those students who join the School after Year 7. The screening includes tests that provide reading and spelling ages and a dyslexia screen in order to identify any underlying difficulties. Those students who are highlighted as presenting with difficulties that are consistent with a dyslexic profile, may have more diagnostic assessments which will contribute to creating a Pen Portrait. Parents may wish to pursue a formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist who may give a diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia. This would be arranged privately by parents.
- Students' tracked performance in Assessments eg PUMA and PIRA in Junior School and the formal tracking system in the Senior School.
- Standardised screening or assessment tools, such as Cognitive Ability Tests for verbal and non-verbal ability such as INCAS in Junior School and MidYis, Yellis and Alis in the Senior school.

Students can also be referred directly to the SEND Team by staff (via the referral form on the intranet), by parents or by making a request themselves. New referrals are triaged weekly in a joint SEND & Pastoral meeting to determine appropriate next steps. Where a potential SEND need is suspected screeners and/or specialist assessments will be used to help assess the need.

Plan

For students with identified SEND the SENDCo will work collaboratively with appropriate staff to:

- use a range of information and data to shape the student's curriculum and pastoral provision, in line with the Code of Practice.
- identify the student's skills and note areas that require support
- ensure on-going observations/assessments to provide regular feedback on achievements/ experiences, in order to plan next steps in learning
- ensure students have opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in subjects and in the pastoral programme
- involve students in planning/agreeing their own targets ensuring a person centred approach

- involve parents in a joint home-school learning approach
- communicate relevant information to teaching staff and non-teaching staff where appropriate.

Pen Portrait

Quality First Teaching is supported and guided by Pen Portraits which are in use for all students on the LEC register (from Monitoring up to EHCP). This is a personalised document that identifies strengths and any difficulties which may present as barriers to learning. It will also include strategies for teaching and learning. The Pen Portrait is co-produced by the SENDCo, the young person, parents and teachers. The Pen Portrait may also include information and recommendations from reports written by external agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists. The SENDCo carries out a needs analysis for any pupil identified as having, or as possibly having, SEND.

Pen Portraits will also include detail of any other reasonable adjustment that the student needs. All reasonable effort will be made to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made in line with the plan outlined in the Pen Portrait. If an oversight or error is made this will be picked up by the SENDCo/SLT as appropriate.

SEND Support Plan

Students on SEND Support level or with an EHCP will have a SEND Support plan in addition to a Pen Portrait. This will identify their strengths and difficulties but will also identify SMART targets for them to work towards and detail what support they are accessing that is additional to or different from that which is made available through Quality First Teaching. This might include interventions, support from external professionals/agencies, support in class from an additional adult etc. As appropriate to the needs of the individual.

Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

A pupil may enter AESG with an EHCP. Furthermore, where, despite the School having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the needs of a pupil, the School / parents can consider requesting an EHCP assessment. This is for pupils with very significant needs which cannot be met from the existing resources within school and where, despite cycles of the Assess Plan Do Review Graduated Response, a gap is widening in a specific area of difficulty. An EHCP is decided by the Local

Authority and involves a panel of specialists who decide if the young person's needs fall into the highest category of needs. The SENDCo and teachers are involved in the development and review of the EHCP to determine what can be provided within the School's own resources and what will require additional external expertise or training.

The EHCP is formally reviewed annually, focusing on the progress of the student towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHCP and considering whether these outcomes and supporting targets are appropriate. Reviews are held in school and are attended by the student, parent/carers, SENDCo, a health service representative and a local authority health or education representative. Prior to the review, the SENDCo requests written reports about the student from all parties. After the review, any amendments required to the EHCP are finalised.

When the student reaches Year 5, the SENDCo arranges a Transition Review and invites the representatives of the desired next setting. From Year 9, all reviews must include a focus on preparing the student for adulthood. When a student moves from senior school to a post-16 institution, a reviewed EHCP is completed to ensure a smooth transition to the student's next educational setting.

Do

Self-Support

At AESG we encourage all of our students to become independent young people. Consequently, when we are working with students to plan the support they need in school we will always endeavour to sign post them to appropriate self-help strategies.

Quality First Teaching

“Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEN” Code of Practice

All students have access to a curriculum designed to meet the learning styles and needs of a range of students through planning and delivery in the classroom. Subject specialists at AESG have a wealth of experience in meeting the requirements for a range of learning needs and the School recognises the importance of maintaining a consistently outstanding level of teaching and learning in all classrooms and supports this through regular CPD for staff around the topic of SEND. Quality First Teaching is the primary basis for supporting pupils with SEND at AESG, with teachers referring to the individual student's Pen Portrait alongside a guidebook of Quality First Teaching Strategies to understand how best to support each individual student, differentiating and/or scaffolding by task style, adapting resources, questioning approach, seating, pace, presentation and homework, to name just a few.

Learning Enhancements

In some instances, where self-help and quality first teaching approaches have not been sufficient to meet their level of need, students may be withdrawn from a lesson/registration period, in order to attend a small group or one-to-one learning enhancement to work with a member of the SEND Team, which may focus on the development of skills such as reading comprehension, spelling, numeracy or handwriting. Progress and needs will be monitored and, if necessary, the SENDCo will recommend a further formal assessment if learning support does not appear to be meeting the pupil's needs.

Access Arrangements

Students who have been assessed as having a learning difficulty may be eligible to apply for access arrangements to complete internal examinations and public examinations. The SENDCo works closely with the Examinations Officer to ensure the JCQ guidelines are met.

In order that the provision of access arrangements in examinations should reflect the candidate's normal way of working, the staff strive, with the support of the SENDCo, to provide access arrangements in assessments carried out in lesson time wherever this can be achieved with a reasonable adjustment.

Review

The voice of the student

The Code of Practice includes a chapter on student involvement.

'Schools ...should show sensitivity, honesty and mutual respect in encouraging students to share concerns, discuss strategies and see themselves as equal partners with the school. This reflects the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.'

We believe that our students should be involved in making decisions where possible. The ways in which our students are encouraged to participate will reflect students' evolving maturity. Participation in education is a process that will necessitate all students being given the opportunity to make choices and to understand that their views matter. We believe this will help to make confident students and young adults, who know that their opinions will be valued, who can practise making choices and will be more secure and effective students during their education with us.

The SEND Team will meet regularly with students with SEND and parents. The reviewed SEND Support Plans and Pen Portraits will be shared with parents and staff to ensure the needs of pupils are being met.

In addition to meeting with students with SEND and parents as part of this process the SEND Team may:

- Gather the views of the student's teachers
- Carry out observations in lessons
- Carry out book looks
- Provide mentoring
- Monitor progress through diagnostic assessments.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of information will be respected. Selected information from external experts which is needed to make requests to Examination Boards for extra time in external examinations will be given to the Examinations Officer, to the student's Head of Year and Form Tutor and to the Deputy Headmistress (Pastoral). The SENDCo will supervise this process, and will add the names of these students to the SEND Register.

All teaching members of staff have access to the names and requirements of students who have been identified as having SEND (or are being monitored for suspected SEND Needs) as part of our graduated response. All members of staff understand the importance of confidentiality in their support of these students.

The School Nurse will store confidential medical information.

Staff Continuing Professional Development

All staff are encouraged to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to work with students with SEND. These training and development needs will be clearly communicated to Senior Leaders by the SENDCo and will form an essential strand of the School's CPD programme.