



# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES POLICY

## 1 Aims

- 1.1 The aims of this policy are to promote good practice in our detection and management of special educational needs and to explain the support we can provide for children who have learning difficulties and the co-operation we will need from parents.
- 1.2 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format, if required.

## 2 "Special educational needs" and "learning difficulty"

- 2.1 Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- 2.2 Children have a learning difficulty if they:
  - 2.2.1 have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
  - 2.2.2 have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Authority (if your child has a disability, please ask to see our Disability Policy);
- 2.3 A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the *language or medium of communication of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught.* (section 312(1), (2) and (3) Education Act 1996). Children, however, for whom English is an additional language will be provided with appropriate support provided they meet the School's academic criteria].
- 2.4 A child who finds a particular subject difficult does not necessarily have a "learning difficulty" in the legal sense of that expression; there will often be disparities in the speed with which children learn, in their skill at solving problems and in their general acumen.
- 2.5 The expression "learning difficulty" covers a wide variety of conditions and may include those known as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit

(hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result from emotional or behavioural disorders. The expression may also include those who have problems with their eyesight or hearing or who have an autistic spectrum disorder.

- 2.6 Learning difficulties may affect children who have a high IQ and academic ability as well as those of lower IQ and ability. Sometimes a child's learning difficulty becomes apparent for the first time at the age of 11+ or older, when the educational pressures tend to increase.

### 3 Policy statement

- 3.1 **The School:** The RGS is a mainstream independent school with high academic standards which accepts boys from the age of eleven years. Even so, we carry out screening tests on each pupil, in order to detect signs of learning difficulties, where apparent from the test results.
- 3.2 **Provision:** The provision which we can make for children who appear to have a learning difficulty includes: learning support provided by the Learning Support Department; recommended strategies for teachers, parents and students; and referral to a recommended professional whom the school has a working relationship with, such as an educational psychologist, clinical psychologist or a paediatrician for a formal assessment. If a referral to a recommended professional is made, the costs incurred will be passed onto the parents of the pupil being assessed.
- 3.3 **Consultation:** We will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents about their child's learning difficulties and to ensure that teachers are given any necessary information about a child's learning difficulties and that teaching practices are appropriate.

### 4 Implementation and procedures

- 4.1 The School aims to provide learning support to those Students who are identified as being in need of it. Notification of concern can be expressed by the pupil or parent but identification of need should be made by a qualified individual such as a doctor, Educational Psychologist or specially trained teacher. If parents include circumstances which might require learning support in their medical return to the School Nurse prior to their son's entry into the RGS, the School Nurse will pass that information on to the Head of Learning Support and to the boy's tutor. In some circumstances, such as severe dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and Asperger's Syndrome, the Head of Learning Support will recommend that parents seek outside professional advice and support. In the case of Students who come to the School with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) a system of support will be organised by the Head of Learning Support and where necessary funding will be

sought from the LEA (not all statements come with funding). If the LEA remove or reduce funding the cost incurred will be passed onto parents. Students who arrive at the School or who are identified whilst at the RGS as having special needs will be closely monitored and where necessary will receive support from the Learning Support Department or outside agencies. In cases where Students are receiving additional support a Pupil Profile will be drawn up by the School to facilitate their progress. This will be reviewed on a termly basis.

- 4.2 New Students are screened for literacy difficulties, whether they enter the school in the First Form or the Third Form. Screening is done by means of nationally standardised tests which allow determination of a spelling age and reading comprehension age for each pupil. On the basis of those results, any Students who seem likely to struggle because of such difficulties are offered support by the Learning Support Department. This takes the form of lessons in small groups or one to one once a week for half a term. Students who take part in these lessons do so to improve on difficulties associated with Literacy, SpLD, SEMH. Support can be provided for handwriting, spelling, study skills, organisation, anxiety management, dyslexia, social and emotional literacy and motivational coaching.
- 4.3 The Learning Support Department is also happy to reassess any Students who performed well in the initial screening, but whose tutors, parents or subject teachers consider them to be likely to benefit from such support. Usually, Students who have had this support go on to be successful in their studies without any further assistance. The Mathematics Department is used to dealing with boys with dyscalculia and offers extra support in these cases.
- 4.4 Occasionally, however, there are Students who need further support. Sometimes their difficulties can be alleviated by having a short course of one-to-one lessons with the Learning Support Department, typically four weekly lessons. If they are still experiencing difficulty, then the School may advise parents to seek outside help, such as specialist lessons for dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties. The Head of Learning Support can advise parents on suitable tutors if necessary.

RGS Guildford recognises that it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly because of disability arising from an identified special educational need.

- 4.5 If there are concerns regarding the need for access arrangements such as extra-time, the concern should be raised with the Head of Learning Support. If the concern is raised by a teacher, then a referral form should be completed and passed on to the Head of Learning Support. If the concern is raised by a parent or a student, then they should bring this to the attention of the individual's tutor who will in turn complete a referral form. Information will then be gathered by the Head of Learning Support to determine whether or not there is enough evidence to warrant the employment of an outside agency to carry out further assessments in accordance with JCQ requirements. Outside agencies will be directly employed by the school and parents should not seek to employ a private assessor. The outside agency will be known by the school and where possible the

assessments will take place during school hours on the school premises. A meeting between the assessor and the Head of Learning Support will be held directly after the assessment to discuss the results. The Head of Learning Support has the responsibility of ensuring that the assessor meets the academic requirements needed to carry out the assessments and will keep a copy of the assessors' qualification available for inspection.

- 4.6 In certain exceptional cases, Students may be allowed to word process their examination scripts rather than write them out by hand. In this instance evidence of a medical condition or disability should be provided. In consultation with teachers and in alignment with the RGS Laptop policy the Head of Learning Support will meet with the examinations officer and either the Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning) or the Deputy Head (Students) to determine the need of a laptop.

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- 4.7 Where an outside agency is employed, the recommended professional will be proposed by the Head of Learning Support and the Educational Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Paediatrician or Occupational Therapist will conduct assessments of Students at the RGS where at all possible. The recommended professional may be asked to discuss the findings of a student's assessments with the Head of Learning Support and members of the Senior Management Team. The Head of Learning Support will liaise with the appropriate professional as to the suitability of each assessment according to the Students' needs.
- 4.8 Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Paediatricians and Occupational Therapists will be recommended by the Head of Learning Support and also known to the school, whereby all qualifications and certificates provided, will be kept securely and checked by the Human Resources manager.

## **5. Academic Matters:**

- 5.1 In the area of academic matters there are a number of strands attached to this aspect of equal opportunities and treatment:

5.1.1 Setting (5.3)

5.1.2 Mixed Ability (5.4)

5.1.3 Differentiation (5.5 - 5.6)

- 5.1.4 Teaching Styles (5.7)
- 5.1.5 Entitlement to the whole course of study (5.8)
- 5.1.6 Subject Options (5.9 - 5.10)
- 5.1.7 Special Educational Needs (5.11)
- 5.2 Catering for the needs of Students of all abilities, in the context of the RGS, and which will fully challenge the most able of our Students should be developed, whilst also encouraging those of average abilities.
- 5.3 Setting is believed to be the most appropriate initial stage of meeting the needs of the most able, for some departments. These are the departments of Mathematics and, where option choices permit, Modern Foreign Languages. Students are selected for teaching groups within each of these areas by their respective ability at the end of the Third Form. Assessment is conducted via regular testing, end of year examinations and continuous teacher evaluation. Students and parents are informed of their sons' set allocations, in writing, at the end of the Third Form. There is some movement between sets (both up and down) during the ensuing two years. In Mathematics there are eight sets in each year group. In Mathematics there are four bands of ability in each of which there are two sets. The lower ability sets are smaller in size than are the higher ability sets, which allow teachers to give closer attention to the needs of individual Students. In Modern Foreign Languages, setting is carried out according to pupil choice and ability, as the blocking system by which the timetable is constructed permits.
- 5.4 Mixed ability teaching, within the context of the RGS, is considered by the majority of departments within the School to be the most appropriate arrangement for teaching. In accordance with all good teaching styles, departments attempt to exercise considerable care when devising tasks and activities, the nature, features and requirements of which will enable them to be accessible to all Students. When undertaking this task teachers should pay particular attention to the part of the policy which deals with differentiation (5.5).
- 5.5 Differentiation occurs when there is planned intervention by the teacher with the intention of maximising the achievements of Students based on their differing individual needs. Differentiation can be done by resources, tasks, responsive teaching, individualised support and groupings within lessons.
- 5.6 Teachers are encouraged to support Students' learning by:

- i. communicating learning objectives to the students;
- ii. making resources clearly presented;
- iii. giving clear and succinct instructions both orally and written (where possible);
- iv. using a variety of resources to engage students;
- v. have clear schemes of work which build on previous knowledge; keeping copies of resources in well-ordered and logical places for students (such as in OneNote and Sharepoint);
- vi. building subject-specific study skills into their lessons and schemes of work
- vii. making assessment criteria clear to the Students. Students should be aware of the criteria by which their work is to be marked, preferably in advance of the work being done.
- viii. creating a productive and non-judgemental learning environment in their classrooms, where Students can work collaboratively and ask for support.
- ix. approaching the Learning Support department for ideas and support and quality-first teaching methods
- x. sharing best practice within departments and with colleagues in other departments (e.g. in Development Days, the Teaching and Learning Forum, the Head's Teaching and Learning Bulletin Tips)

5.8 Students' entitlement of access to the whole course is set out below:

5.8.1 all Students follow the same schemes of work in all years, with the exception of the top set mathematics sets (see 5.3). Consequently, the higher set groups may work at a faster pace and/or study more demanding work in addition to that studied by lower sets. All Students, however, experience their full entitlement to the whole of the appropriate course to maximise their examination success.

5.8.2 the current schemes of work have been devised to ensure that the needs of all RGS Students are satisfied. They are also sufficiently demanding to test the most able Students, whilst still encouraging those of average and below average ability, in the context of the RGS, to reach new levels of achievement.

5.8.3 as stated in 5.6, differentiation is the means by which different Students achieve different results and levels of achievement. The time at which a teacher will direct a pupil onto higher level work is purely dependent upon the stage of cognitive development reached by the pupil, and not his age. Strategies employed include:

5.8.3.1 setting different writing, which extend the core topic;

5.8.3.2 setting different reading tasks, which extend the core topic;

- 5.8.3.3 setting research tasks, to extract information which could be used by the rest of the class;
- 5.8.3.4 setting individual project work, differentiated by difficulty;
- 5.8.3.5 setting more challenging problems and questions;
- 5.8.3.6 encouraging involvement with academic extra-curricular activities;
- 5.8.3.7 encouraging attendance at academic lectures/seminars.

5.8.4 Strategies employed for weaker Students may include:

- 5.8.4.1 providing extra lessons at lunch-time, or after school. All colleagues are encouraged to liaise with the Head of Learning Support. Support is provided by a specialist teacher trained in the area of Special Educational Needs. This support is provided to meet the needs of all Students who come to the School with either SpLD, SEBD, physical and sensory disability, literacy and numeracy difficulties. Any Students causing concern will go through a system of assessment and review. If necessary these Students will also receive extra support. Students also have the opportunity of opting into a system of rotational support whereby they miss one timetabled lesson per week to attend a small group or one to one coaching catering for their specific needs. Students are never required to miss more than one lesson of any one subject in any half-term period.
- 5.8.4.2 providing additional help with homework.
- 5.8.4.3 providing additional resources, such as reading matter and encouraging the use of mobile computers for research, developing the Students' knowledge of ICT support packages such as Inspiration, close liaison with outside agencies, parents, subject teachers and HoDs. However, Students must use their stylus to write when using their mobile devices, unless they have an approved Exam Access Arrangement which allows them to type.
- 5.8.4.4 judicious use of the commendation system, as a means of motivating.

5.9 With regard to subject options: Spanish may be chosen instead of French in the First Form; French, Spanish or German as a second language can be picked up in the Third Form. In addition, Second Form boys can choose German and Greek as a subject option. In the Fourth and Fifth Forms, Students follow a common

curriculum of Mathematics, English Language and Literature, a modern language, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Religious Education, PE and Games, a Tutor Period and a Monday Period 8 activity. They also have to choose three further subjects from; Art, Academic P.E, Computer Science, Music, French, Spanish, German, Latin, Greek, Drama, History, Geography and Religious Studies, one of which has to be from the last three (their 'humanities' option). In the Sixth Form boys can choose from all of the subjects on offer provided that they have proved to have some ability for the subject at GCSE Level.

- 5.10 The boys have a completely free choice of which subjects they wish to study, within the constraints outlined in 2.9. The timetable is constructed after these choices have been made to ensure that all choices made are possible.
- 5.11 The RGS does not often educate Students who have been formally awarded an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and are identified. There are, however, a number of Students who have conditions such as mild forms of dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger's and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Teaching staff are made aware of such special needs by the School Nurse, or by the Head of Learning Support. Information regarding which boys are in receipt of extra help, are on the database.

## **7 Gender / Antisexist Policy**

- 7.1 Working within the context of an all-boys school, the Governors, Senior Management Team and staff stand against sexism and all forms of discrimination on the grounds set out by the Equality Act 2010. See also the Governors' overall Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 7.2. To promote justice, equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all and thereby allow all Students to achieve the level of success and self-respect which they deserve.
  - 7.2.2 to instil in Students an awareness of sexism and to establish an environment where school becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self-esteem;
  - 7.2.3 to provide a safe and welcoming place for all of its members;
  - 7.2.4 to provide an environment where sexist assumptions, attitudes and behaviour are continually challenged;
  - 7.2.5 to provide a curriculum which gives students the confidence that sexism can and must be eradicated;
  - 7.2.6 to contribute towards imparting a sense of citizenship in the Students;

- 7.2.7 to take the appropriate action to deal with any form of sexism within the School;
  - 7.2.8 to recognise in our teaching the contributions to the development of Science, Technology and the Arts which have been made by all genders;
  - 7.2.9 the teachers will, by careful use of language and choice of resources, avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society;
  - 7.2.10 all Heads of Departments will continually review their schemes of work in the light of this policy with respect to content, methodology, aims and resources.
- 7.3 Choice of reading schemes, books and other literary resources.
- 7.3.1 Teachers will choose resources which:
    - 7.3.2 portray a world view as seen from a male, female or transgender perspective and thereby communicate how it may feel to be of another sex or gender;
    - 7.3.3 are factually accurate and use up-to-date text, illustrations and maps;
    - 7.3.4 do not stereotype individuals or groups, including people who identify as transgender, or equate men with being the dominant sex or women or the subservient sex, or vice versa;
    - 7.3.5 show the achievements and attributes of both sexes, both past and present;
    - 7.3.6 show students of both sexes involved in a variety of activities:
      - 7.3.6.1 show that females have important roles and hold positions of authority;
      - 7.3.6.2 show characters not having to justify their sex by being exceptionally virtuous or brave etc.;
      - 7.3.6.3 avoid pictorial caricature.

**Reviewed by: Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning) and Head of Learning Support**

**Date of last review: 2 July 2021**

**Date of next review: Trinity 2022**

[Hyperlinks or references to the following policies](#)

- Accessibility policy
- Admission policy
- Disability policy
- Exams policy
- Laptop policy

Please refer to a sperate Multicultural / Anti-racism Policy