



# **Special Educational Needs Policy 2016**

## 1. Introduction

As a non-discriminatory institution, we want to offer as much support as possible to students who experience difficulties with learning. As such we have compiled the following, in addition to the **Equalities and Non-Discriminatory Policy & Disability Policy**, to give guidance on recognising difficulties and what steps to follow if a student needs support. All information regarding a person will be kept in the strictest confidence.

## 2. Assessing learning difficulties

If everyone is aware that lateness, disorganisation, poor awareness of time, and difficulty with analogue clocks can all indicate dyslexia, this may make us more alert to those students who are not late of their own volition. Students may also lack the organisational skills to complete homework tasks. This may also apply to students who have autistic-type characteristics, or who have attention disorders. When combined with the low self-esteem and demotivation which can affect students who are struggling to read and write, or study in general, a good deal of patience may be required to ensure that all students have the chance to achieve their best outcomes. Specific help with organisational and study skills may be of immediate benefit.

Teachers can find **documents on the T drive** online which will help them think about particular students' presenting difficulties. (The digital document is called *Learning Difficulties\_Differences\_Defns\_Symp\_links.doc* and is in the *Learning Difficulties* folder). This is not about labelling people, but thinking about what they're coping with and finding practical ways to help. A *Dyslexia Adult Checklist* is also available in the folder.

### 3. Administrative procedures

#### Pre admission

A **Special Needs Assessment** form needs to be completed when **assessing a student for admission**, in cases of **pre-advised** learning difficulties or physical disability. The Special Needs Coordinator will act as a link between the marketing team and the teachers/managers. The marketing team will keep the SENCO advised of the needs of a potential new student, then discussions with senior managers will determine whether the school can provide for the student's needs at the time of the request.

The **Application Form** and **Consent and Medical Declaration Form** have both been redrafted to include possible self-referral re medical or learning needs. There should be SENCO input whenever these are **redrafted**.

An **Individual Action Plan** will be completed at an early stage for students that we can accommodate - preferably before arrival. The IAP is **saved online in the Special Needs folder**, a signed copy is held on confidential file held by the class teacher (with the placement test) and ideally the student receives another copy, although this is not always practicable for all students and all ability levels.

**Preparation of an IAP** will need to include the **Operations Manager** if there might be any physical difficulties which could affect the student's safety in the building: a meeting is required between the relevant parties (Principal, SENCO and Operations Manager) and the OM will need to **sign the IAP** to show that safety has been considered. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be prepared by the OM where relevant. A buddy will be assigned, who may be the class teacher, and a sign-in sheet may be required in addition, to cover out-of-class time, when the OM's team will be the evacuation buddy.

If the class teacher is the buddy, any substitute teacher will be informed of this responsibility by a **note on the weekly plan**.

If there are evacuation issues, the OM will complete a **Risk Assessment** on induction day, and **inform relevant staff of H&S issues**.

**Accommodation** - support services (under the Operations Manager) will be aware of accommodation suitable for students with various physical needs.

## Placement testing

Documents on the T Drive will be used to inform **senior teachers** when conducting **Placement Tests**. The Placement Test should **specifically state** that **no special educational needs** have been found, where this is the case. Otherwise, **referral** is initiated.

The SENCO will assess any **Placement Tests** which raise questions about possible learning differences, and there may need to be a further **assessment interview**, either with the DOS or SENCO, according to availability.

On **induction** day, accessibility of information such as **schedules** needs to be considered, and vital information may need to be given orally or by email.

Whenever the **Placement Procedure** is reviewed, the SENCO should be part of the consultation.

## Internal referral - at any time

If you have **concerns** about a student, you should **talk to other teachers**, especially if the student is new to you but familiar to others, and you should then share your concerns with the SENCO or DOS.

## Register of Concerns

A **register** (kept on the T Drive, and administered by the SEN team - the SENCO or their deputy) will be kept of any students about whom concerns have been raised at an informal level. **The student's entry on the register** will be **printed and attached** to the learner's profile, so subsequent class teachers will be aware of the issues raised. Most of these students can be catered for in regular lessons, with a suitable level of input. The SEN team will make sure this list is **reassessed** at regular intervals, at least monthly, and that appropriate help is being provided. **If the student's needs are not being met** in general classes, an **IAP** will be prepared.

## Individual Action Plan

This would be required, for example, if a student's failure to progress leads to an offer of **1-to-1 tuition**, and the IAP should aid with **monitoring** the student's progress from this point.

The IAP will be completed by the SENCO and the class teacher (with approval of senior managers) within 2 weeks of referral. This should be **saved online in the Special Needs folder**, and a copy **printed** to accompany the student's placement test in the class folder, with an additional **copy for the student**. Review dates will be built in and must be **diarised**.

## 4. Implications

### Your teaching

Following concerns raised, or an assessment of needs, the resulting teaching should be **learner-centred**, focussed on **access** to the curriculum, and should start from individual **strengths**. Many suggestions which help students with specific difficulties will also help the whole class, and are just good practice: for example, giving clear instructions.

For more ideas about teaching students with particular difficulties, an extract and a full copy of *Access for All (DFE 2002)* is available on the T Drive in the *Learning Difficulties* folder. The full document includes, for example, **acceptable terminology** to include in your reports and assessments. Derogatory terms should never be used, either when talking to other staff or in writing.

Other documents are available in the *Learning Difficulties* T drive folder which should help answer your preliminary questions on strategies to use with various learner differences. These will later include '**Top 10 Tips**' leaflets, which will be introduced at staff meetings over the coming months (from February 2016.)

### Shared resources for teachers

A **Google Drive folder** is being used to share resources for visually impaired students. This is within the NCG shared folder/SEN students/NCG blind student.... and will include scanned reading tasks, audio conversions, braille conversions etc.

### Lesson Plans

The **class profile** in **lesson plans** should include a mention of any special difficulties, the problems that teachers might anticipate, and the measures that will be taken to overcome them. The copy given to inspectors should be **anonymised**, for safeguarding reasons.

### The golden rule - ask the learner

If you suspect a student is experiencing difficulties, arrange a time when you can sit and discuss this with them privately. The student will often be the best expert on what helps them most: what colour paper, which colours of writing on the board, whether an overlay would help, etc. If you identify **specific resources** which are not currently available, please talk to the DOS or SENCO.

Following this conversation, an **Individual Action Plan** may need to be completed.

## IELTS and other exams

Exam centres need to be **pre-warned** about special difficulties, and will need some evidence, especially of dyslexia, which requires a formal assessment if allowances are to be made. For IELTS and other Cambridge Exams, an application for additional support or extra time during the exam needs to be submitted at least six weeks in advance (follow this link for further details: <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/special-circumstances/>). This will rarely be possible for our students, given cultural difficulties in talking about learning differences and their generally short stays in the school. Simpler problems, though, like stammering, hearing difficulties etc., may qualify a student for more time in the test; these need to be considered, and **negotiated, before** the day of the exam.

## Observations

The SENCO will occasionally **observe classes** which contain pupils who have been alerted to the SEN team, and such observations will **inform procedures and training**.

## 5. Teachers with dyslexia

**Although this document is aimed at supporting students, if you are a teacher:**

- **Visual** lesson planning can help dyslexic teachers to be more organised: search for '**5 minute lesson plan**' for online templates.
- Difficulties with spelling need to be acknowledged, and solutions found, e.g. negotiating with students for them to double-check any spellings given in class.

## Appendix - document control

Edit date	Changes	By	Next review date
Nov 2014	Document agreed	J Ayres, NCM management	
May 2015	Document control table added Printed copies of the SEN documents are no longer kept in the staff room A new checklist is available in the shared folder	J Ayres	November 2015
June 2015	Details of use of referral, assessment and planning documents added/clarified.	J Ayres	November 2015
November 2015	Details of forms and procedures were clarified, removing references to an Agreement form which is not used - the Action Plan performs this purpose	J Ayres	May 2016
December 2015	Header, footer added	J Ayres	May 2016
January 2016	Amendments following tightening-up of procedures. Next review - keep same date, as the policy beds down.	J Ayres	May 2016