



Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

1. Policy

1.1. Values and Principles

The Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation's (hereafter called 'The Foundation') vision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is the same as for all children and young people – that they achieve and lead happy and fulfilled lives as stated in its Academic Strategic Plan – Aim:

'To provide an outstanding educational experience which promotes equality of opportunity for all our pupils, 3–18, allows them to fulfil their potential, and fully prepares them for further education and the global environment beyond.'

The Foundation is an inclusive and equal opportunities establishment. Pupils identified as having special educational need or a disability will, like all pupils at The Foundation, be entitled to access the full school curriculum and be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the School to achieve their full potential in all areas of school life.

For those identified as having a special educational need or a disability, The Foundation is committed to providing the appropriate support, as best as it can reasonably accommodate and free of charge, so that they can become individual, independent learners and fulfil their potential through high attainment and achievement.

This policy has due regard to the statutory guidance contained in the *Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice [2014]*, the statute law of the *Families Act [2014]* and adheres to the philosophy underlying the *Equalities*

Act [2010]. The School commits to observing its principles and does not discriminate on any grounds.

1.2 Definitions

The *Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice [2014]* and the *Families Act [2014]* define a Special Educational Need or Disability as a child or young person who has:

‘a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.’

A child with a learning difficulty ‘has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age’.

A child with a disability ‘has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.’

Children are not 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.

1.3 Policy Objective

The Foundation, in following the 2014 Code of Practice, will follow a *graduated approach* where decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil’s needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. There are four key elements to this approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

1.3.1 Assess

The School will ensure rapid identification of all pupils requiring SEND provision by providing limited screening for all pupils entering The Foundation in their first term to assess their literacy and numeracy needs. Such screening will be subject to any limitations in expertise, experience or the diagnostic tools available. Parents may seek further professional diagnosis, with which the School will assist if able, but any fees will be payable by parents. It is recommended that parents consult

with the school SENCo before any external assessments are sought.[Further information on the tests applied can be found in the Learning Support Handbook].

It is expected that all staff will refer those pupils who they suspect may have learning difficulty to the Learning Support Department for screening, subject to any reasonable limitations in their qualifications, experience or expertise.

It is expected that parents will ensure that the School is in full possession of all previous diagnostic tests, medical reports and previous school reports which might be important in the School recognising and addressing, as far as it can reasonably make, a pupil's special educational needs or disability.

Should screening indicate that a specific learning difficulty exists, the School will inform parents of the services and provisions they can reasonably expect to be provided with, including further assessment for Access Arrangements.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the screening and assessment process.

1.3.2 Plan

Upon diagnosis of a learning difficulty, the Learning Support Department will draw up a Learning Profile detailing the pupil's specific learning difficulty and how teachers can support that pupil in lessons. Pupils with a Pupil Passport may not necessarily receive additional specialist support but their needs will be covered by Quality First Teaching.

For those whose learning difficulty or disability requires specific additional support, their Learning Profile will detail the support provisions in place and the specific skills which will be covered, as well as the outcomes sought. [Further information on the thresholds applied to qualify for additional support can be found in the department's handbook]

Parents will be invited to collaborate on the contents of the Learning Profile, ensuring that they are happy with the information being shared with teaching staff, as well as the provisions arranged. The Learning Support department will continue to work with parent/carers to gain a better understanding of their child and involve them in all stages of their child's education. This includes supporting

them in terms of understanding SEND procedures and practices, in particular those provided for their child,

1.3.3 Do

Pupils with SEND will have full access to the School's curriculum, but some aspects may be tailored appropriately. This will be co-ordinated by liaison between the Head of Learning Support, Heads of Section and Heads of Department, and will be carefully monitored and regularly reviewed in order to ensure that individual targets are being met and all pupils' needs are catered for. Parents will be consulted and kept fully informed of any planned curriculum adaptations.

All teachers are teachers of special needs and as such are accountable for the progress and development of all pupils with a learning difficulty in their class with high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, as the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Continuous monitoring of those pupils with SEND should be undertaken by their teachers to help ensure that they are able to reach their full potential.

Where a learning difficulty requires additional support, one-to-one or small group timetabled provision will be organised on a fortnightly basis, dependent on need, to overcome all barriers to learning and address individual needs. A record of curriculum and skills coverage in each lesson will be kept. [Further information on additional support can be found in the Learning Support Handbook]

The Learning Support Department will also work with and in support of outside agencies when the pupils' needs cannot be met by the school alone.

1.3.4 Review

The School will ensure that parents/carers of pupils with SEND are kept as fully informed of their child's progress and attainment via interim curriculum reports and formal reports, in line with the School's reporting policy.

It will ensure that pupils with SEND and their parents are involved in decisions affecting their future SEND provision.

The Learning Support Department reserves the right to discontinue additional support if its assessments suggest that a pupil, who has benefited from additional

support and secured the foundation skills, would no longer gain any measurable benefit from further additional support. Parents will be informed of this decision.

1.4 The Accessibility Plan

1.4.1 The School's layout and facilities:

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- Chorister School, Cathedral Site consists of very old buildings that have been recently refurbished but still have many staircases and steps to negotiate
- The Senior School also consists of a range of old buildings, many of which are listed. The most recent additions are the Derek Best Block, built in 1985 and MacLeod House, built in 2006
- Both sites are located on undulating / hilly terrain accessed by pupils through paths and walkways
- The School has disabled toilet facilities in Macleod House at the Senior School, and an accessible toilet in the Administration Block at the Senior School.
- Ramps have been added to various buildings as part of ongoing maintenance projects

Wherever possible, the School will make reasonable adjustments to the timetable to allow pupils with restricted mobility to attend accessible parts of the school.

1.4.2 The School has a plan in place to help comply with the relevant parts of the Equality Act (2010). This is an update of, and replaces, the DDA plan. The Foundation will review and evaluate the plan annually to:

- access the effectiveness of actions taken in the previous year
- set targets for the forthcoming year
- update in the light of any legislative changes

A copy of the plan is appended to this policy. Shading indicates that an item has been completed.

1.5 The Local Offer

The School will cooperate fully with the local authority and local partners in the development and review of The Local Offer in order to provide a comprehensive, transparent and accessible picture of the range of services available for students and parents.

The School will also publish its Handbook and SEND Information Report, detailing the kinds of special educational needs for which provision is made and the procedures the department follows.

2. Procedures

All SEND procedures are outlined in the Learning Support Department's Handbook

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The Deputy Head [Academic] will:

Line Manage the performance and operations of the Learning Support Department.

3.2 The Head of Learning Support

Will be the SEND Co-Ordinator, responsible for the day to day operations and procedures of the Learning Support Department as laid out in the Learning Support Handbook.

Will coordinate screening, assessment, planning and reviewing of pupils' progress, as well as entry of the SEND register on ISAMS.

Co-ordinate the provision for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan [EHCP] and provide updates to the local authority.

Will ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and supported through INSET etc.

Will be the main contact in all liaison and correspondence with parents relating to SEND.

Co-ordinate all access arrangements and liaise as appropriate with the examinations officer.

3.3

Departments and Teachers

Have a responsibility to be aware of all pupils with a SEND and their specific needs, as detailed in the Learning Profile, as categorised in ISAMS.

Be aware of the broad symptoms of learning difficulties and refer all pupils who they think might have a SEND to the Learning Support Department for screening and assessment, where necessary. [This should not lead to the assumption that teaching staff are fully trained in the recognition and diagnosis of all learning difficulties and disabilities.]

Plan and structure lessons which effectively differentiate and provide basic strategies to support pupils with a SEND. [Quality First Teaching]

Attend all SEND in-service training and act on latest advice/policy as well as being aware of the support and training that can be provided.

4. Oversight

This policy is overseen by the Education Committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed at least annually.

Policy written: June 2009

Policy reviewed:

July 2016

08/06/17

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 05/06/18

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 07/06/19

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 08/07/20

Mrs J Wood, Head of Learning Support 03/03/21

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 26/11/21

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 24/11/22

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 23/11/23

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head

Mr A Pearson, Deputy Head (Academic) 20/11/25

PLAN 2025/2026	Objective	What	Who	When	Goal
Short Term	Improved availability of written materials in alternative forms	Assess the needs of particular new pupils and ensure that written materials are available in a suitable format.	SEND Coordinator researches and discusses with Head	Annually at the start of the academic year to meet the needs of individual pupils	School able to deliver information to all pupils and parents with disabilities
	Improve communications / access to learning materials	Extend the use of the remote platforms in all curriculum areas to support on line access to learning materials and assignments.	Heads of Department	Summer 2026	Access to materials on line and remotely
	Provide INSET opportunities for all staff to improve their ability to support pupils with SEND.	Include appropriate training in INSET days and at other times during the year.	Dir. Teaching and Learning	Review in September annually	Improved staff awareness of SEND requirements and ability to support SEND pupils.
Medium term	Improved working environment for pupils with visual impairment	Incorporate appropriate colour schemes when refurbishing areas	Estates Manager to discuss with SEND Coordinator	Each project	Visual impaired pupils able to work independently in all teaching areas and access houses

	Disabled / access WC facilities (central)	Adaptation of central Male/Female WC to incorporate Disabled / Access WC facility	Estates Manager co-ordinate design and costs	Ongoing	Pupil & visitors accessible Disabled WC in central location
Long term	Improved access to all ground floor areas	Fixed and portable ramps to be installed where reasonably practicable	Estates Manager to include in all refurbishment works	Ongoing, as needed	All ground floor teaching area accessible
	Improved access to all first and second floor areas (portable)	Portable stair climbing / descending hoists / lifts and stair climbing equipment to be utilised where reasonably practicable	Estates Manager to source and cost.	When a specific need is identified	Some first and second floor areas accessible
	Improved access to all first and second floor areas (fixed)	Fixed lifts and stair climbing equipment to be utilised where reasonably practicable	Estates Manager to include in all refurbishment works	When a specific need is identified	Most first and second floor areas accessible
	Disabled / Access WC and washing facilities (houses & other)	Incorporation of Disabled / Access WC and washing facilities within refurbishment schemes	Estates Manager to include in all refurbishment works	Ongoing	Pupil & visitors accessible Disabled WC in all area

