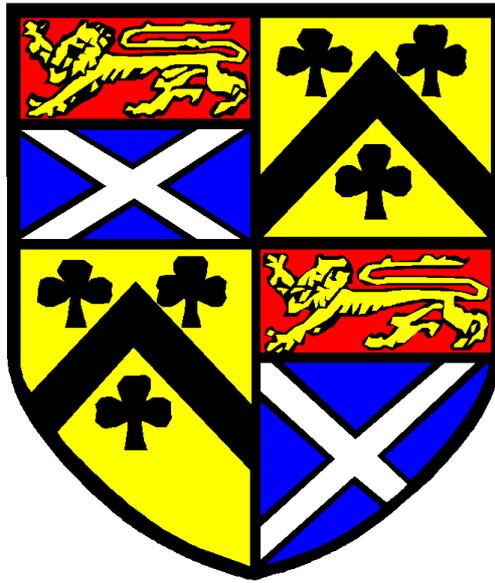


The Rochester Grammar School



Disability and Special Educational Needs Policy

September 2014

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Definition of Special Educational Needs

Pupils have special educational needs (SEN) if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

Pupils have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age,
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Pupils must 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.

This DSEN policy details how RGS will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them. RGS will use its best endeavours to ensure that teachers in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs to allow pupils with special educational needs join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated.

RGS will have regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs and ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that DSEN provision is being made for their child.

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with DSEN to achieve their potential. RGS recognises that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of children with special educational needs will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

Young people with disabilities and special educational needs often have a unique knowledge of their own needs and their views about what sort of help they would like to help them make the most of their education will be ascertained. They will be encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition processes.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

Provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's head teacher, SENCO and Learning Support Manager, all other members of staff have important responsibilities.

All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.

Teaching such pupils is a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response. Central to the work of every class and every subject is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the pupils. The majority of pupils will learn and progress within these arrangements. However, for pupils with special educational needs, there may be a need to provide an enhanced level of provision that supports and enhances their learning abilities.

Graduated response

If a pupil is known to have special educational needs when they arrive at the school, the Principal, SENCO, Learning Support Manager, departmental and pastoral colleagues will:

- use information from the primary school to provide appropriate support and provisions for the pupil to enable them to access the curriculum as fully as possible.
- involve the pupil in planning and agreeing the provisions and support needed
- involve parents in planning and agreeing the provisions and support needed

Early Identification

Assessment is a continuing process that can identify pupils who may have SEN.

RGS will measure children's progress by referring to:

- evidence from teacher observation and termly assessment
- their performance against the level descriptions within the National Curriculum at the end of a key stage.
- standardised screening or assessment tools.

English as an additional language

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual, RGS will look carefully at all aspects of a pupil's performance in different subjects to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the language that is used there or arise from special educational needs.

The role of the SENCO

The DSEN Coordinator (SENCO), in collaboration with the Principal and governing body, plays a key role in helping to determine the strategic development of the DSEN policy and provision in the school to raise the achievement of pupils with DSEN.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's DSEN policy
- liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- liaising with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after pupil has DSEN
- line managing the Learning support manager.
- Advising on a graduated approach to providing Additional SEN Support
- coordinating provision for pupils with DSEN
- overseeing the records on all pupils with DSEN are kept up to date
- liaising with parents of pupils with DSEN
- contributing to the in-service training of staff

- liaising with external agencies including the LA's support and educational psychology services, Medway Youth Trust, health and social services and voluntary bodies.
- Ensuring with the Principal and the school governors that the school meets its responsibilities under the equality act (2010) with regards to reasonable adjustments and access arrangement

Monitoring pupil progress

Teachers may conclude that the strategies they are currently using with a pupil are not resulting in the pupil learning as effectively as possible. In these circumstances, they will consult the SENCO to consider what else might be done. The starting point will always be a review of the strategies being used and the way in which these might be developed. Evaluation of the strategies in place may lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the particular class or subject. Consideration should then be given to helping the pupil through *SEN Support*.

The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate and all school based interventions have failed to make improvements. Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance, be progress which:

- closes the attainment gap between the pupil and the pupil's peers
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers
- matches or betters the pupil's previous rate of progress
- ensures access to the full curriculum
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- demonstrates improvements in the pupil's behaviour
- is likely to lead to appropriate accreditation
- is likely to lead to participation in further education, training and/or employment.

Additional SEN Support

The four primary areas of need are:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health
4. Sensory and/or physical

When a pupil is identified as having special educational needs, RGS will provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.

The triggers for intervention through *SEN support* could be concern, underpinned by evidence, about a pupil who, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a pupil's identified area of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills that result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas

- presents persistent emotional and/or mental health difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

If RGS concludes, after consulting parents, that a pupil may need further support to help them progress, they will consider their reasons for concern alongside any information about the pupil already available to the school. The school SENCO will support the assessment of the pupil, assisting in planning future support for the pupil in discussion with colleagues and monitoring the action taken. The pupil's subject and pastoral teachers will remain responsible for working with the pupil and for planning and delivering an individualised programme.

In some cases outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. In such instances it is good practice for these professionals to liaise with the RGS and keep them informed of their input. If these professionals have not been working with the school, the SENCO, with the parent's permission, will contact them.

Nature of intervention

The SENCO and the pupil's subject teachers should decide on the action needed to help the pupil to progress in the light of their earlier assessment. This might be:-

- to provide different learning materials or special equipment,
- to introduce some group or individual support,
- to devote extra adult time to devising the nature of the planned intervention and to monitoring its effectiveness
- to undertake staff development and training aimed at introducing more effective strategies.
- access to LA support services for one-off occasional advice on strategies or equipment or for staff training may make it possible
- to provide effective intervention without the need for regular or ongoing input from external agencies.

Individual Profiles

Strategies employed to enable the pupil to progress will be recorded within an Individual profile (IP). The IP includes information about:-

- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- any access arrangements
- when the plan is to be reviewed

The IP will only record that which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum provision. The IP will be reviewed 3 times a year. The pupil and parents will be invited to contribute to the review process and be involved in deciding on appropriate provisions.

School request for Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

For a few pupils the help given by schools through *Additional SEN Support* may not be sufficient to enable the pupil to make adequate progress. It will then be necessary for the school, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, to consider whether to ask the LE to initiate a EHCP.

Where a request for a EHCP is made to an LA, the pupil will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the school will provide written evidence to the LA detailing :

- the school's action through *SEN Support*
- Individual Profile for the pupil
- records of regular reviews and their outcomes
- the pupil's health including the pupil's medical history where relevant
- National Curriculum levels attainments in literacy and mathematics
- educational and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist support teacher or an educational psychologist
- views of the parents and of the pupil
- involvement of other professionals
- any involvement by the social services or education welfare service.

When the LA receives a request for a EHCP, it must decide within six weeks whether to carry out such an assessment.