ABBEY COLLEGE IN MALVERN
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Special Educational Needs and Disability

Related Documents Include:

This policy should be read alongside the College's:

- Admissions Policy and arrangements
- Accessibility Plan / Accessibility Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Boarding / Welfare arrangements and relevant health procedures
- Examinations Policy and examination access arrangements procedures
- Complaints Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy arrangements

Legal Status:

This policy is intended to reflect the law and guidance applicable to an independent school in England, including, as relevant:

- Children and Families Act 2014, including Part 3 (children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities) and section 41 (approval of independent special schools and special post-16 institutions).
- Equality Act 2010, including the provisions concerning disability discrimination and the duty to make reasonable adjustments in schools.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, as amended.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015), insofar as applicable to the College and its work with pupils and local authorities.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended, including the standards relating to quality of education, pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing, and leadership and management.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, in the version in force, and applicable statutory safeguarding guidance.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation.
- Applicable examination-board and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and guidance, where relevant.

References to statutory guidance and external regulations should be read as references to the versions in force at the relevant time. The College will review this policy when material changes occur.

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Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The Principal will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. Monitoring may include:

- the progress and outcomes of pupils receiving SEND support;
- the quality and timeliness of identification, support plans and reviews;
- feedback from pupils, parents or carers and staff;
- the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments and classroom strategies;
- staff training and confidence;
- the management of examination access arrangements; and
- any relevant complaints, safeguarding matters or patterns of concern.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory requirements, inspection findings or the needs of the College's pupils make this necessary.

- The next official date for review is **October 2027**

Introduction

Abbey College is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment in which each pupil is treated as an individual and is enabled to participate in College life and make appropriate progress. The College recognises that pupils may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and that needs may be identified before admission or emerge during a pupil's time at the College.

The College will identify barriers to learning, consider the needs of each pupil, make reasonable adjustments where required by law, and provide appropriate support within the educational provision it is able to offer. The College will work in partnership with pupils, parents or carers, previous schools, local authorities and relevant professionals.

Abbey College is an independent mainstream day and boarding school. It is not a maintained special school or an independent special school approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014. This policy does not designate the College as a special school or as a specialist SEND provider. The College does not seek section 41 approval through this policy. The College may consider an individual pupil with SEND where it is satisfied, following appropriate assessment and consultation, that the pupil can access and benefit from the education and care it can reasonably provide.

The College's non-section 41 status does not remove or reduce its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, or any other applicable legal obligations. Decisions about admissions, support and the suitability of a placement will be made lawfully and on an individual basis.

Definitions and Areas of Need

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A pupil has a learning difficulty or

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disability for this purpose where they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. A disability under the Equality Act 2010 is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The SEND and Equality Act definitions are related but not identical; a pupil may be disabled without having SEND, or may have SEND without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability.
The broad areas of need commonly used in the SEND Code of Practice are:

- Communication and interaction, including speech, language and communication needs and autism.
- Cognition and learning, including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyscalculia, and more general learning difficulties.
- Social, emotional and mental health, including difficulties such as anxiety, attention-related needs and emotional regulation.
- Sensory and/or physical needs, including hearing or visual impairment, physical disability and medical needs which affect access to education.

These categories are not labels or diagnoses. Pupils may have needs across more than one area, and needs may change over time.

Aims and Principles

The College aims to:

- identify pupils' needs as early as reasonably practicable and respond promptly to concerns;
- focus on each pupil's strengths, aspirations and barriers to learning rather than relying on labels;
- promote high-quality teaching, appropriate differentiation and access to a broad and suitable curriculum;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and consider appropriate support and adaptations;
- set clear, proportionate and measurable outcomes and review whether support is effective;
- listen to pupils and involve parents or carers in decisions, subject to the pupil's age, understanding, wishes and applicable law;
- work constructively with external professionals and local authorities where appropriate;
- support pupils' participation in academic, social, pastoral, extracurricular and boarding life, where relevant; and
- maintain the safety, welfare and educational interests of the pupil concerned and the wider College community.

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Admissions, Information & Suitability

The College asks parents or carers to provide accurate and relevant information about a pupil's learning, development, health, disability, support history and any existing assessments or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The College may seek information from the pupil's previous school and, with appropriate consent or other lawful authority, from relevant professionals.

Where SEND or disability is known before admission, the Principal or delegated senior leader will consider the information available, the pupil's strengths and needs, the adjustments and support likely to be required, the College's facilities and staffing, and whether the pupil can access and benefit from the education and care the College can provide. The College may need further information or professional advice before reaching a decision.

The College will not assume that a diagnosis alone determines suitability. Nor will it promise provision that it cannot reasonably deliver. Any decision will be individual, evidence-informed and consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and other applicable law. The College will consider reasonable adjustments to its admissions processes where required.

If a pupil's needs become apparent or change after admission, the College will discuss the matter with the pupil and parents or carers, assess the support and adjustments required, and consider whether these can be provided safely and effectively. Where the College concludes that it may not be able to meet a pupil's needs, it will communicate with the family and relevant professionals and follow a careful, lawful process. No pupil will be excluded or treated unfavourably simply because they have SEND or a disability.

Identification & Assessment

Identification is a continuing process and may be informed by:

- information supplied by the pupil, parents or carers, previous schools and other professionals;
- admission information and any proportionate screening or baseline assessment;
- teachers' observations, work scrutiny and assessment of progress;
- attendance, participation, wellbeing and pastoral information;
- the pupil's own account of what helps or hinders their learning; and
- formal assessments or reports from appropriately qualified external professionals, where necessary.

A pupil will not be regarded as having SEND solely because their first language is not English or because they are learning English as an additional language (EAL). The College will seek to distinguish

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language acquisition needs from SEND, while recognising that EAL and SEND can co-exist. Assessment will take account of the pupil's linguistic, cultural and educational background.

Where a teacher has a concern, the teacher should record the concern, the evidence observed, the strategies already tried and the pupil's response, and refer the matter to the SEND Lead or designated senior leader. Initial classroom strategies and appropriate teaching adjustments should not be delayed while a formal assessment is considered.

The College will not require a medical diagnosis before considering whether a pupil may need support or whether reasonable adjustments are required. Equally, the College does not itself make clinical diagnoses unless a suitably qualified professional is engaged to do so.

Where a pupil is identified as needing additional or different provision, the College will use a proportionate cycle of assess, plan, do and review, reflecting the graduated approach in the SEND Code of Practice.

8.1 Assess

The College will consider the pupil's needs, strengths, progress, barriers to learning, views and the effectiveness of existing teaching strategies. Relevant information may be gathered from parents or carers, teachers, the pupil, previous schools and external professionals.

8.2 Plan

Where appropriate, the SEND Lead, teachers, pupil and parents or carers will agree a written Individual Support Plan (ISP) or equivalent record. This will normally identify the pupil's strengths and needs, intended outcomes, strategies and adjustments, any additional provision, responsibilities and a review date. The level of detail will be proportionate to the pupil's circumstances.

8.3 Do

The subject teacher remains responsible for the progress and day-to-day teaching of the pupil, supported by the SEND Lead and other staff as appropriate. Agreed strategies may include differentiated teaching, adapted resources, assistive technology, structured routines, targeted interventions, small-group or individual support, and liaison with external professionals.

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8.4 Review

The College will review progress and the effectiveness of provision at appropriate intervals, normally at least termly for pupils with a written ISP, unless the pupil's circumstances require a different timescale. The pupil and parents or carers will be invited to contribute. Strategies and outcomes will be amended where necessary. A review may conclude that support should increase, change, reduce or cease.

Education Health & Care Plans

An EHCP is a statutory plan prepared by a local authority following an assessment under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The College will consider an EHCP and any associated professional advice when assessing whether it can meet a pupil's needs.

Parents or young people may request that a local authority consider a particular school or institution. The statutory duties governing which institutions a local authority must name, and the position of independent schools which are not approved under section 41, are distinct. Abbey College is not a section 41-approved institution. A request for Abbey College to be named in an EHCP does not, by itself, mean that the College is automatically required to accept the placement. Any proposed placement will be considered through the applicable statutory process, including consultation with the College and the relevant consent requirements.

If the College is named in an EHCP with the necessary agreement and the pupil is admitted, the College will work with the local authority, parents or carers, the pupil and relevant professionals to understand the specified outcomes and provision, and to establish how the College can contribute to delivery. The College will cooperate with lawful reviews and requests for information. The local authority retains its statutory responsibilities for maintaining and reviewing the EHCP and securing the special educational provision specified in it.

The College will be clear with families and local authorities about the provision it can offer, any limitations, and any additional arrangements or resources that may be required. No statement in this policy should be read as a commitment to operate a specialist unit or to provide provision beyond that agreed for an individual pupil.

Teaching, Learning & Reasonable Adjustments

The starting point for supporting pupils is high-quality teaching that takes account of different learning needs. Teachers should use appropriate differentiation, clear explanations, checks for understanding, accessible materials and flexible teaching approaches.

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Depending on individual need, support and adjustments may include:

- breaking tasks into manageable steps and providing clear written or visual instructions;
- additional processing time, repetition, pre-teaching or checking understanding;
- adapted worksheets, alternative formats, assistive technology or suitable software;
- seating, lighting, acoustics or classroom environment adjustments;
- planned movement breaks, predictable routines or access to a suitable quiet space;
- support with organisation, planning, transitions and independent study;
- targeted literacy, numeracy, communication or study-skills intervention;
- access to learning support staff, subject specialists or external professionals where available and appropriate; and
- reasonable changes to College practices, policies or physical features where required by the Equality Act 2010.

The College will consider reasonable adjustments individually and in good time. What is reasonable depends on the circumstances, including the effectiveness of the adjustment, practicability, resources, cost, health and safety, and the interests of other pupils. The College will not treat the availability of a diagnosis as the sole test of whether an adjustment is required.

Social, Emotional, Behavioural & Mental Health Needs

The College recognises that social, emotional and mental health needs may affect learning, relationships, attendance and wellbeing. Staff should respond supportively, seek to understand the reasons for a pupil's presentation and use appropriate pastoral and educational strategies.

Support may involve the SEND Lead, Welfare Manager, pastoral staff, parents or carers and external professionals. Behaviour will be considered in context, including whether an unmet learning need, disability or other factor may be contributing. Safeguarding concerns must be acted upon under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The College must also maintain a safe and orderly environment and protect the education and welfare of all pupils. Where a pupil's needs or risks appear to exceed the support the College can safely provide, the Principal will review the situation with the family and relevant professionals and consider appropriate next steps.

Boarding Provision

For pupils who board, SEND-related planning will take account of the whole school day and the boarding environment, not only classroom learning. Relevant staff will be informed, on a need-to-know basis, of practical strategies and adjustments necessary to support the pupil's safety, communication, routines, independence, health and wellbeing.

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Where appropriate, the College will consider adjustments to boarding routines, communication systems, access to quiet or suitable spaces, support with organisation and transitions, and liaison with parents or carers and external professionals. Any arrangements must be consistent with safeguarding, health and safety, staffing and the welfare of all boarders.

Working with Parents, Carers & Pupils

The College values the knowledge parents and carers have of their child and will seek to establish constructive communication. Parents or carers will normally be informed when the College has significant concerns about a pupil's learning and will be involved in planning and reviewing additional support.

The College will provide information about the pupil's progress and the support being provided in a manner appropriate to the pupil's age, needs and circumstances. The pupil's views, wishes and feelings will be sought and taken into account. As pupils grow older, their involvement in decisions about their education and support will be increasingly important.

The College will respect confidentiality and the rights of pupils and parents or carers, including the circumstances in which information may lawfully be shared without consent to safeguard a child or meet another legal obligation.

Staff Responsibilities & Training

The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College has arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND and for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

The SEND Lead coordinates the day-to-day operation of the policy. This includes maintaining appropriate records, advising staff, coordinating support plans and reviews, liaising with parents or carers and external professionals, and advising the Principal when a pupil's needs may require additional resources or a review of placement suitability.

The Welfare Manager and boarding staff contribute to the identification and support of needs affecting welfare, behaviour, emotional wellbeing and boarding life. The Examinations Officer works with the SEND Lead and relevant assessors on examination access arrangements.

All teachers are responsible for the progress and inclusion of pupils they teach, for implementing agreed strategies, for recording and raising concerns, and for communicating relevant information to the SEND Lead. Support staff must follow agreed plans and report observations or concerns to the appropriate lead.

The College will provide staff with information, guidance and training proportionate to the needs of its pupils and the roles of staff. This may include SEND awareness, autism and communication, specific learning difficulties, inclusive teaching, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding and the effective use of support plans.

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Examination Access Arrangements

The College will consider examination access arrangements for pupils who may need them in internal and public examinations. Arrangements must comply with the current rules of the relevant awarding organisation and, where applicable, JCQ regulations and guidance.

The SEND Lead and Examinations Officer will work together to identify possible needs, gather appropriate evidence and ensure that any application is supported by the required documentation and assessment. Where the regulations require assessment by a suitably qualified specialist assessor, this will be arranged.

Any arrangement must be permitted by the relevant awarding organisation, supported by the required evidence and reflect the pupil's normal way of working where the rules require this. Examples may include extra time, supervised rest breaks, a reader, a scribe, a word processor or other approved arrangements. No arrangement is guaranteed merely because it is requested or because it has been used in a different examination.

EAL status alone does not automatically entitle a pupil to examination access arrangements. Any use of dictionaries or other language support is governed by the specific awarding organisation's rules for the subject and examination in question.

Safeguarding, Health & Safety

Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to particular safeguarding risks. Staff must remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, discrimination or other harm and must follow the College's safeguarding procedures. A SEND diagnosis or disability must never be assumed to explain away a safeguarding concern.

Where a pupil has medical, sensory, physical or personal-care needs, the College will consider relevant risk assessments, healthcare information, emergency arrangements and staff training in accordance with its health, safety and safeguarding procedures.

Confidentiality, Records & Information Sharing

SEND information, reports and support plans will be handled sensitively and stored securely in accordance with the College's data protection arrangements. Access will be limited to staff who need the information to teach, support, safeguard or make appropriate decisions about the pupil.

The College will explain, so far as appropriate, what information is being recorded and how it may be used or shared. Information may be shared with parents or carers, professionals, awarding organisations or public

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authorities where there is a lawful basis and it is necessary and proportionate. Safeguarding information will be shared in accordance with the College's safeguarding duties.

Records will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the College's retention schedule and applicable data protection law.

Complaints & Concerns

Parents or carers who have concerns about the identification, assessment or support of a pupil should, in the first instance, contact the SEND Lead or the Principal. The College will seek to resolve concerns through discussion and review of the pupil's needs and provision.

If a concern is not resolved informally, the parent or carer may use the College's formal Complaints Policy. This does not affect any separate rights or routes of complaint available under equality, education or other applicable law.

Appendix 1 – Graduated Response at Abbey College

Stage	What happens	Typical record / outcome
Concern raised	Teacher or staff member records the concern, evidence and strategies already tried; refers to SEND Lead / designated senior leader.	Concern record and initial discussion.
Assess	Consider progress, strengths, barriers, pupil voice, family information and relevant professional advice.	Assessment summary and baseline.
Plan	Agree outcomes, strategies, responsibilities and review date with pupil and parents / carers as appropriate.	Individual Support Plan where appropriate.
Do	Teacher implements agreed classroom strategies; additional support is coordinated where appropriate.	Teaching records and evidence of provision.
Review	Evaluate progress and whether the support is effective; amend, continue, increase, reduce or cease support.	Dated review record and revised plan if needed.

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Appendix 2 – Suggested Individual Support Plan Headings

- Pupil's name, year group and date of plan
- Pupil's strengths, interests and aspirations
- Pupil's views: what helps and what is difficult
- Identified needs and barriers to learning
- Relevant professional advice / reports
- Agreed outcomes (specific and reviewable)
- Classroom strategies and reasonable adjustments
- Additional provision, frequency and duration (where applicable)
- Responsibilities of teachers, SEND Lead, support staff and family
- Boarding / welfare considerations, where relevant
- Review date, progress evidence and agreed next steps

Appendix 3 – Key Distinction: SEND, Disability & EAL

SEND, disability and EAL are not interchangeable terms. A pupil may fall within one, two or all three categories. The College will consider each relevant framework separately: whether the pupil has a learning difficulty requiring special educational provision; whether the pupil is disabled for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and requires reasonable adjustments; and whether the pupil is acquiring English as an additional language and needs language support. EAL must not be mistaken for SEND, and SEND must not be overlooked because a pupil is learning English.

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