

SEND OFFER

(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Head Teacher: Mr N Fisher

SENCo: Mrs K Kallend

The following is a summary of the changes to the support of all children and young people from 0-25 years with special educational needs. Further information including information for parents can be found at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

We do hope this information is helpful. However, if you have any queries or would like to discuss any aspect of your child's provision at St Columba's, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Fisher, Head Teacher or Mrs Kallend, SENCo at kkd@st-columbas.bexley.sch.uk.

What is The 2014 Children and Families Act?

The 2014 Children and Families Act – part 3 has been active since September 2014 and is a completely new way of addressing the support of children and Young people with special educational needs. It puts children and young people at the very centre of planning and makes teachers more accountable for their progress.

Guidelines, referred to as the Code of Practice have been written and all people working with children and families must refer to this when considering the support of children and young people.

Education, Health and Care plans to replace statements

Under the new rules, SEN statements will be replaced with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Unlike statements, which cease when a young person leaves full time education, EHC plans can be valid until a young person is 25. This means that EHC plans can be used to support young people from birth to adulthood.

From September 2014, all new assessments of SEN will follow the new rules, and support will be provided, by the school and local authority, through an EHC plan. If your child requires an EHC Plan, our SENCo will discuss this with you and involve you in the application process.

Existing statements will be rewritten as EHC plans within three years; students who already have statements, will continue to be supported using the old guidelines until September 2017. Annual Reviews will continue to be used as the way to evaluate progress and our SENCo will continue to liaise with you about the details of these.

How will students with SEN be supported at St Columba's?

Parents will be informed by the school if their child has a Special Educational Need and if they are to be put on the school's SEN register. Appropriate support for each student will be discussed with the parent and can include:

- High quality teaching adapted to the needs of individual students
- Regular meetings with student and or parents/carers
- In class support from teaching assistants for students with statements/EHC plans or a SEN need
- Specialised programmes to improve literacy and spelling delivered by a Specialist Teacher
- Small group literacy and numeracy intervention for those with very low starting points
- Advice and support for teachers from the SENCo, pastoral team including our Chaplain and the Senior Leadership Team
- Access to the Resource Provision
- Use of Laptops in lessons where there is a significant amount of writing
- Use of electronic reader pens for those students who have dyslexia
- ASD support programme both for students and their parents/carers
- Speech and Language Therapy for those students with a place within the resource provision
- Social skills groups and Sensory Circuits
- Study Skills groups
- 1:1 sessions focusing on improving working memory
- Homework Club
- Access arrangements KS3-KS4
- Support from teaching assistants during exams to provide extra time, readers, and scribes
- Support to teachers through "Staff Surgeries" where teachers share good practice when supporting students with SEN
- Where appropriate, additional support may also be sought from outside agencies including a request for Educational Psychologist involvement.
- Support from the local authority AEN advisor for both students and their parent or carer

What is not SEN?

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a student has SEN. Where there are concerns, the school will assess to determine if there are any causal factors. Slow progress or low attainment does not necessarily mean that a student has SEN and will not automatically lead to a student being recorded as having SEN. Although English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not SEN it is sometimes the case that a student with EAL may also have SEN. Support is also provided by the Local Authority EAL advisor.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What types of SEND do we cater for?

Students with a range of special and additional educational needs and disabilities attend St Columba's. These include students with cognition and learning needs where additional support may be required when they learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. These learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) which affect one or more aspect of their learning e.g. dyslexia and

dyspraxia. We also support students with communication and interaction needs e.g. speech and language difficulties and autism spectrum disorder, as well as sensory impairments, physical disabilities and social, mental and emotional health needs. 14% of the school's student population have SEND. A small percentage of students are also learning English as an additional language. Support provision for students with special and additional educational needs and disabilities are co-ordinated by the SENCo.

How do we identify SEND?

Students are identified as experiencing SEND according to the criteria set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015). On entry to St Columba's, pupils undertake a cognitive and reading test to enable staff to have a baseline result. Data from Primary schools is also collected during transition visits. Where a SEND need has already been identified at primary level, the SENCo will liaise with the primary school to enable a smooth transition into St Columba's. This may involve visits to St Columba's over the summer break to familiarise the student with their new surroundings.

When deciding whether to make special educational provision, the SENCo, alongside the teacher, will consider all information gathered from within school about the student's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This will include high quality and accurate formative assessment and early intervention materials. A small number of students may require additional, specialist assessment and this is co-ordinated by the SENCo and Specialist Teacher and, in exceptional cases, via referrals for external specialist assessment. This information gathering will include an early discussion with the student and their parents.

Consideration if special educational provision is required will start with desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the student and their parents. This will then determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required. However support is provided, a clear date for reviewing progress will be agreed and parents, student and teaching staff will each be clear about how they will help the student reach the agreed expected outcomes.

How do we work in partnership with parents and carers?

Parent/carer partnership is a core part of the work that takes place at St Columba's. When identifying a students as needing SEND support, the views and experiences of parents are taken seriously. These views are recorded and comparisons made with the schools assessments. This happens in a variety of ways. Parents/carers of young people with special educational needs and disabilities with an EHC Plan or statement are invited to an annual review to discuss the progress and provision required. Parents and carers are also invited to Parents' Evenings where they have an opportunity to discuss the progress of their son in all of his subjects with individual teachers and the SENCo. Parents and carers of those students with ASD are also invited to Parent Surgeries to discuss any issues arising both at school and home. These are held in conjunction with the SENCo and ASD advisory team.

The SENCo is available to discuss any issues arising at any point during the academic year. Please either contact the main school office or email directly.

How do we promote student voice for young people with SEND?

All students with SEND are encouraged to join the School Council or become a Tutor Group representative. This enables the student to recognise what they need to do themselves to fulfil their potential but also gives them a real opportunity to contribute to any required adaptations to teaching and/or support.

Students and parents are also involved in the creation of the Student Passport. This document allows them to inform teachers how best they learn and what strategies can be put in place to support them. The SENCo is always available to discuss issues arising with the students, feeding back to the classroom teacher, which forms an important link between student and teachers.

How is progress monitored and supported?

The progress of all students with SEND is monitored by the subject teachers who are responsible for putting in place additional interventions to support good or better progress for all their students. Where a student's progress is becoming a cause for concern, the Head of Department, teacher and SENCo will initiate a further co-ordinated set of actions. This may include targeted interventions to close gaps in attainment and progress and may also include a further meeting with the student and their parents/carers.

At St Columba's Pastoral and Academic boards, led by the Senior Leadership Team, meet every term to discuss the progress of all students including those with SEND. The impact of any intervention is reflected on and next steps discussed.

What do we do to support transition to next phases of education and preparation for adulthood?

Wherever a young person's aspirations lie, it is important that they are equipped to manage the challenges in the next phase of their life. When a new student arrives at St Columba's, we undertake a thorough review of all information and data, as well as standard testing, to ensure appropriate setting and to establish the need for any further specialist assessments. It may also be appropriate to put in place immediate support provisions. The SENCo and Head of Year oversee the transition at Key Stage 3, as well as casual admissions at any point in the academic year.

If a young person has an EHC Plan, the SENCo will attend transition review meetings in Year 6. The SENCo will also provide support to assist with selecting appropriate Key Stage 4 curriculum pathways with support from Prospects who meet with students in Year 9.

In Year 11, students are given every opportunity to make informed decisions about the next stage in their education or their introduction to training or employment. St Columba's works in close partnership with Prospects to ensure that students with an EHC Plan, as well other students with significant needs, have advice and a personalised transition plan in place. The main aim of the plan is to set high aspirations, ensuring a wide range of options and supporting the young person to achieve the best possible outcomes in further education or employment.

If, at any time, a young person transfers to a new school or college, the SENCo liaises closely with staff at the new school and provides them with all necessary information, including student files, so as to ensure the appropriate arrangements can be made to make the transition process as smooth as possible.

What is our approach to teaching students with SEND?

As part of the tiered and inclusive approach that is set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015), St Columba's focuses on 'quality first teaching'. This means that all systems and forms of support are driven towards supporting good or better progress in all lessons. Several subject departments, including English, Mathematics and Science, organise students into classes according to their current attainment. Classes where a higher level of support is required may be smaller in size and may receive support from additional staff members such as teaching assistants. Departments and the SENCo organise a wide range of intervention programmes. In addition, students with an EHC Plan will receive individual support and monitoring from teaching assistants across a range of subjects, according to their needs.

What adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment for students with SEND?

As part of St Columba's commitment to 'quality first teaching', all teachers are provided with up-to-date information about each student located within their online class registers. This includes information about any student's SEND. This is supplemented by information regarding any special requirements; examples include access to colour overlays, laptops and reading pens as well as specialist resources for students with a physical difficulty.

Some students in Key Stage 4 with SEND will also have access arrangements for examinations and controlled assessments. All teachers work within a framework that sets out clear differentiation strategies for each type of SEND; in addition, any very specific adaptations that are necessary for individual students (such as specific resources and seating arrangements) are communicated to staff and monitored by the Head of Department. Quality assurance of differentiation for students with SEND is embedded in St Columba's termly schedule of teaching observations and marking scrutiny.

What is the expertise of staff and what training is provided to staff?

The Senior Leadership Team and SENCo have extensive teaching, management and research expertise in the field of special educational needs. They are supported by a highly experienced and extremely dedicated support staff team. Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Teaching Assistants have responsibilities in specialist areas and receive in-service training from expert professionals to update their knowledge and skills. The Resource Provision Manager has undergone specialist training, Etkan accredited, to enable support to students with speech, language and communication needs.

The school's whole staff training programme also includes refresher training in key areas of SEND, which supplements the comprehensive differentiation frameworks provided to all teachers to support 'quality first teaching'. All staff have access to a regularly updated library of online training and advisory materials in all areas of SEND. Teachers and support staff are also regularly briefed by the SENCo on the individual needs of students and strategies to support these needs. In addition, staff can seek the advice of the SENCo, especially where a young person's needs may be more complex.

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our provisions for students with SEND?

Student progress is at the heart of evaluating the effectiveness of any provision. Individual provisions and interventions have their own progress and impact measures, depending on what the aim of the provision/intervention is. Typically, any provision or intervention will be evaluated for any individual student within a six week period, as part of the 'Assess – Plan – Do – Review' process that is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015). In addition all students undertake termly assessments the results of which are then reported back to parents along with the student's attitude to learning grades.

How we do enable students with SEND to engage in activities that are available to all students?

St Columba's will always look to remove a perceived barrier that might deny any individual access to our services. Each student with a disability or medical need is treated as an individual. The school is pro-active in making 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled students and those with medical needs to ensure that they have access to most buildings and therefore the majority of the curriculum. Students with a physical disability (or medical needs, including those that may be of a temporary nature) will have, if appropriate, access to the Learning Support Unit on the ground floor and the option of using the lift to help them move around the school with minimum disruption to their learning.

In some exceptional cases, a personalised timetable or phased reintegration plan may be put in place. Some students may need a Health Care Plan, which will be drawn up in partnership with parents or carers, healthcare professionals, the Head of Year and the SENCo. Information such as triggers, signs, symptoms, treatments and strategies for managing an emergency are shared with staff. Similarly, advice on differentiation in class for a student with a disability or medical need is clearly communicated to all teachers and closely monitored. Most equipment used in classrooms is accessible to all students regardless of their needs. The School also provides a range of adaptive technologies or other equipment, via departmental resources or via the SEN Department. All students with a disability or medical condition will be supported to ensure that they have full or alternative access to the school's extra-curricular activities, including clubs and trips.

What support is provided for students' social and emotional development?

Apart from the daily pastoral care provided by each student's tutor and their respective Head of Year, pastoral care will also be provided by the Senior Leadership Team, class teachers, support staff, and the Safeguarding Team. Some students, who may or may not have SEND may also receive additional support from the Learning Support Unit. This support includes personalised mentoring and a range of engagement and early support provisions including the School Nurse and Educational Welfare Officer. The school chaplain is also available to support the students when required.

The SENCo reviews the needs of students with possible social, mental and/or emotional health needs and meets regularly with the Head of Year to carry out a full review of such needs and support requirements for their individual year group cohort. If necessary the SENCo can also refer students for professional support. Outside agencies including CAHMS and Youth Action Diversity Trust (YADT) who provide interventions and support for those students with mental health concerns.

What other bodies and agencies do we work with?

At St Columba's we work with a range of external professionals and agencies. These include medical professionals in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in addition to Youth Action Diversity Trust, the ADHD Assessment Service, ASD Assessment Service, physiotherapists and occupational therapists for those students with a physical disability in addition to those with fine and motor skills difficulties.

Advisory teachers in hearing impairment, visual impairment and ASD visit the school and meet with students, staff and parents when requested. In liaison with pastoral staff and the Safeguarding Team, professional partnership work may also take place with the Educational Welfare Officer, social workers, the New Horizons Federation (for students who are vulnerable or missing education) and local youth organisations. In complex cases, the SENCo will engage with professionals from the Bexley Early Intervention Team, such as Educational Psychologists.