



**NORTHGATE**  
*High School*

# Special Educational Needs Policy

Respect | Determination | Teamwork

**Review period:** Annual

**Review by:** Mrs S Asher

**Date Reviewed:** April 2020

**Next Review:** May 2021

# Learning Support – Special Educational Needs Policy and Local Offer

## Definition of Special Educational Needs

Students have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

Students have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age which has resulted in a diagnosis by an educational psychologist or medical professional
- 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

Students 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 are taught.

This policy is developed in accordance with the Children and Families Act March 2014 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice updated Feb 2015, and Suffolk Local Authority guidance.

Northgate High School recognises that the Special Needs provision within the school is the responsibility of all colleagues and high quality, differentiated teaching is the aim of the whole school.

## Objectives

1. To provide all students, irrespective of the nature of their educational needs, with a culture and ethos in which all are valued equally.
2. To provide the appropriate support needed by those students who may experience learning, physical, sensory or emotional difficulties at some time in their school career, to map provision and ensure sustainability, recognising the limitations of the mainstream environment.
3. To prepare students towards as much independence as possible.
4. To make arrangements for the early identification and subsequent provision required for students with special needs.
5. To ensure that the special educational needs of students are met with the fullest possible access to the curriculum and that they make the best possible progress.
6. To foster links with parents and provide information and advice services throughout their child's school career.
7. To encourage purposeful and positive links with outside agencies and the wider community.
8. To promote the sharing of information and best use of available data to encourage planning and inclusion of students of all abilities.
9. To monitor and track vulnerable groups of students, sharing information and planning appropriate intervention when necessary.
10. To promote the professional development of staff with regard to their expertise in dealing with students with special educational needs.
11. To ensure that the views of the student and parent are collected and taken into account when planning educational experience.

## Assistant Headteacher – Learning Support and SENCO

The postholder oversees the progress of students with special educational needs, language needs and social and emotional issues, through transition to post 16 and works alongside the Leadership team.

- He/She ensures effective response to data analysis and learning need and identifies and works to overcome barriers to progress for these students and co-ordinates intervention
- He/she manages the work of the Learning Support Department and fulfills the role of SENCO, implementing the SEN Policy and Code of Practice.
- He/She ensures the effective consultation with and capture of parent and student voice so that views are taken into account when planning provision.
- He/She is responsible for all matters relating to the education and learning needs of students with an Education, Health Care Plan or who fall within the Single School Category, including the Annual Review of Plans.
- He/She has overall responsibility for individual specialist interventions and provision mapping for students with an SEN,

ensuring that their needs are being met, the application, monitoring and evaluation of policies relating to SEN, inclusion, other vulnerable groups, (Children in care, with English as an additional language) including Accessibility and Equalities Policies.

- He/She assesses the effectiveness of provision, monitoring gaps in achievement and works alongside teams to effectively include and differentiate for student need, providing for training needs.
- He/She works with the data manager to ensure the effective dissemination of student information and to facilitate effective tracking within departments.
- The post holder will account for the most effective use of the TA team (deployment, training, professional development,) and monitor, alongside the Leadership team, alternative provision arrangements and monitors personalised timetabling, foundation learning pathways and provision for students at risk of exclusion.
- He/She liaises with the Local Authority SEN and Family Services teams, attends IYFAP, has oversight of provision for children in care, liaises with the Early Help team, community groups, Alternative Tuition Service, Children and Young People's Services and is alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- He/She ensures that policy and practice respond to changing local and national demands.
- He/She performance manages the Head of Foundation Learning and the Performance Development Reviews of Teaching Assistants at all levels.

## Head of Foundation Learning

The postholder leads Foundation Learning within the Learning Support Department, at KS3 and KS4, managing a team of colleagues responsible for delivery of Foundation Learning across Years 7-9 and Year 10 and 11 pathways.

- He/she leads in raising standards of student attainment and achievement in learning within the Foundation Learning provision and monitors and supports student progress by making use of data systems.
- He/she ensures the provision of an appropriately broad, balanced and relevant and differentiated curriculum for students working within Foundation Learning courses, in accordance with the curricular policies of the school.
- He/she supports the agenda of raising aspirations, promoting high achievement and meeting the learning needs of individuals and groups of students and plans in partnership with curriculum areas especially English and Maths in order to ensure high quality provision of learning experiences and close gaps in attainment.
- Appropriate schemes of work, resources, marking policies and learning and teaching strategies for Foundation Learning courses are developed by the post holder.
- He/she attends/runs Annual Reviews when appropriate.
- In addition, he/she will liaise with feeder primary schools as appropriate and ensure that student information in relation to SEN and low prior attainment for year 6 at transfer periods is collected, collated and disseminated.
- He/She performance manages the teachers of foundation learning and is team leader for the teaching assistants who have a role in supporting interventions to boost literacy and numeracy, independence and resilience.

## Teachers of Foundation Learning/teaching assistants who volunteer to deliver small group intervention

- The postholders work with the Head of FL to deliver appropriate schemes of work and interventions to promote literacy and numeracy with foundation learners with specific, moderate and other learning barriers, to promote students' progress, addressing specific learning needs.
- They maintain accurate records of progress and reports on progress as part of whole school systems.
- They work alongside the Head of Foundation Learning in delivering specific interventions and promote effective differentiation, sharing good practice amongst colleagues and supporting access in classrooms.

## Administrative Support Officer

- The post holder ensures the efficient and effective administration of the Learning Support Department by identifying, establishing and maintaining appropriate systems and procedures.
- He/She co-ordinates all clerical and administrative support relating to the functioning of the Assistant Headteacher Progress/SENCO role, the collection of paperwork and data for HNF, Performance Review, Annual Review and parent liaison.
- He/she acts as a first point of contact for agencies, teachers, parents and students contacting the Learning Support department and triages issues to relevant professionals.

- He/she collates evidence relating to examination access, health and safety requirements, personal care rotas and room timetables.
- He/she assists with the management of the One Page Profile process, and supports the administration of all matters within the department which are not directly related to teaching and learning but which ensure effective provision; invitations, information dissemination, letters, record of communications.
- The postholder informs students re appointments for specialist interventions, memos staff, fields telephone messages and ensures information is passed on to relevant colleagues.
- He/She ensures that records are maintained.
- He/she maintains departmental resources i.e. stationery and laptop security.
- He/she attends a weekly meeting with Teaching Assistant team leaders and supports follow up actions.

## Clerical Assistant

Updates records, attaches One Page Profile to management systems, disseminates paperwork to staff, ensures collation of returns, copying and ensuring smooth communications either electronically or by paper copy, files and assists with the collation of Annual Review information, arranges appointments for Annual Reviews and appropriate correspondence, and works to support the Administrative Support Officer in all clerical duties.

## Teaching Assistant Team Leader

Four teams of 4 or 5 teaching assistants are led by 4 team leaders who channel issues, disseminate information, provide a liaison point and communicate directly with the Assistant Headteacher around the day to day running of the Learning Support Department and information relating to barriers of progress for all students. Team leaders, administrative support officer and the Assistant Headteacher meet weekly and these minutes are shared with all teachers and support staff. Whilst there is overlap between the students who fall under the four teams of keyworkers, these teams are defined as:

1. Communication team (Visual impairment, hearing impairment, additional language needs)
2. ASD/ADHD team (autism and ADHD social and emotional well-being specialist support)
3. Generalist team (support for access, literacy, numeracy, social and emotional.)
4. Foundation learning team (specialist intervention for literacy, numeracy, independence and resilience) (Head of FL)

Each teaching assistant and team leader is a keyworker for a group of students. Keyworkers are the first point of contact for teachers, parents and students/students in communicating issues around progress and access, providing support and intervention to address these. They will develop expertise in specialist interventions and be deployed to address any barriers as they arise.

## Higher Level Teaching Assistant IAG

This is a specialist role. The postholder has responsibility for information, advice and guidance to students and students vulnerable to low engagement and participation in training and education including those with SEN, premium premium students and children in care. The post holder liaises with higher education and training providers, the Head of Careers, the Early Help NEET prevention team and social worker support and arranges appropriate intervention – visits, interviews, parental communication etc.

To support this role, the postholder is a keyworker for children in care, attends PEP meetings and CIC Review meetings and liaises day to day with teachers about the progress of students in care or who have been in care in the past. He/she updates the CLA tracker on a monthly basis or as necessary, ensuring that all stakeholders are aware of and supporting educational targets.

The postholder works as a team leader for teaching assistants. He/she liaises with the teaching assistant team to promote the progress of their keyworkees, liaising with them about One Page Profiles, communication, issues of concern and acting as conduit to the Assistant Headteacher as defined above.

In addition, the postholder assists with the dissemination of examination papers for those with access arrangements during external examination periods and liases closely with the administrative support officer, the examinations team.

## TA with attachment to the Sixth Form

The postholder works to the Head of Sixth Form and Assistant Heads of Sixth Form and liaises closely with the Assistant Headteacher Learning Support to co-ordinate support for students with special educational needs aged 16-19. He/she collects transfer information, collects evidence to support examination access applications, liaises with teachers of students around access, attends Open Events and meetings relevant to sixth form student needs. He/she liaises with classroom teachers (see p9), assesses the level of support required, maintains records and communicates with parents and students. He/she attends Annual Reviews when appropriate and completes appropriate records. The postholder ensures that the One Page Profiles for sixth form students are up to date and information to teaching colleagues is complete.

## Admission Arrangements

The year prior to transfer to Northgate the Assistant Headteachers and Progress Director for year 6/7, visit all the main feeder primary schools. The purpose of these visits is to make contact with the students and assess provision needs prior to the provision mapping process. For some individuals, additional visits are arranged if this is felt to be appropriate. The SENCO will if possible, attend the Annual Review of EHCP year 6 students who live within catchment, to discuss the appropriate provision for the students when they transfer to Northgate.

## Transfer Arrangements

If a student is known to have special educational needs when they arrive at the school, the Assistant Headteacher, Progress Directors and subject leaders will:

- use information from the primary school to provide an appropriate curriculum for the student and focus attention on action to support the student within the class
- ensure that ongoing observation and assessment provides feedback about the student's achievements to inform future planning of the student's learning
- ensure opportunities for the student to show what they know, understand and can do
- involve the student in planning and agreeing targets to meet their needs, where possible and appropriate. (One Page Profile, Review)
- involve parents in developing a joint learning approach at home and in school (One Page Profile, Review)

**Accessibility** – please see policy

## Staffing

### Teaching Assistants (TAs) in addition to HLTAs

- 10 whole school day, 8 part time TAs – 2010-11 (Plus 3 HLTAs)
- 10 whole school day, 6 part time TAs – 2012-13 “
- 12 whole school day, 5 part time TAs – 2013-14 “
- 12 whole school day, 6 part time TAs – 2014-15 “
- 12 whole school day, 7 part time TAs – 2015-16 “
- 17 whole school day, 7 part time TAs – 2017-18 (Plus 2 HLTAs)
- 2018-19 -3 team leaders, (including 1 HLTA), 12 TAs, full time, 6 part time TAs
- **2019-20 – 3 team leaders (including 1 HLTA) 16 TAs full time 7 part time TAs.**  
**The Teaching Assistant team continues to be developed and trained to deliver expert, high impact but flexible proactive progress support and the key focus is on providing high quality teaching where additional impact is made through additional intervention.**

A range of interventions are offered by the Learning Support team including:

- Morning tutorial intervention programme
- Lunchtime club
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) programme
- Braille support
- Discovery Club
- Craft Club
- Homework Club
- Break time cover
- Personal care as necessary
- Personal feeding as necessary
- Sound discovery delivery
- Foundation learning support
- Accelewrite

- Accelerated
- Toe by toe
- County Inclusion Support Service - Support

## Identification, Assessment and Provision

Provision for students with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's Headteacher, SENCO and learning support team, all other members of staff have important responsibilities.

*All teachers are teachers of students with special educational needs.*

Teaching students with an additional need is a whole-school responsibility, requiring a whole-school response. However, the appropriate level of response will be discussed primarily by the Assistant Headteacher for Learning Support/SENCO to aid staff planning and will be disseminated accordingly. All teachers work to ensure shared good practice relating to inclusion of and differentiation for students/students with SEN and EAL students. The progress and attainment of these groups is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher Learning Support, Progress Directors and Heads of Subject/Department and formally assessed at key data analysis points. However, these points are reached as part of a continuous cycle of assess, plan do, review that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of the students. The majority of students and students will learn and progress within these arrangements. However, for students with special educational needs, there may be a need to provide an enhanced level of provision to narrow gaps in achievement.

## High Quality Teaching

– see teaching and learning key principles and behaviour for learning key principles.

## First layer of identification at Northgate High School – Teacher Support (LN, EBP, Attendance, Medical and EAL)

Northgate High School uses a 'Teacher Support' flexible identification of students who are underachieving. This tier of identification gives clear direction to teachers about who needs support, for what reason and provides some guidance on what form the intervention will take and what the outcome should be. It clearly recognises the part played by teachers in ensuring that teaching and learning strategies are appropriate and support is offered in the classroom by the teacher to ensure progress. Good teaching is at the heart of progress and support for students.

Teachers may conclude that the strategies they are currently using with a student are not resulting in the student learning as effectively as possible. Data analysis points formalise this process. In these circumstances, they will consult the Progress and Pastoral teams to consider further options. The starting point will always be a review of the strategies being used in the classroom and the way in which these might be developed.

The key test of the need for identification at teacher support level is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways for example, progress which:

- narrows the attainment gap between the student's peers
- 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 student's previous rate of progress

Interventions at this level aim to;

- provide differentiated access, strategies and resources, to improve progress (TS - learning need)
- ensure improvements in self-help, social or personal skills (TS - emotional, behavioural, pastoral)
- lead to improvements in the student's attendance (TS - attendance)
- lead to appropriate provision in the face of temporary medical need (TS – medical)

## English as an additional language

The identification and assessment of the additional support for young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual, the school will look carefully at all aspects of a student'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. This group are identified as a vulnerable group. A home-school liaison officer helps to foster links with the Bangladeshi community and a senior teaching assistant focuses support on the EAL group.

- Interventions at this level are identified as TS – EAL

## School Support Category and Education, Health and Care Plan

School Support Category (K) is characterized by a diagnosed learning, medical or mental health need and the involvement of external services such as special needs advisory teachers, educational psychologists, Child and Family Pathways (IDT or CAMHS) Paediatrician etc. A request for help from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the SENCO and colleagues, in consultation with parents, at a review of the child's One Page Profile or at a data analysis point.

The triggers for School Support could be that, despite receiving teacher support, the student:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a sustained period suggesting a need for investigation of a learning barrier
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with their own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised support identification or a diagnosed mental health issue
- has sensory, medical or physical needs requiring additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits, providing direct intervention to the student or advice to the staff, by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

Interventions that this wave accesses include but are not diagnosed by:

- Access to TA support in lessons
- Bespoke timetable
- Small group teaching for literacy and numeracy – foundation learning at KS3 or 4
- One Page Profile
- Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP)
- Individual Health Plan (IHP)
- Suffolk Personal Support Framework (SPSF)
- IDT - Child and family pathways programme, formerly Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Anxiety programme
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and Language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- County Inclusion Support Service
- Visual timetables and time out cards

Northgate High School uses a One Page Profile to co-ordinate support, involve parents and students and communicate with teachers and assistants. All students at School Support or EHCP level will have a One Page Profile, (OPP). The OPP will set out strategies for supporting the student's progress. Delivery of the OPP will remain the responsibility of subject teachers and those delivering interventions. If the SENCO and the external specialist consider that the information gathered regarding the student is insufficient, and questions remain that they are satisfied demand attention, then more detailed advice may be sought from other outside professionals with parental consent.

### School request for statutory assessment

For a few students, the help given by schools through School Support may not be sufficient to enable the student 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 Local Authority (LA) to initiate a statutory assessment. Where a request for a statutory assessment is made to a LA, the student will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the school will provide written evidence to the LA detailing:

- the school's action
- records of regular reviews and their outcomes
- the student's health including the student's medical history where relevant
- attainment levels in literacy and mathematics
- educational and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist support teacher
- views of the student, parent or carer
- involvement of other professionals

- any involvement by the social services or education welfare service.

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

## The Education Health and Care Plan

This is a legal document which outlines the duties around the student's education. EHCPs will outline education and health support around children and young people and their families and will run from age 2 to 25 unless the young person attends higher education at age 18, when they will cease.

It will include:

- the student's name, address and date of birth
- details of all of the student's special needs
- the special educational provision necessary to meet the student's special educational needs
- the type and name of the school where the provision is to be made
- relevant non-educational needs of the child
- information on non-educational provision

### Annual review of an Education Health and Care Plan

Plans will be reviewed at least annually with the parents, the student, the LA and the school to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the student's needs or to the special educational provision specified. The annual review should focus on what the child has achieved as well as on difficulties that need to be resolved. The annual review held in year 9 will be particularly significant in preparing for the student's transition to employment, the further education sector, work-based training, higher education and adult life and will involve the Integrated team. The aim of the annual review in year 9 and subsequent years is to review the young person's EHCP and draw up and review the Transition Plan. From Year 9 onwards, an additional 'Moving into Adulthood' form will be completed and returned to Family Services to support onward provision planning.

The EHCP will be reviewed at a formal Annual review and parents will have the opportunity to meet with the Assistant Headteacher/SENCO at 2 other points in the school year.

### Nature of intervention for this wave:

The Assistant Headteacher/SENCO and the student's subject teachers should decide on the action needed to help the student 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 intervention, whilst balancing this demand within the limitations of the mainstream setting
- 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

## One Page Profile– a non-statutory student passport

Strategies employed to enable the student to progress are set out within a One Page Profile. This includes information about:-

- The nature of the special educational needs of the student
- Suggestions for the teaching strategies to be used
- The intervention provision to be put in place
- Data – to include reading age, maths age and benchmarks in maths and English
- EHCP outcomes, (if the student has an EHCP).

It will present a 'passport' for the student who will play an intrinsic part in its compilation. It gives a holistic view of the learning and emotional/social needs of an individual to enable access arrangements to be made and approaches to be differentiated by subject teachers.

The OPP will only record that which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum provision. The OPP will be reviewed at least twice a year and shared with parents. The OPP is used to support only students with an EHCP or those at School Support level.

## SEN and Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form, transfer arrangements are made as soon as GCSE results are known and a place has been offered and accepted at Northgate High School under the admission criteria advertised. The same subject grade/level criteria will apply to those who have an SEN as those who do not, in order to determine the appropriateness of the course and best support students moving forward. Additional courses will not be put in place or offered to specially cater for students with SEN post 16. However, additional support to access the courses on offer will include;

- access to Sixth Form TA for advice and meetings as necessary to discuss academic and pastoral concerns.
- Access to TA support to promote Sixth Form learning and progress, encouraging the development of independence, unless the physical needs of the student require additional support for them to demonstrate their ability.
- Regular meetings as above, Annual Reviews as part of yearly cycle as previously described.

## Personal budgets

All families with an approved Education, Health Care Plan will have a legal right to request a personal budget from the Local Authority, if they choose. Parents can directly buy in the support identified in the plan. Parents will be given a choice of whether to take control of the personal budget by agencies managing the funds on their behalf or, where appropriate, by receiving direct payments, if they are suitable, to purchase and manage the provision themselves. Any queries regarding this choice will be directed to the Local Authority in the first instance.

Local offer – The Local Authorities Offer is viewable on the LA website

Northgate High School Local Offer is outlined in this policy which is published on the school website.

For policies relating to exam access needs, please see appendix one and appendix two.

## Complaints procedure

We hope that parents will feel able to discuss and problems with the Learning Support Department in the first instance. However, all parents are entitled to access a complaints procedure. Please refer to LA website for information on how to pursue a complaint.

## Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually – Next review: May 2021 May

## Appendix One – Exams Access Arrangement Policy

Access arrangements are examination arrangements for students with special education needs, disabilities or temporary injuries. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments.'

'Reasonable adjustments' are made when a candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which will include:

- Education, Health and Care Plan and other individual need
- The effectiveness of the provision
- The cost of the adjustment
- The likely impact of the adjustment on the candidate and others.

If the cost or timeframe is unreasonable, or if the adjustment affects the security or integrity of the assessment it will not be made because it will not be reasonable.

For all public examinations, Joint Council for Qualifications(JCQ) Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustments Regulations are applied. These are accessible at this link: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/general-regulations-for-approved-centres-2019-2020>

Failure to comply with these regulation may constitute malpractice and this will affect a candidate's and a whole centre results.

Decisions to apply for access arrangements will be made based on the following criteria:

- Existence of an EHCP
- Flagging of student need by teachers, SENCO and normal way of working at home and at school.
- Portfolio of evidence of need compiled by the SENCO to support application including teacher feedback and evidence of work
- Asssment of learning need by a JCQ recognised, certified practitioner.

### Responsibilities

The **SENCO** is responsible for leading on access arrangements and will ensure that:

- Liaison with parents, students and external assessors has taken place
- All Form 8 and other relevant paperwork is complete
- External assessment is undertaken professional and is compliant to JCQ regulations
- Evidence of need is determined and portfolio of all required documentation is up to date
- Access arrangements online are made in a timely manner and comply correctly.
- Liaison with examiination officer to ensure access arrangements are applied correctly
- Liason with Heads of Department and teaching staff to ensure that they know which students are entitled to access arrangements, that these should correspond to the students' normal way of working and that access arrangeents are made for internal assessments and mock examinations.

The **Examination Officer** is responsible for the practical appliation of access arrangeents in public examinations. This will involve:

- Being aware of the students eligible for access arrangements and any particular conditions
- Putting access arrangements in place according to the regulations
- Making practical arrangements eg for extra rooms, extra invigilation etc.

**Heads of Department** and **teaching staff** will support the SENCO in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements. This involves:

- Being aware of which students are eligible for access arrangements
- Ensuring that access arrangements are made for these students in internal tests and mock examinations
- Collaborating with the SENCO to provide evidence of students' normal way of working.

**Parents** of students from Year 9 who feel that their child should be assessed for access arrangements due to learning difficulties should contact the SENCO as early as possible, for further advice, bearing in mind that access arrangements are

only made for students who have difficulties which amount to a substantial impairment and which meet the thresholds of JCQ qualification. Applications from private assessors are not accepted by Northgate High School as JCQ certification must be in place.

## Types of access arrangements

These depend on student need and normal working practice alongside current JCQ regulations. This means that different arrangements may be allowed in different examinations and SENCOs are required to consider need on a subject by subject basis. Arrangements most commonly used include;

- 25% extra time
- Use of a word processor – see appendix two.
- Application for a reader and/or scribe depending on need
- Supervised rest breaks
- Bilingual translation dictionary.

Details of thresholds can be found in the JCQ regulations for each session.

Temporary access arrangements and applications for special consideration can be made in certain circumstances. These arrangements can be processed as the need arises. An example could be a Year 11 student who has broken a wrist and must be given access arrangements but who is not given an unfair advantage. Appropriate documentation must be held by the centre.

## Evidence required

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a 'limitation going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people.' Any arrangement or reasonable adjustment we consider has to be evidenced with the extent and type of evidence required depending on the nature of the access arrangement. The most common request is for extra time or an alternative room.

In order to award extra time of up to 25% and/or separate room for **learning difficulties** the school must assess the needs of the student based on the EHCP confirming the disability or an assessment by a specialist assessor confirming a standardised score below 84 for speed of reading, or reading comprehension or speed of writing or cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working. The report must be presented in a Form 8 with Section C hand signed and dated by the assessor. In addition, the school is required to collate a portfolio of evidence of the normal way of working for the candidate, clearly demonstrating the need for extra time.

For difficulties relating to **sensory, physical, mental or emotional needs**, so as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCO must produce a detailed evidence pack which:

- Confirms that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties accessing and processing information and is disabled under the definition of the Equalities Act 2010
- Includes evidence of the candidate's difficulties and how they impact on teaching and learning in the classroom
- Shows the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for extra time of up to 25% or an alternative arrangement
- Confirms that without the application of alternative arrangements, the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage
- Confirms that this is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as a direct consequence of their disability.

This detailed information will be supported by, for example:

- A letter from IDT, clinical psychologist or hospital consultant; or
- A Speech and Language Therapist report; or
- Evidence from a LA Psychological Service or Sensory Impairment Service; or
- An EHCP which confirms the candidate's disability.

**A doctor's letter is not regarded as sufficient evidence for extra time or an alternative arrangement** because it does not confirm a specific diagnosis that falls within the special consideration remit. Other arrangements, eg seating position within the examination hall may be discussed with the Examinations Officer to help alleviate anxiety.

## The application process

Students on the SEN register will automatically be considered for assessment for access arrangements by the SENCO who will have established a picture of need and normal way of working which meets the JCQ access thresholds in Years 7-9.

A student may self refer or be referred by a parent or teacher but must provide evidence to support their referral.

In normal circumstances, assessment will be made at the start of the GCSE or A level course.

In all cases, the following steps will be followed to ensure compliance:

- Teachers may flag students to the SENCO with evidence of need
- SENCO will collate information and assess threshold compliance
- JCQ Form 8 will be completed by the SENCO
- Assessment will take place
- The assessor will hand sign and date Form 8 Section B making recommendations for access arrangements.
- The student must sign the Data Protection Notice
- SENCO will make an online application for access arrangements to the JCQ and must be processed and approved no later than the JCQ published deadline.
- Students, parents, teachers and the Examinations Officer will be notified of the outcome and implications for school work and assessments.
- Evidence will be stored on file for inspection by the JCQ inspector, including the original Form 8, signed Data Protection Notice, confirmation of approval of the access arrangements and portfolio of evidence of need/normal way of working.
- This must be in hard copy and available on request.

## **Use of externally commissioned reports**

Parents have the right to seek further diagnostic assessments for their children. However, the organisation or individual performing the assessment must have prior contact with the school to gather background information . A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation cannot be used to award access arrangements and external assessors must have a thorough and up to date understanding of the JCQ regulations. In order for a report to be used for an application for access arrangements it must evidence the students disability as giving 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people.' The report must state the students' disability must be 'substantial and long term.'

It is always at the discretion of the SENCO as to whether the recommendations contained within the report are followed. The decision will be made based on whether the recommendations fit with the picture of need already established within the centre and the students normal way of working and comply with JCQ regulations and thresholds.

## Appendix Two – Statement for the use of a word processor during exams

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and guidance of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

**Reviewed by:** Sarah Asher, SENCO

**Date of next review:** May 2021

Northgate High School values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work, and expects that most students will handwrite in exams. However, there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the School, where students may benefit from using a word processor and in these cases the School will allow use of a word processor for note-making in class, for homework, and for internal and public examinations.

Students with access to word processors in exams are allowed to do so in order that barriers to assessment are removed for disabled candidates, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The School will allow students to use word processors in exams when they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The student has a specific learning difficulty/disability (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The student has a physical difficulty/medical condition such (such as hypermobility/juvenile arthritis) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The student has a sensory impairment (such as vision or hearing impairment) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The student has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding his/her answers illegible; and, after substantial intervention, has laptop use as normal working practice

This use of a word processor also extends to the use of electronic braille.

Students permitted to use word processors in public exams (ie GCSEs, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals) must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for classes, homework, internal tests and internal exams.

It is not school policy to provide a word processor for a student solely on the basis that they prefer to type or that they can work faster on a keyboard because they use a laptop at home.

A student may also use a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.

Students who have permission to use a word processor in class are able to borrow a laptop from the Learning Support Department if one is not available in the curriculum area. The School will provide word processors with spelling and grammar checkers and predictive text facility removed for use in internal exams and public exams. These word processors are not able to connect to the internet.

The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course. Students are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.

The need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject by subject basis. Students who have permission to use a word processor in exams do not have to use it in all exams, e.g. they may opt to use it in subjects with extended writing demands only. The provision will be agreed with the SENCO during mock/practice exams.

The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Where possible students using word processors in external exams are internally accommodated together in a smaller room within the school.

