

MAIDSTONE GRAMMAR SCHOOL



SEN & Disability Policy/SEN Information Report

SENCo: Miss R Johnson (Deputy Headteacher)
National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASCO)

AEN Manager: Mrs McCarthy

Link Governor for SEND: Mrs Hazel Crittall

Ratified by the Governors July 2024

Date of next review: July 2025 (or earlier if national guidance changes)

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:-

Children and Families Act 2014

SEN Code of Practice 2015

SI 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Part 3 Duties on Schools – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

Schedule 1 regulation 51– Information to be included in the SEN information report

Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer

Equality Act 2010

Schools Admissions Code, DfE 1 Feb 2012

SI 2012 1124 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

SI 2013 758 The School Information (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Antbullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Accessibility Plan

Key policies can be found on the school website at: <https://mgs.kent.sch.uk/about-us/our-policies-and-documents/>

This policy has been written by the SENCo in consultation with the AEN Manager and in liaison with the SLT. Staff, Governors and the parents of children with special educational needs have been consulted. The policy is based on the Kent model policy available on KELSI.

Definition of SEN

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. *SEN Code of Practice (2015, p 15)*

Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’ *SEN Code of Practice (2015, p16)*

1 The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at the school

At Maidstone Grammar School we can make provision for every kind of frequently occurring special educational need without a statement of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plan, for instance dyslexia, dyspraxia, speech and language needs, autism, Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD/ADD, learning difficulties and behaviour difficulties. There are other kinds of special educational need which do not occur as frequently and with which the school is less familiar, but we can access training and advice so that these kinds of needs can be met.

In recent years or currently the school has met or is meeting the needs of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan including with the following kinds of special educational need: autistic spectrum condition, high functioning autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, hearing impairment, visual impairment and other physical impairment.

Decisions on the admission of pupils with a statement of special educational need / Education, Health and Care Plan are made by the Local Authority following consultation with the school. The admission arrangements for pupils without a statement of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plan do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs. The admission arrangements for the school are available on the school website.

2 Information about the policy for identification and assessment of pupils with SEN

Maidstone Grammar School participates in the Maidstone District Secondary Transition programme and works closely with SENCOs and other key staff in primary schools, with parents and with the local authority to secure a successful transition for Year 6 pupils identified with SEND so that we understand their needs before arrival.

At Maidstone Grammar School we track and monitor the progress of all pupils three times a year in Terms 2,4 and 6 to review their academic progress, with assessment information shared with parents at these points. Heads of Department track and monitor pupils within their subject areas. Heads of House/ Assistant Heads of House track and monitor pupils within their house, taking a holistic view of each pupil's progress. SLT have oversight of academic tracking and monitoring and progress across the school. All students with Additional Educational Needs / Special educational Needs diagnoses are included on our Cause for Concern (CfC) List and tracked and monitored through Cause for Concern meetings which take place three to six times a year for each House.

A core group made up of the relevant Assistant Head of House / Head of House, members of SLT (including the SENCO / Designated Safeguarding Lead) and members of the Student Services Department, Attendance and Safeguarding Team attend each Cause for Concern meeting - they review and agree appropriate action points for each pupil. Actions may include placing the pupil on report for a specified period; working with teaching staff to implement further specific strategies via the Graduated Response, drawing upon the Kent Mainstream Core Standards: https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/117256/Special-educational-needs-mainstream-core-standards.pdf; or supporting the wider pastoral needs of the child.

Some pupils may continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, we will take steps to determine the cause of the learning difficulty, as well as the range of resources and approaches that might support them. This could include by: an assessment by our external assessor to identify processing difficulties etc which may require the implementation of specific strategies by staff and special access arrangements in exams; making a referral to LIFT (Local Inclusion Forum Team) for advice if appropriate; Consultation with STLS (Kent Specialist Teaching and Learning Service) to understand what additional strategies / provisions / resources are required to support the pupil to make better progress; Consultation with the Kent CAT Service (Kent Communication and Assistive Technology Service). Information will be shared with parents/ carers and used to develop a Pupil

Profile document to inform teaching and support staff of the difficulties experienced by the pupil and the range of agreed strategies staff should draw upon to support the pupil to make progress.

If the pupil is able to make good progress using additional and different resources / provision (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the pupil as having a special educational need and classify them as SEN Support. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources / provision he or she will no longer be identified with special educational needs, rather they will be referred to as students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN). These AEN students will also be listed in the school's internal confidential electronic Inclusion Booklet for Staff and they will have a Pupil Profile document drawn up and agreed by SEN staff, student and parents/carers (this includes both students with a confirmed diagnosis and those on the assessment pathway). The Pupil Profile document outlines the diagnosis, difficulties experienced and strategies to be drawn upon in the classroom / school setting. When any change in identification of SEN is made parents will be informed.

Where a pupil is identified as SEN Support or has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), individual targets / a Personalised Plan will be put in place and reviewed regularly to consider what is or is not going well. It will be refined / revised as necessary as part of an ongoing cycle. At this point we will have identified that the pupil has a special educational need because the school is making special educational provision for the pupil which is additional and different to what is normally available.

3 Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have EHC Plans, including

3a How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils

Rigorous tracking and monitoring of academic progress, attendance and welfare of all Additional Educational Needs / Special Educational Needs students (either with a diagnosis or on the assessment pathway) takes place six times a year by a core group of key pastoral and SEN staff through the School's Cause for Concern process.

For students on the SEN register as SEN Support there are, in addition, three review points each year. Each review of the SEN support plan will usually be informed by the views of the pupil, parents/carers and class/subject teachers and the detailed assessment information and feedback from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made. All SEN Support plans will usually include academic targets as well as at least one target linked to wider wellbeing, social interactions and extra curricular involvement.

The *SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.17)* describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

For students on the SEN register with an Education Health Care Plan there are three formal reviews points each year, including an annual review of the provision made for the child, which will enable an evaluation of the effectiveness of the special provision. Again, each review will be informed by the views of the pupil, parents/carers and class/subject teachers and the detailed assessment information and feedback from teachers which will show whether adequate progress is being made. All EHCP reviews include academic targets as well as at least one target linked to wider wellbeing, social interactions and extra curricular involvement.

Regular updates will be provided to the governing body in relation to the completion of annual reviews.

3b The school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked three times each academic year against a set of individual academic target grades. This assessment information is provided to parents / carers. There is also discussion which takes place in school between the form tutor and / or the Head of House or Assistant Head of House and the student at assessment points to review progress.

In addition to this, pupils with additional educational needs (AEN) or special educational needs (SEN) are monitored six times a year through the School's Cause for Concern Process (see Section 2 above).

Students who are formally listed on the SEN Register as SEN Support / EHCP have three further individualised review meetings each year involving key SEN staff, the student and their parents / carers, with ongoing development and review of their personalised targets as detailed on their plan documentation. Feedback is gathered from staff and shared in the review meeting through the Round Robin process.

3c The school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered *SEN Code of Practice (2015, 6.37)*

At Maidstone Grammar School the quality of teaching is judged to be good.

All teachers at Maidstone Grammar School receive annual SEND training led by the SENCo. New staff receive training in supporting students with SEND as part of their induction training. In addition, in 2022-2023 teaching and support staff completed an Autism Awareness course via meLearning online. The SENCo worked with a group of students with Autism Spectrum Condition to develop whole school training for all students on ASC and neurodiversity, delivered through the assembly and tutor time programme and linked to Autism Awareness month - April 2023. In 2023-2024, the SENCo focused on raising awareness around neurodiversity by working with students with ADHD / ADD to create staff training resources and a training film featuring our own student voices to raise awareness of their experiences.

All teaching staff are expected to be aware of the SEND Code of Practice 2015, the principles of "best endeavours" / "reasonable adjustments" and the Kent Mainstream Core standards, all of which underpin our work in school. They should understand how to use the Graduated Response of Assess, Plan, Do and Review as laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015: Teaching staff assess their students on a regular basis; they look for weaknesses and plan interventions to support, drawing upon the student's Pupil Profile document; They then put in place the interventions and review them to make sure progress has been made. The Graduated Response should be viewed and understood as an ongoing cycle which may require ongoing development and adjustment rather than a one off linear process. This is illustrated below:



In implementing a Graduated Response, we follow the Mainstream Core Standards advice developed by Kent County Council to ensure that our teaching conforms to best practice:

https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/117256/Special-educational-needs-mainstream-core-standards.pdf

At Maidstone Grammar School all students who have an Education, Health and Care Plan or who are classified as SEN Support or who have an identified Additional Educational Need (AEN) but are not classified as EHCP or SEN Support are identified to staff in the School's electronic Inclusion Booklet. Staff are required to access this at the start of each academic year so that they know which students in their classes have an identified need. The electronic Inclusion Booklet is updated continuously throughout the year as required, with in-year updates provided to staff as this occurs. All students listed in the electronic Inclusion Booklet with Additional or Special Educational Needs have a Pupil Profile document, drawn up in conjunction with parents and with input from the pupil, with agreed strategies for staff to draw upon when using the Graduated Response. In addition, SEN Support students and EHCP students have individual support plans/ individual targets in place which are regularly reviewed.

In meeting the Mainstream Core Standards the school employs some additional approaches, as advised by internal and external assessments including the deployment of Teaching Assistants to support specific identified students in one or more lessons or subject areas. These are delivered by additional staff employed through the funding provided to the school as 'notional SEN funding'. In most cases, Teaching Assistants are most usually deployed to support identified students to undertake practical work (where there is a physical disability) or to support greater independence by the student in the class context. It is not our practice for Teaching Assistants to withdraw students from lessons for academic support. Where additional academic interventions take place these are planned and delivered outside of lesson time as organised by our Intervention Co-ordinator with a focus on core subjects - English, Maths and Science, Modern Foreign Languages- delivered by fully qualified members of our teaching staff who have been appointed as Intervention Tutors.

3d How the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs

At Maidstone Grammar School we follow the advice in the Mainstream Core Standards on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in statements of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plans.

3e Additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs

As part of our budget we receive 'notional SEN funding'. This funding is used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and different strategies to support pupils requiring SEN support including additional support in specific lessons / subject areas from Teaching Assistants; access to assistive technology where appropriate and agreed between school and parents (e.g. via laptops) in order to fully access the curriculum; assessment by our external assessor to identify processing difficulties which may require the implementation of specific strategies by staff and special access arrangements in exams. In addition, the school can make a referral to its dedicated School Counsellor or MIND worker where personal, emotional or wellbeing issues may be impacting on the pupil.

The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6000 per year of resource for pupils with high needs, and above that amount the Local Authority should provide top up to the school. Where there is this level of higher need the school will make an application for Higher Needs top up funding.

3f How the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at Maidstone Grammar School are available to pupils with special educational needs either with or without a statement of special educational needs / Education, Health and Care Plan.

Every effort will be made by the school to make reasonable adjustments and use best endeavours to enable SEND students to participate as fully as possible in all areas of school life. Where it is necessary, the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity. The school is justified in not making adjustments if there are 'material' and 'substantial' reasons for this. Defining such terms is notoriously difficult outside the context of an individual case but could, for example, include health and safety requirements - our responsiveness to the SEND Code of Practice does not override health and safety legislation and so an adjustment would not be reasonable if it would endanger the health and safety of either the individual student or of other people.

3g Support that is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs

At Maidstone Grammar School we understand that an important feature of the school is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills.

For all students this happens through direct teaching in the classroom, including the PSHCE programme, and also through the form time programme (where there are mixed age vertical form groups supporting interactions across the full age range Year 7-13) and involvement in the wider MGS House system. A key aspect of the pastoral and House system at MGS is that students remain in the same House for their entire school career. This means that they can receive close support from tutors and House staff where required, with regular check ins. It also happens indirectly through conversations between adults and pupils throughout the day, including other members of the pastoral and SEN/Student Services Team where appropriate. In addition, there is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available to all pupils.

For some pupils with the most need for help in this area we can also provide access to an agreed quiet space or “time out” point, such as the school library or our MGS Hub Room – this is a specially designated room with consideration of sensory issues which is designed as a “stepping stone” to support students (including SEN students struggling with attendance or with a diagnosis of Anxiety Based School Avoidance) back into class; also access to our dedicated School Counsellor; access to our MIND worker; specific mentoring or more regular individualised support from the student’s form tutor, Assistant Head of House / Head of House or other agreed member of staff; additional support from the Student Services Department, including the Additional Educational Needs Manager and SENCo; external referral to Early Help or other agencies; referral to KHNES (Kent Health Needs Education Service) where offsite educational provision or support is required; consultation with the Kent Educational Psychology Service.

4 The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator

The SENCo at Maidstone Grammar School is Miss R Johnson, Deputy Headteacher, who is a qualified teacher and has been accredited by the National Award for SEN Co-ordination. Miss Johnson is supported in her role by the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Manager, Mrs K McCarthy.

Both Miss Johnson and the Additional Educational Needs Manager are available on 01622 752101 or by email at: school@mgs.kent.sch.uk.

5 Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured

All staff at Maidstone Grammar School receive regular SEND and AEN training delivered by the SENCo, including in relation to the SEND Code of Practice (2015), Kent Mainstream Core Standards and the Graduated Response. Relevant teaching and support staff also receive annual SEND training in order to support specific students including those with visual impairments, hearing and other physical disabilities. All new staff receive SEND training as part of their induction programme. Several staff including Miss Johnson have completed the full Mental Health First Aid training and a number of other staff have completed the Mental Health First Aid Lite training in previous years. In May 2023 staff received training in relation to mental health and self harm from the Kent Educational Psychology Service. In September / October 2023 Mid Kent MIND has delivered updated mental health training / Suicide Prevention Awareness to MGS staff across two extended CPD sessions. Relevant staff receive additional training in key areas to support them with their duties, including from the STLS service and the Kent CAT team. The School also attends training including Kent’s Special Educational Needs and Disability SEND updates which occur during the year and provide key information regarding SEND and good practice in school. Miss Johnson and/or Mrs McCarthy

regularly attend the Kent SEND conferences and briefings for schools. . In addition, in 2022-2023 teaching and support staff completed an Autism Awareness course via meLearning online. The SENCo worked with a group of students with Autism Spectrum Condition to develop whole school training for all students on ASC and neurodiversity, delivered through the assembly and tutor time programme and linked to Autism Awareness month – April 2023. In 2023-2024, the SENCo developed this focus on raising awareness around neurodiversity by working with students with ADHD / ADD to create staff training resources and a training film featuring our own student voices to raise awareness of their experiences.

In addition, the school attends regular Local Inclusion Forum Team meetings which provide an opportunity to discuss identified students (with parental permission) or anonymous students with a variety of SENCos from other settings and teachers from the Specialist Teaching Service who can then offer support and guidance for future support of the student in school. The school also takes part in the Maidstone District Primary Transition Programme to support the transition of Year 6 students with identified needs.

Where a training need is identified beyond this we will approach an appropriate provider who is able to deliver it. The cost of training is covered by the notional SEN funding.

6 Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the notional SEN funding, or seek it by loan. For highly specialist communication equipment the school seeks the advice of the Kent Communication and Assistive Technology team (Kent CAT Team).

7 The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

All parents of pupils at Maidstone Grammar School are invited to discuss the progress of their children annually at a Parent Consultation Evening (online) and they receive three assessment sheets per year. In addition, we are happy to arrange meetings outside these times or communicate by phone or email.

Where a pupil is identified as having special educational needs because special educational provision is being made, parents will be invited to planning and reviews of this provision three times per year. Parents/ carers and the student will be actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review.

In addition to this, parents of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend three reviews including an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

The SENCo and AEN manager undertake audits of the SEN register throughout the year and will write to parents / carers formally whenever students are added to or removed from the register.

8 The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

Where a student is on the School's AEN inclusion list or the SEN register, then SEN staff work with student and parents to draw up and agree the Pupil Profile document to be shared with staff.

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning through the review meeting process.

Parents are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

The School invites parents and students to feedback on how they feel the Pupil Profile is working at transitions to new key stages in Year 9 and 12 so that we can ensure these remain up to date and relevant.

9 The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school

The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at Maidstone Grammar School are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with the subject teacher, Head of House or Assistant Head of House. Assistant Headteacher overseeing the pupil's Key Stage, the AEN Manager, SENCo or Headteacher to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the governing body.

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have a Statement of SEN/EHCP where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

10 How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The governing body have engaged with the following bodies:-

- Free membership of LIFT for access to specialist teaching and learning service
- Support and involvement of the Kent CAT team (Kent Communication and Assistive Technology Team)
- Involvement of Kent Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy Services for pupils with requirement for direct support or advice.

11 The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and children and young people with SEND up to age 25 (Code of Practice 2015, 6.39)

Information Advice and Support Kent (IASK) provides a free and confidential, information, advice and support service, for parents of a disabled child or child with special educational needs and to children and young people up to age 25 who have a special educational need or disability. We welcome representatives from IASK to attend meetings with parents /carers at the school where this would be helpful to them.

Trained staff can provide impartial legally based information and support on educational matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities, including health and social care. The aim is to empower parents, children and young people to fully participate in discussions and make informed choices and decisions. Also to feel confident to express their views and wishes about education and future aspirations.

They can be contacted on

HELPLINE: 03000 41 3000

Office: 03000 412412

E-mail:-iask@kent.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/listening-to-your-voice-and-taking-action/Information-Advice-and-Support-Kent>

12 The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At Maidstone Grammar School we work closely with the educational settings used by the pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as seamless as possible. Parents are invited to provide information about their child's needs on the school's admissions forms. Information sharing takes place between the pupil's primary school and Maidstone Grammar School prior to transition, including through the Maidstone and District Secondary Transition programme.

Students with special educational needs and disabilities and their parents are offered individual meetings with the AEN Manager/SENCo/key academic and pastoral staff prior to entry, as appropriate to each individual. At the meeting, transitional support will be discussed, this could include:

- A personalised tour of the school for the pupil and their parents prior to transition, including meeting key staff who will be involved in supporting the pupil.
- Additional support at induction sessions e.g. Induction Day -e.g. additional support /student buddies etc.
- Additional/ adjusted resources such as visual timetables and colour coded subject folders may be provided to aid organisation where required.

We also contribute information to a students' onward destination by providing information to the next setting where requested.

13 Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs>

Parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCo for support to gain the information they require.