Policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN) (or SEND) and English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy

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The Perse School

January 2026

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Accessibility

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

Scope

This policy applies to the Perse School ("the School") which comprises the Relevant Schools i.e., 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").

Introduction

This policy sets out and explains the responsibilities that 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;*
- *Anti-bullying Policy*
- *Disability Policy;*
- *Equal Treatment Policy;*
- *Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Policy;*
- *Risk Assessment for Pupil Welfare Policy;*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.*

The School also has an *Accessibility Plan* which is available from the Director of Operations on request.

The School's *Admissions Policy* clearly outlines its policy on admissions and procedures in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

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) spoken at home (see section 10 below).

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.

The School will make all reasonable adjustments in order to afford opportunity to disabled pupils. However, if, despite such adjustments, the School is unable to provide adequately for the pupil's needs, the School may decline to offer a place to a child or request that the parents withdraw the pupil from the School (See section 13 below).

Able, gifted and talented (AGT) provision is overseen by Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning) and is not overseen by The School's Learning Support Department.

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 area 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 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 an additional language (EAL). 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 SEND.
- 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 SEND.
- 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 SEND provision

The Head of Learning Support (Upper) is responsible for overseeing the whole-school 3-18 provision for pupils with SEND. This will involve:

- ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of a child's special educational needs;
- advising and supporting other staff in the School;
- ensuring that appropriate pupil profiles are in place and effectively implemented;
- ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with SEND is collected, recorded, and updated; and
- undertaking any other appropriate duties in accordance with the Code of Practice.

The Head of Learning Support is also in charge of the Learning Support provision at the Upper. The Head of Learning Support (Pelican & Prep) 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.

6. Admissions

The entrance assessments involve a combination of tests, a group activity and a short informal interview with a Perse teacher to talk about the candidate's interests and passions. The School's admissions procedure ensures that all candidates have access and appropriate accommodations in place when completing the entrance assessments.

The School must be made aware of any known special educational need or disability which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the education provided at the School. Access Arrangements refer to specific accommodations made prior to examinations for candidates who demonstrate a documented need and whose learning support requirements align with their usual way of working. These adjustments are intended to ensure fair and equitable access to assessments and may include, but are not limited to:

- Additional time during examinations
- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of a word processor or other approved assistive technology

All Access Arrangements are carefully reviewed and granted by our Head of Learning Support in accordance with the guidelines set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

6.1 Failure to Declare Needs

It is essential that any known special educational needs or access requirements are declared at the time of registration. Failure to disclose such needs in a timely manner may result in The School being unable to make the necessary arrangements for the entrance examination. In such cases, the candidate may be required to sit the examination without adjustments, or an alternative examination date may need to be arranged, where possible. Retrospective applications for Access Arrangements after the examination has taken place are unlikely to be considered.

The School reserves the right not to offer a place if significant needs come to light after the admissions process has been completed and were not disclosed at the appropriate stage.

Arrangements for coordinating SEND provision

7. 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 during their time at the Prep School, and at the start of the Upper School and the 6th Form, in Years 3-6, 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/carers 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/carers as necessary and make recommendations. Further assessment with a specialist assessor may be recommended. Alternatively, assessment information and qualitative observations may lead to a recommendation that the pupil undergo a formal assessment by an external professional such as an Educational Psychologist or psychiatrist to better understand their learning needs. 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 Head of Learning Support (Pelican & Prep). 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 parents will be responsible for the cost of any formal individual assessment conducted by external professionals.

8. Internal Special Educational Provision and Outside Professional Assessments

The School has 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.

In addition, the School can provide the names of Educational Psychologists or other outside professionals to whom parents may refer for tuition, further advice, or formal assessment. Learning support is optional and pupils and parents must make their own decisions as to whether they would like to receive learning support following advice from the School. 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. Parents should ensure that the external professional has a working relationship with the school.

A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements and **cannot** be used to process an application using *Access arrangements online*. This would be where the assessor has not contacted the centre, has not

liaised with the centre, has not been approved by the head of centre and has not received a completed Part 1 of Form 8 from the SENCo.

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.

8.1 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 or internal specialist assessor may then conduct an internal assessment, and the results of this assessment will be communicated to the pupil's parents/guardians/carers. 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 a psychiatrist, paediatrician, speech and language therapist or optometrist.

The Perse Prep School:

If a learning need is suspected, the Head of Learning Support (Pelican & Prep) may suggest a period of support and monitoring by the class teachers. The Head of Learning Support (Pelican & Prep) may go on to suggest an internal assessment to parents. Results from the assessment will be communicated to the pupil's parents/guardians/carers. This may be followed by a period of monitoring with 1:1 support or small group support with a Learning Support Assistant. Assessment by a professional outside agency may be recommended.

The Perse Pelican School:

If a possible learning need is suspected, the Perse Pelican School will consult with parents/guardians/carers and may suggest a period of support and monitoring by the School. An internal assessment may be suggested by the Head of Learning Support (Pelican & Prep), depending on the age of the pupil concerned. Assessment by a professional outside agency may also be recommended.

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.

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.

8.2 Examination Access Arrangements

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A

reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend upon a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

Further information regarding access arrangements can be reviewed in the *Policy on Access arrangements for students who have special educational needs, disabilities or temporary conditions,* which can be requested via the Head of Learning Support.

8.3 Specialist assessments

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 exams.

An internal assessment is a test which takes place within the classroom either during the subject lesson or as part of the annual summer assessment cycle.

A public examination is a nationally set test provided and marked by an external awarding body. For example, GCSE and A-Level examinations.

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 an external 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. Parents/guardians/carers should contact the Head of Learning Support if the pupil's Form 8 is required in Higher Education. Copies of internal learning support assessments can also be provided.

8.4 Assessment data records

The School and its Governors are fully committed to working to the requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 2018. The school will ensure that all employees who have access to a student's personal data are fully aware of and working within these requirements.

All information included in the assessment report will be stored securely in line with the School's data protection policy until the client reaches the age of 25 when this report will be destroyed. Only individuals with approved access will be able to access the information included in this report and any data will be used appropriately.

Students with confirmed exam arrangements – their data will be shared with the JCQ Awarding Bodies (AAO online system) to implement the students exam arrangements for public exams (GCSE and A-Level).

9. 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.

10. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The term "EAL" is used to describe a diverse and heterogeneous group of learners who speak English as an Additional Language. In England, such learners are defined as those who have been 'exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English' (Department for Education, 2019).

For the purpose of the School census, a pupil is recorded as having English as an additional language if she/he is exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English. It is not a measure of English language proficiency or a good proxy for recent immigration. In spring 2018, there were 8.1 million pupils in state-funded schools in England. Of these, 1.6 million (19%)1 were recorded as having English as an additional language.

Pupils whose first language is not English, may experience language-based challenges even if they do not have a specific learning difficulty.

The Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years, states that:
6.24 Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Schools should look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.

The main aims for pupils with EAL are that they:

1. are able to access all aspects of the School curriculum;
2. reach their potential;

At The Perse School, on entry to the school, parents/carers are asked to confirm the use of additional languages within the home to identify those students who fall within the Department of Education definition of EAL. Most pupils in the School have a high level of English proficiency and need no additional support to access the full curriculum. There may be a few pupils who need adapted learning or additional support. To identify these pupils The School uses this information,

combined with screening outcomes and feedback from teachers to allow the Head of Learning Support to identify the students that teachers need to have an increased awareness of, and provide support.

For most students whose access to the curriculum is deemed to be impeded by their English fluency, a learning support (LS2) file will be published which provides classroom recommendations for support.

For some students whose access to the curriculum is deemed to be impeded by their English fluency, short term interventions will be provided by the Learning Support department to provide targeted language support with a focus on academic vocabulary.

11. 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 adopts a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and 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 at any time.

12 Additional welfare needs

When teaching pupils about safeguarding, the School recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all pupils and will consider whether it should adopt a more contextualised approach for some pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.

Additional barriers can exist when detecting the abuse or neglect of pupils with a special educational need, disability or certain medical or physical health condition that can create additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline for those involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of this group of children. The School is mindful that these may include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's condition without further exploration;
- pupils with a special educational need, disability or certain health conditions may be more prone to peer group isolation and can be disproportionately impacted by bullying (including prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) without outwardly showing any signs;
- some pupils may be unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and can repeat the content / behaviour in school without understanding the consequences; and
- there may be communication barriers which are difficult to overcome to identify whether action under this policy is required.

The School should consider providing extra pastoral support and attention for these pupils, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Any report of abuse involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and the Head of Learning Support (the SENCO).

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.

13. Alternative arrangements

13.1 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.

13.2 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. The School is not, however, responsible for securing an alternative placement for the pupil.

14. Risk Assessment

Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

The format of the risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare, and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

15 Record Keeping

All records created under this policy are managed in accordance with the School's *Records Management Policy* and *Records Retention Schedule*.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data. The School's approach to data protection compliance is set out in the School's data protection policies and procedures. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's *Data Protection Policy* and *Information Security and Sharing Data Guidance*.

16. 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.

17. Version Control

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