



# EPSOM

## COLLEGE

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY**

#### **1. Introduction**

Epsom College ('the School') is committed to the equal treatment of all pupils including those with special educational needs ('SEN') and disabilities. This policy works towards eliminating disadvantages for pupils with SEN and disabilities by:

- using best endeavours to ensure that all pupils (including those with medical conditions) get the support needed in order to access the School's educational provision;
- not treating disabled pupils less favourably than their peers;
- making reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission and education;
- ensuring that pupils with SEN and disabilities engage as fully as practicable in the activities of school alongside pupils who do not have SEN and disabilities;
- ensuring parents are informed when special educational provision is made for their child and are kept up to date as to their child's progress and development.

In drawing up this policy, the School has had regard to the following guidance and advice (in so far as they apply to the School):

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Admissions Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Disability Equality and Access Plan.

#### **2. Definition of Special Educational Needs**

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, 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 children their age;
- have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools;

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. The School's support for those children whose first language is not English is set out in the School's Outline of English as an Additional Language Provision.

### **3. Definition of Disability**

A child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Not all pupils who have SEN are disabled. Not all disabled pupils have SEN.

### **4. Governor and Staff Responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for determining school policy and provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities.

The Headmaster is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the School's SEN provision and keeping the governing body fully informed of the implementation of the School's policy in practice.

The Head of Academic Support's responsibilities include:

- determining the strategic development of the SEN and disability policy and provision in the School, together with the Headmaster and governing body;
- having overall day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN and disability policy;
- coordinating specific provision for children with SEN and disabilities, including those who have EHC plans;
- ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the School's approach to identifying and meeting SEN;
- ensuring that teachers are given any necessary information relating to a child's learning support needs and/or disabilities (if known) so that teaching practices are appropriate;
- ensuring parental insights are considered by the School to support their child's SEN and disability;
- liaising with the School's medical staff, external professionals and agencies, as appropriate;
- ensuring that the School keeps records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

The School's Academic Support Department consists of 3 teachers.

All teachers are responsible for helping to meet a pupil's needs (irrespective of any specialist qualifications or expertise). All staff are expected to understand this policy so that the School can identify, assess and make provision to meet those needs.

### **5. Identifying and Supporting Pupils with SEN and Disabilities**

The School's curriculum, plan and schemes of work take proper account of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. The School regularly reviews pupil progress to help monitor whether children are

making expected progress. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN (and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN). However, where the School reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, for example where there are early indications that a pupil is not making expected progress, the School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents and the pupil (as appropriate) to help determine the action required including whether any additional support is needed, such as in-class support.

The School may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child (such as by an educational psychologist), the cost of which will usually be borne by the parents. Where parents wish to request a formal assessment from outside of school, they should ensure the School is given copies of all advice and reports received.

If there are significant emerging concerns, or identified SEN or disability, the School will take action to put appropriate special educational provision in place taking into account any advice from specialists. Parents should always be consulted and kept informed of any action taken to help their child, and of the outcome of this action. Generally, these discussions will be coordinated by the Head of Academic Support, with involvement from other members of staff as necessary. Due weight will also be given to a pupil's wishes (according to their age, maturity and capability).

Arrangements for special educational provision and support are made through the School's graduated approach to SEN support: assess - plan - do - review:

- **Assess:** The School will carry out an analysis of the child's needs so that support can be matched to need. Reading comprehension assessment, writing speed assessment and cognitive ability screening, led by the Head of Academic Support is carried out at the start of term for all new students. If not already done so the School may, in consultation with parents, engage external agencies and professionals to help assess the child's needs and advise on any support needed. Any specialist advice received will usually be discussed with the child's parents.
- **Plan:** Where it is decided to provide SEN support, the teacher and the Head of Academic Support will agree in consultation with parents and the pupil the adjustments, interventions, support and any teaching strategies or approaches that are to be put in place. These will be recorded on iSAMS
- **Do:** Teachers will work closely with the Head of Academic Support to assess and monitor the targeted plan of support and the impact of support and interventions in place for the child.
- **Review:** The effectiveness of any support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed termly OR as agreed between the School and parents. Teachers, working with the Head of Academic Support, will revise the impact and quality of the support and interventions in light of the pupil's progress and development and will decide on any changes to the support in consultation with parents and the pupil (as appropriate).

The School recognises that some pupils with a SEN may also have a disability. The School will do all that is reasonable in order to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can adequately cater.

#### Recording progress of pupils with SEND

The School will record the progress of and any support for pupils with significant learning difficulties or disabilities or where they have an Education Health Care Plan. This will be recorded by way of through the school provision map. This is drawn up in consultation with the pupil's teacher, the Head of Academic Support, the pupil and their parents and kept on the School's information system. The provision map contains key information such as:

- Progress and attainment level
- Teaching strategies
- The additional or different provision of support in place
- Involvement of any specialists or professionals
- Information the pupil would like to share about themselves, e.g. strengths, weaknesses, diagnosed learning difficulties, disabilities or medical conditions and what these mean to the pupil and how these affect them

The provision map may be amended as and when circumstances change and at the request of the pupil, parent, teacher, or Head of Academic Support.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding), together with their parents and teachers, review the plan regularly and the child is encouraged to take ownership of it and to set their own targets.

The School will measure the overall progress of pupils with SEND at the end of the various key stages such as GCSE and A level to see how much progress they make compared with that of their peers. This is key part of the Department of Academic Support's development plan.

#### The School's SEN Provision

The School's SEN provision currently includes: in-class differentiation, learning support (in and out of class), additional specialist teaching, support from the Head of Academic Support and additional one-to-one lessons (usually charged to parents).

#### Further aspects relating to SEND provision

##### Admissions

The School is academically selective and welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities offered and can flourish in its caring environment. The School's Admissions Policy aims to eliminate from the admissions process, as far as possible, any substantial disadvantages which may be encountered by applicants with disabilities.

The School will treat every application from an SEN and disabled pupil in a fair, open-minded way. However, the School will assess all pupils for admission on the basis of its standard selection criteria from time to time.

The School endeavours to ensure that it is able to fully support the needs of all prospective pupils. Parents of children with disabilities, SEN or learning difficulties are advised to discuss their child's requirements with the School before the School considers the application for a place and before they sit the School's entrance exam so that adequate provision can be made for them on the day. Parents are asked to provide a copy of a medical report or educational psychologist's report to support a request, for example, for large print material, extra time, use of laptops or other special arrangements. Before an offer of a place is made, the School will assess whether it is able to adequately cater for and meet any SEN and disabilities (if known) through discussion and meetings with parents, consideration of any professional reports and references from previous schools as appropriate.

An offer of a place may not be made if the School determines, following consultation with parents, that they are unable to meet and provide for a child's needs. The School will always consider its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The School's Admissions Policy can be found on the School's website. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and details how the School supports those applicants with SEN and/or a disability.

### Withdrawal

Where, after all reasonable adjustments have been made or considered, the School feels that it is unable to accommodate a disabled pupil or meet their needs, the School may require parents, after appropriate consultation, to withdraw their child. Fees in lieu of notice will not be chargeable in these circumstances and the Confirmation Fee returned.

### Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan ('EHC Plan')

The needs of the majority of pupils with SEN will be met effectively through the School's SEN support. However, where the child or young person has not made expected progress despite the SEN support in place, parents and the School have the right to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC Plan for their child. Parents are asked to consult with the School before exercising this right. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right.

If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, parents have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber). The School does not have this right of appeal.

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC Plan, the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC Plan can be delivered by the School. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan may need to be charged, either directly to the parent or to the Local Authority if the Local Authority is responsible for the fees and the School is named in the EHC Plan. In all other circumstances charges may be made directly to parents, subject to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The School co-operates with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant annual reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.

### Three-year Accessibility Plan

A copy of the School's Accessibility Plan can be found on the School's website. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

### Bullying and Behavioural Issues

All pupils are taught that any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Pupils are taught through the curriculum, PSHE, assemblies and tutor periods the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with kindness, courtesy and consideration. The School's behaviour and anti-bullying policies make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

The School recognises that disabled pupils or those with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to being bullied. The School's Anti-bullying Policy makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

The School also recognises that bullying (or other matters such as bereavement) can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN but where there are concerns, an assessment may be undertaken to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues.

The School recognises that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can therefore exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed if there are any safeguarding concerns relating to a child.

#### Entitlements to additional time and/or support in external assessments

Children who have been diagnosed as having a learning difficulty may be entitled to support, such as additional time and/or modified provision, to complete external assessments. Parents should speak with the Head of Academic Support with regard to any application for additional support as soon as reasonably practicable. The Head of Academic Support will process applications for appropriate examination access.

#### Concerns

The School will listen to any concerns expressed by parents about their child's development and any concerns raised by children themselves. Parents must notify their child's Housemaster/mistress or the Head of Academic Support if their child's progress or behaviour gives cause for concern.

#### Review

The School will review this policy regularly to ensure the School meets the needs of those pupils with SEN and/or disabilities.