



# Old Vicarage School

## Individual Needs Policy

**This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.**

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Accessibility, Admissions, Behaviour, Discipline & Sanctions, Equal Opportunities, First Aid & Medical Conditions Management and Child Protection & Safeguarding.**

### Introduction

Old Vicarage School is a non-selective mixed ability school. We welcome all pupils who can make the most of the opportunities offered by the School and who will flourish in our inclusive and caring environment. We believe that each child is special and has unique talents, interests and strengths. However, we recognise that there are those who, at various stages in their development, will need special provision in order to help them achieve their full potential.

We believe that all children can improve and achieve given appropriate support. Our staff will work together to nurture the girls, whatever their individual needs, and encourage them to develop confidence and self-esteem. All pupils have a right of access to a broad and balanced curriculum where they are set suitable learning challenges and their diverse needs will be responded to through a range of teaching styles and opportunities.

This policy reflects the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2015, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and specific procedures set out by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

### Admissions

We welcome pupils to our school in accordance with our Admissions Policy and ensure that appropriate provision is made to cater for their needs. All pupils with individual needs play a full part in the daily life of the school and are encouraged to join in all activities.

The school will endeavour to make necessary reasonable adjustments, but we do not have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive treatment.

### Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children have Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they:

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

The School accepts and plans for pupils who may have either a long term or transient need within the following areas:

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

However, this is dependent upon the severity of need and the presence of appropriately trained staff. We recognise that Old Vicarage School may not be the best learning environment for all children.

### **Barriers to Learning**

The School recognises that social, emotional and behavioural barriers to learning can be associated with some disabilities. Mental illness or learning difficulties can cause behavioural issues. We aim to work together with families to overcome or minimise these as far as is possible. Since pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) have very different needs, the School understands the importance of close communication with parents with regards to learning assessments for their child and related targets for improvement.

### **Physical Accessibility**

We will do our best to make necessary reasonable adjustments for physically disabled pupils but, unfortunately, the main School is housed in a Grade 2 listed building with restrictions relating to the physical environment. The classrooms are spread over four floors and parents would need to judge if such an environment was appropriate for any special physical needs their daughter may have.

### Reasonable Adjustments

If a current pupil has a temporary disability, such as a broken leg, the School will take reasonable steps to ensure she is not disadvantaged in any way. Reasonable adjustments may be made regarding the delivery of information for pupils with visual or hearing impairments. e.g. audio tapes or enlarged computer screens.

Please refer to the school's Accessibility policy for further information.

### **Safeguarding Pupils with SEND**

The School recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying or other kinds of abuse. We will give special consideration and attention to any pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, including those who have English as an additional language.

### **The Individual Needs Department**

At Old Vicarage School, the Individual Needs Department is responsible for meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. The department is staffed by qualified specialists who:

- Assess and screen pupils for specific learning difficulties.
- Make referrals to external specialists if appropriate.
- Provide advice on the level of support, resources and strategies required to support learning.
- Teach the girls with specific learning difficulties on a one-to-one or group basis or provide support in class.

### **Identification, Assessment and Provision**

At the heart of the work of every class is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing which takes into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the children.

The majority of pupils will learn and progress within these arrangements. Those whose overall attainment or attainment in specific subjects falls significantly outside the expected range may have Special Educational Needs.

We have a clear approach to identifying and responding to pupils with SEND. In line with the SEND Code 2015, we provide a cycle of action, "Assess, Plan, Do, Review" to create a graduated response to needs. Where a pupil appears to be behind expected levels, we will follow the methodology outlined in the Code for gathering information and seeking "Early Help" if appropriate.

We believe that provision for pupils with SEND is a matter for the school as a whole and that all teachers are teachers of children with individual needs.

### Identification

The School uses both formal and informal methods to assess and identify pupils with potential SEN:

- Formally, the school's system for tracking the progress of individual pupils, including those in the EYFS, will provide information about areas where a girl is not progressing satisfactorily.
- Informally, teachers may judge that progress throughout the year is inadequate by identifying that:
  - Little or no progress has been made, even when teaching approaches are targeted at a girl's identified area of weakness.
  - Difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills has resulted in poor attainment in differing curriculum areas.
  - Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties have not been improved by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school.
  - In relation to identified sensory or physical problems, the girl has continued to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment.
  - In relation to identified communication and/or interaction difficulties, the girl continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

When a concern is identified, the teacher will gather together sufficient evidence to provide a profile of difficulties and will, after consulting parents, refer the case to the Individual Needs department.

### Assessment

On being referred to the Individual Needs Department an assessment will be made by a specialist teacher.

Some pupils will require specialist support from the Department. Parents will be informed if their daughter is receiving this support and any decisions to involve external specialists will be taken in discussion with them. We will provide guidelines to parents as necessary, to help them seek external help from specialists, so that the areas that require support can be identified. Where a girl is referred to a specialist for an assessment, the parents will be liable for the cost of this assessment.

If it is considered that a pupil's difficulties are so severe that their needs cannot be met by the School, parents may apply of their own volition, or be asked by the School to apply, for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC) Assessment following the legal assessment procedures set out by the Local Authority. We will provide the parents with guidance and assistance with this.

### Planning

At the initial stage it may be decided that, with specialist advice and support, the pupil's needs can be supported effectively in the classroom. If the need is more significant it may be deemed appropriate for the pupil to receive specialist support outside the classroom.

The type of support will be dependent on need. Girls may be seen individually, in pairs or in small groups. In some cases it may be appropriate for a member of the Individual Needs team to provide in-class support.

### Distribution of Information, Monitoring and Review

Where a diagnosis has been made or a decision to provide specific support taken, it is vital that this is clearly communicated to all concerned. This is done through the Register of Individual Needs, pupils' ILPs and Class Recommendations.

- Register of Individual Needs: A Register of those identified is kept on the pupil database. This Register includes a summary of pupil's assessment history, summary of remediation provided and recommendations for teacher action. This is to ensure that all teachers are aware of these pupils' needs and how to support them appropriately.
- Class Recommendations: Each pupil on the Register of Individual Needs has a list of class recommendations to enable the teacher to support the pupil within their subject context.

### **More Able Girls**

The School recognises that more able girls in the school may also have individual needs. We have decided not to differentiate between the terms Gifted and Talented but to focus on the areas, academic or otherwise in which certain girls are significantly more able than their peers. These girls are known as More Able Girls (MAGs).

MAGs are girls who exhibit high performance capability in one of the following fields:

- Intellect
- Art/Creativity
- Music
- Leadership
- Specific academic subject
- Sport

### Criteria for identifying pupils

In academic subjects teachers may consider whether a pupil should be deemed More Able by considering the following criteria:

- Demonstrates a high level of originality in thinking
- Demonstrates a sophisticated use of language
- Uses advanced skills when engaged in discussion
- Intuitively jumps steps when problem solving
- Shows exceptional performance across the whole range of school exams and standardised tests

In Music, Art, Drama and Sport, the specialist subject teachers will use experience and professional judgment to decide on a girl's identification.

A Register of those pupils identified as MAGs is kept on the pupil database. The Co-ordinator uses this to keep track of each girl as she progresses through the school and inform new teachers of her particular aptitudes and needs.

### **Annual Report**

An annual report on the progress of all children including those with SEND is presented to the Governing Body by the Head.

### **Parental Partnership**

The School recognises that parents can contribute key knowledge and experience to the shared view of their child's needs and the best ways of supporting them.

All parents of pupils will be treated as partners and will be supported by the School to ensure they are able to play an effective, active and valued role in their daughter's education.

However, should there ever be circumstances in which the School has made all reasonable adjustments and exhausted all appropriate strategies but remains unable to meet the child's needs, parents may be required to withdraw the pupil from the School. Under such circumstances, fees in lieu of notice will not be charged and any deposits held will be credited after any outstanding charges have been deducted.

### **Complaints**

Any complaint about the organisation, management and provision for SEND must be made in accordance with the School's Complaints Procedure. Additionally, all parents of children with SEND have the legal right to seek redress from the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) if they believe that their child has been discriminated against.

Signed: **Gill Tanner**  
Position: Head of Individual Needs

**Gill Linthwaite**  
Head

Revised: April 2020  
Next Review: April 2022