



# St Albans Girls' School

## SEN Information Report – December 2020

All mainstream schools are expected to provide SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) support for a wide range of pupils, including those with:

1. Communication and interaction needs; including speech and language needs and ASD (Autism) needs
2. Cognition and learning needs; including moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia
3. Social, mental and emotional health needs; including ADD, ADHD and Anxiety Disorder
4. Sensory or physical needs: including physical disability, hearing and visual impairment

If a pupil has SEND, then their needs will fit into one or more of these categories. A school's provision for SEND is defined as support which is additional to, or different from, that which is available to all pupils.

### **What should I do if I think my child has special educational needs?**

Your first point of contact at school should always be your child's Form Tutor who will be able to discuss your concerns and refer these on to the appropriate member of staff. You can also contact your child's Director of Learning, the SENCO or a member of the Senior Team. The SENCO or a member of the Senior Team will discuss these concerns with you further – either in person or by telephone. The next stage could include classroom observations and testing using standardised tests. A full range of age appropriate, standardised tests can also be used to identify a full range of learning needs. The results of tests will always be discussed fully with both parents and the pupil in question. The SENCO may offer links to a range of appropriate supportive outside agencies.

### **How will school staff support my child?**

The first and best support for your child is through high quality teaching in the classroom. Teachers are given regular training and support to know how to help students with various additional needs to ensure they thrive as learners. The Learning Support Team deliver regular updates and tailored support to enable the teachers to deliver their subject specialism with strategies to support students with varied needs.

Subject teachers are effective in planning lessons that are accessible to every pupil. This might mean teachers plan to:

- pre-teach content or vocabulary
- use over-learning methods to consolidate the topics
- set alternative activities for home learning

- provide specially targeted texts and resources appropriate for an individual pupil's reading ability, or provide additional apparatus or materials
- adapt and adjust resources and materials to make them accessible for pupils with specific learning needs

All SEN students will have access to a **Key Worker** within the Learning Support team. Each year group has an assigned Key Worker who will liaise with the student and their family to ensure the student is being effectively supported at STAGS.

The Key Worker will also work with the student and family to produce a **Spotlight Profile**. This profile is available to all staff and details the strengths and challenges of the student, for teachers to help them best support the student in class. As the students become more able to reflect on their learning strengths and challenges, sometimes it is appropriate for the students to outline the top 5 ways they are helped to learn in class. These top tips are chosen by the student and known as the **Fab 5**, and are published for all staff.

In school **home learning support** is available to all SEN students before school starts, during lunchtimes and after school in the form of homework club. Home learning club is led by a member of the Learning Support team, who is on hand to provide support to students. **Skill Drills** are also available during lunchtimes. This provides daily opportunities for students to practice skills such as reading, touch-typing, handwriting and journaling.

Targeted support for students with dyslexia, slow processing and other specific or moderate learning difficulties will vary depending on the needs of the student. A small number of students may require in class support from a **Teaching Assistant** to access the curriculum or differentiated tasks, or a small group **intervention**.

The **interventions** that we use are devised, planned and initiated through communication with the child, parent/carer and a range of professionals, both inside and out of school. Targeted support is dependent on need, prior attainment and levels of progress, as well as provision outlined in Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they are making a difference for the students, and supporting their needs effectively.

Current small group and individual interventions include:

**Lexia Power Up**- online responsive computer programme

**That Reading Thing**- 1:1 programme teaching word building skills designed for secondary pupils with reading difficulties

**Toe by Toe**- 1:1 highly structured programme teaching phonics

**Reading Bursts**- scheduled 1:1 read aloud opportunities to support fluency and reading for meaning.

**Tracks**- Personalised spelling system of cumulative learning based on errors in classwork and key subject vocabulary.

**Touch Type Read and Spell**- Online touch typing programme that reinforced reading and spelling patterns in practice rather than nonsense words.

**Skill Drills-** Lunchtime clubs offering practice in touch typing, lettering (for motor control difficulties), Lexia practice and reading.

**Home Learning Club-** With a dedicated Teaching Assistant from 8am before school and until 4:30 Monday to Thursday. Support for independent study and additional over learning

**Key Worker-** Support towards self advocacy skills, someone to speak with at scheduled times and as arising, higher home-school liaison. This is also available as Key-Worker-by-email for those with social and communication needs.

**Think Good Feel Good-** Programme to support healthy thinking habits, recognising difficult thoughts and what to do with them.

**ABC Tracker-** Solution focussed tracking of behaviour to identify and resolve trigger situations

**Target 9-** 1:1 strategy for solution focussed problem solving

**Homunculi-** Anxiety training program for those with ASD

**Social Stories** and **Cartoon Conversation Tools-** Supporting change, problem solving and dealing with transitions

Where required, some SEN students will be able to access **permission cards**. These cards may allow the bearer to take short breaks from the classroom, access SEN or Pastoral spaces or go to lunch early to avoid crowds. Some SEN students may follow a **Personalised Learning Programme** in order to support their learning. These may be permanent or fixed term changes such as a reduced timetable, **soft landing** or reduced home learning.

All SEN students are screened for Exam Access Arrangements in Year 9, however many are provisionally screened before this time. All students with Exam Access Arrangements can attend **Exam Access Workshops**. These workshops ensure students are familiar with their arrangements and have ample opportunity to practice using them before their GCSE exams.

### **How will I know how my child is doing? How will I be involved in discussions about planning for my child's education?**

It is important to communicate together for the best support for your child. The school has scheduled meetings where teachers feedback to parents on their progress. Information on how your child is doing and support they receive can be discussed with subject teachers and Heads of Department. There is also a report for each year group at key points in the year which are published on the school calendar. Incidental opportunities may also arise by email and telephone, and the SENCO can always be contacted via email ([senco@stags.herts.sch.uk](mailto:senco@stags.herts.sch.uk)).

If an additional intervention is considered suitable for your child, the SENCO will write or telephone home explaining the aims of the intervention and create a Personalised Learning Plan. We will keep you updated and ask you to contribute to the Plan at least termly.

### **How will my child be able to contribute their views?**

It is really important that the student's views are central to the process of support we offer, and so we use a variety of ways to include their point of view. It might be in a 1:1 conversation, over email or at an appointment with a chosen parent or friend. There is a blue Post Box outside the SENCO office to allow a physical note too. Sometimes it is hard to know what it is the student wants to say- they just know something might not be working. In those cases, we use a variety of activities to help support their reflection, including 'Good day/ bad day' diagrams, colour-coded timetables to show the levels

of challenge and PATH strategies. We teach and support a continual process of helping students to become more able to reflect and express their views on the support they receive and learn to self advocate increasingly effectively. In addition, regular quizzes are sent to groups of students to seek their views on the impact of their support, to reflect on their exam access arrangements, as well as to gain an overall picture of wellbeing.

### **Who can I contact if I am concerned about the support my child is receiving?**

The Form Tutor is always the first point of contact to share concerns. Parents can also contact or request a meeting with the SENCO. Parents can also contact the nominated SEN Governor, Lesley Ainsworth through the school [email](#).

The Senior Leadership Team will observe pupils receiving SEN support in lessons in order to ensure we are providing the best support to all pupils. We monitor the impact of all the support we deliver alongside the teachers, Directors of Learning and Heads of Key Stage at both formal meetings and informal situations that arise to suit the students' needs.

### **What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?**

We have access to a range of **Specialist Advisory Services** who we frequently communicated with in order to ensure we are providing effective dynamic support for our students. More details about the Hertfordshire Integrated Services for Learning teams can be found [here](#).

### **How will my child be included in all activities outside the classroom?**

All of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our students, including our before-and after-school clubs.

All students are encouraged to go on our residential trip(s).

All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day/school plays/special workshops, etc. No student is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability.

### **How accessible is the school environment?**

STAGS has implemented a programme of improvements over time to the accessibility of our buildings. However, access to some of our older buildings is still via relatively narrow corridors and stairs. Where this may present an issue of accessibility for a student, every effort will be made to timetable their lessons in accessible classrooms. This applies to students with long and short term accessibility requirements. Specialist equipment to access the curriculum supported by the specialist teachers from the Vision, Hearing, Physical Needs Impairment teams .

### **How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?**

A supportive transition process including extensive communication with primary schools, Heads of Key Stage, Directors of Learning and specialist services (such as YC Herts) is all available and applied as needed. Accompanied visits to colleges can also be beneficial. The programme of transition will always be matched carefully to the needs of the student in careful communication with home.

**How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?**

Information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability can be found on Hertfordshire's website [here](#).

**What are the arrangements for handling complaints from parents of students with SEND?**

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the class teacher/SENCO/Headteacher in the first instance. Please refer to our complaints policy for further guidance. This is available on our website.

The parents of students with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first-tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children. They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Exclusions
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services