

2.6 Special Education Needs, Learning Difficulties and Learning Support (including 'more able' and talented pupils)

2.6.1 Learning Support

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Whilst independent schools are not required to adhere to the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2015)* published jointly by the Dept. for Education and the Dept. of Health, this policy has been drawn up taking due regard of its recommendations

2.6.1.1 Aim

The aim of this policy is to define and explain the responsibilities the School is able to accept, the support it is able to provide, and the responsibilities of parents in relation to pupils who may experience special educational needs or learning difficulties or may require learning support during their time at the school.

2.6.1.2 Related Policy

The School has an Admissions Policy which clearly outline its policy on admissions and procedures in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability.

2.6.1.3 Values and Principles

At the School we support and value the abilities of all our pupils. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every person in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every child as an individual. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life. The School adopts a 'whole school approach' to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). All staff work to ensure the inclusion of all pupils. The School is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes. The school will use its best endeavours to meet SEND legislation.

2.6.1.4 Definition of Special Educational Needs

A pupil at Sussex House has a '*learning difficulty*' within the meaning of Section 20(2) *Children and Families Act 2014* if he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age; or a disability which prevents or hinders him from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language (or form of language) in which he is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home. A child has a '*disability*', within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, if he has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

2.6.1.5 Background

A number of pupils in mainstream independent schools, such as Sussex House, may have, or show signs of having, a special educational need or learning difficulty which affects one or more subject areas for which different or additional educational provision may be needed from time to time. The signs of a special educational need or learning difficulty may not previously have been apparent or reasonably detectable. Special educational needs and learning difficulties may affect children who have a high IQ

as well as those of lower academic ability. The terms special educational needs and learning difficulty cover a wide variety of conditions and may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, and communication impairments such as autistic spectrum disorders. They may also include those who have physical disabilities, visual or hearing difficulties, or social, emotional or mental health difficulties. A pupil may also require additional support for other reasons, such as if the pupil has English as a second language. Parents are required to inform the School of any special educational need or learning difficulty that has at any time affected their children either currently or in the past or any other reason for which the pupil may require additional support. Any need for additional support in the school environment, whatever the origin, will be referred to below as a "learning need".

2.6.2 Aims and objectives

2.6.2.1 Aims

The School is committed to the principle that every pupil will have access to a broad and balanced education, in line with the *SEN and disability code of practice 2015*.

- We will strive to ensure that individual learning needs are identified in order to support progression and good mental health and well-being.
- The Governors, staff and pupils of the School will accept and value each other and their differences, and will use their best endeavours to ensure that the School is accessible and that no pupil will be discriminated against.
- Safeguarding procedures will be maintained to ensure that all pupils are protected from harm and neglect.
- All pupils with learning needs will be able to access the curriculum by the provision of differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, extra support or additional resources where appropriate.

2.6.2.2 Objectives

We are committed to

- The early identification, assessment and graduated provision for all pupils causing concern.
- The continuous monitoring of pupil progress to aid such identification and to involve all staff in the continued progress of pupils with SEND.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating all provisions in place to overcome barriers to learning.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers thus enabling them to take an active role in their child's education.
- Involving pupils actively in the decision making process regarding their education, where appropriate.
- Working with outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Ensuring support and regular professional development opportunities to enable staff to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that pastoral care and support is available for all pupils so that they may develop in all areas and build a strong sense of self-esteem.

2.6.2.3 Responsibility for the coordination of SEND provision

Mel Tsiligkeridis is responsible for overseeing and delivering the day-to-day provision for pupils with SEND. She also arranges assessments by specialist teachers to facilitate access arrangements for entrance examinations to senior schools. Mrs Tsiligkeridis also reviews reports from outside professionals (e.g. educational psychologists and occupational therapists) and produces individual educational plans as a result.

However, all staff are responsible for the learning progression of children with learning needs. Every teacher is a teacher of Special Educational Needs. Every teacher is expected

to anticipate individual learning needs. Every teacher is expected to overcome barriers to learning.

The Learning Support Co-ordinator has responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day learning support provision. This provision is:

- to work closely with class teachers and learning support staff
- to provide support to children on the Learning Support register
- to maintain the Learning Support Register
- to monitor the implementation of programmes of work designed for Learning Support pupils and supporting staff in developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- to ensure there is good liaison with parents and, when required, to meet with parents
- to co-ordinate the involvement of support agencies
- to facilitate regular reviews of children's IEPs and monitor their effectiveness
- to monitor Learning Support record keeping and keep under review
- to identify issues for INSET and resourcing
- provide specific guidance for pupils on the SEN register
- keep staff informed of new information from other agencies

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- ensuring their schemes of work show regard to the Learning Support policy
- disseminating information provided by the Director of Studies
- monitoring the provision and progress of pupils needing Learning Support

Subject Teachers will:

- provide differentiation for children across the ability range. This will include reinforcement for some children and extension activities for the more able
- ensure that the Headmaster, Director of Studies and Learning Support Co-ordinator are aware of any pupils needing Learning Support in their class.
- involve parents and ensure that a regular dialogue is maintained.

The pupil is involved at all stages of the Special Needs process. He may be invited to help plan targets and is involved in reviews.

2.6.3 Arrangements for coordinating SEND provision

2.6.3.1 Screening

Our approach to the detection and management of special educational needs and learning difficulties will be guided by the *"Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years"* (2015). The law imposes on schools a responsibility both for the physical and emotional well-being as well as the educational needs of pupils whilst in the care of the school. For this reason and also as a matter of good practice, Sussex House has introduced the following systems:

- During the Michaelmas Term, all pupils in the 2nd Form are assessed using the GL Assessment Dyslexia Screener. In the 3rd Form handwriting is assessed using the DASH assessment. Assessment results are kept in a folder in the Common Room.
- The school also carries out GL Assessment Cognitive Assessment Tests on an annual basis. These can help to identify underachievement by pupils and raise awareness of potential learning difficulties. It is important for parents/guardians to realise that these are screening and not diagnostic tests. The screening tests are not competitive, and no specific preparation is required, nor indeed would it be beneficial.
- If the outcome of a test or any other circumstances gives the School reason to think that a pupil may have a special educational need or learning difficulty, the School will report and consult with their parents/guardians as necessary and make recommendations. Assessment information may lead to a request for a formal

assessment by an Educational Psychologist, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapist, or by another professional as appropriate. The parents will be responsible for the cost of any formal individual assessment conducted by external professionals.

- Where a learning need is suspected or identified by a subject teacher, initial worries regarding pupils should be written on a Pupil Concern Form and given to the Director of the Lower School (2nd and 3rd Form pupils) or the Director of Studies (4th Form to 6th Form), who will discuss the problem with the pupil's Form Teacher and the Learning Support Co-ordinator. Parents of the pupil concerned will also be contacted by the Learning Support Co-ordinator to discuss the needs of the pupil. Observations and internal assessments will be made by the SENDCO to pinpoint weaknesses or strengths and this may result in the pupil concerned being registered as requiring Learning Support.
- Should a pupil be identified as requiring learning support, then an individual education plan (IEP) will be produced. This will identify targets for the pupil to work towards to and suggestions for teaching methods to be used with the pupil. An IEP summary list is kept in a file on the central drive (SNAPE) and staff are supplied with a regularly updated copy of this list. Reviews are carried out twice a year (or more regularly if necessary) and adjustments made if required.

2.6.3.2 Internal Special Educational Provision and Outside Professional Assessments

The School has access to specialist Learning Support Teachers who are qualified to make assessments and who are able to provide appropriate support to pupils with special educational needs and specific learning difficulties. The Learning Support Co-ordinator arranges internal support with staff as well as additional support from external agencies where appropriate. In addition, the School can provide the names of other Learning Support teachers, Educational Psychologists or other outside professionals to whom parents may refer for tuition, further advice or formal assessment. In every case, the decision whether to take up the Learning Support offered by the School or to refer to an outside agency under a private arrangement will be that of the parents, with advice from the School. Parents bear the overall responsibility for taking decisions about the management of their child's special educational needs or learning difficulties. A parent who would prefer to have an external formal assessment must ensure that the School is given copies of all advice and reports received. Where professional outside agencies are used the costs will be additional to the normal school fees, subject to the School's duty to make reasonable adjustments, and terms of payment must be negotiated separately by the parents with the outside agency.

2.6.3.3 Problems in single subjects

For boys who are finding a single subject difficult, subject teachers should indicate this at Staff Meetings and to the Director of Studies and, where possible, in-house extra tuition is offered. As a policy we will try and recommend outside tutors where a member of staff is not available to give extra tuition.

2.6.3.4 Extra Tuition

The school has its own Mathematics tutor who sees both those who have problems in the subject and those who are particularly gifted. However, Staff may be required to give some extra tuition as part of their salaried teaching programme. This is usually for pupils where it is agreed that they need extra help and that it should be the school's responsibility to offer it.

Parents may specifically request extra tuition for their son from a member of staff. In these cases, it would be regarded as something of a luxury and parents would be expected to pay extra. Staff should be careful to ensure that, as much as possible, they are treating all requests fairly. They should only charge an acceptable rate (which can be confirmed by the Director of Studies). Names of boys being given extra tuition should be given to

the Director of Studies. It is most important that parents are dissuaded of the need where there is no real need or, perhaps, just offered one or two 'catch-up' sessions to restore confidence.

2.6.4 Touch typing

The School's policy on use of keyboards (for word-processing) is based on recommendations in the Joint Council for Qualifications handbook: *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* (2016). Whilst the handbook only refers to public examinations (i.e. NOT Common Entrance and Scholarship Examinations to Public School), the stance of the majority of the schools that Sussex House pupils move onto is that pupils should abide by the JCQ regulations. This can be summarised by the principle that a word-processor cannot be used merely because a candidate wants to word-process or that they use a word-processor at home.

The need to use a keyboard can be identified, either

- (i) by an educational psychologist, occupational therapist or another similar specialist, or
- (ii) by teachers suggesting that a keyboard would be appropriate for a boy's normal way of working.

It should be noted that permission to use a keyboard at Sussex House DOES NOT mean that destination schools will automatically permit their use in entrance or scholarship examinations, or once boys start studying at their destination schools. Parents are advised to contact destination schools for further information.

Following identification, boys will be taught touch-typing. Such training should last 8 – 10 hours approximately, assuming there are no specific learning disabilities (including developmental co-ordination disorder; hypermobility; speed of processing and working memory issues). This training will enable the common keys to be accurately used. Subsequently, speed will be developed at the weekly Sussex House typing club, in conjunction with parents at home.

When using keyboards, the optimal performance by pupils in lessons and/or exams is only achieved when they are able to touch-type whilst copying text at rate of 30wpm with 90% accuracy on each row and be able to maintain this for at least 5 minutes. Bearing this in mind, all requests to use keyboards will be assessed on a case by case basis by the Learning Support Team and the Headmaster.

2.6.5 Statements of Special Educational Needs and Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

Parents and the School have the right under Section 36(1) of the *Children and Families Act 2014* to ask the local authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC plan. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right. If the LA refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the School) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Where a prospective pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an EHC plan, the School will consult the parents and, where appropriate, the LA to ensure that the provision specified in the Statement or EHC plan can be delivered by the School. The School will cooperate with the LA to ensure that relevant reviews of Statements and EHC plans are carried out as required. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the Statement or EHC plan will be charged in accordance with the School's Policy on Learning Support Charges, subject to the School's duty to make reasonable adjustments.

2.6.6 Extra Tuition

One of the unique features of a Sussex House education is the school's ability to offer a highly-tailored approach to each individual pupil. In order to best support each pupil's need, at any point in the academic year, the school has in place a system of individual support lessons (commonly termed as 'Extra Tuition').

The purpose of extra tuition is to offer short-term support to particular pupils, where there is an identified need (e.g. catching up work after illness or preparation for a specific examination). Extra tuition is also available to offer a structured programme of advanced study for more able pupils. Unless there is a clear educational case, longer-term support should be handled by a programme of teaching and differentiation within curricular lessons.

In cases where support is needed and beneficial to a boy, the school will fund a course of (up to) four sessions; thereafter parents will need to pay the prescribed rate to continue the sessions.

For boys who do not necessarily require the support, but where extra tuition has still been requested, parents ought to be charged for tuition from the first session. The prescribed rate for all academic tuition currently is £65 per hour (*pro rata* for shorter sessions). For two students taught together the rate is (2x) £35 if the parents are paying and £65 if the school is paying.

All staff are required to advise the Director of Studies of extra tuition requests, and of sessions provided, so that the register of extra tuition is kept up-to-date. No paid tuition must take place without prior consent from the Director of Studies. This is the case where tuition is offered to any pupil of Sussex House. Where there is a request to provide extra tuition to a sibling of a Sussex House pupil, such requests ought to be referred to the Headmaster.

It is expected that extra tuition sessions will take place on school premises; sessions taking place off-site are considered exceptional and require prior approval from the Headmaster.

The payment system for extra tuition has been designed to be practical and straightforward for both staff and parents. In ensuring that all academic extra tuition is paid through the payroll, some key benefits are:

- That all staff members will be compliant with their tax liabilities on extra tuition earnings, and thus avoid the trouble of needing to submit a self-declaration tax return for these earnings,
- That payment for both school-funded and parent-funded lessons will come through the payroll at the same net rate; on a consistent, monthly basis,
- That staff members will not need to deal with the administrative burden of needing to chase parents for payment, since parents will be charged through the school bill.

In order to receive the right payments for extra tuition, the process is simple. When the Bursar requests details of extra hours worked (typically near the end of each calendar month), staff are asked to email the details of tuition hours since the last payroll, and for each boy tutored, specifying which hours are to be paid by the school and which are to be billed to parents. All will then be paid through the payroll.

Under no circumstances must a current member of staff agree to coach any boy due to sit the Sussex House Entrance examinations.

2.6.7 'More able' and Talented

At Sussex House School there is a high proportion of pupils who are academically very bright, who not only demonstrate their more able ability through their performance and contributions at the school but also in their results on national standardised tests. There are also many pupils who are talented in a particular area.

In artistic, musical and athletic areas the staff are specialists and are particularly aware of boys' abilities. Especially able children are given every opportunity to develop their skills at a faster pace, often through highly personal guidance and tuition. For instance, exceptionally talented musicians are given the opportunity for recitals within the school, in some cases accompanied by a professional orchestra.

Staff are encouraged to discuss individual pupils if they feel that there is evidence of a pupil being gifted in their subject. This should be raised with the Director of Studies who will then broaden the discussion with the pupil's Form Teacher and subject teachers. Evidence

All more able pupils at Sussex House should be consistently challenged to a level that best supports their pace, depth and experience of learning. In lessons, pupils should demonstrate extremely good concentration and should be encouraged to spontaneously ask higher-order questions. They should also be encouraged to make perceptive links between areas of study. Furthermore, there should be positive encouragement of creative solutions to problems and also, individual areas of expertise should be nurtured to a high level.

In consideration of how to best stimulate, support and challenge each more able pupil as an individual learner, through both lessons and homework, teachers may adjust:

- the pace, difficulty and style of teaching and learning interactions
- the type and variety of questioning
- the degree of independence/guidance required
- the degree of differentiation by both tasks and outcomes
- the opportunities for task-related peer interaction and learning
- the promotion of higher-order skills, and
- the opportunities for structured reflection on the learning processes and outcomes.

In addition to the above, there are formal structures in place to best support more able pupils in 4th, 5th and 6th Forms:

- in 4th Form there is an accelerated Mathematics set, across all Mathematics lessons, for pupils who have demonstrated especially able ability in Mathematics or related STEM subject work. The teaching covers more challenging material and explores skills and knowledge in extension of the mainstream Mathematics curriculum. The creation of this specialist teaching set is an innovation from September 2019 in response to the increasing number of pupils who are academically in the school's intake.
- in 5th Form there is a specialist Scholarship set that operates in English, Mathematics, Science, French and Latin. The composition of the set is carefully considered (see section 2.1.2 The Curriculum) and in the main, the pupils will be aiming to undertake the Scholarship entry pathway to their destination senior schools. The work in the set is structured towards a faster-moving syllabus, and also to delivery opportunities for more comprehensive learning. The content of the subject courses are, objectively, more challenging, and the boys are taught in a manner that promotes the development of skills in problem solving, data analysis and critical evaluation.
- in 6th Form the set becomes a form in its own right, with the Master of the Scholars overseeing the pupils' progress as their Form Master. The boys take scholarship level lessons across all subjects that continue to offer a very-high degree of academic challenge and are also geared towards the specific scholarship entry

papers of their destination senior schools. Following the examinations (typically in May), the boys in the 6th Scholarship Form are further extended by a stimulating and specialist programme of lessons, activities and experiences.