



Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

Independent Day School

Our Lady of Sion School

Last Reviewed: August 2024
Frequency of Review: Annually
Next Review Due: August 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy demonstrates compliance with the statutory requirements laid out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015)* which provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the *Children and Families Act 2014*, and the *Equality Act 2010*, and can be found on the DFES website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>.

This SEND policy explains how Our Lady of Sion School will identify and support pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities.

(From 1 September 2014, Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) replaced Statements of Special Educational Need (SEN). EHC Plans have the same legal status as Statements of SEN).

The aims of this policy are to promote good practice in our detection and management of special educational needs and to explain the support we can provide for children who have SEND.

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

Teaching and Learning
Curriculum
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
English as an Additional Language

2. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (January 2015) explains that a pupil has special educational needs (SEN) if:

- they have a learning difficulty or disability which makes it much harder for them to learn than other pupils of the same age, and
- they require special educational provision to be made.

There are four main areas of SEN:

- communication and interaction needs;
- cognition and learning difficulties;
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- sensory and/or physical needs.

A disability is described in law (the *Equality Act 2010*) as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

3. OUR AIMS

Our Lady of Sion School is a mainstream independent school with high academic standards which accepts children from the age of three years. To provide the very best academic tuition and support, we carry out screening tests on each pupil, in order to detect any signs of learning need where apparent from the test results.

Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we endeavour to provide all students with a high-quality learning experience. As a school, we strive to ensure that the children and young people educated within our setting, will experience social inclusion. We therefore have high academic and behavioural expectations of all students. Our intake of children and young people is closely monitored to ensure optimal support for children and young people with special educational need, therefore spaces are limited and timeous application for enrolment is necessary. Parents of a child with special educational needs or learning difficulty are advised to inform us when applying to sit our entrance exam so that we can make reasonable adjustments for them. Where appropriate, parents are encouraged to provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, a medical report or a specialist teacher's report.

Our Lady of Sion School believes very strongly that every child here should feel valued and included in the school community. We have high aspirations for all of our pupils, and therefore when working with young people with SEN and disabilities, we will always work to provide them with a broad and balanced curriculum, with high quality adaptive teaching and opportunities for learning differentiated to their needs. Adaptive Teaching is a highly responsive approach which requires real-time adjustment to practise, while actively teaching. Furthermore, we endeavour to ensure that all pupils are able to participate in the wider school life.

At Our Lady of Sion School, it is essential that we:

- communicate regularly and openly with all staff involved with the child. A home-school book is helpful where a child may be unable to communicate accurately or has difficulty expressing feelings and emotions;
- involve all staff. Make sure all who come into contact with the child, eg, lunchtime supervisors, support staff et al, understand their needs and how to respond;
- provide a quiet area or time out place for children who may become stressed during the day. The child should know that the use of such an area is to facilitate not punish;
- are consistent when applying rules; and remind and rehearse them regularly;
- reinforce oral instructions and communication with visual and tangible support;
- use visual prompts where necessary, such as a visual timetable;
- consider how the child will access the curriculum. Think about: teaching and learning objectives, appropriate support, allowing extra time and the style of delivery - does it suit all learning styles?
- constantly revise and reinforce learning;
- help children build friendships; use peer mentoring, buddies, etc;
- provide good role models. Make use of other children and staff to provide good role models;
- encourage communication between children and adults and between children themselves;
- celebrate differences and help other children to recognise and celebrate those differences too;
- support to facilitate independence, not impede it;
- realise we all have good and bad days, highs and lows. A good teacher will help the child to understand that a bad lesson or day can be turned around;

- growth mind-set language should be part of the school culture and support resilient learners;
- create an atmosphere of encouragement and acceptance in which all pupils can thrive;
- be sensitive to individual pupils' needs and celebrate achievements;
- enable each pupil to take part and contribute fully to school life;
- work in partnership with parents to support children's learning and health needs;
- provide quality training for staff that enables them to support pupils with SEN and disabilities.

We want all of our pupils to develop a positive view of themselves so that they can become confident individuals and go on to live fulfilling lives by making a successful transition into adulthood. We will endeavour to fully involve our pupils with SEN and disabilities in all decisions that affect them, so that they can help us to identify what works for them and reflect on what doesn't. The child's voice must be heard as we all work together to support in accordance with the individual needs.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL'S SEND POLICY

Our Lady of Sion School will do its best to ensure that the right provision is made for each pupil with special educational needs and disabilities. We are committed to discovering and providing the best learning conditions for each pupil.

In implementing this policy, our goals are:

- to apply a whole school policy to meet each child's individual needs following the guidelines of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2015);
- to follow and fulfil any EHCP provisions and stipulations and liaise with any external agencies as required
- to identify as early as possible those children who have a specific educational need;
- to identify barriers to learning and participation, and to provide appropriately to meet a diversity of needs;
- to ensure that all staff are aware of each child's needs and are provided with appropriate support so that such needs are met in all areas of the curriculum;
- to use the expertise of staff and the resources available to plan and deliver an appropriate curriculum;
- to ensure that tasks and activities are differentiated to meet the needs of all abilities;
- to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to meet the needs of all abilities;
- to ensure that children's records include information relating to their individual needs and record the interventions that have been provided as well as their outcomes;
- to ensure that pupils are given high aspirations in their learning; to seek their views about their learning, their progress and their school experience;
- to provide pastoral care and support in order to promote a positive self-image and self-worth of all children in the school;
- to regularly review and evaluate children's progress and to work in partnership with parents and children throughout the entire process;
- to ensure the involvement of all support and child health agencies in a multi-disciplinary approach to special needs;
- to ensure that all children have equal opportunities to experience all aspects of school life and ensure that children with special needs do not stand out as different from other pupils.

5. ADMISSION

Our school advocates for responsible inclusion, which includes being mindful of ensuring that our setting is able to provide the curriculum and support which best matches the needs of pupils with SEN(D) needs. Pupils with special needs including, for example, those formally diagnosed with dyslexia or dyspraxia may be accepted, as well as those who have been identified with special needs during their time at Our Lady of Sion Junior School when transitioning to the Senior School. While Our Lady of Sion School requires all prospective pupils to sit an entrance-exam, our school is committed to providing a safe and inclusive space where children and young people with SEN(D) needs can learn, grow and flourish. As a school we take pride in our rich but undeniably demanding curriculum and have high academic expectations. Flowing from the nature of our academic focus, it is unlikely that we would be able to accept children with severe special needs. As an independent school, notational funding through the Local Authority is not provided and provisioning to support pupils with SEN(D) is largely centred upon needs which can be met through resources already available within the school. As an independent school, not funded by the Local Authority except for where pupils have been granted an Education Health Care Plan, parents may be asked to fund additional SEN(D) support in addition to school fees. We will aim to provide the best possible education for each child if it is felt that Our Lady of Sion School is the best place to meet the needs of that child.

Prior to admission, we would expect a child to spend some time in our classrooms, experiencing Sion education for a day or two so that we can fully assess that we would be the correct setting for the individual. We would also request academic reports, school references and information such as SEN reports/Education Psychologist reports to ensure that we would be the most appropriate setting for the child.

It may also be necessary for the SENCO to provide parents with information as to where formal assessments can be carried out during their first term/year at Our Lady of Sion School if this has not been done prior to admission. Parent voice is valued and a positive attitude to understanding how parents are able to, or find it challenging to support their child's learning, is actively cultivated.

6. IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

On entry to Our Lady of Sion School, our SENCO meets each student with SEND together with their parents to discuss their understanding of their difficulties. The SENCO proposes strategies, taking into account recommendations in Educational Psychologists' Reports or medical notes. In collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Support Assistants, the SENCO disseminates relevant information to teaching staff and assists with the adjustment of teaching and learning for the students concerned. The Learning Support team work closely with the Key Stage Coordinators and Deputy Headteacher at all times.

All students identified as showing a specific need in the Senior School are screened using Lucid Rapid. Any challenges highlighted may be further investigated using computerised assessment tools such as LUCID Exact and LUCID Recall which can then be followed up by more detailed psychometric tests including CTOPP2, WIATII and DASH. These assessments are suitable to qualify students to access exam arrangements in the case of qualifying scores. We may on occasions recommend that pupils with suspected learning difficulties should then be assessed by a specialist in order to gain a formal diagnosis if this is something they and their parents' desire. The SENCO and the Learning Support Assistants organise and run support groups for students who experience specific learning difficulties, including but not limited to reading, writing, essay skills, self-image and motivation and study skills. They work on a one-to-one basis with students, inside and outside the classroom as considered appropriate, and liaise with parents in order to help the child to overcome the barriers that their difficulties present. Parents will be asked to fund this support in addition to school fees.

All students joining the Junior School will have visited the school and been assessed formally/informally (see Admissions Policy) by the SENCO.

Students in the Junior School are screened in Years 2-4 using the Lucid Rapid programme which assesses working memory and phonological processing. Students can be screened apart from these times in response to teacher, student or parental request. Weak scores in any area of the screener results will be followed by further psychometric tests with an assessment such as CTOPP2. Children are closely monitored by the Class Teachers. Where suspected specific learning difficulties arise, these are then brought to the attention of the Senior Teacher and SENCO.

Areas of concern may be targeted in an IEP in order to address specific difficulties. If a learning need is suspected the SENCO will run assessments to clarify strengths and weaknesses as appropriate. Student assessment scores such as PTE and PTM will also be taken into account. The SENCO and Class Teacher may in some cases discuss with parents whether it might be helpful to seek further assistance from medical professionals / educational psychologists / specialists in order to gain a formal diagnosis. Guided by the SENCO, LSAs (Learning Support Assistants) and TAs (Teaching Assistants), will work on a one to-one basis with students, inside and outside the classroom as considered appropriate, liaising with parents in order to help the child to overcome the barriers that their difficulties present. Parents will be asked to fund this support in addition to school fees.

In Early Years, where a child appears to be behind expected levels, information is gathered, and 'early help' is sought according to the SEND Code 2015 as appropriate.

Our teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, and we have systems in place to ensure that special educational needs are identified as soon as possible. We start by:

- providing teaching that is of a high quality;
- ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all learners through Adaptive Teaching and where appropriate, differentiated tasks and resources;
- regularly assessing our pupils' progress and targeting areas of difficulty.

A child's needs may become apparent through:

- admission procedures;
- teachers' observations within the classroom;
- screening procedures;
- expression of parental concerns.

Where a teacher has identified a concern regarding a child, they contact the SENCO and the Assistant Headteacher (Academic). The SENCO will then, as appropriate, discuss the teacher's concerns with the teacher, observe the child and determine whether an educational assessment is required. Parents will be informed of any concerns raised and proposed interventions so that open communication ensues from the outset.

Following an assessment and the identification of specific needs, and if it is decided that a pupil requires special educational provision - provision that is additional to and different from that which is available to other pupils in the school- the pupil will be placed on the SEN(D) Register, and a programme of 'school support' or 'monitoring' established. Parents will be informed by the SENCO, when this happens, and staff will be available to discuss concerns with parents. The Assistant Headteacher will always be included in all communication and the Headteacher will be updated too, to enable a full picture of student needs and always be available to the leaders of the school. A record of concerns raised, and subsequent actions will be recorded by the SENCO and a summary of this will be added to the academic concerns area of CPOMS.

7. PLACEMENT ON THE SEN(D) REGISTER

Parents, pupils, teachers, Learning Support Assistants, tutors, the SENCO, the Pastoral team, the SLT, external professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Social workers and Educational Psychologists, may all be participant in some capacity, when the decision to place a pupil on the register is made. Pupil voice is also considered critical, and our children and young people are encouraged to communicate their needs and whether they believe that they require referral, assessment or additional support.

It is often the case that students on the SEN(D) register have an Individualised Education Plan (IEP). These plans are based on the graduated Assess, Plan, Do, Review framework.

At Our Lady of Sion School, we employ the graduated response when supporting students with SEN and disabilities. It helps us to learn more about the pupil and about what helps them to make good progress. The four parts of this approach are as follows:

1. **Assess** – as already outlined above, we assess the pupil's needs, listening to the views of the pupil, parents, teachers and other professionals as we do so.
2. **Plan** – the teacher and SENCO will plan the support needed, involving the pupil and their parents. A review date will be agreed. The Assistant Headteacher (Academic) will oversee this process and ensure that the Headteacher remains informed and updated.
3. **Do** – the SENCO will help the teachers to support the pupil. They will think about the pupil's strengths and areas for development and how best to help them. They will also work with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved.
4. **Review** – everyone, including the pupil and their parents, will decide how effective the support has been. We will then adapt the support in light of the pupil's progress.

Where it has been identified that extra support is necessary for the child to access the mainstream curriculum, parents may be asked to grant permission for an educational screening assessment of the child's needs, conducted by the SENCO. Parents may elect to have their child assessed by an educational psychologist if further investigation into difficulties and needs are required. Results of all assessments will be shared with the parents and relevant teaching staff to discuss the way forward.

After discussion with all parties, additional 'school support', either on a short- or long-term basis, may be recommended and targets in the form of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for the child will be established.

Where appropriate, additional support from the SENCO or a qualified Learning Support Assistant will be provided as a package. Parents will be asked to fund this support in addition to school fees. This support may be one to one out of class, in a small group, or within the classroom setting. The level of support will be regularly reviewed and modified to suit the needs of the child. The cost of this additional support will depend on the individual need. The school will be explicit about additional hours of individual support required and the cost associated with this. Parents will then have the choice to proceed or not. This additional support will be reviewed each half term by the SENCO and progress will be shared with parents and changes made to the support where required.

The school will work with relevant external agencies (eg, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, or Occupational Therapists) to support individual needs.

Students with an EHCP Plan

Our Lady of Sion reserves a number of spaces in order to welcome pupils who through an EHCP, have access to additional funding which ensures that our school is able to provide for their needs as envisioned in the SEND and alternative provision improvement plan : "right support, right place, right time". The school can be

named by the Local Authority (LA) in an EHC Plan/statement with the school's agreement. Whether the school is named or not, a place will only be offered by the school once it is established that the school can support the provision specified on the statement/ECH Plan. Places for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan are limited, and parents wanting to name Our Lady of Sion as the preferred setting, are encouraged to discuss this with the child's SEND officer timeously. For students with an EHCP their progress will be reviewed in consultation with the LEA and an Annual Review will be held within a year of the previous Review. In addition, the SENCO will liaise with the LEA's advisor to visit the school to observe, discuss progress and any issues that may arise.

- Students entering Sion School with an assessment that identifies a need for extra time will be awarded this. A photocopy of all timed assessments where possible will be held on the individual's file for evidence to show what the student can achieve with extra time. The extra time will usually be indicated by a change of pen / font colour.
- Based upon this evidence, exam performance and advice from the subject teachers, an informed decision will be made about whether extra time is appropriate, and for which subjects the student studies. This decision will be made by the SENCO.
- The IEP will be reviewed regularly. This may be prompted by a report card or assessment results.
- The Annual Review will be conducted thoroughly, with the child or young person centre of the process. Additional recommendations to ensure their continued upward trajectory may be made at this time, and in consultation with stakeholders which include the CYP and parents, targets will be reviewed, and provision and support adapted to support the CYPs continued development.

9. COMING OFF THE SEN REGISTER

A pupil will be removed from the SEN Register for 'school support' if it is decided that they have made sufficient progress and are able to access the curriculum successfully. However, they will remain on the 'monitoring' list in case any issues arise. Some pupils may dip in and out of 'school support' and parents will be consulted at each stage.

10. EXAM ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Access Arrangements for exams are awarded following strict guidelines laid out in the JCQ Access Arrangements and reasonable adjustments document which is updated annually. In all cases, evidence of need must be provided, together with evidence of the arrangement being the child's normal way of working within the school.

The following arrangements can be made, subject to meeting specific criteria determined by JCQ, and are applied for formally in year 9 (or in year 10 or 11 if appropriate).

Supervised Movement or Rest Breaks

Supervised Movement or Rest breaks can be awarded by the SENCO, following the JCQ guidelines.

Extra Time

Additional time of up to 25% can be awarded to students who have been formally assessed by an Educational Psychologist and/or a qualified known assessor following the guidelines in the JCQ document. Extra time must be approved by JCQ. Additional time for pupils with an EHCP may be applied for and approved by JCQ, where substantive evidence to support the request, has been submitted.

A reader / reader pen

A reader / reader pen may be used by students when recommended by an Educational Psychologist and/or a qualified known assessor following the guidelines in the JCQ document. The arrangement must be approved by JCQ.

An adult reader will read for up to four students, depending on need.

Scribe

A scribe may be used on a 1:1 basis for students who have been formally assessed and meet the qualifying criteria as detailed in the JCQ document. This Access Arrangement must be approved by JCQ.

Word Processors/Laptops

Word processors/laptops may be used by students who normally use them as part of classroom practice. During the exam, tools that help with punctuation, grammar and spell checkers must be switched off unless otherwise specified by an Educational Psychologist's report.

Prompter

An adult may act as a prompt for a student with an identified need. This arrangement will be awarded by the SENCO following JCQ guidelines.

Practical Assistant

An adult may act as a practical assistant for a student with an identified need. This arrangement will be awarded by the SENCO following JCQ guidelines. This arrangement must be approved by JCQ.

The above options can only be used in examinations if they are part of normal classroom practice.

Children with concentration or focus difficulties:

- Students on the SEND List may also sit their exams in a separate room where the low-key environment may reduce some of the pressure they might otherwise experience.

ICT

ICT has a valuable contribution to make to the learning experiences of pupils with SEND as it can encourage pupils and enable them to:

- express themselves more effectively by providing tools that help them to overcome their difficulties;
- make learning more multisensory;
- explore and investigate by stimulating interest and enhancing problem solving abilities;
- consolidate skills in an enjoyable and rewarding way;
- enhance the presentation of their work.

Laptops can be used for certain classroom tasks if the need has been identified by an Educational Psychologist. These pupils need to have competent keyboard skills and will be encouraged to practice touch-typing on a regular basis. We are happy to arrange for children to use laptop computers and/or tablets in classes as and where this is recommended, for example in an Educational Psychologist's Report. See separate laptop policy available from SENCO and/or the Examinations Officer.

The Examinations Officer holds a small number of laptops for the specific use of children with access arrangements in examinations.

11. RECORD KEEPING

Detailed records are kept of all children placed on the SEND List to record all actions taken, assessments performed and ongoing progress. These records are important as part of the ongoing monitoring of a child and provide evidence for the termly review of progress towards achieving their targets. The SENCO maintains these vital records and shares them confidentially with staff to actively support teaching and learning.

12. STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION

All data including electronically stored data is subject to GDPR. All paper records will be held in line with the school's policy/protocol on security of information.

13. HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents are regularly updated on their child's progress by the SENCO in meetings and by email. Formal review meetings will be arranged by the SENCO, and these are normally termly. The SENCO will usually be present at Parents' Evenings for consultation, but update meetings are not restricted to these calendared times and parents are welcome to communicate as and when is necessary.

Parents will be given guidance on how to assist their child with work at home and will be encouraged to build up their child's confidence and self-esteem.

14. WITHDRAWAL

We reserve the right, following consultation with you, to ask or require you to withdraw your child from the School if, in our opinion after making all reasonable adjustments and exhausting appropriate strategies:

- Your child is in need of a formal assessment, additional specialist teaching, learning support or medication to which you do not consent;
- You have withheld information from the School which, had the information been provided, would have made a significant difference to the School's management of your child's learning difficulties;
- Your child's learning difficulties require a level of support or medication which, in the professional judgment of the Headteacher, the School is unable to provide, manage or arrange;
- Your child has special educational needs that make it unlikely they will be able to benefit sufficiently from the mainstream education and facilities which we provide.

Alternative placement: In any of these circumstances we will do what is reasonable to help you to find an alternative placement which will provide your child with the necessary level of teaching and support.

Withdrawal of a pupil in these circumstances will not incur a charge to fees in lieu of notice. The deposit paid in respect of your child will be credited to your account.

15. COMPLAINTS

It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and swift action. If at any point a parent has concerns about how their child's needs are being met, they should firstly contact their child's class teacher, form tutor or subject teacher as appropriate. For specific concerns or complaints about SEND provision, please contact Sharôn Bruwer (SENCO) in the first instance (bruwers@sionschool.org.uk).

If a parent feels that their concern or complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made to speak to the Headteacher or any other member of the Senior Leadership Team. A copy of the school's Complaints Policy can be obtained from the school's website.

Approved by Board of Governors August 2024

Appendix A: SEND ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION PROCESS OVERVIEW

