

## SEN and Learning Difficulties Policy

### Aims

Davenies is committed to providing equal access for all pupils to a balanced curriculum. The aim of this Policy is to promote good practice in the School's management of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties (LD), and to explain the support we provide for pupils for whom learning may be difficult and the co-operation we will need from parents. The School makes provision in accordance with the *Children and Families Act 2014* and guidance set out in the *SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2015* (SEND Code 2015).

This Policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

### Definitions

- A child has **Special Educational Needs** if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him.
- A child of compulsory school age has a **Learning Difficulty** or disability if he:
  - has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
  - has a disability which prevents or hinders him from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in... schools.
- **Special Educational Provision** is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age by... schools.
- Many children who have SEN may have a **Disability** under the *Equality Act 2010* that is "... a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

*(SEND Code 2015, xiii-xviii)*

A child who finds a particular subject difficult does not necessarily have a "learning difficulty" in the legal sense of that expression; there will often be disparities in the speed with which children learn, in their skill at solving problems and in their general acumen.

The expression "learning difficulty" covers a wide variety of conditions and may include those known as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result from emotional or behavioural disorders. The expression may also include those who have problems with their eyesight or hearing. The School provides subject matter that is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress, in accordance with our *Curriculum Policy*.

Learning difficulties may affect children of any academic ability and may become apparent for the first time at any stage of his education, particularly when curriculum pressures increase.

Although the School acknowledges that not all children with a disability have a special educational need in line with the above definition, we understand our responsibilities under the *Equality Act 2010* and will make reasonable adjustments to include all children and their families, where appropriate. For further information see the School's *Disability Policy*, *Equality Policy* and *SENDA Accessibility Plan*. The School's *SENDA Accessibility Plan* contains further information about the 'Reasonable Adjustment' Duty together with a *Reasonable Adjustments Decision Making Checklist*.

## **Provision**

- Davenies is an Independent Preparatory Day School which admits boys from the age of four years and offers a broad and varied curriculum. The School aims to identify learning difficulties as early as possible and to understand, and be responsive to, the needs and interests of the individual child.
- Davenies is not a specialist provider of Special Educational Needs care. Special education provision is educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for their peers. We aim that wherever possible pupils are taught in their own year group and are only withdrawn for individual support when specialist support is considered essential to provide skills and strategies to enhance their learning and help them gain independence.
- Davenies is currently able to support boys with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia/Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD), mild Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Autistic Spectrum Disorder traits.
- Davenies will provide support to pupils with SEN and LD which is within the remit of the staff skillset available within the School. However, where support or intervention is deemed necessary which is considered beyond the resources of the Learning Support Department, parents will be asked to meet the additional financial costs associated with providing additional resources of external support. Parents will always be asked to agree such a course of action and to meet the costs prior to the additional resources being provided.

## **Objectives**

These objectives were developed in conjunction with the aims and objectives of the School and with due regard to the *Children and Families Act 2015* and the *SEND Code 2015*.

- To help every pupil realise his potential and optimise his self-esteem by ensuring that they have access to the curriculum which is differentiated to meet their individual needs and remove any barriers which may hinder their learning.
- To ensure early identification, assessment and provision for any pupil who may have SEN and/or Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD).
- To maintain relevant pupil records detailing individual needs and interventions put in place and progress made.
- To enable staff to play a part in identifying pupils who are finding learning more difficult than their peers and to take responsibility for recognising and addressing their individual needs.
- To make relevant information available to staff to support their teaching of pupils with SEN/LDD.
- To provide regular training to teaching staff to support their understanding and teaching of pupils with SEN/LDD.
- To encourage the whole school community to have a positive attitude towards SEN.

- To provide resources to pupils and staff that can be used to support individual needs.
- To encourage a positive parent partnership in developing and implementing a joint learning approach at home and at school.
- To involve pupils in target setting of individual support.
- To develop strong links with outside agencies and future schools.
- To keep the SLT and Governors informed and involved in the SEN/LDD provision in the school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Head of Learning Support at Davenies, Mrs Kate King, acts as Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), including for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Mrs King is assisted by two Learning Support Teachers and two Learning Support Assistants who have relevant qualifications in teaching children with Specific Learning Difficulties.

The Head of Learning Support takes day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this *SEN and Learning Difficulties Policy* and co-ordination of the Learning Support provision made for individual children with SEN and LD, working closely with staff, parents and other agencies. She also provides related professional guidance to colleagues on how to support pupils with SEN or LD in the classroom.

The Head of Learning Support meets with the Director of Studies several times a term for monitoring meetings. The Learning Support staff are available to meet with and form and subject teachers to discuss progress and concerns. The Head of Learning Support can be contacted by email: [kking@davenies.co.uk](mailto:kking@davenies.co.uk).

## **Admission**

Prior to admission prospective pupils have a short assessment by the Head of Learning Support to ascertain any potential need for support and to provide advice on setting. The School will not discriminate against a child for entry into Davenies because of their individual needs, however we may feel that we are not able to admit a child if:

- he may not be able to access our curriculum or Common Entrance Syllabus; and/or
- the School does not have the specialist facilities or skills to meet the child's needs; and/or
- admitting the child would create an imbalance of individual needs within a year group; and/or
- admitting the child would jeopardize the performance and progress of his peers.

## **Referral to the Learning Support Department**

Referral to the Learning Support Department can be made by any member of staff or by parents when there are concerns about a pupil having more difficulties in the classroom than their peers. Difficulties could be in a variety of areas including spelling, reading, number work, organisation, presentation and layout of work or study skills.

## **Graduated Response to Provision**

Davenies provides a graduated response that encompasses an array of strategies and provision to take action to remove barriers to learning and put in place effective provision. This takes the form of a four part cycle:- *Assess, Plan, Do, Review*.

### *Assessment*

- Assessment following concerns raised by teaching staff is carried out using appropriate assessment tools or observations. A follow up meeting is held with parents to discuss the findings and plan a way forward.
- Prospective pupils are assessed to evaluate the potential need for support and to inform teaching staff of particular strengths or difficulties that will affect learning.
- The views and opinions of all pupils will be sought at the assessment stage and when an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Learning Plan is prepared.
- Pupils who receive Learning Support are assessed on a regular basis to monitor and inform intervention. Results of assessments are shared with staff, parents and pupils.
- A variety of current, valid and reliable assessment tools are used, depending on the area of concern.
- If the Head of Learning Support feels that assessment by an external agency would be of benefit to inform support and intervention parents are advised and given the contact details of agencies that the school feels to be professional and reliable and includes Educational Psychologists, Paediatricians, Clinical Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Behavioural Optometrists, Speech and Language Therapists and Counsellors. It remains the parents' choice whether or not to follow this advice and the school respects the right of the parents to choose with whom they consult. Parents are responsible for the fees of any external agencies. The findings and reports from such assessments remain the property of the parents but they are encouraged to share them with the school since they will contain important information relevant to the education and care of the pupil. The School respects that information within these assessments is the property of the parents and it will not be shared with a third party without parental permission.
- External assessment reports shared with the school are summarised by the Head of Learning Support and shared with relevant teaching staff if it is felt to be of relevance.

### *Plan*

- If it is decided to provide small group or individual support for a pupil, parents are informed either by the Learning Support Department or by the pupil's form teacher, and provided with review dates.
- Details of the support being provided, with the start date, are entered onto the School's database (Davenies Manager) and the pupil's name is added to the Learning Support List. The pupil's name will be colour coded so that staff know that there is current learning support intervention in place.

### *Do*

- Provision comprises of:
  - In-class support: Learning support staff may support the pupil(s) in the classroom alongside the teacher
  - Strategies and advice for teachers to inform appropriate differentiation and enable needs to be met in the classroom.
  - Reading Comprehension Clinic (SRA Reading Laboratory)
  - Non-Latin Groups
  - Shared or small group lessons

- Individual lessons

#### *Review*

- All interventions are reviewed on a regular basis which varies according to the type of intervention.
- Pupils who have 1:1 or small group support have Learning Plans or IEP's which are prepared twice a year covering the periods September to January and February to July. At the end of the period targets are reviewed and revised. These are shared with the parents, pupil and teaching staff via Davenies Manager.
- Support for pupils may be ended or started at any time during the academic year.
- Pupils who no longer have support are monitored and information regarding learning strengths and difficulties as well as any external or internal assessment reports, are available to staff whilst the pupil remains at Davenies.

#### **Pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans**

Where the Local Authority names Davenies as the school in the EHC Plan, the School will take day-to-day responsibility for making provision and providing a curriculum as set out in the EHC plan. Davenies will only accept pupils with EHC plans if it is the named school. If the Local Authority is satisfied that the provision set out in an EHC Plan can be made more economically in the state sector, it may decline to name an independent school in an EHC Plan. This does not prevent parents from making their own arrangements to pay for a place at an independent school of their choice, so long as the LA is satisfied that the arrangements are suitable.

The annual review of the EHC plans for pupils is the responsibility of the Local Authority however the Head of Learning Support will prompt the Local Authority, if necessary, to ensure that the review takes place and co-operate with the Local Authority during the process. If Davenies is named in the EHC Plan, the provision specified in the Plan must be made.

The Local Authority retains financial responsibility for any school fees of a pupil with an EHC Plan where Davenies is the named school. Applications for statutory assessment and applications for Local Authority funding must be made by the parents. Davenies will provide information to support any such applications. Where the Local Authority makes payments to assist parents to make Davenies the named school, the School will arrange for the agreed level of provision to be made. Where there are additional costs to the School over and above the Local Authority funding, the School will require parents to meet these additional costs.

- Davenies does not have any EYFS pupils funded by the Local Authority
- There are currently NO pupils at Davenies with an EHC Plan

For further information on how the School would meet the needs of a pupil with an EHC Plan, please see the *Education and Welfare Provision for Pupils with an EHC Plan Policy*.

#### **Consultation with Parents**

The School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents about their child's learning difficulties and to ensure that teachers are given any necessary information about a pupil's learning difficulties and that teaching practices are appropriate. All members of staff are aware of the School's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN and recognise it is their responsibility to seek out and share information with parents and the Head of Learning Support.

Parents of pupils who are receiving support are invited to meet with the relevant Learning Support teacher each term to discuss the pupil's progress toward the agreed targets. The Learning Support Department operates an open door policy and the Head of Learning Support is available to meet with the parents of any pupil to discuss concerns regarding learning.

## Information for Teachers

- The Learning Support List (the List) names pupils currently receiving learning support provision as well as pupils who are being monitored and who have external assessments that have been shared with the School. The List is available to all staff on the intranet and is updated termly by the Head of Learning Support.
- Davenies Manager is used to maintain information on individual pupil strengths, difficulties and strategies to support learning. Pupil records are colour coded for easy identification of those who are currently receiving support and those who need to be monitored. Electronic copies of complete reports or digests of reports from external agencies are also available and where the full report is not shown it is available to staff from the Head of Learning Support.
- The Learning Support area of the intranet provides information for staff on different learning difficulties and advice and strategies to support the needs of pupils being met in the classroom.

## Pastoral

The Head of Learning Support is on the School's Pastoral Committee and attends weekly Pastoral meetings to assist in the monitoring of the emotional and social development of pupils. Davenies has a dedicated Pastoral Committee and considers the emotional and social well-being of the pupils to be of paramount importance to their learning. For further information see the School's *Pastoral Care Policy*.

Should the Pastoral Committee have concerns about a pupil which if feels requires specialist input, parents will be advised to consult a counsellor or Clinical Psychologist which would be at their own expense.

Any inappropriate attitudes and practices towards pupils with, or in relation to, special educational needs or learning difficulties, will be challenged. For further information see the School's *Anti-Bullying Policy*.

## Examinations

Children may be eligible to apply for extra time to complete internal examinations and public examinations. In some cases the use of a laptop, reader or an amanuensis may be permitted. Parents are asked to liaise with the Head of Learning Support in good time with respect to this. The School follows the current Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance for Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for Common Entrance and other senior school examinations or assessments are agreed with the senior school concerned in consideration of the ISEB guidelines. For further information see the School's *Examinations Policy*.

## Equipment and Facilities

*Equipment* - The Learning Support Department supplies equipment for pupils to use in school which it feels may support their learning. This includes: pencil grips, move'n'sit cushions and fiddle toys.

### *Laptops*

- The Learning Support Department has a bank of laptops for pupils to use if required. Once a pupil has decided that this is their preferred way of working then the pupil may bring their own laptop into school however they remain responsible for this item and the functionality of it.

- Permission to use a laptop in school for curriculum work is at the discretion of the Head of Learning Support and is subject to evidence of need and competence of use.
- The IT Department provides support for access to printing within school and may allow access to software whilst the pupil is at Davenies in accordance with software licence agreements.
- Use of a laptop for internal examinations is at the discretion of the Head of Learning Support in consultation with the Deputy Head.
- Use of a laptop for external examinations is subject to permission from the examination board or future school.

*Facilities* - Facilities are provided for visiting specialists by negotiation and subject to availability.

### **Transfer to / from other Schools**

Information regarding support that has been provided to a pupil at Davenies is shared with the pupil's next school. All reports from external agencies are only shared with future schools with permission of the parents. Every effort is made to facilitate the transfer of the pupil to another school.

### **Withdrawal**

The School reserves the right, following consultation with parents, to ask or require parents to withdraw their son from Davenies if, in the School's opinion:

- parents have withheld information from the School which, had the information been provided, would have made a significant difference to the School's management of the pupil's learning difficulties; and/or
- the pupil's learning difficulties require a level of support or medication which, in the professional judgment of the Headmaster, the School is unable to provide, manage or arrange; and/or
- the pupil has special educational needs that make it unlikely he will be able to benefit sufficiently from the broad and varied education and facilities which the school provides even after all reasonable adjustments have been made; and/or
- the pupil is in need of learning support, medication or a formal assessment to which parents are unwilling to give their consent.

### *Alternative Placement*

In the event of the above circumstances, the School will do all that is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their son with the necessary level of teaching and support.

### *Finances*

Withdrawal of a pupil in the above circumstances will not incur a charge of fees in lieu of notice. The deposit paid in respect of the pupil on admission will be credited to the relevant fee account.

### **Other Policies and Documents**

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following other School Policies which are available to all staff on the School's intranet:-

- *Admissions Policy* \*
- *Anti-Bullying Policy* \*
- *Behaviour Policy (incl. Rewards & Sanctions, Expulsion & Suspension)* \*
- *Curriculum Policy* \*
- *Disability Policy*
- *Education and Welfare Provision for Pupils with an EHC Plan Policy* \*
- *Educational Visits Policy* \*
- *English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy* \*
- *Equality Policy*
- *Examinations Policy*
- *Marking Policy*
- *Pastoral Care Policy* \*
- *SENDA Accessibility Plan*

\* Policy available to parents on the School's intranet or a hardcopy is available to view in the School Office.

The School is aware of the most recent DfE advice which dovetails with the SEND Code 2015:

- *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* (March 2015)
- *Counselling in Schools: a blue print for the future* (March 2015)

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