



**MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

**MERCHANT TAYLORS' GIRLS' SCHOOL
MERCHANT TAYLORS' PRIMARY SCHOOL
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY**

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This Special Needs Policy takes into account:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: for 0-25yrs (2014(updated 2015))
- The SEN Regulations (2014)
- The Children and Family Act (2014)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Teachers Standards 2012 Section 5
- MTGS Accessibility Policy
- MTGS Pupil Mental Health Policy
- MTGS Accessibility Policy
- JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines

1. **OVERVIEW**

- 1.1. Merchant Taylors' Girls' School (MTGS) is an academically selective school and we welcome all girls who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in our caring environment.
- 1.2. MTGS / MTPS recognise pupils of all abilities may experience obstacles to learning and our aim is to treat each child as an individual and welcome children with special educational needs and disabilities, providing that we can provide them with the support they require. Our spectrum of need includes dyslexia, dyspraxia, pupils on the Autistic spectrum, special needs relating to disabilities and health problems, and emotional difficulties.
- 1.3. MTGS / MTPS aim to ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with special educational needs to high quality education within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self-esteem.
- 1.4. MTGS / MTPS aim to educate pupils with special educational needs alongside their peers, whenever possible, within the normal curriculum, after giving due consideration to the appropriate wishes of the pupils and their needs.
- 1.5. MTGS / MTPS endeavour to identify, assess and provide for all pupils with special Educational needs (or additional support needs) as early as possible. Our strategies for achieving this include use of a variety of screening and assessment methods. If pupils are identified as having, or are suspected of having, special educational needs (or additional support needs) parents will be informed and involved in decision-making processes concerning the provision of appropriate support.

2. DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

- 2.1 A pupil is said to have special educational needs if her learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision to be made for her.
- 2.2 A pupil has a learning difficulty or disability if she:
- a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of her peers or
 - b) has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Section 6), Equality Act 2010.
- 1.6. The above definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer and mental health concern.
- 1.7. It should be noted that under the Equalities Act 2010 'Hidden' impairments such as Dyslexia, Autism, ADHD may qualify as a disability and are therefore subject to reasonable adjustment duties. At MTGS / MTPS this usually comes in the form of 1:1 or small group tutorials, if it is felt that a pupil's needs cannot be addressed in the classroom.
- 1.8. To summarise, pupils at MTGS / MTPS may require special educational provision if they:
- Have a specific and/or significant learning difficulty
 - Present emotional or behavioural problems
 - Have a mental or physical disability
- 1.9. It should be noted that it is the school's aim to cater for all the requirements of all pupils, including the most able at MTGS / MTPS by offering them challenging and rewarding work which will stretch all pupils allowing them to achieve at or above the level expected of them.

3. ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF PUPILS WITH SEN

- 3.1 The school will admit pupils of high academic ability who satisfied the school's entry requirements but may have special needs. Parents of candidates who know in advance of the entrance assessments that their daughter has been diagnosed with a specific difficulty or is receiving additional support must inform the school's admissions office and provide copies of all reports and other relevant information. Parents will be asked to withdraw the pupil, without being charged Fees in lieu, in the professional judgement of the Head and after consultation with the parents and the pupil (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for a pupil's educational needs.

3.2 Entry to Senior School 11+/16+

- 3.2.1 Examination access arrangements (e.g. extra time, use of a reader, scribe or laptop) will be awarded to candidates during the examination/admissions process if they provide MTGS with a recommendation from the pupil's School SENCO or from Educational Psychologist or certified Specialist Teacher Diagnostic Report or a medical recommendation from a health care professional. It must be noted that all reports for external examination access arrangements must meet the JCQ regulations.
- 3.2.2 Whole year screening takes place in the first term of Year 7, measuring ability in comprehension, reading and spelling skills and provide valuable data to identify pupils who may need monitoring. Low scores will generate an initial meeting with the SENCO and a course of differentiated quality first teaching put onto practice. Parents and pupils will also be asked for input to determine pupil targets. Poor handwriting and poor fine motor control will also trigger further investigation.
- 3.2.3 MTGS uses MIDYIS tests to give a baseline for predicting future performance and these scores can also be used to generate further investigation.

4. **OBJECTIVES FOR MTGS/MTPS IN RELATION TO SEN**

When a pupil has been identified as having Special Educational Needs the school will endeavour to:

- 4.1 Ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEN who are otherwise of high academic ability, to high quality teaching within a broad, balanced curriculum so that they can reach their full potential and enhance their self-esteem.
- 4.2 Identify those pupils who have difficulties with learning, which are significantly greater than the majority of pupils within the same age group and academic level.
- 4.3 Supply information to the pupil and their parents outlining the support required and to take into consideration the views and feelings of the pupil and their parents.
- 4.4 Meet the needs of pupils with SEN with appropriate provision and resources. Where possible this will be done within the school, but on occasions it may be necessary to advise parents to seek specialist assessment and/or teaching outside of school.
- 4.5 Advise and liaise with staff and parents on the identification of SEN and provide strategies for in class support. Where necessary the SENCO responsible might recommend either an external or internal assessment.

5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUPILS AT MTGS WITH SEN

- 5.1 All teachers at MTGS / MTPS are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their classes, including those that need additional SEN support from specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils where necessary, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.
- 5.2 MTGS/MTPS will regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils. This includes reviewing teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support SEN pupils.
- 5.3 Class and subject teachers, supported by HoD and HoS carry out regular monitoring of pupils' progress. These seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress. This can be characterised by progress which:
 - 5.3.1 is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
 - 5.3.2 fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress.
 - 5.3.3 fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers.
 - 5.3.4 widens the attainment gap.

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, e.g. social needs.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with desired outcomes, including expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide such support by adapting our core curriculum, or whether additional support or adaptation is needed.

6. CONSULTING AND INVOLVING PUPILS AND PARENTS

- 6.1 When identified as potentially needing special educational provision, the SENCO will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents.

These conversations will ensure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- Parents' will be able to raised their concerns
- Everyone understands the agreed outcome sought for the daughter
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Parents will be formally notified if additional support is provided for their daughter.

7. IDENTIFICATION OF SEN: FOUR BROAD AREAS OF NEED:

When a pupil has been identified with SEN the following four areas of need will be considered:

7.1 Communication and Interaction:

This includes pupils who are on the autistic spectrum, including Asperger's syndrome and pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). All of whom have difficulty communicating with others.

7.2 Cognition and Learning:

This includes pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) which incorporates a range of conditions, including dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

7.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties:

This may include pupils who have a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which can manifest themselves in a variety of ways including self-harm, eating disorders, depression and/or anxiety, substance misuse or physical symptoms which are medically unexplained.

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) would also fall under this category.

7.4 Sensory and Physical Needs:

This includes pupils with physical disability (e.g. vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI)). Those pupils may need additional on-going support and equipment to access the curriculum.

It should be noted that the school will make **best endeavours** to meet the requirements of any individual within the context of 'reasonable adjustments' as required by the Equality Act (2010).

Please note it is very possible that a pupil might fall into one or more of the categories listed above. This is known as 'co-morbidity.'

8. THE GRADUATED RESPONSE

8.1 When a pupil has been identified as having SEN, MTGS / MTPS will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. The school SENCO is made aware to ensure that the pupil is placed on the SEN list and all staff, therefore informed.

8.3 Current level of support at MTGS / MTPS are:

Level 1 – Intense Support (1:1 or small group Specialist Support Lessons). Each pupil follows an Individual Learning Plan

Level 2 – Targeted Support (pupils follow short-term intervention programs)

Level 3 – Differentiated Class Teaching (All pupils on the SEN list have personalised Pupil Profiles, providing important information to allow teachers to support them in the classroom)

- 8.2 SEN support is revised and refined with a growing understanding for the pupil's needs as they progress through the school.

9. ADDITIONAL SEN SUPPORT

- 9.1 If it is decided that further intervention is required which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum on offer, the class or subject teachers, working with the SENCO, should consider all the relevant information and after a clear analysis, outline the pupil's needs. This should draw on thoughts and recommendations from all staff who teach the pupil and address the thoughts and experience of the pupil's parents and the pupil's own views. To help inform this process further, an educational assessment may be carried out by the SENCO after agreement with the parents.
- 9.2 An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be prepared in collaboration with the key members mentioned above. This will reflect a pupil's strengths and areas of need and highlight targets. The ILP should be regularly reviewed and updated in line with the Code of Practice.
- 9.3 In some cases an external professional may be required to assess a pupil. It is the responsibility of the Head of Year, and/or SENCO to liaise with external professionals once agreement from parents has been sought. There are some cases when the school nurse will also be involved in the referral process.
- 9.4 Please note that when parents are advised to seek assessment by an outside professional, or engage a specialist teacher to assist their daughter beyond the scope of the extra help available from the school SENCO any charges arising will be borne by the parents and not by the school. For bursary funded pupils where require an external assessment MTGS will assist with a financial obligation.
- 9.5 One to one or small group specialist teaching with a SENCO and Learning Support Department will be provided for pupils who require it but this provision is not necessarily weekly.

10. EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHCP)

10.1 If any pupil requires an Educational, Health and Care Plan the authority where the pupil lives will be contacted and the SENCO responsible will work closely with the authority to ensure that help in this form is forthcoming.

11. PUPIL PROFILES (PP) AND INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS (ILPs)

11.1 Each pupil on the SEN list at MTGS has a personalised Pupil Profile (PP), detailing strengths, areas of need, strategies to use as part of differentiated classroom teaching and any further support provisions in place. The PP are produced in collaboration with professional reports, the pupil and their parents. These are available to teaching staff on the individual pupils profile on 3sys.

11.2 When a pupil with SEN requires regular specialist intervention which is additional to or different from the school curriculum they will receive an Individual Learning Plan devised by the Learning Support Teacher responsible, in collaboration with the pupil and her parents. The support plan provides the pupil with a personalised and graduated response to their learning needs.

11.3 The main objective of the PP and ILP is to ASSESS, PLAN, DO and REVIEW.

11.4 Individual Learning Plans aim to:

- 11.2.1 Relate to a clear set of expected outcomes, which reflect views, wishes and feelings of the pupil and her parents.
- 11.2.2 Outline the pupil's strengths and weaknesses and include individual thoughts from the pupils themselves.
- 11.2.3 Have stretching and relevant academic and developmental targets.
- 11.2.4 Include evidence-based interventions.
- 11.2.5 Record progress.
- 11.2.6 Be regularly updated and revised twice a year.
- 11.2.7 Include specialist expertise from outside professionals where necessary.

- 11.2.8 Be reviewed by the class or subject teachers in collaboration with the SENCO.
- 11.2.9 All teachers who work with the pupil are made aware of her needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies that are required.
- 11.2.10 Map the provision for the pupil using a 'whole school' approach as identified in the SEN Pyramid.
- 11.2.11 Encourage the use of assistive technologies
- 11.2.12 Encourage pupil's self-advocacy.

12. THE ROLE OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CO-ORDINATOR (SENCO)

- 12.1 The position of SENCO has responsibilities covering MTGS from Years 7 – 13. The SENCO at MTPS oversees SEND at MTPS. The key responsibilities of the SENCO include:
 - 12.1.1 Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy, including the management of the SEN list.
 - 12.1.2 Co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN.
 - 12.1.3 Liaising with all the relevant staff who teach a pupil with SEN.
 - 12.1.4 Advise on the graduated approach to provide a pupil with SEN.
 - 12.1.5 To liaise and keep HoDs and HoS informed of a pupil's progress.
 - 12.1.6 To manage the school's SEN budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
 - 12.1.7 To be in regular contact with parents and facilitate meetings with parents when necessary.
 - 12.1.8 To provide SEN pupils with personalised Pupil Profiles (PP) and an attainable, aspirational and manageable Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which includes considered points from parents, pupil and teaching staff.
 - 12.1.9 To contact other schools within the corporation and liaise with their SENCOs.
 - 12.1.10 To be a key point of contact for any external professionals e.g. educational psychologists, doctors, speech and language therapists etc.
 - 12.1.11 To liaise with Universities and Higher Education to ensure a smooth transition.

- 12.1.12 To work with SMT and the Headmistress to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- 12.1.13 To provide support and training for staff to ensure they have the ability to identify SEN and adapt their teaching if necessary to provide differentiated quality first teaching. Staff training will be done departmentally to ensure the relevant training is given to meet each department's needs in relation to SEN pupils.
- 12.1.15 To attend regular training and INSET sessions relevant to the role.
- 12.1.16 Liaise with other schools and attend the SENCO forums.
- 12.1.17 To regularly meet with the Deputy Head Learning and Innovation and the school Pastoral Team.

13. MEDICAL CONDITIONS

- 13.1 The school pastoral team and school Nurse are involved in the care of girls with any serious medical condition. Please refer to our policy 'Supporting Pupils with long term and/or serious medical conditions' for further information.

14. MENTAL HEALTH

- 14.1 The school has specific legal responsibilities towards pupils whose mental condition falls within the definition of disability under the law. This requires us to ensure that pupils with a well-recognised mental illness are not disadvantaged and that reasonable adjustments are put in place to support their learning. Please refer to our policy 'Pupil Mental Health' for further information.

15. RESOURCES AND DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

- 15.1 The SEN Department has a range of resources to develop the skills of pupils and it is the role of the SENCO to keep informed of any new resources that will be beneficial to the school. Laptops are used during 1:1 sessions, as well as printed material.
- 15.2 The department has two members of staff who hold APCs and are able to carry out the diagnostic testing of pupils. The department is well-equipped with diagnostic tests for such educational assessments to take place in school. Where there is a need for wider testing, parents may be asked to take their daughter to an external professional.

16. APPLICATIONS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

- 16.1 The school SENCO is authorised to award pupils with SEN and/or disabilities access arrangements and reasonable adjustments e.g. extra time, rest breaks, use of a PC for both internal and external examinations providing that their criteria meet the guidelines set out by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) and is the pupil's 'Normal Way of Working'.
- 16.2 For medical concerns a recent covering note from a recognised medical practitioner will be required.
- 16.3 Once a pupil has been given access arrangements it does not automatically qualify them for access arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments the subsequent year and they may need to be tested accordingly. Access arrangement must reflect the pupil's normal way of working.
- 16.4 Testing required for access arrangements will be completed by the school Learning Support Department. Should any further external testing be required, the cost is the responsibility of the parents. However MTGS will contribute to the cost for an external assessment for bursary pupils.

17. EVALUATION OF SEN PROVISION

- 17.1 The school's SENCO liaises regularly with the Deputy Head of Learning and Innovation, Headmistress of MTGS, Heads of Year, the SENCOs at Merchant Taylors' Primary School (MTPS) and MTBS, School Nurse and Exams Officer.
- 17.2 The school's SEN Policy and Development Plan are updated regularly and adjustments made when necessary.
- 17.3 The importance of target setting for individuals needing support is an important part of the New Code of Practice. At MTGS this will be a standard agenda item in departmental meetings. It is the aim that any support is monitored, adjusted and reviewed and parents, staff and pupil are all familiar with it. A focus on outcomes is important if a graduated response is going to work.
- 17.4 Currently SEN support is measured in the following ways:

- Subject assessments and experience of the pupil
- Internal and external exams
- End of term reports
- Views of parents
- Views of the pupil
- Individual Learning Plans
- Diagnostic testing
- Book reviews
- Learning Walks
- Teacher feedback
- Advice from external support services, if relevant

All teacher and support staff will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be regularly reviewed. Pupil Profiles and regular updates in staff meetings will ensure this information is communicated to the pupil's teachers and support staff.

18. ADAPTIONS TO THE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- 18.1 MTGS/MTPS make the following adaptions to ensure all pupil's needs are met:
- 18.1.1 Differentiating the curriculum to ensure all of our pupils can access it (e.g. by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, etc)
 - 18.1.2 Using recommended aids (e.g. laptops, coloured overlays and paper and varying fonts)
 - 18.1.3 Differentiation teaching (e.g. providing longer processing times, reading instructions aloud, seating arrangements)
 - 18.1.4 Providing 1:1 or small group support lessons with a Specialist Teacher

19. ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- 19.1 MTGS have an EAL teacher with responsibilities for overseas pupils.
- 19.1.1 EAL pupils are formally assessed using LOTE and must achieve a score of 5.5 or above to be accepted and secure a place at MTGS.
 - 19.1.2 Once accepted EAL students are informally assessed in an initial meeting with the EAL teacher, who then identifies their needs.
 - 19.1.2 EAL pupils attend weekly support lessons with the EAL teacher and weekly pastoral meetings to ensure they're well-being.

20 PLANNING THE TRANSITION INTO POST 16, UNIVERSITIES, TRAINING AND THE WORKPLACE

- 20.1 Pupils at MTGS entering post-16 education should have access to supportive provision allowing them to build on their achievements.
- 20.2 The SENCO will liaise with the Head of Sixth Form, Head of Senior School and Head of Careers before the pupil approaches the transition point. Similarly the SENCO will help pupils and parents liaise with the educational provider or employer to ensure that relevant information about previous SEN provision is shared, if they are moving away from MTGS.
- 20.3 The pupil's local authority will be able to offer advice on the financial support available to pupils in higher education and how to claim it, including the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA).
- 20.4 DSAs are available to help pupils in higher education with the extra costs they may incur on their course because of a disability. Applications for DSA can be made to Pupil Finance application services.

21. ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

- 21.1 Any serious complaints relating to SEN provision will be dealt with using the school's Complaints Procedure.
- 21.2 Most complaints are likely to be minor and to arise from misunderstandings, which can quickly be resolved by conversations involving the SENCO, staff, parents and pupils as appropriate.

22. CITY OF LIVERPOOL LOCAL OFFER

- 22.1 For information on the City of Liverpool's Local Offer please go to:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/special-educational-needs/SEN-local-offer/>

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Approved by Board of Governors:

To be reviewed by: