

SEND Policy



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At The Spires College we seek to serve the local and wider community by offering students a fully inclusive learning environment in which to flourish as individuals. We are committed to inclusion and the ethos that every teacher is responsible and accountable for all students in their class; every teacher is a teacher of Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

1. General principles

We are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our students whatever their needs or ability:

- ▲ No student is refused admission to the college on the basis of their special educational need or disability in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- ▲ All students are entitled to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.
- ▲ All students are entitled to be valued by all staff for the individual contribution they make and, therefore, are entitled to experience success and feel positive about themselves.
- ▲ The members of the governing body together with all subject teachers, learning mentors, Heads of Department, Heads of Year and the Senior Leadership Team accept responsibility for students with special educational needs and disabilities. All teachers are recognised as teachers of SEND.
- ▲ SEND occurs across the full ability range; students may require special provision or consideration during their time at the college (the details of which are included in this policy).
- ▲ Many students, other than those identified as having SEND, may need temporary help and support during their academic life as they face setbacks.

2. Definition of Special Educational Needs

The Code of Practice (2014) states that:

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or a disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others 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 others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Where a child or young person has a disability or health condition that requires special educational provision to be made, they will be covered by the SEND definition. (Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years – Department for Education June 2014)

3. Aims and objectives

We aim to:

- ▲ Ensure that students with special educational needs are given every opportunity to experience success, achievement and fulfilment in their work.
- ▲ Ensure that students with SEND join in the activities of the college together with students who do not have SEND, so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with the students receiving the necessary special educational provision.
- ▲ Provide educational, emotional, sensory and technical support in a positive learning environment.
- ▲ Ensure that staff and governors operate a system that effectively identifies and monitors the performance of students with special educational needs; to conduct regular reviews of their progress and the provision made for them as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2014).
- ▲ Provide inclusive education for students who have difficulty accessing the curriculum.
- ▲ Maintain, review and update a record of the needs of each SEND student and make these details available to all teaching and support staff.
- ▲ Ensure that all staff (including relevant outside agencies) are aware of, and involved in, furthering the education of students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ▲ Continue to follow transition protocol in line with Torbay Local Authority, to ensure the sharing of information in order to enable support for students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ▲ To implement a graduated approach to supporting students with SEND using a Assess, Plan, Do, Review process.

4. Identifying students with SEND

The SEND Coordinator (SENDCo), the designated Head of Year 7 and the Assistant Principal with responsibility for Primary to Secondary transition will liaise with relevant primary schools to ensure that information about all students transferring from primary school to the college is shared effectively.

At the start of Year 7, or on entry, all students are assessed on their cognitive ability (Cognitive Abilities Tests) to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in order to create a learning profile across the subject range. This information is used alongside data from primary schools to ensure that students who may need additional support, within any subject area, are identified and early intervention is provided.

Once needs are identified, a graduated response to supporting the student's need will begin. The college may undertake early intervention in order to support students with any difficulties they may be experiencing; the aim is to support students to develop independence as they progress through the college, helping them to prepare for life beyond school. Where relevant, the SENDCO may enlist the services of specialist professionals such as Educational Psychologists and Advisory Teachers.

Details of each student with special educational needs including the nature of their learning disability and recommended teaching strategies will be available to all teaching staff. All teaching staff will be made aware of this information and informed when any significant changes are made.

It is the responsibility of all staff to liaise with the SENDCO should they have any concerns that a student may have previously unidentified special educational needs. There is a referral process, which supports concerns raised by teachers, Heads of Department and Heads of Year. Appropriate observations and assessments are then undertaken to identify any specific need.

5. Assessing and reviewing student progress towards outcomes

The attainment of all students in years 7 to 9 is tracked through departmental assessment three times each year. From Year 10, all students at the college have individual academic targets, which are set centrally, based on prior attainment. Progress towards these targets is assessed by class teachers and is reviewed across three data sets, which are informed by ongoing assessment. Student progress is monitored by the class teachers, Heads of Departments, Head of Year and the SENDCO.

Students who require additional support through SEN Support will have a SEND caseworker who will meet regularly with them and offer support and advice to teachers. They will regularly discuss their progress and well-being. The caseworker will liaise with class teachers to plan effective support for students. Liaison with parents and the SEND team is termly to review and evaluate support, provisions and progress.

Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will have targets from the plan, which will be monitored and reviewed by the SENDCO and SEND team. These targets will reflect the ambitions and aspirations of the student and will be outcomes based. Progress against these targets will be reviewed at least once at the Annual Review. Parents and carers will be invited to annual reviews of EHCPs, at which point their views as well as those of the students will be sought. Relevant professionals will be invited to these reviews, where appropriate. Between annual reviews, relevant information from external professionals may be discussed with parents/carers and/or the student directly and/or via a written report.

6. Supporting students between phases of education

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for a young person with SEND and take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

The college's pastoral team are actively involved in all areas of transition across phases of education ensuring that support is available for students who require it at key points in their education.

Students identified as vulnerable, having SEN, or requiring extra support on transition will be identified by primary schools as requiring enhanced transition arrangements. The SENDCo may be invited to Year 5 and/or 6 Annual Reviews. The Enhanced Transition Programme aims to increase familiarity with the college environment and expectations, and to reduce any anxiety that the student may have. Students with higher levels of need with an EHCP will also have a personalised enhanced transition package. All this enables pastoral staff to assess student need and to profile the level of support a student will require on entry to the college. Parents will be invited into the college during the transition period to discuss their child with a member of the SEND team.

In-year admissions may be supported by an enhanced transition. When the need for additional support is identified, a bespoke package may be created in order to ensure a successful admission and this may involve support from the SEND department or Inclusion Centre.

Year 8 Annual Reviews aim to help students explore their aspirations and how different Key Stage 4 options can help them achieve these. The SENDCo is available at our Year 8 Options Evening.

Year 11 Annual Reviews aim to explore Post-16 options and create a clear pathway for progression Post-16. Information relating to the needs of students will be shared with the next educational provider and The Spires College may support transition visits where required.

During Year 11, all students with EHCPs will have the opportunity to meet with an advisor from Careers South West; this is in order to provide students with independent advice and guidance for transition from Key Stage 4 to 5 and beyond.

7. Adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment

We passionately believe that all teachers are teachers of SEND. There is an expectation that teachers will be aware of the learning needs of all students that they teach and will differentiate their teaching strategies and their resources appropriately.

The SENDCo, with the help of external professionals where appropriate, will work with staff to ensure that every student is able to access the curriculum.

The Equality Act (2010) requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to enable all students, visitors and members of the college community the ability to access the same opportunities. Reasonable adjustments are made on a daily basis according to need, by working collaboratively with students, their parents/carers, visitors and all members of the college community. We will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments. Not taking "reasonable steps" to avoid putting the aforementioned at a substantial disadvantage can only be justified if there is a reason that is both material and substantial to the particular case. The college can take account of:

- the need to maintain academic and other standards
- the funding available
- the practicalities of making the particular adjustment
- health and safety
- the interests of other students or members of the wider school community

8. Ensuring expertise among teachers and other professionals to support SEND students

The college places great value in the professional development of our staff. All staff follow a clear induction programme which includes a SEND session focusing on 'quality first teaching', differentiation and adapting teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. Key research and strategies are shared regularly with staff and staff can access on-going support, advice and guidance through the college's SENDCo and professional development programme.

The SENDCo works closely with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that a range of development opportunities and resources are available to both teaching and support staff throughout the year. These development opportunities are adapted to ensure that they address the needs of all current students.

9. Provision for Students with Special Educational Needs

The college operates a graduated approach to student need. The vast majority of concerns can be addressed by class teachers, tutors, Heads of Department, Heads of Year and Pastoral Support Managers. The first contact is the student's tutor, the Pastoral Support Team or Head of Year. If a concern persists, the tutor will signpost parents/carers to the most appropriate person to support them. If there are still concerns that needs are not being met, the relevant staff member may seek to consult or refer the student for support or intervention through the SENDCo.

The progress of all young people including those with SEND is the responsibility of the class teacher. The overview of SEND students is the responsibility of the SENDCo who will monitor, coordinate and evaluate the provision of these students.

The SENDCo can be contacted by telephone on 01803 400660 or by the email address published on our website.

10. External Support

The college is able to access external support as part of the Local Offer. Information about the Local Offer is available at:

<http://fis.torbay.gov.uk/kb5/torbay/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

11. Enabling students with SEND to have access to facilities and extra-curricular activities

The SENDCo works closely with specialist advisory teachers and relevant health professionals from Torbay Local Authority to ensure that all students with physical or sensory needs have the best possible opportunity to access facilities in the college. This may involve accessing or purchasing specialist equipment or making special arrangements to assist a student with moving around the college site. The Spires College is committed to inclusion.

12. Supporting and improving social and emotional development

The Assistant Principal responsible for SEND and the SENDCo work closely with Heads of Year and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that all students are able to access learning and make progress.

During morning registration, all students have the opportunity to speak to their tutor. Students identified with social and emotional difficulties may participate in group or one to one intervention programmes and/or access the school counsellor. Where necessary, students may spend registration in the SEND tutor group to allow for a more personalised approach to registration.

All SEND students have a SEND caseworker who liaises with them regularly. When appropriate, advice or intervention from external professionals will be sought.

13. Concerns and Communication

Regular communication between home and school is essential and central to a student's progress. Contact by telephone, letter, text or email may be used to support or initiate communication.

Reception is open from 8 am to 4 pm for general queries and to contact teachers or other members of staff. Teachers will not be able to take calls during teaching time; the reception staff will pass messages on.

If parents wish to discuss any matter with someone at the college, the first point of contact is usually the child's tutor. However, if parents have a query about a specific subject only, the subject teacher or Head of Department should be contacted. Staff will respond to parental concerns as promptly as possible, and usually within 24 hours.

Each child is also supported by a Head of Year and staff in the student support centre. In the Sixth Form, the Head of Year is the Director of Sixth Form and Assistant Head of Sixth Form. Issues relating to SEND can also be discussed with the SENDCo.

14. Complaints

Any formal complaints should be made through the Complaints Procedure as detailed on the college website.

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