



St Columba's College

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

This policy applies across the College including Early Years, Prep and Senior Schools. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Learning and Teaching, SENDA Accessibility Plan, Medical and First Aid, Admissions, Stretch and Challenge, and Safeguarding Policies.

St. Columba's College is conducted in the educational tradition of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. As such we accept young people, appreciating their individual uniqueness and recognizing that they are on a life-long journey of growth.

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Section 1 Introduction

This policy was developed in response to the principles of the College mission statement and the educational charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. The school seeks to acknowledge and monitor the learning needs of all our pupils and employ strategies to meet them. We support the general principles detailed in the Code of Practice 2014. The College complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to this policy. We aim to ensure that adequate accessibility and provision can be made for all pupils who are admitted to the College.

There is a separate policy for Stretch and Challenge and such pupils will not be considered under this SEND policy. The two policies are not mutually exclusive.

Staffing:

Prep School SEND Co-ordinator: Miss Charlotte Maton

Senior School SEND Co-ordinator: Mrs Emma Dubberley

Section 2 Values and Aims

The College is committed to promoting the highest possible levels of achievement for all members of its school community, valuing all learners equally and developing their enthusiasm for learning. This is achieved through a whole school approach following the guidelines of The Code of Practice for SEN (DfES 2014) and the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission under the Equality Act 2010.

Staff strive to ensure that every pupil in the school is valued as an individual and will receive the best possible education to enable them to reach their full potential. Teachers have high expectations in every area of the curriculum and accentuate the positive in behaviour, work and attitude.

We recognise that all pupils have individual needs, but not necessarily defined as learning needs.

Within the limits of available resources, the aim is to:

- a. ensure that every pupil has equal rights in all areas of our school life as a valued, responsible and equal member of our learning community; and that disabled pupils are not treated less favourably, or substantially disadvantaged because of their disability, in regard to the educational or pastoral provision available to those who are not disabled;
- b. ensure that all school staff are aware of each pupil's needs so that such needs may be met in all school settings and make reasonable adjustments as necessary;
- c. enable all pupils to participate in lessons fully and effectively by providing broad, balanced and well differentiated lessons;
- d. recognise that it is our responsibility to meet the learning needs of pupils so that they make progress and experience success;

- e. encourage pupils to be happy, confident, tolerant and caring, and to share in the planning and evaluation of their learning within a supportive, caring community, encouraging each pupil to achieve their personal best and develop into an independent individual, who has deep respect for others, and is fully prepared to take the next step in their education with enthusiasm and confidence;
- f. provide a whole department additional needs approach, to support pupils with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties;
- g. establish a diagnostic assessment process for pupils whose learning is giving cause for concern to identify individual learning needs in a prompt and thorough manner;
- h. use the 'Graduated Approach' by setting appropriate objectives and targets based on identified needs, and regularly reviewing these targets, to ensure that no pupil falls behind or fails to make progress and that all pupils with SEND have a sense of involvement in their additional provision;
- i. provide staff training and development opportunities so that needs are successfully met in the classroom;
- j. work in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, external agencies to meet the learning needs of their child and ensure their views are taken into account;
- k. Monitor, reflect upon and evaluate provision annually;
- l. accommodate exams concessions in accordance with the relevant recommendations made in full diagnostic assessment reports (for example dyslexia / dyspraxia) as stated in current JCQ Regulations & Guidance.

Section 3 Definition of Learning Need

'A pupil has Learning Needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for some additional or different educational provision to be made for them.' Section 20 of Children and Families Act 2014.

The term 'learning need' covers a wide variety of need and may include dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD, speech and language needs, ASD, and sensory, physical, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

To clarify, a child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most pupils of the same age;
or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for pupils of the same age in the same school.

A pupil is not to be regarded as having a learning need:

- solely because the language or form of the language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught; or
- because they find a subject difficult or complex as there are often disparities in

the speed with which pupils learn.

Section 4 Learning Needs Provision

Learning Needs Provision means educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the standard educational provision made generally for other pupils in the same year group in the school.

There is a designated SEND Co-ordinator in both the Prep and Senior Schools together with a number of support staff. The co-ordinators, Heads of House and school nurses are responsible for overseeing the provision of support for pupils with additional needs.

Most pupils' needs are met and responded to in the first instance through classroom differentiation and high quality teaching.

Section 5 Identification, Monitoring and Assessment

On Entry

The College welcomes all pupils who meet the entry requirements. However, the school is not a specialist provider for special educational needs. Parents are obliged to:

- a. inform the school of any known specific learning difficulty at the time of application for a place;
- b. indicate any additional or different support their child may be receiving in his/her current schooling.

Parents considering a disabled child for entry to the College are expected to meet with the Nurse, Head of Academic Support, and/or designated member of SLT (as appropriate) and discuss the implications of their difficulty from the outset to consider whether current and future needs may be met (see also Admissions Policy).

The practical implications of a pupil's needs are taken into account during the selection process and interview.

Enrolled

All pupils are monitored throughout their time at the school and assessment results together with teacher observations highlight pupils who may benefit from additional support. Parents have the right to raise concerns which are investigated and managed accordingly.

Diagnosis of Educational Needs

Teachers are often the first to recognise or suspect additional educational needs, largely because the presentation typically affect school performance or behaviour.

Pupils develop their own coping strategies. This coupled with quality first teach that responds to individual learning styles, may mask the nature of the educational need.

As teachers work with many different pupils, they come to know how pupils typically behave in classroom situations requiring concentration and self-control. When they notice something non-typical, they may speak with the school's SEND Co-ordinator or the parents about their concerns.

Teachers cannot diagnose educational needs. They can report what they have observed and recorded, and the SENCo may conduct some screening but after that, a professional needs to evaluate a pupil to see if they have a formal educational need.

Such a diagnosis is helped by observations of a pupil's behaviour and practices. Teaching staff play a key role in the process. The professional who makes the diagnosis is usually a professional in relevant the medical/educational field; doctor, psychiatrist, paediatrician or psychologist, for instance.

Relevant information on SEND is available to all staff and passed between year groups and key stages. However, the College cannot undertake to identify every instance of additional need that may exist in the College.

Section 6 Levels of Support

Once a need has been identified, the pupil is entered on the SEND register. This categorises learning needs in relation to levels of support. Parental and pupil views where appropriate are taken into account at every stage:

1. The pupil's diagnosed are of need is acknowledged to ensure awareness by teachers in adopting certain practices. The majority of these are standard within quality first teaching, but would be more specifically applied to assist the pupil.
2. Pupils who require specific adjustments in class (e.g. use of laptop computer) may have a One Page Profile.
3. For pupils requiring some form of intervention, the strategy can be based on withdrawal from classes for support and/or modifying the individual's curriculum.
4. Pupils having regular support from an outside agency (e.g. occupational therapy, speech and language therapy) for their specific needs. Such provision by definition is specialist and requires separate financing by parents. These students may have an Individual Provision Plan (IPP).
5. Pupils currently holding an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) from a Local Authority.

Section 7 Support Planning

One Page Profiles / Individual Provision Plans (IPP) prepared for certain pupils, seek to highlight and implement the required provision, dependent on the identified need of pupil. This may encompass targeted intervention, group work or in-class support.

The College supports and advises parents wishing to request an EHCP assessment for their pupils. This includes completing and compiling supporting paperwork for the application. Where EHCPs have been issued, the SEND Department assists with paperwork and meetings relating to annual reviews. The College acknowledges that EHCPs are confidential and access to them is limited and disclosure only allowed with parental consent or other specific circumstances.

Withdrawal for support lessons is intended to support literacy, numeracy or curriculum work. Resources and advice can be provided to facilitate self-help and parental support strategies. Intensive dyslexic training or therapies are not ordinarily available.

The College cannot guarantee the specific results from the strategies being adopted

Section 8 Parent Liaison

Although the Form Tutor continues to be the key point of contact for all pupil issues, concerns regarding learning needs are directed to the SENDCo (Prep/Senior) to ensure direct communication and focus on the issue.

Parents of pupils who receive formal learning support (or who are being assessed for learning needs) receive regular updates via e-mail or telephone as matters arise. They also receive written reports on attainment and progress according to the College's reporting schedule, and further formal feedback at Parents' Evenings.

Where pupils receive a higher level of learning support, parents are invited to attend a separate meeting to complete the planning and/or review process, if necessary.

Section 9 Learning Needs and Sanctions

Pupils with additional needs or disabilities are provided with strategies to support any challenging behaviours. These strategies are not meant to replace the normal disciplinary procedures in the school, which remain. If a pupil with ADHD fails to follow the behaviour expectations, for instance, sanctions may need to be imposed to help them understand that their behaviour was unacceptable.

The sanction fundamentally supports the pupil in preparing them for adulthood, in understanding the expectation for social conformity. It may not affect the pupil's behaviour immediately, however in the long-term, combined with supportive strategies, improved choices are more likely. Such strategies and targets are implemented sensitively and supportively so that a pupil's self-esteem, relationships with

others and academic progress can be developed in a positive manner to minimise the potential for future challenges.

Section 10 Funding

Children and Families Act 2014 Where a Local Authority (LA) concludes that a child with a statement of Special Needs or EHC plan should be placed in an independent school and names the school in the statement / EHC plan, the LA retains the legal right and financial responsibility for ensuring that the provision specified in the child's EHC plan is made. This will include fees charged by an independent school.

However, where independent assessments and reports are provided which do not have the LA directive, 'College resources' essentially refer to the staffing levels of the Academic Support Department for the current academic year and are deployed to best assist those pupils designated formally as having special educational needs not catered for within the standard practices of teachers (see above).

Financial arrangements operating outside the above arrangements are agreed with the Head and the Bursar on a case by case basis.

Section 11 Access Arrangements for Examinations

Students with SEND may qualify for "access arrangements", e.g. extra time, in GCSE and GCE examinations. The formal diagnosis of SEND must be in place well before such an application to the Examining Boards, and the school must have evidence supporting the claim: past 'evidence of need', 'evidence of provision', suitable recent assessment results and evidence that the adjustments are the student's 'normal way of working'. All applications must be based on the current Regulations for Exam Access Arrangements.

Principles

The College recognizes that children and young people who have special educational needs (SEN) do not necessarily have a disability. Some disabled children and young people do not have special educational needs. However, there is a lot of overlap between the two groups.

What are special educational needs?

- 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 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 they have a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools/post-16 institutions.

(Read the legislation [Children and Families Act 2014. Chapter 6, Part 3 \(20-21\)](#))

Examples of special educational needs (SEN) include:

- Speech, language and communication needs
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Autistic spectrum conditions
- Specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD/ADD
- Moderate learning difficulties
- Profound and multiple learning difficulties
- Multi-sensory impairment

What do we mean by disability?

A child or young person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial or long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Research suggests that about six to seven percent of children are disabled.

Children and young people with the most complex needs will require specialist services. They will require support with their health, education or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development, due to disabilities.

Disabilities include:

- Multiple and complex health needs or chronic illness
- Sensory impairment such as hearing loss, visual impairment or deaf-blindness
- A significant and long-term learning difficulty
- A physical disability
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- A severe communication disorder
- A significant preschool developmental delay

The College aims to ensure that exam candidates who have a recognised disability are not put at substantial disadvantage in accessing both public and internal exams and achieving their potential.

Performance in timed entrance exams is an essential component of the College selection process; wherever possible, candidates are expected to take them under identical conditions, however reasonable adjustment. Special educational needs will also be discussed and taken into account in the interview process.

Wherever possible, all students are expected to take internal exams in Year 7 and 8 under the same conditions. Consideration of SLDs takes place when marking papers, and some adjustments may be made by teachers to compensate for conditions or lack of time.

Each student's needs and past exam experience are reviewed and discussed before access arrangements are considered for public exams. In all cases, arrangements should be in place for all internal exams and this should be the normal way of working throughout the GCSE / GCE course.

Access arrangements that may be provided (subject to JCQ regulations) include:

- a. 25% extra time (in very rare cases, those with significant need may be considered for more);
- b. rest breaks;
- c. word processing;
- d. computer reader / reader;
- e. alternative rooming arrangements;
- f. partial or full transcript;
- g. prompter;
- h. scribe or equivalent.

Possible difficulties for disabled students in accessing course requirements and exams are considered both in relation to taking general curriculum subjects and when making choices for GCSE and Advanced Level courses.

Procedures to identify disabled students and apply for access arrangements

1. Information on the nature and implications of students' diagnosed and documented disabilities is sought from parents through the 'Contact Details' form obtained by the Registrar. This is forwarded to the Nurse and Head of Academic Support and notified to staff via the SEND Register/Medical Register.
2. The College operates whole-year screening procedures in Year 7 and Year 9 to help identify those who may have significant difficulties in exams
3. The SENDCo/Head of Academic Support collects medical or assessment reports, results of screening tests and other documents and submits a Form 8 and application to the Exam Board for individual exam access arrangements.
4. Agreed access arrangements are implemented in subsequent lessons and assessments throughout the GCSE / GCE course in order to build the evidence required. Examples of students' work are kept by the SENDCo/Head of Academic Support as evidence of need and normal way of working. Students' records and work are kept securely in the Academic Support Office.

Examination Arrangements

1. Prior to public exams, an individual timetable can be prepared for a student detailing the agreed arrangements and a copy sent to his/her parents. Students are encouraged to communicate freely with the SENDCo/Head of Academic Support and Examinations Officer to ensure as far as possible that current needs are being met.
2. Students taking exams on computers will have one individually assigned, in a dedicated computer room. The computers are set up for the specific students so that there is no access to spell checkers, calculators etc. (Personal computers of any form are not permitted; all computers used will be supplied by the College). If necessary, a student with a serious mobility difficulty may need separate provision on the ground floor.

3. Candidates with extra time allowances are seated where possible in separate columns in the examination room to reduce disturbance when the bulk of students enter or leave.
4. Invigilators are provided with a list of candidates with additional arrangements and their locations. They are trained in procedures for support, health and safety issues, and dealing with emergencies.
5. Practical exams involving students with SEND who have difficulties with co-ordination may require risk assessment procedures both in respect of the student and the safety of others in the room. Consideration must include such issues as: difficulties of access and mobility, obstruction of walkways, carriage of glassware, liquids and weighty objects, electrical connections and cables, handling and reading of instruments, confusing or forgetting instructions, recording of results.
6. Invigilators are instructed to contact the Examinations Officer, Director of Studies, SENDCo/Head of Academic Support, or Nurse (as appropriate) for advice and support if an urgent issue arises during an exam.