



**Buckinghamshire  
College Group**

# **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy 2023-24**

Responsible Officer: Head of Learning Support  
Date: August 2023  
Review Date: August 2024  
Available: Intranet and Website  
Approved by: Executive

## Introduction

**The Beyond Ambition** is the Buckinghamshire College Group Strategic Plan 2023-2028 and our Special Educational Needs provision is firmly embedded within the vision and values of the College.

Our SEND provision is reflected within our values Ambition, Innovation, Integrity and Respect in providing an offer to students that meets the vision of:

Buckinghamshire College Group is committed to ensuring '*Equal access to opportunities and inclusive learning underpins all that we do*'.

## Core Principles

Buckinghamshire College Group (BCG) works within the 2015 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. All young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- Achieve their best
- Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives; and
- Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment or higher education or training.

The College is fully committed to the inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provided that the College is compatible for the young person's age, ability and aptitude and that their attendance is not incompatible with the efficient education of other studies in the College and is an efficient use of the Local Authority's resources.

In keeping with the College's principles of Equality and Inclusion, we affirm that:

- All learners are of equal value
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships
- We have the highest expectations of all our students
- We work to raise standards for all students
- We observe good equalities practice for our staff
- We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

The College uses the term **parents** to signify parents, guardians and/or carers, i.e. all those who have parental responsibility for young person.

## Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students and apprentices with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), their parents, employers and all staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Admissions Policy and Procedure
- Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy
- Exams Policies
- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy including Prevent
- Student Performance Management Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Exceptional Learning Strategy
- Learning Support Policy

## Definition of SEND

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

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream colleges or mainstream post 16 institutions.

Special educational provision is education or training that is additional to or different from that made generally for other young people of the same age.

## Students with Disability

Many children and young people who have SEND may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...

A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability.

There is a significant overlap between young people with a disability and those with special educational needs. Where a young person requires special educational provision over and above the adjustments, aids and services required by the Equality Act 2010 they will be additionally covered by the SEND definition.

## Key Requirements/Legal Duties

As a College, we will use our *best endeavours* to meet the needs of our SEND students. This policy responds to the requirements and recommendations of:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets and Direct Payments) Regulations, Section 49

## Objectives of this Policy

- To identify and provide for students and apprentices who have special educational needs
- To work within the framework provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2015
- To operate a **whole student, whole College** approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs
- To ensure access to the curriculum for all students
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with students and apprentices who have special educational needs
- To develop and maintain partnership and high levels of engagement with parents
- This policy will be updated regularly.

## Partnership with Students and Families

The College works in partnership with students, their parents, apprentices and their employers. Students' and apprentices' views, opinions, wishes and feelings are always considered. We aim to provide as much information and support as necessary to help all students achieve the best possible outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood. This will enable students with SEND to achieve good outcomes.

The College recognises that parents have a unique overview of their child's needs and how best to support them.

We have high aspirations for all our students, including those with SEND and use a **Person Centred Planning** approach when preparing for their needs. Person Centred Planning is a process for continual listening and learning, focusing on what is important to someone now and in the future. Students with SEND are integral to the decision-making processes affecting them.

### **Identifying and Assessing Students with SEND**

The College has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. There are many opportunities throughout the application and enrolment process for a student to declare their SEND needs. All tutors and assessors are responsible for identifying students with SEND and, in collaboration with the Head of Learning Support and the Learning Support Team, will do our best to ensure that those students requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage.

On entry to the College every student's attainment is assessed in order to ensure continuity of learning. This may identify students who require additional class-based interventions and/or further assessment.

- Information given at interview and enrolment is used to shape the students' provision in the first few months
- The College regularly gathers information about every student's progress
- We expect students, apprentices, employers and parents to participate as fully as possible in the assessment, planning and reviewing process.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 does not assume that there are hard and fast categories of SEN. It recognises that children's needs and requirements fall into four broad areas:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice we accept that students often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. We acknowledge that while considering the needs of the young person, some areas which are not SEN may impact on progress and attainment:

- Disability
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- Being a Child Looked After.

**NB.** Behaviour is not a special educational need in itself. In keeping with the SEND Code of Practice, poor behaviour is viewed as a response to an underlying unmet need which the College, in partnership with parents and the young person, will endeavour to identify.

### **The Graduated Approach to Meeting Special Educational Needs and Disability**

#### **Quality First Teaching**

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their classes, including where students and apprentices access support from Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), specialist tutors or other specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students or apprentices who have or may have SEND. High quality teaching of all students, including those with special educational needs, is a whole-College responsibility. This requirement has been strengthened in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

- All BCG students and apprentices have access to a programme that is tailored to meet the needs of individuals. Targets are set to meet our students AMBITIONS.
- The College regularly reviews the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. In addition, the Head of Learning Support carries out regular pop ins to ensure that high quality teaching for SEND students is in place across the curriculum.
- Advanced practitioners further support teachers / assessors if necessary
- Teachers are able to access detailed advice on all students with SEND.
- There is regular advice and training for colleagues at all levels.
- The College aims to provide advice and training to improve teacher/assessors and Learning Support Assistants understanding of the SEND most frequently encountered in College and to develop their skills in identifying students with barriers to learning.
- Where necessary, outside agencies deliver bespoke training.
- Preparing for adulthood is embedded into student provision.
  - o The College will support students with SEND towards greater independence and employability, enabling young people to achieve their ambitions.
  - o The College will support students with SEND to prepare for adulthood. Strategies for this may include exploring different employment options, independent living, participating in society, and being as healthy as possible in adult life.

### **Criteria for the Allocation of Support**

When a student has been identified as requiring additional support to meet their individual needs this can be through:

- Education Health Care Plan
- Self-referral leading to an assessment by the Learning Support team
- Transition information gathered from previous educational settings
- External professional referrals
- Teacher or assessor referrals.

### **Education Health Care Plan**

The EHCP consultation specialist will be consulted by the student's Local Authority (LA) to assess if '**outcomes**' identified in the ECHP can be met by the College provision. There may be specific situations where a young person needs cannot be met by the College and this will be communicated to the LA in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

To meet '**outcomes**' the College may be required to deliver provision in partnership with subcontractors who will take the lead with specific elements of a young persons '**outcomes**'. This subcontracted provision is in agreement with the LA.

The College will conduct EHCP Annual Reviews in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice.

In a situation where the agreed provision does not meet the planned '**outcomes**' the Head of Learning Support will call an emergency EHCP Annual Review to reassess the provision in partnership with the LA and other key partners e.g. CAMHs, SALT.

### **Self-referral leading to an assessment by the Learning Support team**

Young people, employers and parents can self-refer to the Learning Support team. In these situations, they will be offered an assessment and, where appropriate, will refer onto one of our specialised teachers.

Course Leaders and Curriculum Managers will be informed of any required adjustments.

### **Transition information gathered from previous educational settings**

As part of the transition process the College may receive information from a student's previous educational setting advising that the student has additional needs. With the student's consent the College will work to gather information and arrange assessments to put appropriate support in place.

### **External professional referrals**

The College may receive notification of students with additional needs from professionals connected to the College as well as external professionals. With the student's consent the College will work to gather information and arrange assessments to put appropriate support in place.

### **Teacher and assessor referrals**

Teacher and assessors may identify students who are not making progress despite quality first teaching and request the involvement of the Learning Support team. The Learning Support team will then gather information and arrange assessments to put appropriate support in place.

### **Examination Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**

Through the transition into College process, self-identification, teacher and assessor referral and professional referral, the College will arrange for students who have been identified as potentially requiring access arrangements for external examinations to be assessed by a specialist assessor. If students meet the criteria for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments as specified by the awarding examination body, the College will put the appropriate arrangements in place.

### **Transition to Further Education, Employment and Training**

We place students and their families at the centre of planning for transitions. The College works in collaboration with other educational providers to facilitate the smooth transition of SEND students in to the College. This could be through arranging additional visits, taster sessions or through other resources e.g. Photographic scrap books. The College supports SEND students through advice and guidance, transition to new courses as part of their progression within College as well as leaving College to do; community programmes, apprenticeships, employment or higher education.

### **Students with SEND and Bullying**

Our Student Performance Management Procedure makes clear that all our students have the right to feel safe from bullying. The College has a robust and consistent approach to bullying, which makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Students and apprentices with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment and so particular care is taken to ensure that they feel supported and that any incidents are dealt with promptly.

### **Students with SEND and Exclusions**

When considering whether to exclude a student with SEND, BCG pays due regard to guidance which states that colleges should try every practicable means to maintain a student with SEND in College and should seek local authority and other professional advice as appropriate.

**Complaints Procedure** The College's complaints procedure is outlined in the prospectus and on the College's website.

## Equality Impact Statement

We have a duty to consider the impact of changes on groups with Protected Characteristics (race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership).

What are the overall aims of the change? Why are you proposing it?	The aim of this policy is to provide a framework to ensure that the guidelines are in place to support all stakeholders
Given the aims of your proposal, what issues does your data/information highlight?	Everybody is included within this policy, and all groups are given equability in regards to their needs and provisions
How could the proposed change affect positively/negatively on groups with protected characteristics?	This has a positive impact on all groups with protected characteristics, as they are ensured equal treatment and provision based on their needs. Risk assessments may be carried out to ensure that this is the case and provisions maybe altered to accommodate specific needs
What actions will you take to mitigate any negative impact?	No negative impact to having this policy
Is there any potential negative impact justified in light of wider benefits of the proposal	No negative impact to having this policy
Recording final decision	This policy requires Executive approval
Has the policy taken into consideration the requirements of GDPR regulations? Are there any actions that need addressing, e.g.; data sharing agreement; has data consent been considered; data retention timescales?	GDPR regulations have been considered and actions comply with data protection requirements.