SENDA POLICY

The Special Education Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA) came into being in September 2002. It was revised in 2005 and is an extension of the 1995 Disabilities Discrimination Act (DDA). Schools are now required by law to provide equal access to information and services for all. It is against the law to treat a disabled person "less favourably" than an able bodied person.

In practical terms, this means an obligation to make "reasonable adjustments". Schools are required to anticipate the future needs of their disabled students and not wait for the need for change to arise. However, you are not required to lower educational standards to achieve equal access. If information cannot be made accessible, the institution must provide information in an alternative format so as not to disadvantage any individual.

Since the Warnock Report of 1978, it is accepted that one fifth of the general population of pupils in mainstream schools might have special educational needs of some kind during their school lives. At the present time, it may also be necessary for about two per cent of these children to have statutory statements made of their needs under the regulations of the 1981 Education Act and the 2014 Code of Practice.

The range of learning difficulties, behavioural problems, physical or sensory disabilities that might be found in a typical class, can be considerable and we recognise that this situation exists in this School.

It should be noted that:

- As appropriate, the aims and objectives of the Support for Learning Department relate directly to those of the School and are guided by the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2004, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, Teacher Standards 2012 the Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions 2014 and the 2014 SEN Code of Practice.

- The statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 became legally compulsory for all schools in September 2014. The Support for Learning Department is mindful of the need to address the specific requirements of these integrated working processes and tools that have been introduced as a result of this programme of change that will fundamentally reform the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) system.

To be consistent with the SEN Code of Practice 2014 and the 2010 Equality Act, the following terminology has been used:

Children have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities (D) if they have a learning, health or physical difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they:

a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age e.g. their reading/spelling, processing speed etc. have standardised scores that are below 85 and they require more than additional time as an additional access arrangement for examinations; or

b) Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.
c) The term ‘pupils’ includes those under the age of 5 being educated at this establishment who are deemed likely to have SEN/D when reaching the age of 5 as emphasised in the 2014 Education Act and 2010 Equality Act. At Queen Mary’s it also includes boys up to and including Year 3.

Pupils with literacy or numeracy difficulties, but whose scores may be above 85 will not be classed as SEN but may still receive support lessons if deemed necessary.

N.B. Children must 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.

Admissions

We welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of Queen Mary’s School. Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that our Support for Learning Department can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive support.

The admission arrangements for all pupils attending Queen Mary’s School are in accordance with national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. This includes children with any level of SEN; those with statements of SEN or a combined Education, Health and Care Plan and those without. The School is non-selective.

All SEN and Support paperwork should be passed to the SFLCO, Elizabeth Hopkins, by the previous school, local support services or parents as soon as possible. If the child is considered to have special educational needs and is making a transition from another school, a meeting may be set up between the feeding school’s SFLCO and Queen Mary’s SFLCO to aid the smooth transition of the pupil, and discuss arrangements to be made as well as any other important information relating to the child’s needs. Where face to face meetings are not possible, contact will be made via the telephone to ensure that there is a good understanding of what type of provision is required.

The School will do its best to ensure that the necessary provisions and preparations are made prior (where possible) to the start of the child’s school year. The child will be closely monitored from the start of the new school year to ensure that all the appropriate provisions and interventions are in place.

We advise parents of children with special educational needs to discuss their child’s requirements with Queen Mary’s so that we can make adequate provision for her.

Parents should provide a copy of an Educational Psychologist’s report or a medical report to support their request, for example for extra time or other special arrangements such as a Reader or a Scribe for tests and examinations. With parental agreement, arrangements can be made for an Educational Psychologist’s assessment to be carried out by the independent Educational Psychologist used by the school.

Identification of pupils’ needs

Wherever possible, all prospective pupils are assessed to see if they may have learning difficulties before entry to the school. Each pupil with a special educational need requires special consideration and treatment. If appropriate, adjustments will need to be put in place. We will discuss with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child once they have accepted the offer of a place and before she becomes a pupil at the school.

Queen Mary’s School believes that it is of the utmost importance to identify and assess a pupil’s needs as quickly as possible in her school career. There should be a graduated approach.

- In order that the teaching staff is made aware of possible SEN pupils and also those requiring literacy and numeracy support in their lessons, new girls are tested before entry into school. Girls starting in Year 4 and above are given Schonell spelling and reading tests on their “taster
day” in school. Mathematics and NFER Verbal, Non-Verbal and Quantitative tests are also given where appropriate. Pupils from Year 4 also complete Ann Arbor dyslexia screening tests. Initially younger girls are assessed informally by the class teacher.

- We also use any other available information at the time of entry into school from previous schools, parents and the girls themselves. For younger pupils we rely on baseline assessment, the findings of parents and class teachers. A document with information regarding every child in the school is completed by the SFLCO and is available on line on the staffroom server for every teacher in the school to read. This document is continually updated.

- The School keeps and maintains an accessible record of all pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities. A copy of this record is given to every teacher at the beginning of each term.

- We have formulated and put into action a graduated identification and support system as set out in the Code of Practice, which draws upon expertise from within the school and external support agencies.

**Education, Health and Care Plan**

At the present time, Local authorities are still responsible for maintaining the needs of pupils who have already been granted a Statement of Special Educational Needs. From 2014, Statements have been replaced with a single assessment process and a combined Education, Health and Care Plan so that health and social services is included in the package. Every child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) will be given an individual budget, depending on the nature and severity of their disability, from birth until they reach the age of twenty-five. An Education, Health and Care Plan provides a means of access to extra resources and provides a precise educational and health prescription for the child based on an accurate and detailed account of her needs. Whether the pupil can continue to receive the necessary support within this school must be realistically discussed with all concerned. The decision as to the pupil’s future will be discussed with the needs of the pupil remaining paramount.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan accepted by the school will:

- Be integrated into class and subject lessons as fully as possible.
- Receive mainstream education within their appropriate age group as far as possible.
- Be given access to the National Curriculum programme of study. School programmes and syllabuses may be modified following the advice of the Educational Psychologist, or other qualified professional, but only when agreed by the school following consultation with the pupil and her parents.

If the pupil’s needs remain so substantial that the help given through Additional Support cannot meet them, the School, parents or other agency, can request statutory assessment. While this is being undertaken, the pupil continues to be supported through Additional Support. The parents are kept fully informed and may discuss the procedures with the personnel involved at any time.

**Annual Reviews**

The purpose of the Annual Review for pupils with a statement or an Education, Health and Care Plan is to integrate a variety of perspectives on a child’s progress to ensure that they are achieving the desired outcomes and if necessary to amend the statement to reflect newly identified needs and provisions. The Annual Review should focus on what the child has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved.

**Transition Review**

This is the Annual Review held in Year 9, which is particularly significant in planning for the pupil’s future life. The responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the Transition Plan rests with the SFLCO and the Careers Advisor, who, along with other agencies that may play a major role in the young person’s life during the post-school years, will be invited to the Review.
**Additional Support** (formerly School Action and School Action plus)

Pupils themselves, parents, form/subject teachers or any other professional agency may identify a pupil’s needs at any time in her school life. Initial concern will be documented by the form/subject teacher/tutor. The SFLCO and parents are informed. The SFLCO records the problems of pupils with SEND having sought the parents’ and the pupil’s own views on her difficulties.

Any known health or social problems are detailed together with profiles of achievement, National Curriculum attainments and any other test data. The subject teachers can ask for help from the SFLCO, the School Doctor and any other professional agencies but the responsibility remains with the subject teachers. A record must be kept of the nature of the concern, action taken, targets set and when progress will be reviewed (usually within a term or six months). Parents are kept informed. The subject teacher’s work with the pupil in the classroom, providing interventions that are additional to, or different from, those provided as part of the School’s usual differentiated curriculum offered and usual strategies. We recognise that all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.

**Support for Learning**

Queen Mary’s Support for Learning Department is staffed by fully qualified specialists who are able to support each pupil with a mild specific learning difficulty. There are two support teachers and a coordinator. Please see the SFL Policy for further details.

At the beginning of each academic year the School collates and circulates a Register of Pupils who require additional support, or who have received support in the past years, or who give cause for concern. The Register is regularly updated throughout the year starting September 2015, in consultation with the appropriate staff, parents and pupils. Regular meetings are held to discuss cases, and to impart information. The Support for Learning Coordinator (SFLCO) will lead on this.

The timetable is organised at the beginning of the Autumn Term. Every endeavour is made to accommodate each pupil in a manner that works for her individual needs. Our timetable is not rigid and, if necessary, will be altered to suit the pupil and teachers as far as possible. The needs of pupils with mild difficulties are met within the normal class situation. Where necessary, teachers can consult the SFLCO and will receive advice and materials to help. Pupils are encouraged to seek help when required.

Each pupil who receives individual or group help from the Learning Support Department will have an Action Plan (IEP or Individual Provision Map) drawn up by the SFL support teacher, after information has been gathered from an assessment, from teachers, from parents and from the pupil. The Action Plan (IEP/Individual Provision Map) will set out the nature of the difficulty, the action that will be taken, and details of recommended programmes to follow.

Where the advice of outside help is considered necessary e.g. speech therapy or occupational therapy, it will be included. Additionally, a need for pastoral care may be identified, when the tutor and other staff may be consulted. Any further information about the pupil will be disseminated to the appropriate staff, thereby helping staff to understand and meet the needs of each pupil.

All Action Plans (IEPs/ Individual Provision Maps) are made available to staff so that they can adjust lesson plans. They can be found in the SFL cupboard in the Staff Room.

**Integration of SEN Pupils and Access to the Curriculum**

Pupils with SEN will be given access to the curriculum through the specialist SEN provision provided by the school as is necessary, as far as possible, in line with the wishes of their parents and the needs of the individual.

Every effort will be made to educate pupils with SEN alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SFLCO will consult with the child’s parents so that other flexible arrangements can be made.
The school curriculum is regularly reviewed by the Director of Studies together with the SFLCO to ensure that it is accessible to pupils of all levels and abilities, and supports the learning and progress of all pupils as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom. It is our aim to ensure that all resources and SEN provisions are being used effectively and efficiently within the school setting in order to support the taught curriculum and enable pupils to reach their full potential. The School does this by:

- Keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs of any pupils in their charge including sharing progress reports, medical reports and teacher feedback.
- Providing regular training and learning opportunities for staff of all departments on the subject of SEN and SEN teaching. School staff should be up to date with teaching methods which will aid the progress of all pupils including those with SEN.
- Making use of all class facilities and space.
- Using in-class provisions and support effectively to ensure the curriculum is differentiated where necessary.
- Making sure that individual or group tuition is available where it is felt that pupils would benefit from this provision.
- Setting appropriate individual targets that motivate pupils to do their best, and celebrating achievements at all levels.

Inclusion of pupils with SEN

The Head and the governing body are responsible for inclusion and are responsible for ensuring that it is implemented effectively throughout the school. ‘The Support for Learning’ department has a designated SEN/D governor.

The school curriculum is regularly reviewed by the Head, the Governors, the Deputy Head, the Senior Leadership Team and the SFLCO to ensure that it promotes the inclusion of all pupils. This includes learning outside the classroom.

We aim to optimise opportunities for participation and achievement across all areas of school activity (social, curricular, physical).

- Providing a balanced curriculum for all pupils both inside and outside the classroom, including play and interaction at mealtimes and playtimes, and extending to extracurricular activities and school day trips and residential visits.
- Knowing a child’s preferred learning style.
- Practising teaching methods that suit the needs of individual pupils.

The School promotes an inclusive ethos throughout our school and encourages social responsibility and understanding amongst all our pupils. It is the Policy of the School that any pupils, with any types of special need, should be integrated into the School as fully as possible. They will have full access to the curriculum unless special arrangements have been made, in full consultation with all concerned. It is recognised that all pupils have something to offer to the School and that pupils have strengths and weaknesses in different areas.

It is our policy to recognise those areas of strength and to enhance them, exploiting them to the full, thereby building a feeling of worth and self-esteem in each pupil. At the same time, areas of weakness are targeted in order to remedy problems. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their problems, to face and to tackle them, but not to hide from them. Difficulties are not an excuse.

Differentiation of work or task may take place to ensure full access and, when possible, approaches will be varied or modified to take into account the different learning styles and levels of ability of individual pupils.
Other Adjustments

We are able, depending on need, to arrange for pupils to use laptop computers/ipads etc in classes. Some pupils who require a Scribe for exams, including GCSEs are given access to Dragon Speak. Word processors, Readers and Scribes can be provided for school tests and exams and also GCSE papers for those pupils who qualify for these additional access arrangements. Where necessary, pupils can also complete exam papers in a room on their own with the support of a qualified invigilator.

Monitoring and Review

For pupils with SEN, improvements in reading and spelling are measured using appropriate tests, usually each term. This forms part of the review of the pupil’s Action Plan (IEP) and individual Progress Record sheet and can be used to set targets for the forthcoming term. The standardised tests most commonly used by this department are the Schonell reading and spelling test. Progress in Mathematics and any other areas of difficulty targeted by the pupil’s Action Plan (IEP) is measured by a specific test of the problem area or by discussion with staff, pupil and/or parent. The SFL department endeavours to make the transition from year to year for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities as smooth as possible. Information about pupils’ specific difficulties and working targets is made available to all staff concerned as well as to the pupil and her parents.

We can arrange for pupils with identified or suspected learning difficulties to be assessed by a specialist educational psychologist so that we can identify any area that requires support. We offer specialist one to one or small group lessons and help with study skills outside the normal curriculum. We work closely with the child and her parents to help her to overcome the barriers that her difficulties present.

English as a Second Language

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Queen Mary’s School, pupils must be competent English speakers. We may recommend that some children, whose first language at home is not English, receive 1:1 tuition in English from a specialist teacher in ‘The Support for Learning’ department as an additional language.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

Queen Mary’s School recognises gifted and talented pupils as also having special educational needs. The needs of those pupils are met by individual teachers and tutors who coach and supply differentiated work to meet the challenge. A designated member of staff reviews the needs of all gifted and talented pupils.

Education and associated services

The School has a duty under SENDA to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:
1. Curriculum
2. Teaching and learning
3. Timetabling
4. Homework
5. Serving of school meals
6. Interaction with peers
7. Assessment and examination arrangements
8. School discipline
9. Exclusion/suspension procedures
10. Preparation of pupils for their next phase of education

All of these are bound by the limits of reasonable adjustment as covered by SENDA.
Access to out-of-classroom activities

The School will whenever possible make reasonable adjustment to allow SEN/disabled pupils to access the full educational and learning experiences that the school provides. However, under the reasonable adjustments duty the School would also have to consider:

- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards
- The financial resources available to the School
- The health and safety requirements – SENDA does not override the School’s duties under Health and Safety legislation.
- The interests of the other pupils and persons who may be admitted to the School as pupils.

Physical Accessibility

We recognise that some children with special education needs may also have physical disabilities. Parents and prospective parents of disabled children can obtain copies of the Accessibility Plan and Disability Policy on request. This shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors.

Staff Training

All teaching staff receive training on the learning needs of pupils with special education needs and disabilities.

Appointment of Staff

Queen Mary’s School is committed to an equal opportunities approach to employment, both in the advertising and promotion of posts and in selection procedures. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure that discrimination does not take place.

Accessibility Strategies: Buildings

Under SENDA the school has a planning duty to audit access to buildings and facilities. Such an access audit has been completed and incorporated in the School’s plans for future development.

Review

Queen Mary’s School is committed to reviewing annually, both admissions procedures and policies, and issues of access to learning, to ensure that a continuous responsibility is exercised. Other areas of policy and provision should, if appropriate, be reviewed with SENDA in mind. The Governing Body also reviews SENDA on an annual basis.

Mrs Deborah Hannah Walpole
November 2015

Next Review: November 2016