

## **QUEEN MARGARET'S SCHOOL, ESCRICK PARK, YORK**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY**

#### **Policy to promote the successful inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN) at Queen Margaret's School.**

At Queen Margaret's School, we are committed to providing an inclusive, and accessible, curriculum for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities. Not all pupils with disabilities have special educational needs and not all pupils with SEN meet the definition of disability but this policy covers all of these pupils.

The legal definition of special educational needs is set out in the 1996 Education Act. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children 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 children of the same age.

The specific objectives of Queen Margaret's Special Educational Needs Policy are as follows:

- All prospective pupils of the school will take an entrance test, suitable for their year of entry, to establish that they have an acceptable level of ability to meet the academic demands of the school.
- All prospective pupils (except pupils for whom English as an Additional Language (EAL)) will take a dyslexia screening test.
- Pupils identified as needing support will be interviewed by an experienced member of staff, to ensure that the school can meet their needs and to ensure that students with special educational needs and disabilities will have the opportunity to join in with the activities of the school.
- An experienced teacher will be provided to support the pupil, once admitted to the school.
- An experienced teacher will establish a programme for each pupil needing support to ensure that all learners make the best possible progress
- Effective communication between parents and school will be established.
- Pupils will have the provision to express their views and will be fully involved in decisions which affect their education
- A close link is established with all academic departments to monitor the academic progress of the pupil.
- A close link is established with all resident staff to ensure effective pastoral care of the pupil.
- A close link is established with the Medical Centre as and when necessary.
- Effective partnership and involvement of outside agencies will be established when appropriate.

The success of the school's SEN policy will be judged against the aims set out above.

#### **Admission to Queen Margaret's School**

Queen Margaret's admissions criteria do not discriminate against pupils with special education needs or disabilities; its admissions policy is detailed in The school's Disability Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan 2009 – 2012 (SENDA). In addition, Appendix A details the legal framework within which the Special Educational Needs Policy operates.

### **Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs**

The school is committed to early identification of special educational need and adopts a graduated response to meeting special educational needs.

Prospective pupils that are already identified by an Educational Psychologist's report are interviewed by the Head of the Pupil Support Department.

- The interview although informal includes a reading, comprehension and spelling assessment. The results of these assessments are discussed with parents and then forwarded to the Headmaster.
- As part of the entrance examination procedure all prospective pupils are given a dyslexia screening test (Ann Arbor). All parents are informed that this test is being taken.
- All children who are identified from the dyslexia screening test as 'at risk' and are subsequently offered a place at Queen Margaret's school are assessed by the Pupil Support Department on entry into school.
- In addition to those pupils identified prior to entering Queen Margaret's School, a range of evidence is collected from feeder primary/preparatory schools and through assessment and monitoring throughout a pupil's time at the school. All entrants to Year 1 are assessed at the beginning of the school year using The Wide Range Assessment Tests (WRAT 4). These provide standardised scores in Spelling, Single Word Reading and Comprehension. All pupils are reassessed with parallel forms of WRAT 4 in Year 3.
- All new entrants to the school from any year group are assessed when they first arrive using the appropriate WRAT 4.

Teaching and residential staff will also continually monitor a pupil's progress and if there is any evidence to suggest that a pupil is not making the expected progress, consultations will take place with relevant parties - the pupil, her personal tutor, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), housemistress, parents, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) - and appropriate provision will be made.

### **STAFF**

The named SEN coordinator for the school is Mrs Maggie Tate (MT). She is the Head of the Pupil Support Department and successfully completed a Masters Degree in Education (Special Education) 3 years ago. Her areas of expertise are Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Accelerated learning, Educational Kinesiology, Brain Gym and Synthetic Phonics. MT supports pupils in Years I-VI. MT has recent updated training in Access Arrangements. A statement of the role of the SENCO is in Appendix B.

Mrs Juliet Edwards (JE) works part time in the Pupil Support Department supporting pupils in years I - VI. She is accredited by the British Psychological Society to assess pupils for examination access arrangements. She has a Masters Degree in Special Educational Needs and is currently studying for a Masters Degree in Psychology.

Mrs Dawn Hill (DH) works full time in the Pupil Support department supporting pupils in years 1- VI. She is experienced in multi-sensory teaching and has experience of the Dyslexia Institute's programmes and methods. DH has also studied assessment procedures and has recently completed a Masters Degree in Education (Special Educational Needs).

## **PROVISION/ACTION THAT IS ADDITIONAL TO OR DIFFERENT FROM THAT AVAILABLE TO ALL**

All provision will be recorded in a Classroom Individual Education Plan (CIEP) which will set out cross curricular classroom strategies and classroom targets as well as the pupil's Pupil Support provision and Pupil Support targets. The format of the CIEP template can be found in Appendix C.

Subject teachers are asked to provide information about identified pupils concerning their strengths, difficulties, position in the teaching group and a progress review comment on the previous year's targets. Information collected from teaching staff is then collated by members of the Pupil Support Department and used to inform the Classroom Individual Education Plan. These are written by the pupil's Pupil Support teacher and pupil participation in setting, agreeing or amending targets is encouraged. Parental comment and involvement is at Parent/Teacher meetings or by email or telephone contact.

CIEPs are formally reviewed annually. However, they are evaluated on a regular basis in discussions between teachers, house staff, personal tutors, the Pupil Support Department and the pupil herself as part of an ongoing process of helping pupil's monitor their own progress.

If further provision is required then a case conference can be convened to include parents, SENCO, Senior Leadership, the pupil, Housemistress and personal tutor. Subsequently, an agreed Action Plan would be developed.

The management of CIEPs and IEPs is reviewed regularly within the Pupil Support Department and with Senior Leadership.

**N.B. This policy should be read in conjunction with Queen Margaret's School Disability Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan 2009 – 2012 (SENDA).**

Appendix A: The Legal Framework

Appendix B: The Role of the SENCO at Queen Margaret's School, Escrick

Appendix C: Format CIEP template

## **The Legal Framework**

### **Legislation**

The legislation concerned with Special Educational Needs and Disability is the Education Act 1996 and the 2001 SEN and Disability Act (SENDA). The legal definition of special educational needs is set out in the 1996 Education Act. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children 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 children of the same age in schools in the area. Particularly relevant to the Pupil Support Department at Queen Margaret's are the requirements to ensure that:

- There is equality of opportunity in the school
- The admissions policy does not discriminate against children with SEN or disability
- The code of practice is followed with an effective system of identification and a staged response to meeting individual needs.

It is important to maintain a record of support and intervention for individual students, demonstrating how a child's needs have been identified and met and justifying the ensuing course of action.

### **Role of the SENCO – legal developments**

SENCO status was first defined in the SEN Code of Practice 1994. Responsibilities of the SENCO, as outlined in the code of practice, include:

- Working with, advising and contributing to the training of other teachers
- The teaching of, and maintaining records of, children with special educational needs
- Maintaining contact with the parents of children with special educational needs
- Working with other agencies including medical and psychological services as needed

The SEN code of practice 2001 further explained and expanded upon the role of the SENCO, with responsibilities for:

- Ensuring liaison with parents/carers
- Ensuring that Individual Educational Plans are in place
- Advising other staff about SEN
- Ensuring a school policy for working with children with SEN
- Putting in place a graduated response system to meet children's needs at the earliest opportunity

The latest publication referring to the role of the SENCO, Removing Barriers to Achievement, 2004, suggests that the SENCO should play a role in influencing the development of whole-school policies. The Education and Skills select committee report on SEN, 2006, made 2 further recommendations:

- The SENCO should be a qualified teacher
- SENCOs must be trained to keep their knowledge up to date

## **Disability Discrimination Act**

The Disability Discrimination Act was introduced in 1995. In 2002, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 was implemented and disability discrimination law was directly applied to the education sector. The law covers all activities and facilities provided to pupils including the provision of teaching, examinations, learning resources and access to facilities. In 2010 the Equality Bill was introduced.

The Disability Discrimination Act requires schools to:

- Provide realistic access to the curriculum for all pupils
- Take into account a students' needs and assessment recommendations as part of the admissions process
- Provide SEN pupils with appropriate provision and undertake a duty of reasonable adjustment
- Make provision to ensure that the school is notified of a students' needs
- Ensure all staff are aware of students' needs
- Ensure SEN students are included in all appropriate activities and receive appropriate learning
- Ensure programmes of learning and resources are used effectively
- Report to parents and ensure parents are kept informed of any significant factors
- Have regard to the SEN Code of Practice
- Ensure all teachers are aware of their responsibilities in the identification of, and provision for, students with SEN.
- Maintain evidence of intervention
- Respond to parental concerns

The Disability Discrimination Act has particular reference to Access Arrangements for examinations. It requires the awarding bodies to:

- Allow disabled candidates to use 'reasonable adjustments' in examinations
- Not discriminate against candidates with difficulties or discriminate between candidates with different disabilities
- Ensure Access Arrangements are available dependent upon need and not just disability
- Allow exemption from specific parts of an examination
- Identify, remove or justify possible barriers for disabled candidates within their qualifications

The Disability Discrimination Act currently allows for the protection of 'competence standards'.

Access Arrangements must not jeopardise the integrity or security of the examination or assessment. It is the centre's responsibility to:

- Identify candidates with difficulty accessing assessments
- Explore which Access Arrangements are available and would constitute a 'reasonable adjustment'
- Make applications on-line
- Keep all evidence on file including a history of need and support
- Put Access Arrangements in place in accordance with the JCQ regulations

- Not discriminate against candidates with difficulties or discriminate between candidates with different disabilities
- Ensure Access Arrangements are available dependent upon need and not just disability

## **Data Protection**

The data protection Act 1998 requires that data processed in schools must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection

In addition, as test administrators we have a duty to adhere to the Data Protection Act and the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and must recognise:

- We have both a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure the security and confidentiality of our assessments and all their associated data.
- We are governed legally by the Data Protection Act (regarding the security and confidentiality of tests, their scores and personal information) and the Human Rights Act (regarding the rights of the test takers) but additionally we have moral responsibilities towards test takers with whom we are working.
- Test publishers have a duty to ensure that only those persons qualified to do so are authorised and have access to assessment materials. Subsequently, having purchased these materials it is the responsibility of the test administrator to ensure that only authorised users have access to these materials.
- All test materials and data must be kept in a secure place, with no access to unauthorised persons. Test scores, written reports and personal data should be securely placed in a locked filing cabinet whilst bulkier assessments and test equipment should be in a locked room such that only authorised users have access. It is equally important that when moving location, assessment materials must continue to remain secure and that suitable storage is put in place. To retain the authenticity of tests secure storage must be such that test takers can have no prior access to the tests.
- Before an assessment can take place, test takers must be fully informed as to the identity of the test administrator and their qualifications, the purpose of the test and full consent obtained. In the case of children, parental consent must be obtained. Test takers are entitled to information regarding the whole assessment progress, what will happen after the assessment has taken place and information regarding test scores and their interpretation. Test takers must also be told what will happen to the resulting data obtained. This includes the ensuing release of information, who will have access to these scores, how the information will be stored and for how long. It is important that only the personal information required is noted and taken down accurately, and likewise, only those assessments carrying a purpose towards addressing the assessment question are administered.

## The Equality Act 2010

From 1 October, the Equality Act 2010 replaces all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It also provides some changes that schools need to be aware of.

The new Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

As far as schools are concerned, for the most part, the effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. However, schools that are already complying with the law should not find major differences in what they need to do.

The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for schools that existed under previous legislation – such as the content of the curriculum, collective worship and admissions to single sex and schools of a religious character, are all replicated in the new act. However, there are some changes that will have an impact on schools as follows:

- It is now unlawful to discriminate against a transsexual pupil.
- It is now unlawful to discriminate against a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby.
- New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.
- Extending the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. However this duty is not due to come into effect until a later date, following consultation on implementation and approach.
- The three existing general and specific equality duties on schools (race, disability and gender) to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity will be combined into a single, less bureaucratic and more outcome-focused duty extending to all of the protected characteristics. However, **this change will not come into effect until at least April 2011** so the existing equality duties are to remain in place until then.

The Role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator  
Queen Margaret's School

Specifically the SENCO is responsible for:

- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers.
- Compiling and maintaining the SEN register.
- Overseeing and updating all records on pupils with SEN.
- Creating and maintaining communication and consultation with parent/carers.
- Determining and contributing to staff professional development.
- Working in partnership with external agencies.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policy and procedure.
- Leading the SEN team responsible for devising and implementing the Pupil Support Development Plan.
- Meeting and liaising with Sister at the school medical centre.
- Meeting and liaising with Boarding Staff
- Meeting and liaising with the Heads of Department.
- Meeting and liaising with the Schools Examinations Officer particularly in relation to Access Arrangements
- Informal and regular contact and communication with Year Heads.
- Advising on the content and detail of the school's SEN policy.
- The day to day operation of the SEN policy.

Appendix C: CLASSROOM INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN

NAME

D.O.B.

YEAR

REVIEW DATE JAN 2011

NEXT REVIEW DATE JAN 2012

STANDARD SCORES SPELLING

READING

COMPREHENSION

IDENTIFIED DIFFICULTIES

STRENGTHS

LEARNING SUPPORT PROVISION AND OUTCOMES

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

CLASSROOM TARGETS

MT/JAN/2010