

# Blackfen School for Girls



## SEND Policy

Head Teacher: Mr M Brown  
Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
Policy Date	January 2022		
Review Date	January 2023		
Review Period	Annually		
Lead Person	DHT, SEND	Sarah Cascarino	
Prepared by	DHT, SEND	Sarah Cascarino	
Verified by	Head Teacher	Matthew Brown	
Approved by	Chair of Governors	Stuart Fitz-Gerald	

# Blackfen School for Girls

**SENCO:** Ms Sarah Cascarino, Deputy Head Teacher (SENCO Greenwich University 2009)

**SEND Manager:** Mrs S Mackay

**SLT SEND advocate:** Matthew Brown, Head Teacher

**Special Interest Governor for SEND:** Mrs Carol Townsend

The **SENCO** works under the leadership of the Head Teacher and the Governing Body. The SEND manager has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual students with SEND, including those who have statements or EHC plans. Ms Cascarino is also the designated teacher for children who are looked after (CLA) and Designated Safeguarding Lead. (DSL).

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

A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- 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.

Special educational provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools.

A child or young person has a disability under the Equality Act (2010) that is 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing and long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

## The Aims of our Policy for Special Educational Needs and Disability

At Blackfen School for Girls;

- We value all children equally
- We welcome children with special educational needs as part of our community
- We seek to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to engage in the curriculum
- We are committed to improving outcomes through high aspirations and expectations for children and young people with SEND.
- We recognise that some children need additional support to ensure access to the whole curriculum whilst in mainstream classes. We ensure that the needs of children and young people are identified and assessed and that appropriate support strategies are provided. If additional specialist advice and support is required, the appropriate external agencies are contacted.
- We recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational needs. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that we listen and understand when parent's express concerns about their child's development.

# Blackfen School for Girls

Additionally, we will listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.

- We recognise the vital role of parents/carers in the identification, assessment and response to their children's special educational needs. We will work in true partnership with parents/carers, valuing their views and contributions and keeping them fully involved in their child's education.
- We believe in the involvement of the child and the importance of taking their views into account. We will make every effort to involve the child in decision-making about their special educational needs provision.
- We are committed to effective collaboration between all agencies working with a child and a multi-disciplinary approach to meeting children's special educational needs. We will actively support the establishment and maintenance of close links with all agencies working with the child.
- Every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person including those with SEND

## Key roles for co-ordinating the provision of education for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability

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### The Key role of the Governing Body:

The Governing Body, in cooperation with the Head Teacher, will determine the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEN, establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work. The Governing Body will

- Ensure that the necessary provision is made for any student who has SEN;
- Ensure that the SEN Information Report is published on the school website;
- Ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those students who have SEN;
- Consult the Local Authority and the governing bodies of other schools, when it seems to be necessary or desirable in the interests of coordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole;
- Ensure that a student with SEN joins in the activities of the school together with students who do not have SEN, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision their learning needs call for;
- Ensure the efficient education of the students with whom SEN students are educated and the efficient use of resources;
- Have regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all students with SEN.
- Ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for the child
- Ensure that they are fully informed about SEN issues, so that they can play a major part in school self-review.

# Blackfen School for Girls

The Key role of the Head Teacher:

- The Head Teacher has responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for children with SEN. The Head Teacher will keep the Governing Body fully informed and also work closely with the school's SEN Manager and SEN Coordinator.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO and the SEND manager include:

- overseeing the day –to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND, including those with statements and Education and Health Care (EHC) plans
- advising staff on the provision of SEND support and classroom strategies.
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet students' needs effectively
- liaising and working closely with parents/carers of students with SEND
- liaising and working closely with student support officers of students with SEND.
- liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies
- Initiating ks2-3; ks3-4 and ks4-5 transition support for students with SEND
- being a key point of contact with external agencies for SEND referrals, including the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with Leadership Team and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring the accurate upkeep of SEND records for all students with SEND
- providing professional guidance and training opportunities to colleagues

# Blackfen School for Girls

## Identifying Special Educational Needs

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### Transitions between KS2 and KS3

The SEND manager will liaise with SENCOs from feeder schools prior to admission. Visits to the feeder school will be arranged and the SENCO and SEND manager will meet new students and key members of staff to gather information to support a smooth transition to secondary school. The SENCO will relay information and specific classroom strategies to staff at the start of each new term (INSET). Students with statements and/or those who are vulnerable will be invited to visit Blackfen during the Summer term to meet OASIS staff, including TA key workers. They will also be invited to attend our OASIS Transition Tea Party, an annual event which is hosted by our current year 7 students.

Children in Year 7 with a specific professional diagnosis of SEND will be placed on the SEND register and parents informed about their progress on a regular basis. All students in year 7 are assessed for Reading and Spelling ages. Students with levels significantly below their chronological age are timetabled a weekly Literacy group. Groups are small in size and focus on raising literacy levels.

These early collaborative partnerships enable staff at Blackfen to gather a holistic view of the child, plan personalised interventions, recommend appropriate peer groupings and ultimately develop productive relationships with the children and their families.

### When there has been no prior SEND need identified

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Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including where students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Staff appraisal and faculty reviews enable scrutiny of the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement.

Subject teachers, supported by Faculty Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team make regular assessments of progress for all students. These assist in identifying students making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

- 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 the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

The first response to such progress will be high quality teaching targeted at the student's areas of weakness. Where progress continues to be less than expected the subject teacher, working with the SENCO, student and their parents/carers will use a graduated approach to gather evidence whilst putting into place interventions designed to secure better progress, where required.

# Blackfen School for Girls

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENCO will consider information gathered about the student's current levels of attainment, alongside national data and expected levels of progress. Additionally, early discussions with students and their parents/carers will enable a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulty. This will allow agreement of outcomes to improve progress in learning and help determine the support that is required. Consideration will be given here, to whether support is additional to provision made generally to children of their age.

For higher levels of need, the school will draw on more specialised assessments and guidance from external agencies and professionals such as the Educational Psychology Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and School Health and therapists (including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists as necessary).

However, support is provided, there will be a date for reviewing progress with the student, parent/carer, teacher and SENCO. The purpose of this early action is to help the student achieve the identified outcomes and remove any barriers to learning. If it is decided that the student does have SEND, arrangements for appropriate special educational support will be made through the school's approach to SEN support.

## SEND Support – A graduated approach

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The SEND Code of Practice (2015) describes four broad categories of need:

**Communication and Interaction:** Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction and may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination which may impact how they relate to others.

**Cognition and Learning:** Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific areas of learning such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

**Sensory and/or Physical needs:** Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. Children and young people with Vision Impairment (VI), Hearing impairment (HI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning or rehabilitation support. Some children and young people with a Physical Disability (PD) require additional on-going support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

**Social, Emotional and Mental health difficulties:** A wide range of social and emotional difficulties can manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.

# Blackfen School for Girls

Where a student is identified as having SEND, action will be taken to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. The SEND support will take the form of a four-part cycle (the graduated approach), through which earlier decisions and actions are re-visited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making good progress and securing good outcomes.

The graduated approach consists of the following actions:

- 1) **Assess:** The subject teacher, working alongside the SEND manager, should carry out an analysis of the student needs, including:
  - teacher's assessment and experience of the student
  - previous progress and attainment
  - individual development in comparison to peers and national data
  - the views and experiences of parents
  - the student's own views
  - advice from external support services or professionals from social and health services if already involved
- 2) **Plan:** When providing a student with SEND support, the parents/carers will be formally notified. The teacher and SEND manager will agree, in consultation with the parents/carers and student, the adjustments, interventions and support to be put into place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, with date for review. All teachers and support staff who work with the student will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. Plans will seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.
- 3) **Do:** The subject teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main subject teacher, they will still retain responsibility for the student. They should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist support staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SEND manager will support the subject teacher in further assessment of the child's strengths and weaknesses and advise on the effective implementation of support.
- 4) **Review:** The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on student progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support and interventions will be evaluated along with the views of the student and their parents/carers. The subject teacher, working with the SEND manager, student and parents/carers, will revise the support in light of the student's progress and development or removal from the SEND register. Where a student has a statement or EHC plan, the review process will occur during the annual review meeting with the SENCO and SEND manager.

## Blackfen's Provision for children with special educational needs

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- Additional support is available to provide one-to-one or small group tuition for children and young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Social plan.

# Blackfen School for Girls

- Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or Education, Health and Social plan, will receive in-class support from a Teaching Assistant.
- Children with EAL, who also have special educational needs, may receive some in-class TA support.
- Students with SEND may have a more personalised curriculum to match their individual needs.

## Requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

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Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the School, Health Care, Social Care, parents/carers or young person (over the age of 16) should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. To inform its decision, the local authority will expect to see an evaluated School Based Support Plan that has been in place and requires specific funding.

## Supporting students and families

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An Information report about provisions offered for children and young people with SEND can be found on the school's website <http://www.blackfen.bexley.co.uk>

Students and their parents/carers can find additional guidance and support through Bexley's local offer: <http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk>

## Accessibility and support for students with medical conditions

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Blackfen School for Girls recognises that students at school with medical conditions should be appropriately supported to ensure they have full access to education, including after school clubs, cultural activities, school trips and physical education. Children and young people with medical conditions will have individual support strategies which will be shared with all staff.

Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case, the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act (2010). Blackfen School for Girls is accessible for disabled students and has qualified first-aiders across the school. Laptops are available for children with communication difficulties, specific learning difficulties or temporary disabilities where available. Children and young people with temporary disabilities can also access a support room provision in OASIS.

Some students with medical conditions may have special educational needs or a statement or EHC plan which brings together education, health and social care needs. Statutory practice will be followed as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2014)

Children and young people with SEND are regarded as full members of our school community and provision is inclusive. Children and young people have full access to the environment, resources, staff and activities.

## **Blackfen School for Girls**

Arrangements made relating to the treatment of concerns and complaints from parents of children with special educational needs concerning the provision.

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Any concerns or complaints about SEND provision should be initially addressed to the SEND manager who will respond by meeting with the parents/carers to discuss the situation. If this does not resolve the situation, then the complaint should pass to the SENCO.