



## Special Education Needs and Learning Support Policy

This policy document is a statement of the whole school aims, responsibilities and procedures established to ensure the effective and efficient provision for children with Special Educational Needs (Learning Support Needs) at Bishop's Stortford College and is applicable to all pupils attending the College. It takes into account the Education Act (1996), the Special Needs and Disability Act (2001), the Equality Act (2010), the Children and Family Act (2014), statutory guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (2014), The 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (Revised) (2020), and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014), alongside the Teachers Standards (2012).

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) refers to any pupil who has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or who is deemed to have a learning difficulty or disability, such that special educational provision needs to be made for that pupil. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are those pupils requiring additional support in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to pupils of the same age, and to make adequate progress. All pupils at Bishop's Stortford College are given every opportunity to develop in all aspects of the curriculum and school life and to reach their full potential.

We encourage parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or learning difficulties to discuss their child's requirements with us before they come to the College. We are then better able to plan provision which best suits their needs.

### Special Educational Needs and Disability Defined.

In accordance with the 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) a child or young person is recognised as having SEND 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 is understood as having a learning difficulty or disability if he or she;

- has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age (nationally); 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.

Additional needs can be broadly categorised into four areas of need:

- Cognition and learning needs, including specific learning difficulties such as Dyspraxia and Dyslexia.
- I, Social emotional and Mental Health needs
- Communication and interaction needs, including Asperger's and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- Sensory and/or physical needs, including visual or hearing impairment.

Pupils will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. The College's support for those children whose first language is not English is set out in the School's ESOL Policy.

At Bishop's Stortford College, pupils identified as having a requirement for Learning Support generally fall into three categories:

- Those who have specific or general difficulties in one or more areas of the curriculum. This includes pupils who have been diagnosed with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder.
- Those with visual, auditory or physical impairments which affect their capacity to learn.
- Pupils suffering emotional or psychological difficulties, or presenting with specific behaviour problems. These pupils are supported through the pastoral system and occasionally through the School Counsellor. Nevertheless, the specific needs identified in the categories above are frequently associated with (and may indeed generate) emotional and behavioural problems.

### **The objectives of the SEND and Learning Support Policy.**

- To outline how the College identifies pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- To explain the provision in place to support the individual needs of all pupils at Bishop's Stortford College who have been identified as having SEND and who require additional support considering them within the wider context of inclusion.
- To ensure that all members of staff are aware of the needs of every pupil in their care and understand that it is their responsibility to meet these needs within the classroom context.
- To make appropriate and effective support available for all teachers to meet the learning requirements of these pupils.
- To involve pupils and parents in the planning of Learning Support.
- To communicate fully with parents, recognising the importance of nurturing a positive partnership between home and school.

- To enhance the self-esteem of pupils with SEND, to develop their engagement in and enjoyment of their studies and to enable them to achieve their full potential.
- To ensure that no pupil is discriminated against in any area of school life on the basis of their SEND, and that high expectations are maintained for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- To have regard to all relevant policy and legislation in the decisions made at Bishop's Stortford College and to use the procedures outlined in The 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) to identify, assess and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disability.
- To strive to provide the best setting we can to meet the needs of all children with SEND, regularly monitoring and evaluating the site and available resources in order to effect improvements.
- To work closely with external agencies when necessary and appropriate, in order to ensure that pupils and their families have access to all available, necessary and relevant external support.

### **Guidelines from the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (Jan 2015) & Children and Families Act (2014)**

#### **'The Head'**

The Head has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the College's work, including provision for children with SEND. The Head will keep the Governing Body fully informed and also work closely with the school's Head of Learning Support..

#### **'The Governing Body'**

The Governing Body, in co-operation with the Head, determine the College's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEND, establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work.

The Governing Body must:

- Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice.
- Develop, support and monitor the SEND Policy and review it as appropriate.
- Ensure SEND provision is an integral part of the College Development Plan.
- Ensure that a summary of SEND provision is included in school information sent to parents.
- Ensure that the quality of SEND provision is continually monitored.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND achieve standards commensurate with their abilities.
- Ensure that SEND is an integral part of the Schools' subject policies.

In addition, the College has a nominated Governor with responsibility for Learning Support who represents the interests of pupils with SEND at Governing Council meetings, and is a first point of contact for the Head of Learning Support with the Governing Council.

**The Role of the** Head of Learning Support The HEAD OF LEARNING SUPPORT leads the Learning Support Team, reports to the Head and Governors and is responsible for overseeing the provision of

education for pupils with special needs and Learning Support requirements throughout the whole of Bishop's Stortford College (Pre-Prep, Prep School and Senior School).

The responsibilities of the Head of Learning Support are:

- Overseeing the operation of the College's Special Educational Needs and Learning Support Policy.
- Encouraging a joined-up approach to provision, from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Year 13.
- Working with all members of staff to support pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and those that require Learning Support.
- Promoting child-centred, inclusive and effective teaching practice amongst all members of staff to strive to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made within every classroom.
- Managing and updating the College's SEND and Learning Support Register, detailing all pupils with SEND and learning support needs.
- Using performance data to monitor progress of pupils with SEND and learning support needs and to evaluate the support in place.
- Reporting educational progress to parents of pupils receiving additional support and ensuring that lines of communication are open and accessible, encouraging positive and effective home-school partnerships to develop.
- Informing the Governing Council in writing, or by other means, of developments as requested.
- Liaising with external agencies in order to access additional and relevant support for those pupils for whom it is required.

### **Admission Arrangements for Pupils with SEND.**

- Pupils who have additional needs are welcomed at all stages of the College, providing they meet academic requirements and are deemed able to cope in the mainstream classroom. Assessment with the Head of Learning Support may be requested before a place is offered, and parents' procurement of an Educational Psychologist's report may also be required.
- Parents of pupils with additional needs are encouraged to visit the Learning Support Department and/or arrange to meet the Head of Learning Support to discuss their child's learning needs and requirements at any stage of the application/entrance process, to ensure that they are fully informed of the levels and forms of support available.

## **Children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs).**

An Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) is issued following an external assessment process conducted by the Local Authority (LA) and is a legal document describing a child's needs and the provision needed to meet those needs.

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC Plan, the College will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC Plan can be delivered by the College,

In the event of a child joining the College with an EHCP, regular communication will be in place between home and school to monitor that child's engagement with, and access to, the curriculum and to the wider aspects of life at the College, and to ensure that the targets detailed in the EHCP are being met. An individual Learning Plan may be put in place, if appropriate, to support this process. A yearly EHCP review meeting will take place with the appropriate team of people in attendance. For this purpose, teachers are expected to provide detailed reports on the learning and progress of that pupil. It is the responsibility of the Head of Learning Support to collate this information into a school report that is presented formally at the Annual Review Meeting to parents and a representative of the appropriate Local Authority. Bishop's Stortford College recognises that whilst it is the responsibility of the Local Authority and not the school to organise the Annual Review, it is good practice for the school to ensure that the review takes place, and the College therefore co-operates fully with the Local Authority in the review process.

Bishop's Stortford College will support parents with the application process for an EHCP if a pupil attending the College is considered to have special educational needs which are so significant that they require educational provision which cannot be reasonably provided through the services that are normally available.

### **Identification and Assessment.**

The 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) and The Equality Act (2010) provide statutory guidance on identifying SEND in schools. The system for assessing learning support requirements at Bishop's Stortford College has been developed both in accordance with this statutory guidance and in response to the particular context of the College. The College endeavours to identify all cases of special educational needs but cannot guarantee to do so.

### **At Bishop's Stortford College we understand that-**

A pupil may have a learning difficulty/SEND if he/she;

- has greater difficulty with learning than the majority of his/her peers;
- is working significantly below his/her peer group, especially in numeracy and literacy;
- has a speech or language difficulty, including understanding of the spoken and written work, that inhibits his/her learning; or
- has a physical and/or sensory impairment which requires specialised provision.

All members of staff, as well as the Learning Support Team, use a range of strategies to identify concerns regarding a pupil's progress, attainment, wellbeing or inclusion. We regularly review pupil progress to help monitor whether children are making expected progress. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN (and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN).

However, where the College reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, for example where there are early indications that a pupil is not making expected progress, the College will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents and the pupil (as appropriate) to help determine the action required including whether any additional investigation is needed. These may include:

- Liaison with pre-school provision and/or previous schools.
- Review of EYFS profiles (when available).
- Analysis of whole school assessment data, such as annual standardised testing (completed in the Prep School).
- Reviewing outcomes of additional individual assessment data.
- Classroom observations conducted by the Head of Learning Support, other members of the Learning Support Team, members of management etc.
- Middle Years Information System (operated by the University of Durham) results.
- Liaison with class and subject teachers.
- Liaison with parents through parent-teacher consultation and individual contact between school-parent and parent-school.
- Liaison with external agencies, where pupils may have been known to their service(s) e.g. Educational Psychologists.
- Work sampling and analysis.
- In-class target setting and monitoring.

### **The Response.**

Children who are identified as having probable additional needs follow the graduated route of support in accordance with The 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014), using the Assess-Plan-Do-Review approach.

### **Initial Concerns.**

If there are significant emerging concerns, or identified SEND and therefore requires support which is in addition to the differentiated and individualised teaching and learning already in place in the classroom, the class/subject teacher will respond by planning, monitoring and reviewing additional pupil-specific strategies.

These strategies are expected to be identified in the teacher's planning documentation. Evidence of well-considered, effectively planned and resourced, individualised provision, as well as detailed monitoring and review by the class/subject teacher is essential before any additional support is implemented.

### **Ongoing Concerns.**

Where a pupil's needs are ongoing and have not been met in the classroom, despite highly individualised support being put in place, pupils are referred to the Learning Support Department for assessment/review. An assessment appropriate to the needs of the pupil will be conducted by one of the department's Specialist Assessors to identify the pupil's type and level of need. Where a pupil is identified as having additional needs, further support will be planned.

Pupils are considered eligible for Learning Support provision if they fulfil the following criteria:

- Have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Or

- Have a formal diagnosis of an additional need as evidenced by an external assessment completed by a specialist (Educational Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist or medical consultant) **recognised by the College**, which has an identifiable impact on their progress in school (as evidenced by annual standardised testing such as MidYIS or progress data gathered through core assessments).

Or

- Where school data evidences that a pupil has demonstrated significantly slower progress in Maths or English in comparison with their other subjects.

### **And**

- Where internal psychometric testing identifies at least two below average (standardised score of 84 or below) core abilities, such as reading or writing, which has an identifiable impact on their progress and performance in school (as evidenced by annual standardised testing such as MidYIS or progress data gathered through core assessments). Or where testing indicates one below average standardised score of 84 or less and one low average standardised score (85 – 89), in two different areas of speed of working.

Bishop's Stortford College offers pupils support most appropriate to their needs. This might include any of the following:

- In-class support, delivered with the assistance of a Learning Support Assistant or other adult.
- Class linked small group or paired support sessions.
- Small group booster sessions.
- Paired or group timed intervention programmes.
- One-to-one support lessons or timed intervention programmes.

*Please note that the delivery of support for Pre-Prep is set out in the section for Early Years and KS1.*

The nature of support lessons are determined by need and can take the form of individual, paired, or group support lessons. Pupils in receipt of Learning Support are written a one-page Pupil Profile outlining their specific difficulties and suggested strategies for supporting their learning. These are available for all staff to access through the College's Management Information System (MIS) and are updated at least annually. In accordance with the 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014), the College recognises that all class, form and subject teachers are ultimately responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, even where pupils are in receipt of Learning Support. It is therefore an expectation that all staff regularly access and are familiar with the content of the Pupil Profiles, relevant for the pupils they teach.

The College is aware that some pupils will not make adequate progress for reasons other than having a SEND. For instance, poor attendance or low ability will also affect a pupil's learning and outcomes. Where assessments conducted in the Learning Support Department identifies no SEND, that pupil's teachers will be encouraged to explore other approaches to support the progression of this pupil. Similarly, the College recognises that some pupils with SEND will not require any additional support as their learning and progress is at least at expected levels.

If, despite the additional support and input received, a pupil continues not to make appropriate levels of progress, or their wellbeing becomes a concern, parents may be asked to seek an external assessment. Advice from external agencies may include specialist assessments, referrals or support with teaching approaches and materials.

At all stages of the support process, the school aims to include parents/carers and pupils in as much of the decision making as possible, as we recognise that effective communication will nurture successful parent partnerships, which in turn will facilitate improved learning outcomes for pupils.

Learning Support is intended to be flexible and responsive to need. Provision is reviewed at least annually and, if Learning Support lessons are considered by staff to be no longer relevant or appropriate, lessons will cease. Careful monitoring of the learning of pupils no longer receiving Learning Support will take place, to ensure that progress continues at the expected level.

### **Commissioning External Assessments.**

The College may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child (such as by an educational psychologist or child psychiatrist), the cost of which will usually be borne by the parents. Where parents have concerns and may wish to request a formal diagnosis from outside the College, parents should ensure that they contact the Head of Learning Support to discuss their concerns. Parents must ensure the College is given copies of all advice and reports received.

External assessments, such as Educational Psychologist assessments, are recognised as most effective when they are completed in collaboration with educational settings and the College therefore expects parents to discuss external assessments with the Learning Support Department before booking/attending appointments. **Parents should note that, in line with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidance, the outcomes or recommendations made in assessments conducted without prior input from the College may not be recognised and therefore may not be acted upon.** If parents are considering external assessment, they should always discuss this with the Head of Learning Support first.



## **How staff support our pupils with SEND.**

All details of pupils with additional needs, including guidance for teaching, are found on the Management Information System (MIS). Pupils receiving Learning Support, who have a formal diagnosis of need or who have Access Arrangements for public exams, are identified with a 'heart icon' by the side of their name on this system.

Staff have a responsibility to ensure they are aware of all of their pupils' individual needs. In the Prep School, 'Planning Adjustments' are accessible to all staff to support their focussed planning of learning for pupils with SEND. Teaching staff are expected to ensure that their curriculum planning can be accessed by every pupil.

In this planning, staff should identify each of the following:

### *Prior considerations:*

- To establish the specific needs/ability of the pupil and their learning levels.
- To establish the purpose and desired outcomes of the differentiated material.
- In the case of pupils with disability, consideration needs to be given to the physical environment and resources to be used. Where possible, reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure pupils are able to access the learning environment.

### *Presentation:*

- To present all information in a user-friendly, attractive way.
- To show consideration of the background, font and size of visually presented material to ensure optimal contrast for pupils with additional needs.
- To consider the length of the written content.
- Wherever possible to reinforce written content with pictorial cues.

### *Content:*

- Instructions should be clear, easy to follow and unambiguous, and wherever possible verbal instructions should be reinforced with visual (written) instructions and pictorial cues, and vice-versa.
- The use of complex vocabulary should be considered, with staff providing a glossary of words, word mat, and access to dictionaries/visual dictionaries or a key word sheet if applicable.
- Design the content so the pupil achieves success, considering scaffolded approaches to tasks.
- Where possible, use handouts rather than asking pupils to take down notes from the board or by dictation.

Where possible, staff should use pupils' strengths to support their learning.

- Where dictation or taking notes down from the board are essential, allowing pupils to photocopy the notes of a reliable class member, or providing sheets on which to annotate e.g. copies of PowerPoint slideshows.
- Be sensitive to the feelings of the pupils when asking him/her to read aloud in class and facilitate group or guided reading that does not highlight particular difficulties in this area.
- Encourage the use of word processors, particularly for the production of coursework.
- Although correcting spelling errors is important, highlight only four or five key words (most likely subject-specific OR high-frequency sight words which a pupil regularly spells incorrectly) on each piece of work.
- Encourage planning at each stage of an activity and facilitate with appropriate resources and materials.
- Encourage pupils to believe that they can succeed, celebrate their successes and praise their efforts. Expectation theory is particularly relevant to the dyslexic pupil e.g. If you expect them to succeed, they will usually do so.
- Recognise the importance of incorporating adjustments as part of whole class planning, showing understanding that what benefits pupils with SEND most likely extends the learning of all pupils.
- Ensure that pupils are aware of the steps they need to achieve in order to succeed: be very clear in terms of expectations and desired outcomes from a specific task.
- Consideration should also be given to the setting and recording of homework tasks to ensure that all pupils will be able to access them outside of the classroom. Homework may need to be pre-recorded for some pupils, while others may need additional time to organise and record the task(s) being set.

Parents are informed of the school's concerns and approaches to support at every stage. If parents have concerns regarding their child's learning or progress, these can be raised in the first instance with their child's teacher, form teacher, subject teacher or directly with the Head of Learning Support

Pupils who require additional support will also be identified on the school's SEND and Learning Support Register, and will have their needs considered when sitting both internal and external examinations in terms of special arrangements.

### **Access Arrangements.**

Access Arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities, medical needs or temporary injuries to access assessments/examinations.

Please see Access Arrangements Policy which outlines the process to identify AA.

Bishop's Stortford College is entirely compliant with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance for determining eligibility for Access Arrangements in external examinations. Applications for Access Arrangements are processed at the start of the examination course (e.g. the beginning of the Lower Fifth for GCSEs) and at the time of application the arrangement must be a candidate's normal way of working, and a history of need must be strongly evidenced (except in the case of temporary injury).

The HEAD OF LEARNING SUPPORT regularly liaises with the Examinations Officer to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place for pupils eligible for Access Arrangements.

Please see the website for the College's Use of a Word Processor in Examinations Policy, which outlines the criteria pupils must meet in order to be entitled to use a word processor in external examinations.

### **Pre-Prep (Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1) Learning Support.**

Within the Pre-Prep, support is provided for children who are not making expected progress with class or group provision. If a teacher is in anyway concerned about any aspect of the academic, social or physical progress of a child in their class, they discuss this immediately with the Head of Pre-Prep. Any concerns are also discussed with the parents of the child.

A tracking system is in place to monitor progress, where a child is deemed to be either on track or not on track against age related expectations. The children will be identified for an intervention programme, where appropriate next steps will be put in place. Their progress within the intervention programme will be reviewed regularly. Intervention is led by the class teachers and supported by the teaching assistants focused on intervention.

For children entering Pre-Prep with an already identified learning need, a course of action will be planned, which will involve creating an Individual Education Plan by the Pre-Prep Learning Support Assistant, in consultation, where necessary/appropriate, with the Head of Learning Support and class teacher. Parents are involved at every stage.

Any children who may have a learning need will be assessed by the Pre-Prep Learning Support Assistant, in consultation, where necessary/appropriate, with the Head of Learning Support. If further assessment is required, a referral to an external specialist may be requested or recommended. Clear records of the concern are kept and suggested plans of action are implemented and their effectiveness assessed regularly. Parents are involved at every stage.

Learning Support provided in the Pre-Prep is planned to meet the individual needs of each pupil and so support may be delivered in class in a small group or one to one basis.

The Head of Learning Support has a responsibility to liaise regularly with the Pre-Prep to ensure effective communication regarding pupil needs being maintained, and to support pupil transfer.

### **Staff Development.**

In order to maintain a high standard of teaching and learning across the College, with particular focus on meeting the needs of SEND pupils, Bishop's Stortford College ensures the following:

- Staff will have the opportunity to attend Learning Support/SEND courses, which are of interest and have a particular bearing on children they are supporting. In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching, all staff are encouraged to undertake training and development.
- Staff are given regular opportunities to share and discuss any concerns or queries they may have in terms of the learners with SEND in their classes with the Head of Learning Support or members of the Learning Support Department.

- The school Head of Learning Support attends appropriate training in order to keep up-to-date with local and national information relevant to the department.
- On arrival, new staff receive induction which includes an introduction to the College's approach to SEND provision and the expectations the College places on all staff in terms of supporting all their learners, including those requiring additional support.
- As appropriate, the Head of Learning Support will provide staff training/INSET relevant to the needs of the pupils attending the College.

### **Confidentiality.**

Our work with children and families brings us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those working at Bishop's Stortford College can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning/group management, with people who are not members of staff, other than the parents/carers of that child.
- Information given by parents/carers to the school will only be passed on to members of staff on a need to know basis.

### **Charging.**

In most circumstances there is no charge for Learning Support at Bishop's Stortford College.

External assessments, commissioned by parents/carers following consultation with the Learning Support Department, are paid for by the parents/carers of the child concerned.

### **Helpful SEND Advice**

Hertfordshire SENDIASS is an impartial Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). Visit [www.hertssendiass.org.uk](http://www.hertssendiass.org.uk) or email [sendiass@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@hertfordshire.gov.uk) for helpful advice or information.