



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 mixed ability school. It is non-selective for girls entering Nursery and Reception. We welcome all girls 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 girls 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 girls 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 Girls and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and specific procedures set out by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Admissions

We welcome girls to our school in accordance with our Admissions Policy and ensure that appropriate provision is made to cater for their needs. All girls 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 interventions.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

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

- Have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of girls 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 girls 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 girls 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

This is, however, 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 girls.

Barriers to Learning

The school recognises that social, emotional and behavioural barriers to learning can be associated with some disabilities. Mental health issues or learning difficulties can cause behavioural issues. We aim to work together with families to overcome or minimise these as far as possible. 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 girls but, 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 girl 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 also be made regarding the delivery of information for girls 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 Girls with SEND

The school recognises that girls with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying or other kinds of abuse. We will give special consideration and attention to any girls who are disabled or have special educational needs, including those who have English as an additional language. The mental health and wellbeing of our girls is fundamental in all that we do.

The Individual Needs Department

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

- Provide teachers with advice on the level of support, resources and strategies required to support learning in the classroom.
- Maintain the provision map in consultation with class teachers.
- Assess and screen girls for specific learning difficulties.
- Make referrals to external specialists if appropriate.
- Teach girls with specific learning difficulties on a one-to-one or group basis or provide support in class. This is dependent on need.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

At the heart of the work of every class is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing which considers the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the girls.

Most girls 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 girls 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 girl 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 girls with SEND is a matter for the school as a whole and that all teachers are teachers of girls with individual needs.

Identification

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

- Formally, the school's system for tracking the progress of individual girls, 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 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 girls 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 girl'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, and staff will liaise closely with the local authority to provide appropriate support in school. The EHCPs will be reviewed annually, and the required curriculum will be provided as set out in the EHCP. It is the responsibility of the local authority to review any EHCP but Old Vicarage School will ensure that any such reviews take place. At the time of writing there are no girls with an EHCP at the school.

Planning

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

Old Vicarage School strives to be an inclusive school with systems in place for early identification of barriers to learning and participation. All girls have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, and we have high expectations. We are aware that girls with SEND may be more vulnerable to exploitation and bullying and aim to ensure that the girls' mental health and well being is at the forefront of what we do.

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 Provision Map, the Register of Individual Needs, girls' ILPs and Class Recommendations.

- Register of Individual Needs: A Register of those identified is kept on the girl database. This register includes a summary of the girl's assessment history, summary of remediation provided and recommendations for teacher action. This is to ensure that all teachers are aware of this girls' needs and how to support them appropriately.
- Class Recommendations: Each girl on the Register of Individual Needs has a list of class recommendations to enable the teacher to support the girl within their subject context.
- In the Upper School each girl has a progress record that is updated each term.
- Teachers are responsible for detailing the support girls they teach require when completing their Medium Term Plans each term.
- The Provision Map is an overview of interventions and adjustments made for girls in each year.
- Girls with reports from external specialists are identified on the school's main tracking system.

Annual Report

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

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 girls 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 girl 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. Is this allowed/legal?

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 girls 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

Clare Strickland
Head

Revised: April 2023
Next Review: April 2024