



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY (MTGS)

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This Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Stanfield, Merchant Taylors' Accessibility Policy
- Stanfield, Merchant Taylors' Mental Health Policy
- JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Guidelines
- Stanfield, Merchant Taylors' Safeguarding Policy
- Merchant Taylors' Behaviour Policy
- Merchant Taylors' Data Protection Policy
- Merchant Taylors' Admission Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Merchant Taylors' Complaints Policy

1. **OVERVIEW**

- 1.1. Merchant Taylors' Girls' School (MTGS) is an independent school. We welcome all pupils who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in our caring environment. We aim to provide all pupils with a school career that promotes intellectual, emotional, social and physical development, allowing them to emerge as confident, well-educated and well-rounded adults. We celebrate all successes both academic and non-academic.
- 1.2. MTGS recognise that some pupils will require additional, specific provisions to support their learning. In keeping with the Equality ACT (2010), the non-statutory guidelines within the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Children and Family Act (2014), MTGS will strive to make reasonable adjustments to support pupils with SEND.
- 1.3. MTGS aim to provide all pupils with a balanced, broad and enriching curriculum and to ensure full entitlement and access to all MTGS pupils, so that they can reach their full potential, in being confident, independent pupils and enhancing their self-esteem. Whilst due recognition will be given to the SEND of any pupil, all pupils are expected to demonstrate respect for self and others; responsibility for their own learning and development; and demonstrate resourcefulness. Adherence to the School's Code of Conduct as presented in the MTGS Behaviour Policy is a requirement of all MTGS pupils.
- 1.4. MTGS aim to educate pupils with SEND alongside their peers, whenever possible, within the normal curriculum, after giving due consideration to the individual pupil's needs.

2. **Aims**

- To support all pupils with SEND in achieving their learning potential.
- To ensure that all pupils with SEND to become confident, independent pupils who are prepared for further studies and their next steps in life.
- To communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents / guardians in discussions and decisions about the pupil's support and provision.



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- To ensure equality and inclusion for all pupils.

3. Objectives

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

- Create an inclusive environment and ensure full entitlement and access for pupils with SEND to high quality teaching within a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum so that they can be supported in reaching their full potential and enhance their self-esteem.
- Ensure the school implements national legislation and guidance relating to pupils with SEND.
- Use a whole school approach to identify those pupils who have difficulties with learning, which are significantly greater than the majority of pupils within the same age group.
- Make best endeavours to meet the requirements of any individual within the context of 'reasonable adjustments' as required by the Equality Act (2010)
- Ensure pupils, parents / guardians and staff are partners in reviewing and making decisions.
- Ensure provision and support is pupil-centred.
- Meet the needs of pupils with SEND with appropriate provision and resources. Where possible this will be completed within the school, but on occasions it may be necessary to advise parents to seek specialist assessment and/or teaching outside of school. Any cost of such external provision will be borne by the parents / guardians.
- Advise and liaise with staff and parents/guardians on the identification of SEND and provide strategies for in class support.

4. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: for 0 -25yrs (2015)
- The SEN Regulations (2014) which sets out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN Co-Ordinator (SENDSCO) and special educational needs (SEN) information report.
- The Children and Family Act (2014), Part 3 which sets out school's responsibilities for pupils with SEND.
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20) which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.
- Teachers Standards 2012 Section 5



5. **DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED**

5.1 A pupil is said to have special educational needs if their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision to be made.

5.2 A pupil has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers or
- b) have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

(Section 6), Equality Act 2010.

5.3 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 concerns.

5.4 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.

5.5 The SEND Code of Practice identifies 4 areas of need:

- **Communication and interaction**
This includes pupils who are on the Autistic Spectrum, and/or pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).
- **Cognition and Learning**
This includes pupils with specific learning difficulties, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties**
This may include pupils who have a wide range of social and emotional and/or mental health difficulties which can manifest themselves in a variety of ways including self-harm, eating disorders, depression and/or anxiety and substance issues.
- **Physical and/or Sensory**
This includes pupils who have visual and/or hearing impairments, or a physical need that means they require additional on-going support and equipment to access the curriculum.

Note: a pupil may fall into one or more of the categories listed above.

5.6 MTGS will make best endeavours to meet the requirements of any individual within the context of 'reasonable adjustments as required by the Equality Act 2010.



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5.7 MTGS aims to educate pupils with SEND alongside their peers whenever possible, within a normal curriculum, after giving due consideration to the individual pupil's needs.

6. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

6.1 Upon application, parents / guardians are required to inform the school of any specific learning or educational needs that their child requires. This will include sending copies of relevant professional reports, such as an assessment by an Educational Psychologist or medical professional. It is important that full details are provided so that the school can access whether if it can make reasonable adjustments to support the child's needs.

6.2 The Learning Support Department work closely with class teachers to identify pupils with SEND. Quantitative and qualitative data is collated, to track the progress of pupils and support in the identification of SEND. Where a pupil is identified as potentially having SEND, the school's SEND Cause for Concern process is followed.

6.3 MTGS recognises that potential underlying difficulties may only emerge as a pupil progresses through the school. Teachers can raise SEND concerns about a pupil by following the SEND Cause for Concern referral process. Pupils and / or parents can also make referrals by speaking to the Learning Support Department, their child's Form Tutor or Head of House, who will then follow the SEND Cause for Concern referral process.

6.4 Whole year screening takes place in Year 7, 10 and 13 measuring ability in literacy skills and providing data to form part of the schools tracking and monitoring of pupil progress, in addition to helping the school to identify potential needs in order to further support pupils.

6.5 MTGS use MidYis, Yelis and Alis testing to provide a baseline for predicting future performance and these scores can also be used to generate further investigation.

6.6 When parents/guardians are advised or seek assessments or services by an outside professional or agency to assist their child beyond the scope of the support available from the school, any charges will be borne by the parent/guardians and not by the school

6.7 Entry to Senior School 11+/16+

Examination access arrangements (e.g. extra time, use of a reader, scribe or laptop, etc.) will be awarded to candidates during the examination/admissions process, if they provide MTGS with a recommendation from the pupil's School SENCO, as well as a diagnostic report from an Educational Psychologist or certified Specialist Teacher Diagnostic Report or a medical recommendation from a health care professional. It



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must be noted that all reports for external examination access arrangements must meet the JCQ regulations.

7. IN-SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR SEND

- 7.1 When a pupil has been identified as having SEND, the school will support to remove barriers to learning and where appropriate and able to do so make 'reasonable adjustments'.

MTGS has 3 Levels of Support:

Level 1 Pupils who receive 1:1 learning support in addition to High Quality Teaching

Level 2 Pupils who receive small group learning support in addition to High Quality Teaching

Level 3 Pupils with SEND who are supported and make progress with High Quality Teaching only

- 7.2 All pupils accessing Level 1 – 3 have an individual Pupil Profiles (PP) detailing relevant and accurate descriptions of pupils' needs, strengths, areas of interest and teaching strategies to support their learning in the classroom. PPs are prepared in collaboration with the pupil and relevant diagnostic reports or assessments. PP can be located in a link in the SEND List and Monitoring List, on the Teacher Portal and in the individual pupil's file. PP are working documents and change with the needs of the pupil.

- 7.3 All pupils accessing Level 1 have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). ILPs are produced in collaboration with the pupil and parent/guardians, and are reviewed twice a year by the pupil's Learning Support Teacher, in discussion with the pupil and their parents/guardians.

MTGS aim to:

- Liaise closely with the pupil, their parents/guardians and staff to support the needs of the pupil
- Adopt a pupil-centred approach to provisions and support
- Liaise with outside agencies/professionals, as appropriate, to support the pupils needs
- Collaborate with staff to support the social and emotional well-being of the pupil
- Collaborate with staff to ensure the needs of the pupils are met within the classroom
- Monitor and review the progress of pupils in line with the school's tracking and reporting procedures
- Support and develop pupils' academic achievements but also non-academic and personal qualities, developing self-esteem and self-worth
- Provide ongoing CPD for staff
- Liaise closely with external agencies/professionals as appropriate to further support the individual needs of the pupil



8. EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHCP)

MTGS will work closely with the relevant Local Authority to support the needs of the individual pupil, as stated in their EHCP.

As per the Children and Families Act (2014), it is the legal responsibility of the pupil's Local Authority to arrange the provision specified in their EHCP.

9. SAFEGUARDING AND SEND PUPILS

9.1 The increased vulnerabilities of children with SEND mean that safeguarding must remain a constant focus for all school staff. MTGS recognize 'the welfare of the child is paramount, and this underlies all our work with our pupils, including pupils with SEND.

9.2 MTGS recognise pupils with SEND may experience the following vulnerabilities:

- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing and reporting.
- More prone to peer group pressure or bullying.
- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further explanation.
- Disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021))

9.3 MTGS follow the Safeguarding Policy.

10. THE ROLE and Responsibilities

10.1 The SENDCO

The key responsibilities of the SENDCO include:

- Be a voice for pupils with SEND at MTGS
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of MTGS SEND policy
- Co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEND
- Liaising with all the relevant staff teaching pupils with SEND
- Advise on the graduated approach to support pupils with SEND
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to support pupils with SEND in receiving reasonable adjustments and high-quality teaching.
- As appropriate, liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that MTGS meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regards to reasonable adjustments and examination access arrangements.



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- Liaising with external professionals, including educational psychologists, doctors, speech and language therapists, etc. to support the needs of the pupil
- Management of the school's SEND budget and other resources to support pupils' needs effectively
- To provide support and training for staff to ensure they have the ability to identify SEND and adapt their teaching if necessary to provide high-quality teaching.
- Attending regular training and INSET sessions relevant to the role.

10.2 The MTS Governors:

- Help raise the awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND issues and disability provision within MTGS

10.3 The Senior Management Team (SMT)

- Work with the SENDCP to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within MTGS.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND.

10.4 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring they follow the MTGS SEND policy.
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class, including those that need additional SEND support from specialist staff. Inclusive quality teaching, adapted for individual pupils where necessary, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND.
- Working with the SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision. They seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress. This may include progress in areas other than attainment, e.g. social communication, sensory needs, etc.

10.5 **Parents / Guardians**

- Parents / Guardians should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress and development.
- Parents / Guardians of a pupils with SEND will be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their child's SEND and support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about their child's support.

10.6 **The Pupil**

- The school have a pupil-centred approach to SEND. The pupil's views are to be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.



11. MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The school pastoral team and school Nurse are involved in the care of pupils with any medical condition. Please refer to our policy on First AID and Medical Conditions for further information.

12. MENTAL HEALTH

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 on 'Pupil Mental Health' for further information.

13. ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Follow the English as an Additional Language Policy

14. EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 14.1 The regulations for Access Arrangements for public examinations are determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and other relevant Awarding Bodies.
- 14.2 In order to apply JCQ regulations, evidence must be presented to demonstrate a history of need and the normal day-to-day working of the pupil at MTGS. As an examination centre, we must ensure no candidate is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to their peers as a result of a specific needs or learning need; equally that no candidate should be unreasonably advantaged by provision of an access arrangement.
- 14.3 Once a pupil has been awarded 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, as well as the access arrangement reflecting the pupil's normal way of working.
- 14.4 As an examination centre, MTGS is required to ensure that any adjustments are based on evidence of need. Permitting access arrangements which are not supported by appropriate evidence constitutes malpractice by the Centre and could lead to the recall of certificates.
- 14.5 Where testing is required for access arrangements, this will be completed by the MTGS Learning Support Department. Evidence of the pupil's normal way of working in school will have been collated in order to demonstrate a clear picture of need. Should any further external testing be required, the cost is the responsibility of the parents.



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- 14.6 External assessments or educational psychologist reports may not be used as evidence for access arrangements unless there is an established working relationship between the external assessor and the school. In addition to this, prior to the external assessment the school must have provided background information to the external assessor to ensure MTGS and the assessor are working together in a joined up and consistent approach.
- 14.7 The Access Arrangements awarded at previous schools are not automatically carried forward and do not guarantee eligibility for Examination Access Arrangements at MTGS.
- 14.8 Where Access Arrangements are required as a result of a long-term medical condition, the professional diagnosis should ensure there is clear and substantial evidence for an arrangement to be made as a direct result of the candidate's long-term and continuing medical needs presenting a persistent and significant barrier to learning.
- 14.9 Pupils with Exam Access Arrangements are awarded such arrangements as their standard way of working in school (classwork and internal assessments and tests) as well as in public examinations.
- 14.10 The final decision regarding Exam Access Arrangements for internal and public examinations rest entirely with the school in its capacity as an examination centre.

15. EVALUATION OF SEND PROVISION

- 15.1 The school's SEND Policy and Development Plan are updated regularly, and adjustments made when necessary.
- 15.2 Any support provided is monitored, reviewed and adjusted regularly by the class teacher.
- 15.3 Currently SEND support is measured in the following ways:
- Our whole school approach to SEND.
 - Pupil progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEN.
 - Pupil Voice on feeling safe, valued and included in the school community
Comments and feedback from pupils and parents.

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

- 16.1 Pupils at MTGS entering post-16 education should have access to reasonable adjustments to support their needs.
- 16.2 The SENDCO will liaise with the Head of Sixth Form and Head of Careers before the pupil approaches the transition point. Similarly, the SENDCO will support pupils and



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parents/guardians, as well as liaise with the educational provider or employer to ensure that relevant information about previous SEND provision is shared.

- 16.3 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.
- 16.4 Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) is 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 Student Finance application services.

17. GDPR AND USE OF DATA

MTGS follow the school's Data Protection Policy

18. ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

Complaints will follow MTGS Complaints Procedure

19. Your LOCAL OFFER

. Each Local Authority has a Local Offer, which provides information on the support available to children and young adults with Special Needs and Disabilities. For your Local Offer contact the Local Offer for your home address.