

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
Created	2009	Vice Principal
Last Review	July 2022	Learning Support Leads, Compliance Manager
Approved	September 2022	Principals and Headteachers
Next Review	September 2023	Compliance Manager

This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS.

Thomas's London Day Schools operates as a united group of schools with a similar ethos and values and as such is referred to as a singular body.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Thomas's Admissions Policy, Assessment Policy, Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy, Curriculum Policy, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SENDA Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Thomas's seeks to encourage a diverse community to which individuals may contribute as fully as possible. It aims to create conditions whereby pupils are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential by ensuring that no member of the school is unfairly discriminated against as a result of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, age, social background, disability, religion or belief, family circumstances or sexual orientation.

To this end Thomas's will:

- fulfil its legal obligations under the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years (2015), the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010 (2014) and any related or subsequent legislation;
- seek to identify and remove all unjustified direct, indirect, associative and perceived discrimination against people with a learning difficulty and/or disability;

- pursue a consistent programme of development and improvement in facilities, in processes and in the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff to meet the needs of people with learning difficulty and/or disability, wherever reasonably possible;
- liaise with national organisations and local support services to ensure that a range of options, resources and facilities are identified for the benefit of individuals.

The **SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years** (2015) states that:

“A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- 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 or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.”

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

The **Equality Act** (2010) states that a person with a disability is:

“one who has 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”

- An “impairment” has a long term effect if it has lasted or is expected to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person concerned.
- “Substantial” is neither minor nor trivial.

It will be unlawful for a Responsible Body to discriminate against pupils with a disability. Discrimination can take place in two ways:

- Treating a pupil “less favourably” than others for a reason relating directly to their disability.
- Failing to make a “reasonable adjustment” to ensure they are not placed at a “substantial disadvantage” for a reason relating to their disability.

2. AIMS

Most importantly, Thomas’s has an underlying belief that quality first teaching should underpin all learning and that we should have high expectations for all pupils. Our aims are:

- to provide the best setting to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and to monitor and evaluate sites and resources in order to effect improvements;
- through reasonable adjustments to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to enable pupils with SEND to have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the school;
- for staff at Thomas’s to welcome pupils with SEND where Thomas’s is able to meet their needs, and adopt a positive attitude towards all pupils’ needs, recognising each pupil’s strengths and challenges;
- for all pupils to achieve their expected level of progress;

- to include parents/carers as partners and involve them in decisions about their child's education;
- to ensure safeguarding procedures are in place so that all pupils will be protected from harm and neglect;
- to support pupils with medical conditions to enable their participation in all possible school activities;
- to take into account the views of the individual pupil when their requirements are being assessed;
- to ensure that members of staff working with pupils with SEND, have appropriate information and support;
- to support pupils with SEND who may be more vulnerable to abuse, bullying, exploitation and other issues because of their SEND, including working with teachers to ensure they can access the PHSE and RSE curriculum.

Thomas's objectives for SEND show a commitment to:

- the early identification, assessment and graduated provision for all pupils causing concern;
- working within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice (2014);
- monitoring of pupil progress to aid identification and maintaining an awareness that the continued progress of pupils with SEND is the responsibility of all staff;
- regularly monitoring and evaluating provision in place to overcome barriers to learning;
- working in partnership with parents/carers thus enabling them to take an active role in their child's education;
- involving pupils actively in the decision making process regarding their education
- working with outside agencies to meet the needs of SEND pupils;
- ensuring support and well targeted continuing professional development opportunities to enable a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need and fulfil their responsibilities;
- ensuring that pastoral care and support is available for all pupils so that they may develop in all areas and build a strong sense of self-esteem.

In addition:

- applications to the school are assessed subject to the admissions process and on the basis of the applicant's aptitudes, abilities and qualifications. All reasonable appropriate adjustments will be made to ensure that the needs of applicants with SEND are catered for and that they are not disadvantaged in the admissions/recruitment process;
- the school will take steps to enable pupils who become disabled during their time at the school to continue in their school, wherever possible;

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Head

- To be aware of this policy and its related Code of Practice to ensure that pupils with SEND are treated fairly with respect and in accordance with this policy.
- To co-operate with interested agencies and comply with the Code of Practice in ensuring appropriate support and provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

- To liaise with the Head of HR, the Maintenance team and the Health and Safety Leader to ensure that, as far as is reasonably possible, the school is accessible to pupils, staff, parents and visitors. Refer to the Accessibility Policy for further information.

3.2 *Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader*

- To be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND provision.
- To ensure screening and tracking systems are in place for identification.
- To manage interventions and develop alternative teaching strategies and individual programmes where necessary, in collaboration with the subject/class teacher.
- To ensure that pupils with SEND have equal access to all areas of the curriculum;
- To organise access arrangements for external and internal exams;
- To support teaching staff in developing effective differentiation strategies. I.
- To lead the commitment of the school to working with SEND pupils and their parents, ensuring their views and contributions are valued.
- To lead induction and in-service training so that teachers are made aware of and trained in recognising signs of SEND.
- To advise individual staff and seek out and promote sources and materials appropriate to individual teachers' training needs.
- To acknowledge that teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their class and advise them on effective intervention.
- To review target setting and individual provision (including EHC plans) regularly with the class teacher and involving pupils in formulating the plans
- To keep records of the identification, co-ordination and level of provision for pupils with SEND, completed in liaison with teachers, Head, parents and child.
- To liaise with Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leaders from the other Thomas's schools to share best practice and organise combined staff in-service training, bringing in outside agencies and individuals where appropriate.
- To keep abreast of professional developments and current good practice.

3.3 *Heads of Department/Subject Leaders/Heads of Year*

- To ensure that this policy is communicated effectively and implemented within their areas of control.

3.4 *Members of Staff*

- To be involved as applicable to the needs of the pupil – class teachers, subject and year group leaders, teaching assistants and Heads of school areas.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 *Admission*

Whilst the school has a selected entry procedure (for year groups other than Reception), the Admissions Policy includes provision for pupils with SEND to have equal opportunity to participate. Best endeavour will be made to meet the individual needs of a pupil with SEND.

- Applications from all pupils will be assessed on the selection criteria outlined in the Admissions Policy and the degree to which the school can adequately cater for their needs. Discussions about the support requirements of pupils will be separate from that consideration.
- All parents of children who are being called for assessment will be asked if they require any assistance to enable them or their child to access the buildings and/or to participate fully in the interview and assessment, for instance the provision of information or tests in an alternative format. The school will make available clear information about access to buildings and support facilities to enable the parents of disabled pupils to make an informed choice of school.
- parents of pupils with SEND may discuss the curriculum, the teaching and the learning activities entailed with the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader, to ensure that any learning support and other needs are clearly identified. Relevant members of staff will receive appropriate training.
- No pupil will be refused a place at the school on the grounds of SEND alone before an opportunity has been provided for full consideration of the specific support or facilities required, in consultation with the Head, the Learning Support/Enrichment Leader and others whose expertise may be required for the specific situation. The final decision rests with the Head.
- If a pupil is rejected on grounds other than the selection criteria outlined in the Admissions Policy, a record of the decision and the reasons for it will be kept for one year. Refer to Admissions Policy for further information.

4.2 Site and Facilities Provision

The school will endeavour to make the site and facilities are fully accessible to pupils with SEND.

In the light of evidence about a pupil's particular needs, provision can include:

- improving access as far as is reasonable through physical changes to the building and by providing extra resources;
- ensuring pupils have equal access to all pupil facilities. While it is recognised that some of these facilities are located in buildings, which have access problems, the school will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that the facility can be provided in such a way that the needs of the disabled pupil are met. Examples of this would be assistance in the library to obtain books, provision of information in Braille or large print, special keyboards and software programmes.
- Each school maintains an Accessibility Plan which is implemented and kept under annual review.

4.2 Curriculum Provision

The school will take appropriate steps to ensure that lessons are organised in ways which offer the best possible opportunities for full participation by SEND pupils.

Parents may discuss the specific requirements of the curriculum with the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader to ensure that learning support and other needs are identified and made known to relevant staff. This mechanism will also be used to enable pupils and their parents to discuss any emerging needs and identify appropriate possible courses of action to address those needs. Relevant members of staff will receive appropriate training.

The curriculum will be implemented to ensure:

- there are appropriate and effective classroom management plans, with planning and differentiation to meet the individual's needs;

- there is ongoing consultation with parents and pupil to establish a collaborative partnership and programme of support;
- links are developed and maintained with support agencies, other mainstream prep and senior schools and special schools through visits, and membership of professional bodies eg NASEN, PATOSS and BDA;
- all teachers and support staff are alerted to the pupil's needs and are provided with appropriate training and literature;
- strategies are reinforced for safe internet use and helping the pupil develop appropriate practices for taking down and recording information eg. iPads and keyboards(see Appendix 1 for guidance and conditions of use);
- alternative sources of information are provided;
- members of staff work with the local borough to ensure the terms of the EHCP offer is carried out.

4.3 Education and Wellbeing Provision

Teachers, support staff and pastoral leaders play a pivotal role in identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils, both with and without SEND. Regular meetings of year group and pastoral leaders identify pupils who appear vulnerable or who may have undiagnosed needs in the above areas to ensure that vulnerable pupils are identified, and that appropriate support/provision is put in place as swiftly as possible. Extended pastoral support for pupils is implemented to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- There are always opportunities for SEND pupils to talk with members of staff to help to build their social skills, self-esteem, confidence and resilience.
- The School has a counsellor with whom referrals can be arranged.
- Pupils with SEND are involved in all aspects of school life including school committees, after-school activities and clubs.
- Pupils concerned about bullying can share their concerns with a trusted member of staff or by using the virtual worry box.

4.5 Health and Safety

The school will ensure that all pupils, including pupils with SEND, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other Health and Safety issues within the schools that affect them.

4.6 Assessment access arrangements

Access arrangements will be determined after consultation with the pupil and their parents, relevant academic staff, the Learning Support / Learning Enrichment Leader and others, as necessary.. The purpose of any special arrangements shall be to compensate for any barrier to learning.

- Any request for special arrangements, in relation to examination and assessment procedures, must be supported by EP or other relevant professional evidence and it is the parents' responsibility to make that available to the school.

Public Examinations

For public examinations, JCQ requires that the decision to initiate the process for assessing a pupil for examination arrangements lies with the school, and only recommendations from an assessor approved by the school will be accepted. The school cannot accept any reports or assessments unless they are part of a process

initiated and approved by the SENCo, with support from teaching staff and senior leadership.

For public examinations the centre's JCQ-documented specialist teacher administers the relevant test and fills in the relevant documentation for the examination board.

Exam boards have strict criteria to adhere to when requesting special arrangements and evidence and recommendations must be provided by specific professionals holding qualifications to do so for example: educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, or specialist teachers holding qualifications recognised by JCQ for confirmation of learning difficulties.

The Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader and designated specialist teacher are responsible for registering access arrangements online (AAO) and a record of the pupils registered for their access arrangements is kept securely by the school. Relevant documentation and evidence is passed on to the school's examination officer to be held for inspection by JCQ.

The school's examination officer in liaison with the specialist teacher will coordinate the exam access arrangements procedure.

Updated assessments should take place in year 9 ready for IGCSE/GCSE's, and early in year 12 for A-levels. These pupils will have had these arrangements as their normal way of working in earlier internal examinations and lessons.

The school's internal deadline for applications to be processed by the department within an academic year is February half-term.

4.7 Developmental support

The school will take all appropriate steps to ensure that a pupil who becomes disabled or develops special educational needs during their career at the school has every opportunity to remain at the school through the provision of the same level of adaptation and support as a comparable pupil who has SEND requirements at the start of their school career.

The Head and Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader will work with parents and the pupil to review provision to ensure that the pupil can continue to thrive at the School. Should the school be unable to meet the requirements for the child, the parents may be asked to find alternate provision.

4.8 Evaluation

Any pupil who has been identified by the school as having SEND should be the subject of a regular review. The Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader will:

- assess the progress made by the pupil;
- arrange meeting with parents, teachers or external agencies where needed;
- judge the effectiveness of targets, EHC plans and of any specialist involvement;
- review updated information;
- plan future action and set new targets;
- include teachers, parents and, where appropriate, outside specialists.

4.9 Support Services

- The school works with specialists such as Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language specialists and offers parents the option of paying for individual or paired/group lessons. These specialists agree to follow the school's policy and work through the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader.
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- The school advises parents on a wide range of available services and advice.

4.10 *Links with schools*

- The school works closely with parents to advise and help on applications to suitable schools.
- The Head/Deputy Head and the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader make contact with the receiving school to discuss the pupil's individual needs.
- With the member of staff who advises on senior school admissions, the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader will provide support to parents in choice of next school and in preparing for transfer.
- Where necessary, transfer of SEND information is arranged with the parents' permission.

4.11 *Complaints*

Any concerns or complaints about the school's provision for a pupil with SEND should refer to the Complaints Procedure. .

5. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE Statutory Guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2022)

HM Gov 'Working together to safeguard children' (July 2018)

DfE Statutory Guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (Dec 2015)

DfE Departmental Advice 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015)

DfE Statutory Guidance 'SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years' (January 2015)

DfE Departmental Advice 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools' (May 2014)

Children and Families Act 2014.

DfE Guidance on Teachers Standards 2011 (updated 2013),

The Education Act 2011,

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Guidance on the use of touch typing to support pupils with SEND pupils

Appendix 2: Useful contacts and organisations

APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF TOUCH TYPING TO SUPPORT PUPILS WITH SEND

Pupils who have difficulties with handwriting and/or problems with processing and getting their ideas down on paper can find that using a laptop, iPad or other electronic device

- enables clear writing
- enables the expression of ideas and knowledge
- overcomes frustration and fatigue
- increases confidence and independence

The following conditions should be met before permission from the Learning Support / Learning Enrichment Leader will be given for a pupil to type as their normal way of working:

1. A specific recommendation has been received from a suitable professional a.
2. Touch-typing skills must be sufficiently developed.
- 3.
- 4.

Please note it is the parents' responsibility to provide and maintain (including labelling) a compatible keyboard

Teachers will:

- take responsibility for guiding the pupil and preparing appropriate resources;
- ensure that pupils using a device in a lesson at a time when other pupils are not, are able to access all the required resources to complete the task in hand;
- recognise that pupils with language or social communication difficulties may need additional support with online resources and may not always recognise the dangers presented in online environments.

In exams

- pupils may use school devices for internal exams and for external entrance exams where typing is their 'normal way of working' and permission has been received;
- the Learning Support/Learning Enrichment Leader will confirm the list of pupils typing and liaise with the IT department over technical support;
- spelling and grammar checks and predictive tools will be disabled;
- pupils typing should be seated with screens visible to the invigilator and not to each other;
- work will be printed out on school printers as soon as each exam ends.

APPENDIX 2: USEFUL CONTACTS AND ORGANISATIONS

The following list gives examples of organisations that are able to provide assistance and offer disability training. In addition Local Authorities run short tailor-made training courses on disability issues. This list is not intended to be comprehensive. There are other organisations that offer help.

1. **AbilityNet**

Telephone: 0800 269545 Email: enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk

Website: www.abilitynet.org.uk

AbilityNet offers a comprehensive range of services to pupils, professionals, schools and statutory bodies and provides free information and advice on any aspect of the use of a computer by someone with a disability.

2. **British Dyslexia Association**

Telephone: 0333 405 4567 E-mail: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Website: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

The British Dyslexia Association offers advice, information and help to families, professionals and dyslexic individuals. The BDA is working to raise awareness and understanding of dyslexia and to effect change.

3. **Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE)**

Telephone: 0117 353 3150 E-mail: admin@csie.org.uk

Website: www.csie.org.uk

CSIE gives information and advice about inclusive education and related issues and publishes the “Index for Inclusion”.

4. **Department for Education**

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

The DfE website offers guidance, information and links to all areas of education and training for adults and young people.

5. **Equality and Human Rights Commission**

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

6. **Keytools Limited**

Telephone: 0844 879 2282, e-mail: keytools@hypertec.co.uk

Website: www.keytools.co.uk

Suppliers of specialist IT equipment and resources for users with a disability.

7. **MENCAP**

Telephone: 0808 808 1111

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Mencap works with children and adults with learning disabilities and their families and carers to improve their lives and opportunities.

8. **nasen**

Telephone 01827 311500. E-Mail: welcome@nasen.org.uk

Website: www.nasen.org.uk

Nasen offers a range of courses, publications, resources and advice for schools, parents, governors, and LEA's on supporting learners with special educational needs.

9. **The National Autistic Society**

Telephone: 0808 800 4104

Website: www.autism.org.uk

The National Autistic Society provides information, advice, training and support to families, professionals and organisations supporting people with Autism and Aspergers syndrome.

10. **Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)** – including transcription centre

Telephone: 0303 123 9999

Website: www.rnib.org.uk

RNIB offers practical support and advice to anyone with a sight problem.

11. **Action on Hearing Loss**

Telephone: 0808 808 0123 Textphone: 0808 808 9000

Email: informationline@hearingloss.org.uk

Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Gives information and raised awareness of deafness, hearing loss and tinnitus. Provides training courses and consultancy.

12. **SCOPE**

Telephone: 0808 800 3333 E-mail: helpline@scope.org.uk

Website: www.scope.org.uk

13. **Tourettes Action**

Telephone: 0300 777 8427

Website: www.tourettes-action.org.uk

Tourettes Action (Tourettes Syndrome (UK) Association) develops and disseminates educational material to individuals, professionals and to agencies in education and health to help people and their families to cope with the problems that occur with Tourette Syndrome.

14. **ADHD Foundation**

Telephone: 0151 541 9020

Website: <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>

Offers strength-based lifespan service to people living with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia and Tourette's syndrome.

15. **Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families**

E-mail: info@annafreud.org

Website: <https://www.annafreud.org/>

Child mental health research, training and treatment centre working with children and their families to deliver timely evidence-based support