



# Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Clifton College is committed to the equal treatment of all pupils including those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. This policy works towards eliminating disadvantages for pupils with SEN and disabilities by:

- using best endeavours to ensure that all pupils (including those with medical conditions) get the support needed in order to access the College's educational provision
- not treating disabled pupils less favourably than their peers
- making reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission and education
- ensuring that pupils with SEN and disabilities engage as fully as practicable in the activities of school alongside pupils who do not have SEN and disabilities
- ensuring parents are informed when special educational provision is made for their child and are kept up to date as to their child's progress and development.

In drawing up this policy, the College has had regard to the following guidance and advice (in so far as they apply to the College):

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (December 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Admissions Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy, and Accessibility Plan.

## DEFINITIONS

### ***Special Educational Needs***

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, a child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age;



- have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or early years providers;
- are under five years old and would be likely to have such difficulties if special educational provision were not made for them.

There are four broad areas of need, as identified by The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice. These are: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Sensory and Physical Needs.

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. The College's support for those children whose first language is not English is set out in the College's EAL Policy.

### ***Disability***

A child or young person is disabled if they 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 (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). 'Long-term' means 12 months or more. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy.

A tendency to set fire, steal, physical or sexual abuse of other persons, exhibitionism and voyeurism are expressly excluded from the definition of disability.

**Not all pupils who have SEN are disabled. Not all disabled pupils have SEN.**

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Council (the College's governing body) has overall responsibility for determining College policy and provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities.

The Heads of the Upper and Preparatory Schools are responsible for overseeing all aspects of the College's SEN provision and keeping the Council fully informed of the implementation of the College's policy in practice.

The Heads of Learning Support (Upper School, Prep School and Pre-Prep & Pre School) are responsible for:

- determining the strategic development of the SEN and disability policy and provision in their respective Schools, together with the relevant Head and the Council;
- having overall day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN and disability policy;
- coordinating specific provision for children with SEN and disabilities, including those who have EHC plans;



- ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the College's approach to identifying and meeting SEN;
- ensuring that teaching and learning colleagues are given any necessary information relating to a child's learning support needs and/or disabilities (if known) so that teaching practices are appropriate;
- ensuring parental insights are considered by the College to support their child's SEN and disability;
- liaising with staff in the Health Centre, external professionals and agencies, as appropriate;
- liaising with each other, or with other schools, when a pupil with SEN transfers;
- ensuring that the College keeps records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

All teachers are responsible for helping to meet a pupil's needs (irrespective of any specialist qualifications or expertise). All staff are expected to understand this policy so that the College can identify, assess and make provision to meet those needs.

## **IDENTIFYING PUPILS WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES**

Pupils with SEN and disabilities may be identified by the College in a number of ways.

In the first instance, and in accordance with the College's terms and conditions, parents of pupils must notify the College if they are aware or suspect that their child has SEN and/or disability.

All new pupils are screened in their first term and this may identify possible SEN and/or disability. This enables the Schools to obtain baseline information of their underlying ability. Information regarding any pupils who have raised concern is shared with teaching and pastoral staff to alert them to any pupils who need close monitoring.

The College regularly reviews pupil progress to help monitor whether children are making expected progress. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN (and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN). However, where the College reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, for example where there are early indications that a pupil is not making expected progress, the College will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents and the pupil (as appropriate). This will help to determine the action required including whether any additional support is needed, such as in-class support, extra 1:1 lessons or group sessions. Timetabled group sessions take place in all year groups throughout the Preparatory Schools and in years 9-11 in the Upper School by means of a modified timetable that includes GLS (Group Learning Support).

Regardless of the manner in which concerns are raised, the College may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child (such as by an educational psychologist), the cost of which will usually be borne by the parents. Where parents wish to request a formal assessment from outside of school, they should ensure that the provider liaises with the College prior to assessment and the College is given copies of all advice and reports received.



## SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES

If there are significant emerging concerns, or identified SEN or disability, the College will take action to put appropriate special educational provision in place taking into account any advice from specialists. Parents should always be consulted and kept informed of any action taken to help their child, and of the outcome of this action. Due weight will also be given to a pupil's wishes (according to their age, maturity and capability).

Arrangements for special educational provision and support are made through the College's graduated approach to SEN support: **assess - plan - do - review**:

- **Assess:** The College will carry out an analysis of the child's needs so that support can be matched to need. Assessment procedures may include:
  - Information from parents or pupils;
  - Screening activities;
  - Informal teacher observations;
  - Formal tracking of pupil progress through standardised assessments and progress reports;

If not already done so the College may, in consultation with parents, engage external agencies and professionals to help assess the child's needs and advise on any support needed. Any specialist advice received will usually be discussed with the child's parents.

Assessments may be adapted to ensure accessibility.

- **Plan:** Where it is decided to provide SEN support, the Heads of Learning Support will agree in consultation with parents and the pupil the adjustments, interventions, support and any teaching strategies or approaches that are to be put in place. These will be recorded in the student's Pupil Profile.
- **Do:** Teachers will work closely with the Heads of Learning Support to assess and monitor the targeted plan of support and the impact of support and interventions in place for the child. This means ensuring:
  - Additional or different provision is given consistently in the short term and then reviewed;
  - Taught skills are brought back into the classroom;
  - Staff delivering the plan are trained and confident;
  - Communication systems are in place to inform relevant staff of the focus of any additional support and on-going outcomes.
- **Review:** The effectiveness of any support, as outlined in the Pupil Profiles, and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed regularly. The Heads of Learning Support, and relevant teachers, will revise the impact and quality of the support and interventions in light of the pupil's progress and development and will decide on any changes to the support in consultation with parents and the pupil (as appropriate).



The College recognises that some pupils with a SEN may also have a disability. The College will do all that is reasonable in order to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the College can adequately cater. Please see the College's Reasonable Adjustments Policy for further details.

## **RECORDING PROGRESS OF PUPILS WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES**

The College will record the progress of any support for pupils with significant learning difficulties or disabilities. This will be done for those who have an Education Health Care Plan as well as those who do not and will be recorded by way of a Pupil Profile. This is drawn up in consultation with the Heads of Learning Support, other relevant teachers, the pupil and their parents. The Pupil Profile contains key information such as:

- Progress, attainment and/or assessment level
- Areas of strengths and need
- Teaching strategies (including interventions) and recommendations
- Involvement of any specialists or professionals
- Information the pupil would like to share about themselves, e.g. strengths, weaknesses, diagnosed learning difficulties, disabilities or medical conditions and what these mean to the pupil and how these affect them (dependent on age)
- Date the Pupil Profile was drawn up and date of review.

The Pupil Profile may be amended as and when circumstances change and at the request of the pupil, parent, class teachers, or Heads of Learning Support.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding), together with their parents and teachers, review the plan regularly and the child is encouraged to take ownership of it.

### ***Early Years Provision***

The College monitors progress of all pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The designated person responsible for coordinating SEN provision in the EYFS (which includes Preschool and Reception) is the EYFS SEN Lead. They will work closely with the Head of Learning Support of the Pre-Preparatory School, class teachers and parents. SEN Provision and parents in EYFS are supported by the Bristol Early Years Inclusion Team and children in the Preschool may qualify for additional SEN funding. This process will be coordinated by the EYFS SEN Lead and the Head of Learning Support.

## **THE COLLEGE'S SEN PROVISION**

The College's SEN provision includes in-class differentiation and strategies, learning support (both in and out of class), support from the Heads of Learning Support and specialist teaching in groups or as one-to-one lessons (usually charged to parents).

## **ADMISSIONS**

The College welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities offered and can flourish in its caring environment. The College's Admissions Policy aims to



eliminate from the admissions process, as far as possible, any substantial disadvantages which may be encountered by applicants with disabilities.

The College will treat every application from an SEN and disabled pupil in a fair, open-minded way. However, the College will assess all pupils for admission on the basis of its standard selection criteria, both during the initial application and when transitioning from the Preschool to Reception, from the Pre-Prep to the Prep School, or from the Prep School to the Upper School.

The College endeavours to ensure that it is able to fully support the needs of all prospective pupils. Parents of children with disabilities, SEN or learning difficulties are asked to discuss their child's requirements with the College at the earliest opportunity so that reasonable adjustments can be made during the admission process to ensure that they are able to fully demonstrate their abilities. Parents are asked to provide a copy of a medical report, professional reports or educational psychologist's report so that the school is able to make reasonable adjustments in order to support the pupil's needs.

Before an offer of a place is made, the College will assess whether it is able to adequately cater for, and meet, any SEN and disabilities through discussion and meetings with parents, consideration of any professional reports and references from previous schools and assessment of the pupil at a taster day, as appropriate.

An offer of a place may not be made if the College determines, following consultation with parents and professionals, that they are unable to meet and provide for a child's needs. The College will always consider its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The College's Admissions Policy is available on the College's website. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and details how the College supports those applicants with SEN and/or a disability.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Clifton College is a school with an aim to support and see pupils progress through the College from age 3-18. It is acknowledged that on occasion, a pupil will be identified who will not thrive in the Clifton environment. These pupils will be monitored and supported as far as possible by their class teachers and the Learning Support Departments. If the concern continues and/or the pupil's happiness and wellbeing is compromised, a decision will be taken as to whether the College can provide the most appropriate learning environment for the pupil. Parents will always be involved in this process.

- Teaching staff should document concerns about the child and report them to the relevant Housemaster/mistress, Heads of Learning Support and Deputy Head Academic as appropriate.
- Parents should be informed of the concern via the relevant school Deputy Head Academic or Head of Learning Support as soon as possible.
- The Learning Support Departments will provide interventions to help the pupil succeed. If, despite these interventions, the pupil continues to struggle the Departments will convene a further meeting with the parents.



- Heads of Learning Support, and relevant staff, will attend this meeting. A decision will then be taken as to whether Clifton can provide the best learning environment for the pupil.
- The Deputy Head Academic or Headmaster will meet with parents to discuss the meeting decision and outline interventions that are needed to help the pupil thrive at the College, or signpost parents to the Local Offer for alternative school options.
- Conversations, and observations will be ongoing and the College will be mindful of the natural transition points such as: Preschool to Reception, Pre-Prep to Prep, Year 6 to Year 7, Prep to Upper and Year 11 to Year 12.
- Where, after all reasonable adjustments have been made or considered, the College feels that it is unable to accommodate a disabled pupil and/or pupils with SEN or meet their needs, the College may require parents, after appropriate consultation, to withdraw their child. Fees in lieu of notice will not be chargeable in these circumstances.

### **PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION HEALTH CARE PLAN (EHC PLAN)**

The needs of the majority of pupils with SEN will be met effectively through ordinarily available provision and the College's SEN support. However, where the child or young person has not made expected progress despite the SEN support in place, parents and the College have the right to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC Plan for their child. Parents are asked to consult with the College before exercising this right. The College will always consult with parents before exercising this right.

If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, parents have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber). The College does not have this right of appeal.

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC Plan, the College will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC Plan can be delivered by the College. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan may need to be charged, either directly to the parent or to the Local Authority if the Local Authority is responsible for the fees, or the cost of provision, and the College is named in the EHC Plan. In all other circumstances charges may be made directly to parents, subject to the College's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The College co-operates with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant annual reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.

### **THREE-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

A copy of the College's Accessibility Plan can be provided upon request. This sets out the College's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the College's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the College for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the College; and improve the delivery



to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

## **BULLYING AND BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES**

All pupils and staff are taught that any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Pupils are taught through PSHE lessons, and through the curriculum and co-curriculum, more broadly, the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with kindness, courtesy and consideration. The College's behaviour and anti-bullying policies make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

The College recognises that disabled pupils or those with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to being bullied. The College's Anti-bullying Policy makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

The College also recognises that bullying (or other matters such as bereavement) can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN but where there are concerns, an assessment may be undertaken to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues.

The College recognises that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can therefore exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

The College's Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy will be followed if there are any safeguarding concerns relating to a child.

## **ENTITLEMENTS TO ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

Children who have been diagnosed as having a learning difficulty may be entitled to access arrangements, such as additional time, rest breaks, use of a word processor, prompt and/or modified provision, to complete assessments and external exams. Parents should speak with the Heads of Learning Support with regard to any concerns they have regarding the requirements for such arrangements. In line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), assessments from external professionals cannot be used as evidence for the application of access arrangements for GCSEs and A Level exams.





If an assessment is needed in order to support an application for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments for public examinations, the assessment must be carried out by an assessor employed within the College or by an external assessor who has an established working relationship with the centre. A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the College cannot be used to award access arrangements.

## **CONCERNS**

The College will listen to any concerns expressed by parents about their child's development and any concerns raised by children themselves. Parents must notify their child's housemaster/housemistress/class teacher in the first instance if their child's progress or behaviour gives cause for concern.

## **MONITOR AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually and at other times in the intervening period as necessary.