



## Special Educational Needs Policy

### Introduction

The College's Values statement includes the following which is central to our support for young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD):

- Equality – we benefit from being a diverse community: we celebrate this and champion inclusion in all we do.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, which recognises the entitlement of all students to a balanced, broadly curriculum. Our SEN policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The College with the Governing Body will ensure that appropriate provision will be made for all students with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

### Definition of Special Educational Needs

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability and learning difficulty as a “physical or mental impairment” which has “substantial and long term adverse effects on normal day-to-day activities.” Here, “**substantial**” means “more than minor or trivial” and “**long-term**” means that the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so. The 2014 Code of Practice does not assume that there are hard and fast categories of LDD but recognises that the needs of the young person and requirements fall into four broad areas:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

### The SEN Aims of Richard Taunton Sixth Form College

- To ensure that all students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- To provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- To ensure the identification of all students requiring SEN provision as early as possible in their college career
- To ensure that students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities play as full a part as possible in all college activities
- To ensure that parents/carers of students with LDD are kept fully informed of their son/daughter's progress and attainment
- To ensure that LDD students are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future SEN provision

### 1(a) Admission Arrangements

Young people with LDD are considered for admission to the college on the same basis as for young people without LDD. The college will liaise with the previous school or college and possibly the Local Educational Authority concerned, to ensure that the



college is able to meet the student's needs. In accordance with the Children and Families Bill (2014), section 38 subsection 4b, young people who have an Educational Health Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs will be accepted, subject to entry requirements, unless the college does not feel able to meet those needs and make the appropriate reasonable adjustments or "the support of the young person at college would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education of others or the efficient use of resources."

### **2(a) Assessment and Identification of SEN**

If the student applies during the year prior to starting at college and indicates that there may be a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability, the College will carry out an initial assessment of the student's needs, during a pre-enrolment interview, which will be informed by a reference from the student's school. In addition, all new students participate in a screening process, which may lead to a full diagnostic assessment for examination Access Arrangements (please see sub-section 2b below).

### **3(a) Curriculum Access**

The College has adopted a whole-college approach to SEN Policy and practice. Students identified as having SEN are, through teacher planning and schemes of work, as far as reasonably practicable, integrated into mainstream classes. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the college offer and that they are integrated into all aspects of college life, subject to entry requirements.

### **4(a) Links with Local Education Authorities, Agencies, Organisations and Student Services**

The College works closely in partnership with relevant Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to support the SEN provision for those students who are considered to have High Needs (HNS).

The College recognises the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess and provide for SEN students. When it is considered necessary, colleagues from a wide variety of support services will be involved with SEN students (please see sub-section 4b below).

### **5(a) Partnership with Parents/Carers**

The College firmly believes in developing a strong partnership with parents/ carers and that this will enable young people with SEN to achieve their potential. The College recognises that parents/carers have a unique overview of the young person's needs and how best to support them and that this gives them a key role in the partnership.

### **6(a) Links with Schools and Transfer Arrangements**

The College liaises extensively with schools, in order to develop an individualised transition plan to support the progression of SEN students to College.

## **Procedures**

### **1(b) Admission Arrangements**

When completing the College application, students are asked to identify if they have a Learning Difficulty or Disability. The College will ask the current school or college for a reference, which will also normally indicate if the student has a history of SEN



provision. If the student and/or school have indicated a Learning Difficulty or Disability, the student will normally have a pre-enrolment interview with a member of the Learning Support team. If appropriate, the student will be offered a transition visit, to meet key members of the Learning Support team, and a tour of the College. A member of the Learning Support team may also contact the school SENCo for further information.

### **2(b) Assessment and Identification of SEN**

All students will participate in a rigorous College diagnostic screening process, the first stage of which includes free-writing, to identify specific areas of literacy difficulty. This takes place during the Freshers' days, in July, prior to formal Enrolment in August-September. All students are then asked to complete an online screening test (LUCID Exact), which is accredited by the British Dyslexia Association, during the August-September formal Enrolment. Students who continue to demonstrate difficulties will then be assessed for examination Access Arrangements, such as Extra Time or support from a Reader or Scribe. The specialist assessor who conducts the latter assessment will likely also recommend 1:1 or small group interventions to support literacy development, study skills or personal organisation in the College Learning Support base: Upgrade. In addition to the three-stage screening process identified above, students, parents/carers or teachers may make a request for an Access Arrangements assessment.

### **3(b) Curriculum Access**

Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities will likely benefit from some additional support during lessons. These students may or may not be classified as High Needs Students, for whom the College receives additional funding from the appropriate Local Educational Authorities. Depending on the level of need, these students will likely receive some support, during some class-based lessons, from a Learning Support Assistant. These students may also be encouraged to access Upgrade for further support on a 1:1 or small group basis. A cluster system is used, in Upgrade, to prioritise those students who need the most support, at busy times of the academic year. There is a dedicated tutor group for those SEN students who may find it difficult to integrate into a mainstream tutor group. Specialist academic and emotional support is available for these students, during the weekly tutorial session (PREP).

### **4(b) Links with Local Education Authorities, Agencies, Organisations and Student Services**

There are very regular meetings between members of the College Learning Support team and SEN Personal Advisors from Hampshire or Southampton Local Education Authorities (LEAs). These may concern transition programmes for students who are progressing from school to college, transport arrangements for eligible SEN students, requests for new Education Health Care Plans, annual reviews of existing Education Health Care Plans, arrangements for Personal Budgets and funding for High Needs Students. In addition, the College liaises frequently with the LEAs concerning The Local Offer website, which is offered by each LEA: this provides information enabling carers/parents and students to compare the SEN provision on offer at the College with that offered by other local providers.



To enhance the additional support for SEN learners, the College works with an extensive range of external support agencies, organisations and Student Services, including the following:

- Speech and Language therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Sensory impaired Children's Services
- Hampshire Hospital Education Service
- NHS Psychological Services
- Behaviour Improvement Team
- General Practitioner

In addition, important links are in place with the following organisations:

- Higher Education Institutions
- The business community
- The Education Welfare Team
- Enabling Services
- The Education Welfare Team
- Children's Services
- Adult Services

### **5 (b) Partnerships with Parents/Carers**

There is regular communication between the College and Parents/Carers concerning the progress of students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. Carers/Parents are able to telephone or e-mail the Learning Support Manager or Learning Support Administrator about any concerns. Carers/Parents are invited to attend regular Progress Review meetings with the tutor of their son or daughter. In addition, the Learning Support team conduct regular Student Passport Reviews (Individual Education Plan Reviews) with individualised targets which are updated each Progress Review day. Carers/Parents are also invited to attend annual Education Health Care Plan Review meetings at the College. There has been extensive consultation with Carers/Parents during the process of developing the College Local Offer website.

### **6(b) Links with Schools and Transfer Arrangements**

In order to develop an appropriate Transition Plan for a student who has been identified as having a Learning Difficulty or Disability, the Learning Support Manager, or a member of the SEN team, attends Year 10 and/or Year 11 reviews with external agencies to effect a successful transition to College. In addition, members of the Learning Support team visit partner schools, during the summer term, to gather information which will inform the development of support plans for SEN students. To advise prospective students and Carers/Parents about College options, members of the Learning Support team attend Open Evening events at partner schools. Throughout the year, transition visits are arranged for SEN students to visit the College, with members of staff from their school and/or Carers/Parents. During these visits, students are able to meet key members of College Learning Support staff, ask questions and have a tour of the College, including visits to the likely curriculum areas which will be most pertinent to their programmes of study.