

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School

Special education needs policy

This policy applies to the whole School and is published to parents and students



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Principles

This policy seeks to ensure that provision for children with special educational needs (SEND) is a matter for Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) as a whole. The School's Governors, Headmaster and all other members of staff will have regard to the [SEND Code of Practice 2014](#). The aim is for inclusive education for all SEND students at RGS.

Background

RGS is a 7-18, academically selective independent co-educational day school. It is keenly aware that addressing individual learning needs is the key to student success and, therefore, this policy seeks to inform teaching and learning throughout the School.

Objectives of special needs provision

- To help all students at RGS to achieve full access to the curriculum including school trips and extra-curricular activity
- To encourage all members of the School (teachers and students) to develop an awareness of and respect for individual differences and alternative ways of learning
- To note and monitor progress of students with SEND
- To provide advice and guidance to students and teaching staff as appropriate
- To help students and families access assessment and support for SEND and specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia.

Arrangements for coordinating and monitoring SEND provision

The Director of Student Progress, Learning and Support (DSPLS), Alice Lee, oversees arrangements for coordinating and monitoring SEND provision throughout the School, working closely with the Pastoral Director and Heads of Year in the Senior School and with the Head of Learning Support in the Junior School. Together they have general responsibility for monitoring the progress of students with SEND and maintaining communication with their teachers. Their more specific functions are listed below, but as the understanding of SEND improves nationally and the awareness of the diversity and needs of our students is enhanced, it is clear that no list can be exhaustive. Some students have complex needs and it is likely that in addition to the School's pastoral response, the DSPLS has a close working relationship with parents and a role with local authority outside agencies such as SENTASS and Parent Partnership.

The DSPLS carries out the following functions or ensures others do so:

- Contributing where necessary to the admissions process
- Day-to-day operation of the School's SEND policy
- Coordinating the work of Learning Support Assistants
- Overseeing records of students with SEND
- Liaison and collaborative work with external support services including educational psychologists
- Liaison and advice to fellow teachers and staff
- In-service training SEND training of staff
- Liaison with parents and co-collaboration of learning plans and other support
- Working with pastoral staff to coordinate or undertake assessment and provision of students with SEND
- Liaising with the School's Exam Officer to coordinate access arrangements for external examining bodies
- Coordinating provision of extra time for internal exams
- Contributing to planning and provision for students with other learning needs
- Reviewing progress of students with SEND with the Pastoral Director and completing an annual report for Governors.

The DSPLS works increasingly closely with pastoral and academic staff and liaises with other schools to provide the best proactive and often innovative, evidence-based approaches for each individual student. She is managed and supported by the Headmasters of the Junior and Senior Schools, the Director of Studies and the Pastoral Director. The Pastoral Director oversees an annual review of the SEND provision in the Senior School and in the Junior School. This review also results in a report which is presented to the Governors.

The importance of community at the RGS has been highlighted in the School's new development plan for 2015-18 and in this context there are a range of ways in which the importance of valuing and promoting diversity and difference are examined, in age appropriate ways, throughout the School including (but not exclusively) the PSHE and P&R curricula, assemblies, tutor time and in the School's response to incidents of intolerance. This also further enhances the School's promotion of British Values.

The role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body's arrangements for coordinating SEND provision follow the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*, modifying its suggested Code of Practice to reflect the differences in governance between maintained and independent schools. The Governing Body will receive annual reports from the Head. The Governing Body asks one Governor to take particular interest in SEND issues. The nominated Governor for this is Catherine Murphy. The nominated Governor and relevant staff usually meet each term to review SEND provision.

The Governors play a significant part in overseeing school self-review and will, with the Head, decide the School's general policy and approach to meeting students' special educational needs. The Governors will ensure that:

- They are fully apprised of the developing and monitoring of the School's SEND policy

- All Governors (especially any SEND Governors) are up-to-date and knowledgeable about the School's SEND provision, including how funding, equipment, personnel and resources are deployed
- SEND provision is part of the School development plan
- The quality of SEND provision is monitored using hard and soft data, qualitative information and student and parents' views and wishes.

The role of teaching staff

"All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs" SEND Code of Practice: 2014.

Teachers should:

- Be aware of SEND students' individual needs
- Ensure they have up-to-date knowledge about the implications of dyslexia in particular and more general SEND and implement appropriate strategies in their classroom teaching including strategies outlined in an Individual Learning Plan
- Discreetly, but positively support students in the classroom
- Liaise with SEND specialist/s to identify areas of difficulty in their subject area and agree appropriate strategies
- Have access to *the Learning Preferences folder* which provides information to guide teachers supporting students with additional needs.

Admission arrangements

The method of selection for admission to RGS varies according to the age of the applicant (see the School's **Admissions policy**), and is designed foremost to assess the child's potential to flourish within the School's fast-paced academic programme. Treating children as individuals is important to the School, and it welcomes children with SEND provided that it can reasonably give them the support they need in order to thrive on those terms.

Before children undergo the usual assessment procedure for their age, their parents are urged to talk to the School well in advance about any special arrangements such as extra time, usually an Educational Psychologist's report will be necessary.

Students with physical disabilities

- Facilities for students with special educational needs at RGS include those which increase or assist access to the School by students who are disabled
- Reasonable adjustments to the curriculum and an inclusive approach to teaching and learning will aim to include students with disabilities
- Specific arrangements will be made for students with hearing or visual impairment, following the advice of expert agencies
- This SEND policy has regard to the School's **Disability accessibility policy** which is drafted in accordance with the **SENDDA 2001**.

English as an additional language

It must be stressed that having a language other than English as a first (mother) tongue **is not a special educational need**. However, given the high academic

demands of RGS, a student who is not a fluent English speaker but has nonetheless satisfied the School's academic entry requirements may find the pace very challenging. Where appropriate the School will provide some pre-teaching of key vocabulary in specific subject areas. The School may recommend tuition in English as an additional language and will offer to make arrangements for this so that the student is not disadvantaged. There may be an additional charge on school fees for such support.

Screening and identification of SEND

The special educational needs of students within the School may be known before they start or may become apparent at any other time. Information may be received from primary schools, parents, other agencies, through internal screening or through observation of progress. Support is given and progress monitored through pastoral and academic heads, who inform staff and the school's SEND specialist/s of student needs.

It is the School's policy to screen* all students for specific learning difficulties on entry into the Junior School and to monitor those who are achieving less than might be expected for their age and ability. In Year 7 we try to measure baseline capabilities through adaptive testing. Additional needs are identified through professional awareness of needs and a collaborative approach with parents to ensure that concerns are looked into and an individualised approach provided in the necessary areas. Teaching staff receive training in the identification and support of students with specific learning difficulties.

** The screening process in the Junior School tends only to highlight possible cases of dyslexia. The School does not possess the expertise to formally diagnose medically based needs e.g. dyspraxia, ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, although specific learning and psychological needs are diagnosable within school. The screening may highlight factors suggestive of these conditions. When the School believes that a student may have a complex condition such as this it will note these concerns, discuss them with parents and advise on how to obtain an assessment by an appropriate specialist if the parents wish or the school feel it would be helpful and maintain regular meetings to review progress.*

Medical information relevant to students' learning is passed on to teaching staff by the School Nurse through the pastoral system. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will be shared with staff for those students whose medical needs require teaching adaptations.

The School is currently developing a wide-ranging approach to study and learning skills and is committed to constant review of the effectiveness of its teaching and learning for all students. Sometimes an ILP may be an appropriate tool for ensuring an individual student's needs are met in school. Discussion between staff and Learning Support specialists are supported through the ILP, which helps identify and develop a process of support. The DSPLS oversees the compilation of an ILP.

Students with an education and health care (EHC) plan

Students with a local authority EHC plan (previously known as a statement of needs) may join RGS if they satisfy its academic entry requirements and will not be disadvantaged. The SEND Code of Practice 2014 states that the local

authority has a statutory duty to monitor and annually review provision for all students with an EHC plan, whether they are in a maintained or independent school. The RGS supports the requirement to undertake an annual review of plans in conjunction with local authority advisors. In cases where a student cannot fully engage in their education at RGS due to their SEND and where these SEND have become apparent since they joined, the School may ask the student's local authority for an EHC assessment to be carried out with a view to them receiving an EHCP and receiving additional support to help the student.

Exceptionally able students

Students are provided with extension activities across the curriculum when they are known to be of exceptional ability. Recently articulated University dislike of early entry for public exams means that, even where students display exceptional ability, the School will discourage students from sitting exams outside their age-cohort. Responsibility for stretching the most able students is inter-departmental. There is recognition that there should be opportunities for breadth of education too, either through differentiation in the classroom, through extra-curricular activities or extension learning where appropriate. The School is also aware that some exceptionally able students may find it hard to form friendships and navigate the social challenges of growing up, and looks to support these students through its pastoral system. The School also recognises that students may have dual exceptionalities (SEN and AGT) and approaches the support of these students through pastoral and SEND support.