



THE PERSE
SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

Policy on Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and Learning Support

The Perse School

April 2021

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Accessibility

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Scope

This policy applies to the Perse School (“the School”) which comprises the Relevant Schools ie the Perse Pelican Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School including the EYFS setting (“the Perse Pelican School”), the Perse Preparatory School (“the Perse Prep School”) and the Perse Upper School (“the Upper School”).

Aim

The aim of this policy is to define and explain the responsibilities the School is able to accept, the support it is able to provide, and the responsibilities of parents in relation to pupils who may experience special educational needs or learning difficulties or may require learning support during their time at the School.

Related Policies

The School has the following policies which can be found on the [School Website](#):

- *Behaviour and Discipline Policy;*
- *Disability Policy;*
- *Equal Treatment Policy;*
- *Risk Assessment for Pupil Welfare Policy;*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.*

The School also has an *Admissions Policy* which clearly outlines its policy on admissions and procedures in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability.

The School’s *Relationships Education and, Relationships and Sex Education Policy* is available to parents in the policy section of PersePortal.

1. Values and Principles

At the School we support and value the abilities of all our pupils. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every person in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every pupil as an individual. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life. The School adopts a ‘whole school approach’ to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). All staff work to ensure the inclusion of all pupils. The School is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes. The School will use its best endeavours to meet SEND legislation.

2. Definition of Special Educational Need and Learning Difficulties

A child has *Special Educational Needs* if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child has a *'learning difficulty'* within the meaning of Section 20(2) *Children and Families Act 2014* if they:

- a. have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age;
or
- b. a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions; or
- c. are under five and fall within a. or b. above or are likely to do so when of compulsory school age if special provision is not made for them.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or (form of language) in which they are or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home. A child has a *'disability'*, within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The School recognises that some pupils with special educational needs or learning difficulties may also have a disability. Pupils and parents are referred to the School's Disability Policy.

3. Background

A number of pupils in mainstream independent schools such as The Perse may have or show signs of having a special educational need or learning difficulty which affects one or more subject areas for which different or additional educational provision may be needed from time to time. The signs of a special educational need or learning difficulty may not previously have been apparent or reasonably detectable.

Special educational needs and learning difficulties may affect children who have a high IQ as well as those of lower academic ability.

The terms special educational needs and learning difficulty cover a wide variety of conditions and may include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and communication impairments such as autistic spectrum disorders. They may also include those who have physical disabilities, visual or hearing difficulties, or social, emotional or mental health difficulties. A pupil may also require additional support for other reasons, such as if the pupil has English as a second language. Parents are required to inform the School promptly of any special educational need or learning difficulty that has at any time affected their child either currently or in the past or any other reason for which the pupil may require additional support.

Any need for additional support in the school environment, whatever the origin, will be referred to below as a "learning need".

4. Aims and objectives

4.1 Aims

- The School is committed to the principle that every pupil will have access to a broad and balanced education, in line with the SEN and disability code of practice.
- We will strive to ensure that individual learning needs are identified in order to support progression and good mental health and well-being.

- The Governors, staff and pupils of the School will accept and value each other and their differences, and will use their best endeavours to ensure that the School is accessible and that no pupil will be discriminated against.
- Safeguarding procedures will be maintained to ensure that all pupils are protected from harm and neglect.
- All pupils with learning needs will be able to access the curriculum by the provision of differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, extra support or additional resources where appropriate.

4.2 Objectives

We are committed to:

- The early identification, assessment and graduated provision for all pupils causing concern.
- The continuous monitoring of pupil progress to aid such identification and to involve all staff in the continued progress of pupils with SEN.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating all provisions 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, where appropriate.
- Working with outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils with SEN.
- Ensuring support and regular professional development opportunities to enable staff to 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.

5. Responsibility for the coordination of SEN provision

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for overseeing the whole-school 3-18 provision for pupils with SEN. The Head of Learning Support is also in charge of the Learning Support provision at the Upper. The Prep and Pelican Learning Support Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the day-to-day provision at those schools. However, all teaching and relevant support staff are responsible for the learning progression of pupils with learning needs. Every teacher is a teacher of Special Educational Needs. Every teacher is expected to seek to anticipate individual learning needs. Every teacher is expected to overcome barriers to learning.

6. Arrangements for coordinating SEN provision

6.1 Screening

The School's approach to the detection and management of special educational needs and learning difficulties will be guided by the "Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years" (or any substitute or amending Code of Practice) issued from time to time by the Department for Education.

The law imposes on schools a responsibility both for the physical and emotional well-being as well as the educational needs of pupils whilst in the care of the school. For this reason and also as a matter of good practice, the School has introduced the following systems:

The Perse Upper School and Perse Prep School:

The Upper School and The Prep School screen pupils for special educational needs. All pupils will be screened at the start of the Prep School, the Upper School and the 6th Form, in Years 3, 7, 9 and 12 respectively. Pupils who enter the School in Years 3 – 13 inclusive will be tested during their first term in the School.

The cost of such screening will be included in the termly fees. It is important for parents/guardians to realise that these are screening and not diagnostic tests. The screening tests are not competitive, and no specific preparation is required, nor indeed would it be beneficial. In addition, information from parents, teachers and school assessment and reporting (including MidYis and InCAS) is used to identify pupils who may have a learning need.

If the outcome of a test or any other circumstances gives the School reason to think that a pupil may have a special educational need or learning difficulty, the School will report and consult with their parents/guardians as necessary and make recommendations. Assessment information may lead to a request for a formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapist, or by another professional as appropriate. The parents will be responsible for the cost of any formal individual assessment conducted by external professionals.

The Perse Pelican School:

Regular assessment and observation of the pupils is part of the Perse Pelican School's ongoing practice to ensure that the School meets their needs. Any concerns are then discussed with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Assessment information will be shared with parents and may lead to a request from the School for further advice, or formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist, Occupational or Speech and Language Therapist, or other professional as appropriate. The Perse School maintains a list of Educational Psychologists for parents to consult should they wish to obtain a third party opinion. The parents will be responsible for the cost of any formal individual assessment conducted by external professionals.

6.2 Internal Special Educational Provision and Outside Professional Assessments

The Perse Prep School and the Upper School have access to specialist Learning Support Teachers who are qualified to make assessments and who are able to provide appropriate support to pupils with special educational needs and specific learning difficulties. The Prep and Pelican Learning Support Coordinator arranges internal support at the Pelican School with the Teaching Assistants and/or teachers as well as additional support from external agencies where appropriate.

In addition, the School can provide the names of other Learning Support teachers, Educational Psychologists or other outside professionals to whom parents may refer for tuition, further advice or formal assessment. In every case, the decision whether to take up the Learning Support offered by the School or to refer to an outside agency under a private arrangement will be that of the parents, with advice from the School. Parents bear the overall responsibility for taking decisions about the management of their child's special educational needs or learning difficulties. A parent who would prefer to have an external formal assessment must ensure that the School is given copies of all advice and reports received.

In order for the School to accept recommendations for examination access arrangements from an educational psychologist or specialist assessor, the external professional must have an established relationship with the School and be suitably qualified ie they are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) in the case of Educational Psychologists or have a current Assessment Practising Certificate in the case of Specialist assessors.

Where professional outside agencies are used or an updated report for tertiary / higher education is required, the costs will be additional to the normal school fees, subject to the School's duty to make reasonable adjustments, and terms of payment must be negotiated separately by the parents with the outside agency.

6.3 Learning Support

The following procedures are followed where a learning need is suspected or identified:

The Upper School:

If a learning need is suspected, the Head of Learning Support may suggest a period of support and monitoring by the class teachers and tutors. The Head of Learning Support may conduct an internal assessment. Following an assessment, the Head of Learning Support may recommend a course of tuition in, for example, literacy or study skills with a learning support assistant. In some circumstances, the Head of Learning Support will recommend an assessment by a professional outside agency such as an Educational Psychologist. Where necessary the Head of Learning Support will draw up a pupil profile to inform staff of a pupil's learning needs and necessary support strategies within the classroom.

The Perse Prep School:

If a learning need is suspected, the School having consulted with the Perse Prep School Learning Support Coordinator will inform the parents and suggest an internal assessment. This may be followed by a period of 1:1 or small group support and monitoring by the Learning Support Assistant. Assessment by a professional outside agency such as an Educational Psychologist may be recommended.

The Perse Pelican School:

If a possible learning need is suspected, the Perse Pelican School will consult with parents and may suggest a period of support and monitoring by the School. An internal assessment may be appropriate, depending on the age of the pupil concerned. Assessment by a professional outside agency such as an Educational Psychologist may also be recommended.

In the Perse Upper School and the Perse Prep School learning support tuition takes place both within and outside school hours. In the Perse Pelican School learning support tuition normally takes place within school hours.

Learning support of this kind will be arranged, subject to prior agreement being reached with the parents as to the charging arrangement for this..

6.3.1 Examination Access Arrangements

The school carries out specialist assessments for pupils who require access arrangements in their *school exams* due to their specific learning difficulties, including internal and public (GCSE, Cambridge Pre-U and A level) exams.

The school is *not* responsible for writing full Diagnostic Assessment Reports required for access arrangements and resources in higher education. It is recommended that pupils who wish to continue their exam access arrangements at university and/or intend to apply for a Disabled Students Allowance should commission an external professional, such as an Educational Psychologist or a Specialist Assessor, to provide a Full Diagnostic Assessment Report. Commission of the report is a private matter between the parents and the external professional and responsibility for payment lies with the parents.

6.4 Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

Parents and the School have the right under Section 36(1) of the *Children and Families Act 2014* to ask the local authority (“LA”) to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC plan. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right. If the LA refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the School) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC plan, the School will consult the parents and, where appropriate, the LA to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC plan can be delivered by the School. The School will cooperate with the LA to ensure that relevant reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.

Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC plan will be charged to the local authority if the authority is responsible for the fees and the School is named in Section 1 of the EHC plan. In all other circumstances the School will agree the charging arrangements with the parents with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, where applicable.

7. Anti-bullying policy

The School recognises that pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or learning difficulties may be at risk of being bullied. The School has an *Anti-Bullying Policy* which makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously. If parents are concerned about their child's welfare they can approach the pupil's tutor, class teacher or any senior member of staff to discuss their concerns in private at any time.

8. Additional welfare needs

The detection of abuse or neglect of pupils with a special educational need or disability may be particularly difficult. This creates additional safeguarding challenges for those involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of this group of children. The School is mindful in particular that:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury in fact relate to the pupil's special educational need or disability should not be made without further exploration;
- pupils with a special educational need or disability can be disproportionately impacted by bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- there may be communication barriers which are difficult to overcome to identify whether action is required.

Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE), relationships education / relationships and sex education programmes, through the supportive School culture and through the School's policies.

9. Alternative arrangements

9.1 Withdrawal

The School reserves the right, following consultation with parents, to ask for or require the withdrawal of the pupil from the School if, in its opinion after making **all** reasonable adjustments and exhausting appropriate strategies:

- the pupil is in need of a formal assessment, support or one to one teaching, learning support or medication to which parents do not consent; and/or
- parents have withheld information from the School which, had the information been provided, would have made a significant difference to the School's management of the pupil's special educational needs and learning difficulties; and/or
- the pupil's learning needs require a level of support or medication which, in the professional judgment of the Head, the School cannot reasonably be expected to provide, manage or arrange; and/or
- the pupil has special educational needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities that make it unlikely that they will be able to benefit sufficiently from the mainstream education and facilities which the School provides.

9.2 Alternative Placement

In any of these circumstances the School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide the pupil with the necessary level of teaching and support.

9.3 Financial

Withdrawal of a pupil in these circumstances will not incur a charge to fees in lieu of notice.

10. Record Keeping

10.1 All records created under this policy are managed in accordance with the School's Records Retention Schedule and may contain personal data. Details of how the School obtains and uses this information is set out in the School's *Privacy Notices* for parents and pupils and the School's *Data Protection Policy* and procedures.

11. Liability of the School

Unless negligent in the operation of this policy, the School accepts no responsibility to the pupil or parents caused by, or arising out of, any failure to detect or refer a special educational need or learning difficulty or other condition or situation of special need.

12. Version Control

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