

# SEN Policy

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## Introduction

Caroline Chisholm School is a larger than average, cross-phase, mainstream school encompassing children from 4-19 years. Within the secondary phase of the school, we host a designated special provision (DSP) for autism and have ten places within this provision across the secondary phase.

Admissions to the DSP is determined by NCC and reflects specific admissions criteria. More information about our DSP is available on request.

We recognise at Caroline Chisholm School that a range and degree of learning difficulties, behavioural problems, physical or sensory disabilities will be experienced by some of our students. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school, with a strong focus on academic progress of all our students notwithstanding any additional needs. The primary focus is to secure outstanding outcomes for all of our young people.

It should be noted that:

1. As appropriate, the aims and objectives of the Learning Support Team relate directly to those of the school and the Statement of Principles adopted by the LEA. These are also based on the values derived from, and are guided by, the requirements of the Equality Act 2010; SEND Code of Practice (2014); Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
2. To be consistent with the SEN Code of Practice 2014, the following terminology has been used:
  - A student is recognised as having a learning difficulty if he/she has **significantly greater** difficulty learning than the majority of others of the same age
  - A student under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition above, or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them
  - This definition of **learning difficulty** does not apply to students who have learning problems solely because his/her first language is different from the language in which he/she will receive his/her education
  - It is noted that the following factors may impact on progress and attainment but are not in themselves a learning difficulty:
    - Disability (the Code of Practice 2014 outlines reasonable adjustment duties under the Disability Equality legislation which we are compliant with)
    - Attendance and punctuality
    - Medical conditions
    - Being in receipt of student premium grant
    - Being a looked after child
  - The term "parents" is employed throughout this policy and others to refer to any parent, guardian, or other adult in "loco parentis"

## Aims

1. To ensure full entitlement and access for SEN students to high-quality education within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and stimulate student interest and enjoyment of their education
2. To educate students with SEN, wherever possible, alongside their peers within the normal curriculum of mainstream schools, after giving due consideration to the appropriate wishes of the students and parents and their individual needs
3. To enable SEN students to be familiar with a body of knowledge, skills, principles and vocabulary in order for them to lead full and productive lives
4. To identify and assess students with SEN at the earliest opportunity
5. To fully involve parents and students in the identification, assessment and delivery of SEN and to strive for close co-operation between all agencies concerned
6. To work proactively with local authorities and other external agencies to ensure we perform our role in terms of joint commissioning of services (Children's and Families Act 2014)
7. To advocate a person-centred planning approach
8. To provide requisite information for the "local offer" in accordance with the special educational needs (local offer) (England) Regulations Clause 30, and at the behest of the local authority
9. As a mainstream educational setting we will use our best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by the student's or young person's needs (Code of Practice 2014)

## Admissions

The Principal and SENCO monitor our annual intake to ensure that students with special educational needs have not been refused admission or discriminated against because of their special needs.

- For those who have SEN, but are not in receipt of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), we will consider applications on the basis of our published admissions criteria as part of normal admission arrangements.
- For those that have an EHCP, we will liaise closely with the local authority and parents and will ensure that our legal obligations are met.

## Identifying Special Educational Needs

### Primary

Within the primary phase, students who have additional needs are identified by nursery provisions and transitional visits are made by the SENCO. Further identification is usually made initially by class teachers and subsequently investigated by the SENCO. All students are tracked via Development Matters in the foundation stage, and subsequently via national curriculum and P scales in Key Stages 1 and 2, which may lead to identification of students who are not making expected levels of progress.

### Secondary

The process of identification and assessment normally starts through liaison with our primary feeder schools, or home visits. Relevant staff visit our feeder schools or students' homes to meet prospective students, parents and teachers during the year prior to

commencement.

During the first few weeks of term, all year 7 students are given a reading test (which provides a reading age and standardised score) and a numeracy screening shortly after. Identification of students needing literacy or numeracy support will be largely based on the results of these tests.

Subsequent requests for support are also considered from various sources, including parents and teachers. Some students may personally request support and the school endeavours to assess, identify and intervene as far as is possible within the limits of the resources.

Parents will be contacted if assessment or referral indicates that a student has SEN and are thereafter kept regularly informed by a variety of means of their child's progress.

Within both Primary and Secondary phases identification of Special Educational Needs is a holistic process, taking into account the needs of the whole child.

## **A Graduated Approach to SEN Support**

### **Curriculum**

The Learning Support Team works closely with the senior managers of the school curriculum regarding the timetable to ensure that:

- It is balanced (i.e. that it allows for and facilitates adequate development in each curricular and skill area)
- It allows for differentiation according to individual needs
- It offers equality of opportunity and access to the different curricular and skill areas

This entitlement curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to the student's needs, both present and future, and that it is perceived as such by the students themselves and their parents.

### **Quality of Teaching**

Caroline Chisholm School recognise that "all teachers are teachers of special educational needs" (Code of Practice 2014). In order to support this, the Learning Support Team offers advice and INSET (training) opportunities to subject teachers and other departments on employing differentiated teaching methods and resources to meet the needs of a wide range of learners. Additionally, we ensure that subject staff are made aware of the special educational needs of any students in their charge.

We recognise that high quality teaching, appropriately differentiated, is the first step in responding to children who have or may have SEN and that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for good quality teaching. We regularly review the quality of teaching for all students which includes additional INSET opportunities for teaching staff to improve understanding of strategies to support vulnerable students.

## Additional SEN Support

The Learning Support Team staff:

- Provide expertise in the education of students with learning difficulties;
- Provide expertise in the education of students with social emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- Provide expertise in the education of students with dyslexia;
- Provide expertise in the education of students with specific numeracy difficulties
- Provide expertise in the education of students with autistic spectrum conditions

A range of support is offered to students who are identified as needing additional SEN support above that of good quality teaching.

How do we decide if a young person needs additional SEN support?

- **ASSESS:** The decision is made to allocate additional SEN support dependent on the individual's level of need and ability to access the school curriculum and make good progress. In making this decision, we consider academic progress and national benchmarking in conjunction with information from a range of skill-specific standardised assessments
- **PLAN/DO:** If a child is indicated as likely to benefit from SEN support, we discuss and plan the type and focus of this support and share this information with parents in a variety of formats including IEPs (primary phase) and student profiles and target documents.
- **REVIEW:** These documents are reviewed termly by the Learning Support Team, and where appropriate, with the student. This review will discuss the progress information provided by subject teachers within our internal census and the impact that SEN support is having on supporting the student's progress. Parents can of course request access to this review.

## Managing Students Needs on the SEN Register and the Local Offer

The range of SEN Support at CCS includes access to shared LSA support in lessons, intervention programmes such as literacy, numeracy and social support, alternative provision and reduced class sizes in some subjects. This reflects the needs of any given cohort and as such will change over time.

Careful consideration will be given to each student's needs in terms of determining their access to additional support. Their allocation will be determined with reference to the significance of their needs in relation to those of their peers. We are committed to an equitable, flexible and creative distribution of this resource. It is based on a principle of equivalent funding and not limited to a number of hours of LSA support formula.

In terms of the local offer, we deploy devolved SEN money to facilitate the range of additional SEN support as described above. If an individual's required SEN support provision is in excess of the devolved money already made available to CCS, then we may decide to apply to the High Needs Panel in order to be able to make the necessary provision available in school. We will notify parents of such applications as required.

For those that have an EHCP, any application to the High Needs Panel would be in excess of the individual monetary support already provided by the EHCP.

Should we believe a child's needs meet the published local criteria for an EHCP, we will make the relevant application to Northampton County Council. This step will only be taken after lengthy and substantive discussion with parents.

## **Specialist External Support**

A range of external specialist support is made available within school and is funded by CCS. This range includes the Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy Team Target Autism and Visual Impairment and Hearing Impairment support teams. The decision to involve and fund specialist external support will be made on the needs of the individual child in relation to the needs of their peers, the likely benefit of such support and the perceived impact on student well-being and progress.

Additionally, we work proactively with external agencies to secure good outcomes for our children. As part of this work we are familiar with and act as lead professionals on Early Help Assessments for those that meet the criteria of and would benefit from a multi-agency approach. A central part of the EHA process is to work proactively with parents.

## **Access Arrangements**

In terms of Access Arrangements, we follow the guidance of the JCQ and ensure that all those who qualify under the JCQ criteria and would benefit from access arrangements have these in place. We operate under the principle that access arrangements must reflect usual classroom practice. Parents will be informed if their child has been allocated access arrangements and support arrangements are discussed between parents and learning support staff.

## **Support Outside of the School Day**

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Every effort is taken to ensure that all those who would like to take part in such an activity are not disenfranchised by any additional need. In a very small minority of predominantly overseas visits, this process requires close working between our Learning Support Team and parents/carers to ensure that there is a balance of consideration between health and safety risks and the benefits of such opportunities.

A range of activities are staffed during lunchtimes by Learning Support staff to ensure that students who would benefit from such activities are able to do so.

## **Student Well-Being**

In order to support the emotional and social development of our students, there is a range of provision which includes a nurture group (primary phase) and designated social support during lunchtimes. We have a strong pastoral system and every child has a form tutor with whom there are regular opportunities for dialogue. There is a safeguarding team who meet on a weekly basis to discuss any concerns regarding student well-being and take appropriate actions when needed.

## **Communication with Parents**

Planners are provided to students who need them, and act as the first point of contact between school and home and all students have a form tutor who is the primary point of reference for parents/carers. **All** students who have an EHCP have an individual caseworker within the Learning Support Team who acts as an additional link between home and school and will routinely monitor progress and wellbeing.

Information about the curriculum studied by our students is available for parents/ carers to read on our website. Details of homework assignments are available for parents to view on Insight.

## **Transitions**

Transitions into and out of CCS are managed by the Learning Support Team for those students who have EHCPs. This may also apply to those students not named in such a document but who may require a high level of SEN support and as such have a higher level of need than would ordinarily be met by the usual transition work of the school. We recognise the importance of parents within this process and seek their involvement at every stage.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

SEN provision is regularly reviewed internally by both the Learning Support Team and wider personnel within the school. Additionally, we have undergone an external revision of our SEN provision and we participate fully in an annual review of our DSP which is managed by Northampton County Council.

Provision and progress of SEN students is discussed on a termly basis by the governing body at the Students Sub Committee and we have a SEN nominated governor.

## **Appendix 1**

Information on Northampton County Council's Offer can be found at the following link:  
[www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/localoffer)