

HOWELL'S SCHOOL: WHOLE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS POLICY

Definition

'Students have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.' (SEN Code of Practice, Wales 2002).

At Howell's, we believe a student should be considered for inclusion in ALN if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty accessing the curriculum than the majority of students of the same age (eg dyslexia, EAL) (SEN)
- Have a disability which hinders them making use of educational facilities available to other students (eg physical/emotional/behavioural) (SEN)
- Have an outstanding talent or ability which qualifies them for special educational provision (eg the more able academically and talented musicians, sports people etc) (MAT; see MAT Whole School Policy).

Aims

It is important to remember we are a selective school and although we do everything reasonable to make students' educational experience at Howell's an inclusive one, the education of a minority must always be compatible with the needs of the majority. At Howell's we aim to provide an inclusive education by:

- Creating an environment that meets the needs of each student
- Providing a whole school response to special educational needs within the overall ethos of the school which is compatible with the needs of the majority of students
- Identifying any difficulty as early and as thoroughly as possible
- Assessing and providing for these needs as quickly as possible
- Encouraging parental co-operation and keeping the parents well-informed
- Ensuring the student has a voice in this process
- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning
- Providing a positive and active approach from all the staff to ensure that the student feels valued
- Striving to give students the maximum opportunity for enabling full access to all elements of the school curriculum at the appropriate level of learning

Objectives

The objectives of Howell's SEN policy are:

- To set achievable targets – however small – thereby promoting self-esteem and a positive attitude to learning
- To encourage differentiation by task and/or by outcome through a variety of resources and teaching strategies
- To work in partnership with students and parents
- To make all staff aware of the need for a whole school response to special educational needs
- To involve outside agencies where appropriate and promote effective partnership with them

Role of the class teacher

The class teacher will:

- Identify students who are experiencing difficulties and inform the ALNCO and SENCO of any students causing concern; this may be through assessment of written work, or on-going classroom observation
- Differentiate wherever necessary and practicable within the classroom to provide appropriate opportunities and resources for the SEN student
- Monitor and record the progress of the student as an on-going process
- Use the advice and guidance of the Pupil Passport as a starting point in the support of a student

Role of ALNCO

As the member of the Extended Leadership Team with responsibility for Additional Learning Needs, the ALN Co-ordinator, with the support of the Principal, the ELT, the SENCO and specialist teaching staff in the Learning Support department will seek to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching through the analysis and assessment of students' needs, by monitoring the standard of students' achievements and by setting targets for improvement.

The responsibilities of the ALNCO include:

- Overseeing the day to day running of the school's SEN/ALN policy across both junior and senior phases
- Along with the SENCO, co-ordinating provision for students with special educational needs
- Along with the SENCO and MATCOs, liaising with, advising, and supporting colleagues on all aspects of SEN, including the more able and talented
- Along with the SENCO, liaising with SEN students and parents to provide the most effective support
- Overseeing record keeping of all students with additional learning needs
- Along with the SENCO and MATCOs, monitoring and evaluating the additional learning needs provision
- Managing the ALN resources

- Along with the SENCO, liaise with the Examinations Officer and Lead Invigilator to organise access arrangements for learners with ALN
- Contributing to the professional development of all staff

Role of SENCO

The SEN Co-ordinator will work closely with the ALNCO to develop effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching through the analysis and assessment of students' needs, by monitoring the standard of students' achievements and by setting targets for improvement.

The responsibilities of the SENCO include:

- Overseeing the day to day running of the school's SEN/ALN policy across both junior and senior phases with regard to special educational needs
- Managing a department of specialist learning support teachers
- In conjunction with the ALNCO, co-ordinating provision for students with special educational needs
- In conjunction with the ALNCO, liaising with, advising, and supporting colleagues on all aspects of SEN
- In conjunction with the ALNCO, liaising with SEN students and parents to provide the most effective support
- Maintaining the records of all students with special educational needs
- Liaising with external agencies eg Dyslexia Action Cymru
- In conjunction with the ALNCO, monitoring and evaluating the special needs provision
- Managing the SEN resources
- Along with the ALNCO, liaise with the Examinations Officer and Lead Invigilator to organise access arrangements for learners with SEN
- Contributing to the professional development of all staff

Role of the Principal

In Howell's the Principal will:

- Report to the Governing Board about ALN where and when necessary
- Be familiar with the students on the ALN lists and the arrangements that have been made for them
- Monitor teaching arrangements for ALN students with the ALNCO and SENCO

Role of Parents

The school will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2002) when carrying out its duties towards all students with special educational needs and will ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their son/daughter. Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling students with SEN to reach their full potential. The school recognises the importance of working in co-operation with parents to find the best ways of supporting the students. Developing good relationships with parents is vital to the success of our intervention. The parents can contact the ALNCO and SENCO directly to help facilitate this. Parents are encouraged to give

their support at home wherever possible with the emphasis on raising self-esteem and building a positive attitude.

Contact with parents is usually through:

- Letter, telephone or e-mail in the first instance
- Reports: as with all students, yearly reports keep parents informed of academic progress and are the principal means of communication between school and home. In the case of SEN students, the Pupil Passport gives specific advice to parents on how the child's learning difficulties are being addressed and sets annual targets for the student
- Meetings with the ALNCO, the SENCO, Head of Senior School, Head of Junior School, Head of College, and/or Heads of Year and any other relevant member of staff where appropriate
- Parents' evenings

If the SENCO makes a recommendation for SEN assessment, this can be done either in school by one of our qualified specialist teachers, or if appropriate by an external specialist such as an educational psychologist. It is the responsibility of the parents to pay for any external assessment and any subsequent specialist teaching that may be recommended by the educational psychologist. All discussions with parents (with details of any action to be taken) are recorded by the ALNCO, the SENCO and/or Head of Junior School (as appropriate).

Role of the Student

Students are encouraged to be part of the decision making process. All plans for intervention are discussed with the student.

Identification in the Senior School and College

Identification of special educational needs may occur through one or more of the following *formal* procedures:

- Group screening tests (Dyslexia Screening, Reading Age Screening and Spelling Age Screening) take place in the first term of Year 7 (and for other new entrants at an appropriate state) to identify students who are at risk from specific learning difficulties. These tests will be used in conjunction with entrance examination results and MIDYIS (Year 7) to determine whether a student should be referred for a more detailed assessment of their learning needs. The school will keep parents informed at all stages of testing where appropriate
- Group screening tests (Reading Age Screening and Spelling Age Screening) also take place in the first term of Year 12 (and for other new entrants at an appropriate state) to identify students who are at risk from specific learning difficulties. These tests will be used in conjunction with other prior data (GCSE points etc.) to determine whether a student should be referred for a more detailed assessment of their learning needs. The school will keep parents informed at all stages of testing where appropriate
- Classroom observation
- Internal exams and assessments

- Transfer of information across the primary and secondary phase (see Transfer from Junior Schools to Senior School, below)
- Information from parents about special needs and other medical conditions which may have a material effect on a student's education (eg at Year 12 entry)

We are constantly assessing students' work as part of the daily purpose of education and it is likely that on many occasions identifying special educational needs will arise out of a subject teacher's *informal* observations and discussion with students. Subject staff may bring to the attention of the ALNCO and the SENCO any student they feel may require special help or support. The SENCO will liaise with parents about methods of assessment.

Assessment

After initial identification takes place, a formal assessment may occur. This happens in the following ways depending on which is appropriate for the individual student.

In the Senior School:

- Educational psychologist's report to identify potential dyslexic students and assess their needs
- Assessment of specific learning needs by a qualified member of the school's Learning Support staff, usually the SENCO
- Interview with EAL specialist at school
- Discussion with English teachers
- Discussion with Maths teachers and numeracy support teacher
- Discussion with school counsellor, appropriate members of SLT, HoSS and with GP/consultant
- Discussion with HoD, ALNCO and SENCO
- Samples of work sent to specialist teaching staff/ the Dyslexia Action for a second opinion

Responses to assessment

- The SENCO will liaise with parents, educational psychologists and other external bodies to decide on the best course of support
- Support may take the form of some small group or individual help, eg learning support, or more specialised help from the on-site Dyslexia Action Satellite teachers for dyslexic students
- Students receiving help either from Dyslexia Action Cymru have one or two hours a week of specialised tuition. This may be at lunchtime, after school or during curricular time; these students normally follow a modified timetable
- Following the formal assessment, an individual education plan (Pupil Passport) may be drawn up where appropriate by the SENCO
- In the Senior School individual departments respond to students with special educational needs through specific strategies outlined on the Pupil Passport and in departmental schemes of work to extend the most able and to support those with learning difficulties
- The SENCO maintains a register of all students with special needs (the Learning Support Register), together with advice on how best to support them in the

classroom. An Additional Learning Needs site can be found on the Teachers' Portal with details of all SEN students, a digest of their specific needs, and how best to address them. All departmental staff are required to acquaint themselves with the information contained on the ALN site, and HoDs are asked to have Special Needs as a standing item on their departmental agenda. It is essential that all new information about SEN, which is issued via email by the ALNCO and SENCO, is discussed at departmental meetings.

- As a result of a learning needs assessment, particularly with students at KS4 and KS5, it may be found that a learner has a slight barrier to learning that would not be classified as a SEN, but would under JCQ guidelines entitle them to a concession in a public examination (25% extra time, use of a word processor); these students will be placed on the Register of students with examination concessions.
- No access arrangements for external examinations can be put in place after the Joint Council for Qualifications deadline for processing access arrangements of 21st March as this would not be the student's "normal way of working"

Record keeping in the Senior School

- ALN information, including advice on teaching students with special needs and guidance in understanding the Pupil Passport, is available to all staff on Firefly
- Regularly updated information about students, including Pupil Passports, the Learning Support Register and the Register of students with examination concessions, is available on SIMS
- The ALNCO and SENCO keep records of regular meetings with students and parents
- The SENCO in conjunction with members of ELT and Heads of Year tracks the academic progress of SEN students and addresses any concerns
- Letters, records of telephone conversations and meetings, educational psychologist's reports and Pupil Passports are held on SIMS and on the individual student's file

Transfers from Junior School to Senior School

- Copies of special educational needs identification sheets and record of additional support sheets are transferred from the Head of the Junior School to the Senior School SENCO at the end of Year 6. There is also a meeting between the Head of the Junior School, the Year 6 teachers and the ALNCO, the SENCO in the Senior School and the Year 7 Head of Year when these students are discussed. The SENCO then distributes any relevant information via e-mail or initial staff meetings at the start of term
- Students who come from other feeder schools have their records forwarded to Howell's; references also help with identification of students with special educational needs

Training

Training in special educational needs may take several forms for staff:

- In departmental meetings where a member of a body such as the Dyslexia Action or ALNCO and SENCO advise staff on procedures such as the marking of a dyslexic student's work

- In HoDs' meetings where the ALNCO, the SENCO or special educational needs teacher reports to staff on developments in special educational needs teaching
- In staff meetings/staff briefings/via e-mail where information concerning individual students requires quick and effective communication with subject teachers
- The ALNCO or SENCO is available to attend core subject departmental meetings to advise staff on such provision
- INSET days: on these occasions part or all of a day may be devoted to examining one of the key issues of special educational needs, or on giving practical advice to the whole staff from specialists in the field
- Specific training via external agencies such as the GDST for SENCOs or teachers in co-ordinating and implementing policy on special educational needs

Specific provision is made for the following special needs:

1 Dyslexia

We have an independent Dyslexia Unit on-site run by specialist staff. Students follow an individual programme and are taught 1:1 or 1:2. Liaison occurs between the SENCO and the Dyslexia Unit teachers who regularly report on students' progress.

Parents pay Dyslexia Action Cymru direct for this extra support.

2 EAL (English as an Additional Language)

The EAL teacher will screen all EAL students at point of entry. If a student is offered a place, the EAL teacher arranges to teach her/him each week, the amount of time depending on the needs of the individual. This teaching takes place during private study lessons or lunch hours, or in the Junior School, it may be taught during a timetabled English lesson. The students are taught individually, in pairs, or small groups depending on their timetables and whether a partner with a similar level of English can be found.

The EAL lessons have two main aims: the first is to improve the student's knowledge and use of English; the second is to help her/him with classwork and homework in her regular school subjects. Lessons cover grammar, vocabulary and using appropriate English in different situations. Skills such as note-taking, reading, writing, asking questions and making oral presentations are developed. Helping with school subjects could include going over worksheets and textbooks, checking understanding and giving the student the vocabulary and grammar needed to express the concepts.

Parents usually pay for these lessons, or they may be paid for wholly or partly by the school, according to the Principal's discretion, and depending on need.

3 Learning Support

Improved literacy and numeracy skills have been identified as the most significant and common factor in raising GCSE grades in all subjects. The aims of Learning Support are to improve and strengthen study skills in those students for whom such skills are under-developed. Students are generally offered learning support classes if it is felt that they would benefit from extra tuition in reading, comprehension and general literacy or numeracy. Learning Support students usually follow a modified timetable (eg with a reduced number of languages), and attend one or more Learning Support lessons in private study periods. Recommendation for learning support usually comes from a core subject teacher

via the SENCO. These lessons are paid for by the school and parents are not expected to contribute.

In the Junior School early intervention with regard to literacy support for those students who are encountering some difficulty is considered of crucial importance. Problems where help is given include those where the students have a poor reading or spelling age, poor comprehension skills or underdeveloped writing skills. The majority of these lessons take place in small groups of students who are withdrawn during the English curriculum lessons. This support is given principally by one of the specialist Learning Support teachers, or by either the English co-ordinator or the classroom assistants. The library reading time and some assembly times are also utilised for reading, language and mathematical activities in Key Stage 1.

Specialist provision is not available for other pervasive developmental conditions, eg ASD, ADHD, or sensory disabilities; however, current information and guidance for teaching staff on such conditions is available on the Teachers' Portal and via Individual Education Plans.

It is important to remember we are a selective school and although we attempt to make every reasonable adjustment to make students' educational experience at Howell's an inclusive one, the education of a minority must always be compatible with the needs of the majority.

4 ALN: MAT students

The school employs two More Able and Talented co-ordinators (one Junior School teacher, one Senior School teacher) who work alongside the ALNCO to facilitate provision for MAT learners. See separate Whole School MAT Policy.

5 ALN: Medical conditions

Parents are expected to inform the school of any physical or mental impairment that is known and that is likely to have a noticeable effect upon a student's daily work and progress. A register is maintained in SIMS which is continually updated and published as the medical list when required. Training is provided if needed for all staff (eg on the use of the 'Epipen', medical condition awareness etc) and all staff are asked to make themselves aware of students on the medical list. Staff are updated of any additions or deletions to this list either by email, at the weekly briefing meeting or at a staff meeting. Where appropriate, a student's timetable may be modified to accommodate individual needs.

6 ALN: Those whose difficulties arise from an emotional, behavioural, or familial problem

In the Senior School members of staff who teach these students and others who support them (the school counsellor, Heads of Year, members of ELT) are kept informed via email or meetings of the way the problem is to be tackled, monitored and what progress has been made. This is to ensure we have a consistent approach. The SENCO liaises with outside agencies or may delegate this task if appropriate. The SENCO will also liaise with the examinations office at regular points in the year and before school and public examinations to pass on information about students who may qualify for special consideration. In the case of emotional issues Deputy Principals may refer to ALNCO to add to register of concessions.

The referral system is outlined below:

Student > subject/form teacher>SENCO/Counsellor>Head of Year/Examinations Officer

Familial, behavioural or psychological issues affecting students, where and when appropriate, are conveyed to subject staff and the Examinations Officer by the Head of Senior School or Head of College/Head of Year. (Please see separate policy on confidentiality.)

The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law. Additionally this policy complies fully with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO with reference to any relevant documents, such as reports by an educational psychologist or specialist teacher. Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams and submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Examinations Officer. Rooming, invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer and Lead Invigilator with support from the SENCO and ALNCO.

Special Educational Needs Procedures in the Junior School

Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher will:

- liaise with the previous teacher prior to the new academic year
- use appropriate strategies and monitor and record the progress of the student
- identify additional students who are experiencing any difficulties
- discuss with either KS1 or KS2 co-ordinator, who will gain evidence and suggest simple strategies to address concerns
- inform Head teacher who will discuss with ALNCO and SENCO at next regular meeting
- class teacher/KS Co-ordinator/Head teacher to monitor progress. If still concerned after half a term, Head teacher to contact SENCO /Educational Psychologist for advice which may lead to the next stage. This may involve observations by SENCO, informal observations and/or assessments by Educational Psychologist or a teacher from the Dyslexia Action. Parents are involved at each stage as appropriate
- follow and monitor any Pupil Passport a particular student may have. Share the Pupil Passport with the student and parents and update regularly in September and March
- inform other teachers who may teach the student
- differentiate within the classroom and provide appropriate opportunities and resources
- keep evidence of strategies used for students experiencing emotional difficulties and will involve parents in a supportive role

Role of the Student

Students are encouraged to be part of the decision making process. All plans for intervention are discussed with the student who will discuss their Pupil Passport with either the class/support teacher

Identification, Assessment and Recording in the Junior School

- All our students are assessed (both formally and informally) when they join the school so that we can build upon their prior learning
- We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for them
- If our assessments show that a student may have a learning difficulty we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available resources. In Howell's Junior School we have regular assessment and review so that we can identify any students who are not making the expected progress and intervene and monitor as necessary, at any stage during their time in school.
- The student's teacher will offer interventions that are different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices.
- After discussion the Head teacher and the class teacher will inform the parents and draw upon them for additional information.
- Support for the student may be in the form of:
 - different learning materials or special equipment
 - some group or individual support
 - different strategies to those usually used
- We will record the strategies used to support the student within a Pupil Passport. The Pupil Passport will show the short-term targets set for the student and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. The reviews will take place every six months.

Special Needs in Breakfast Club/After School Care/TOOT Holiday Club

All the Out of School Care Clubs are staffed by teachers, teaching assistants and catering staff working in Howell's; they use their experience, knowledge of the children and regular contact with class teachers and teaching assistants to provide the most appropriate approaches and opportunities for each child and their particular needs and preferences. Facilities, equipment, staffing and resources, within reason, can be adapted to cater for specific needs, and excellent partnerships with parents facilitate the sharing of information so that each and every child has the best possible care.

The Role of the Managers

The Managers will:

- liaise with SENCO, class teachers, teaching assistants and parents to ensure that, where special needs have been identified through Howell's initial assessment, ongoing assessments and day to day interactions, staff are fully briefed and can adapt their approaches to meet those needs and preferences

- provide special equipment and resources and adapt staffing arrangements to meet identified and additional needs as appropriate
- provide training as appropriate to cater for specific needs in conjunction with SENCO and Mrs Judith Ashill, Head of Junior School
- ensure that the home language, social, cultural and religious practices of individual children are understood and catered for as appropriate by all staff
- address special needs and preferences that are identified in the Clubs in conjunction with staff, parents, Mrs Ashill, Head of Junior School and SENCO as appropriate
- ensure that all children have access to the play opportunities, facilities and activities in order to promote their welfare and development
- liaise with internal and external agencies through the SENCO and parents to facilitate meetings and appointments supporting children with special needs in BC/ASC/TOOT hours
- TOOT only: liaise with parents of siblings of Howell's girls who do not attend Howell's to discuss any special needs and preferences and agree how these can be met within the Holiday Club

The Role of the Out of School Care Club staff

The staff will:

- inform the Manager of any concerns about individual children so that a plan of action can be formulated and agreed with all concerned
- discuss their knowledge, experience and up to date observations of individual children with the Manager and other staff in order to address special needs and preferences as appropriate
- take part in training as appropriate
- ensure that, when intimate care is being provided, the privacy of all children is respected

The Role of the Child

Children in all clubs are encouraged to voice their thoughts, ideas and concerns with staff and suggest ways forward in order that they are involved in their own development

Policy updated: October 2016

Key contacts

- Senior Leader (ALNCO) – Mr Tom Walters
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator – Mrs Freda Harvey