

6.48 Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Learning Difficulties Policy
Independent Day School for Girls

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- equality, diversity and anti-racism policy;
- disability policy;
- child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures;
- risk assessment policy for student welfare;
- anti-bullying policy;
- English as an Additional Language policy;
- admissions policy;
- emotional health & wellbeing policy;
- public examinations policy;
- access arrangements policy;
- word processing policy;
- external exams equality policy
- behaviour policy
- relationship and sex education policy
- exclusion, removal and review policy

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References in this policy to JCQ Regulations and ICE relate to / are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments last updated in March 2026 (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments/>) and 'ICE- Instructions for conducting examinations 2024-2effective from 1 September 2026 (https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2026/09/JCQ-Instructions-for-conducting-examinations-2026_FINAL.pdf).

1 Aims

1.1 This is the policy on special educational needs, disabilities and learning difficulties of The Maynard School (**School**).

The School is an academically selective independent school which seeks to provide an inclusive educational environment for all students. Whilst the School is not required to implement all aspects of statutory SEND provision that apply to state-funded schools, it is guided by the principles of the SEND Code of Practice, the Equality Act 2010, current JCQ regulations and recognised best practice. The School is committed to identifying and responding to additional needs at an early stage and to making reasonable adjustments wherever practicable to support students in accessing learning and demonstrating their abilities. The School also keeps under review emerging national developments in SEND policy and reform, including those set out in the Department for Education's 2026 Schools White Paper, adopting approaches which align with its educational aims and the needs of its students where appropriate

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- 1.1.1 to promote good practice in the detection and management of special educational needs and disabilities (**SEND**);
- 1.1.2 to explain the support the School can provide for children who have SEND and the co-operation needed from parents;
- 1.1.3 to actively promote the well-being of students.

2 Scope and Application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**)

3 Regulatory Framework

The Maynard is an academically selective independent school which seeks to be inclusive and make reasonable adjustments wherever possible, guided by the SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act 2010 and current best practice and this policy has been prepared with regard to the School's responsibilities under:

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Education and Skills Act 2008;

Children Act 1989;

Childcare Act 2006;

Equality Act 2010; and

Children and Families Act 2014.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (DfE and Department of Health, January 2015) (the SEND Code of Practice);
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (current edition);
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Instructions for Conducting Examinations (current edition);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition); and
- Relevant Department for Education guidance relating to inclusion, SEND and reasonable adjustments.

4 **Publication and Availability**

This policy is available in hard copy on request.

A copy of the policy is available for inspection from the Head's PA during the School day.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 **Definitions**

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

References to the **Proprietor** are references to the Board of Governors.

References to **working days** mean Monday to Friday, when the School is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the School's website.

References to an **Individual Support Plans (ISP)** are references to a plan or programme designed for children with SEN to help them to get the most out of their education. An **ISP** builds on the curriculum that a SEND child is following and sets out the strategies being used to meet that child's specific needs, targets for the child to take ownership of their learning and support and review points where appropriate.

5.1 Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Reasonable Adjustments

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

A child has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions; or

(c) are under compulsory school age and are likely to fall within either of the definitions above if special educational provision is not made for them.

5.1.2 A child must not be regarded as having SEN solely because the language, or form of language, in which they are taught differs from the language spoken at home. Students for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) will be supported appropriately in accordance with the School's English as an Additional Language Policy.

5.1.3 The School recognises that students learn in different ways and at different rates. Difficulty in a particular subject or area of learning does not necessarily indicate the presence of a special educational need. Identification of SEND is based on a holistic assessment of a student's needs, strengths, progress and access to learning.

SEND may arise from a range of needs and differences, including cognition and learning needs, communication and interaction needs, social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH), sensory or physical needs, and neurodivergent profiles such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, ADHD and autism.

The School recognises that SEND can affect students across the full range of academic ability. Some needs may be identified in early childhood, while others may become apparent later as educational, social and organisational demands increase.

5.1.4 The School seeks to adopt a strengths-based and inclusive approach, recognising that a diagnosis is not required for support to be considered. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate support may be implemented where evidence indicates that a student is experiencing barriers to learning, participation or assessment.

6 The School's SENCO (who is also the School's Exam Access Arrangement Co-ordinator and in-house Level 7 Specialist Assessor) has responsibility for:

- the strategic development of SEND provision across the School;
- ensuring effective communication and partnership with students, parents, staff and external agencies in relation to SEND;
- identifying, assessing, monitoring and reviewing students with SEND through the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review;
- advising, guiding and supporting teaching and support staff in meeting the needs of students with SEND and promoting inclusive classroom practice;
- ensuring that appropriate SEND Support Plans (ISPs) and examination access arrangement records are in place, reviewed regularly and implemented effectively;
- overseeing the collection, maintenance and secure management of records relating to students with SEND;
- supporting the identification and implementation of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements in accordance with current Equality Act and JCQ requirements;
- promoting student voice and involving students, where appropriate, in decisions about their support and provision;

- liaising with external professionals and agencies where specialist advice or assessment is required; and
- undertaking such other duties as are appropriate in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice and current best practice.

7 Procedures

7.1 The School is an academically selective mainstream independent school with high academic expectations of all students. We are committed to the early identification of SEND and, where appropriate, carry out screening assessments from Year 3 onwards to help identify students who may be experiencing barriers to learning or who may benefit from additional support.

7.1.2 The School's approach to the identification and support of students with SEND is guided by the SEND Code of Practice and current best practice. Identification is based on a range of evidence, including screening assessments, teacher observations, academic progress, student voice and parental feedback. The School seeks to ensure that any assessment of need is evidence-based, holistic and appropriately informed by professional judgement

7.2 Screening Assessments:

7.2.1 During a student's first year at the School, and subsequently where a concern is identified, the School may carry out screening assessments, the results of which will be shared with parents.

The assessments used are screening tools rather than diagnostic assessments and are not intended to provide a formal diagnosis. Their purpose is to identify areas that may require further investigation, support or specialist assessment. The cost of routine screening is included within tuition fees.

7.2.2. Where screening results indicate a potential area of need, the student may be placed on the SENCo's monitoring register and relevant staff will be informed through the iSAMS and SEND registers. A period of observation and evidence gathering follows after which the SENCo may undertake further assessment or recommend additional support.

7.2.3 Where screening results, professional observations or other evidence suggest that a student may have SEND, the School will consult with parents and, where appropriate, the student, to discuss findings and agree appropriate next steps.

7.3 Formal assessment

7.3.1 A concern requiring further investigation may be raised by the student, parents, teaching staff or the SENCo. The SENCo will gather and review all relevant evidence before determining whether further assessment is appropriate.

The SENCo reviews academic progress data regularly in collaboration with Heads of Year and teaching staff. Together, they may determine that a student would benefit from further assessment, a learning profile discussion or additional support.

7.3.2 Where further investigation of a student's learning profile is considered necessary, assessments will usually be carried out by the SENCo. In both the Junior and Senior School, assessments may also be undertaken by the Learning Support Assistant who is trained to administer relevant assessments up to the end of Year 8.

Prior to any assessment, the SENCo will gather information from teaching staff to build a holistic picture of the student's strengths, challenges and normal way of working. From Year 9 onwards, where examination access arrangements are being considered, this information may form part of the evidence required for a JCQ Form 8 or Form 9 application.

7.3.3 Following assessment, a written report will be shared with parents. The findings will be discussed with the student, parents and relevant staff to agree appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and any recommended next steps.

7.3.4 Where assessment results and supporting evidence indicate that a student may have SEND requiring further specialist investigation, such as a specific learning difficulty, communication and interaction need, social, emotional and mental health need, sensory need or neurodivergent profile, the School may recommend assessment by an appropriately qualified external professional.

This may include an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, medical professional or other relevant specialist, depending upon the presenting needs.

Parents may choose a professional recommended by the School or one of their own choosing. The cost of any external assessment is normally the responsibility of parents.

To ensure a holistic and collaborative approach, the external assessor must liaise with the School and obtain relevant background information before conducting any assessment.

7.4 Examination Access Arrangements

The following section relates specifically to assessments used as evidence for examination access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

7.4.1 For students in Key Stages 4 and 5, where assessment scores may be used as evidence to support an application for examination access arrangements, the assessor (usually the SENCo) must establish whether the assessment results demonstrate an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the student's performance in examinations and assessments, in accordance with current JCQ regulations.

It is important to note that access arrangements are awarded on the basis both of evidence of need and the candidate's normal way of working, and that assessment

scores alone do not automatically entitle a candidate to an access arrangement. Where a formal assessment forms part of an application for examination access arrangements, the assessor will complete the relevant JCQ documentation and the SENCo will ensure that all remaining sections are completed and retained in accordance with current JCQ requirements.

7.4.2 Where the school SENCo and/or an independent assessor undertakes an assessment for the purposes of examination access arrangements, they must obtain evidence from the School regarding the candidate's history of need, provision and normal way of working before completing the assessment. This requirement is set out in current JCQ regulations.

For applications requiring Form 8 or Form 9, evidence must include observations and feedback from teaching staff together with evidence demonstrating the student's normal way of working in internal assessments, tests and examinations. Before the AAO application can be completed online, evidence of extra time use (e.g. a class test or an end of year exam / mock) in relevant subjects must also be kept on file after the assessment in accordance with current JCQ requirements.

7.4.3 Where an educational psychologist's report or other specialist assessment has been obtained independently of the School, the information will be considered alongside evidence held by the School to inform understanding of the student's needs and appropriate provision.

Where examination access arrangements are being considered, the School may be required to gather additional evidence or undertake further assessment to ensure that all current JCQ requirements relating to evidence of need and normal way of working have been met

7.4.4 The School will maintain records to support applications for examination access arrangements in accordance with current JCQ regulations and inspection requirements.

7.5 Learning support

7.5.1 Where screening results or other evidence indicate that a student may benefit from additional support, but do not suggest an immediate need for formal assessment or specialist teaching, the School may recommend participation in a small learning support group or 1:1 led by the SENCo, Learning Support Assistant or literacy support provider.

These sessions may focus on areas such as study skills, literacy, reading, spelling, handwriting, organisation and independent learning strategies.

Learning support of this kind is provided at no additional cost and forms part of the reasonable adjustments and support that the School may offer to help students access learning effectively.

The student's progress and needs will be monitored regularly. Where concerns persist, or where the support provided does not appear to be meeting the student's needs sufficiently, the School may recommend further assessment or referral to an appropriate specialist

7.5.2 Additional Specialist Teaching

Where appropriate, and where supported by assessment evidence, the School may recommend a programme of additional specialist teaching delivered by an external suitably qualified specialist (e.g. speech therapy) or our Learning Support Assistant on an individual or small-group basis.

This provision will normally consist of one session of 30 to 60 minutes per week during term time over a pre-determined time period depending on need (usually 3-5 weeks). Additional specialist teaching with our Learning Support Assistant is offered as a chargeable service and will be arranged directly with parents at the School's published rate. External services such as SALT or OT services are payable by parents directly to the specialist and sessions are arranged in conjunction with the SENCo and the student/family to ensure minimal impact on the individual's main learning and timetable.

7.5.3 External Teaching

Parents may choose to arrange specialist teaching or therapeutic support outside school. Where appointments are scheduled during the school day, they should be arranged, wherever possible, to minimise disruption to the student's education.

The Head reserves the right to approve arrangements that involve absence from lessons, taking into account the student's welfare, safety, academic progress and the wider demands of the curriculum and school timetable.

7.6 Examination Access Arrangements

7.6.1 Students with SEND or disabilities may be eligible for examination access arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments for internal and public examinations, where there is evidence of need and the arrangements reflect the student's normal way of working in school.

Parents are asked to liaise with their child's Head of Year and the SENCo in good time with respect to this.

7.6.2 Access arrangements are determined in accordance with current JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements. The key principle is that a student's approved arrangements must be supported by evidence of need and a clear history of normal way of working within the School.

As students' needs may vary between subjects, access arrangements may be appropriate in some subjects but not others.

The SENCo, assessor, teaching staff, support staff and examinations team will work together to ensure that approved arrangements are appropriately implemented in internal assessments, mock examinations and public examinations.

7.7 Information sharing and parent involvement

7.7.1 Parents are encouraged to provide the School with copies of any relevant assessments, reports or recommendations relating to their child's SEND, learning profile or disability. Such information will be treated confidentially and shared only with those members of staff who need it to support the student effectively.

7.7.2 The School will work in partnership with parents and, where appropriate, the student, to identify needs, review support and agree appropriate strategies and adjustments.

7.7.3 Parents should notify the School promptly if they have concerns about their child's learning, wellbeing or progress so that these can be discussed and appropriate support considered.

7.7.4 Parents retain overall responsibility for decisions relating to external assessments and specialist services. Where parents obtain reports or recommendations from external professionals, copies should be provided to the School. External reports will be considered alongside the School's own evidence, observations and assessment data and will form part of the holistic picture of a student's needs when determining appropriate support and provision.

7.8 SEND Support Plans (e.g. ISPs)

7.8.1 The SENCo will ensure that an appropriate SEND Support Plan, Student Profile or equivalent record is maintained where additional provision, support or adjustments are required.

The plan will be developed in consultation with parents and, where appropriate, the student. It will identify the student's strengths, areas of need, agreed adjustments, interventions, support strategies and intended outcomes.

7.8.2 The SENCo will review provision regularly and consider:

- (a) the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the student's progress, wellbeing and access to learning;
- (b) the views of teaching staff, parents and, where appropriate, the student; and
- (c) any changes required to support, provision or intended outcomes.

7.8.3 Provision will be reviewed through the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

8 Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans

8.1 Where a prospective student has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, the School will consult with parents and, where appropriate, the relevant local authority to determine whether the provision specified in the EHC Plan can reasonably be delivered by the School. Reasonable adjustments will be considered throughout the admissions and transition process.

Where the School is named in Section I of an EHC Plan and the local authority is responsible for funding the placement, any additional provision specified within the Plan will normally be funded by the local authority. In other circumstances, the cost of additional provision may be charged directly to parents unless it constitutes a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010, for which no charge will be made.

8.2 In accordance with current JCQ regulations, where the School or an awarding body has a duty to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled candidate, no additional charge will be made in relation to that adjustment or associated aid.

9 Additional Welfare Needs

9.1.1 The School recognises that students with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying, social isolation and other barriers to wellbeing. The School is committed to promoting an

inclusive environment in which all students feel safe, valued and able to participate fully in school life.

9.1.2 Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will be addressed in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

9.1.3 If parents have concerns regarding their child's welfare, wellbeing or safety, they are encouraged to contact the student's Form Tutor, Head of Year, SENCo or another appropriate member of staff at the earliest opportunity

9.2 The School recognises that students with SEND can face additional barriers to communication and may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or bullying.

When considering safeguarding concerns relating to students with SEND, staff will be mindful that:

- indicators of possible abuse, neglect or safeguarding concerns may be mistaken for, or attributed to, a student's SEND without appropriate investigation;
- students with SEND may be disproportionately affected by bullying, prejudice-based incidents or peer-on-peer abuse;
- communication differences may make it more difficult for some students to recognise, report or describe concerns; and
- students with SEND may require additional support in understanding and accessing safeguarding processes and support systems.

9.2.1 All safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

9.3 Disability

9.3.1 The School recognises that some students with SEND may also be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. Students and parents are referred to the School's Disability Policy for further information.

9.3.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, to reduce barriers to learning, participation and assessment for disabled students.

9.3.3. The School aims to support disabled students fully within the context of its educational provision and available resources. Where, despite reasonable adjustments, consultation with parents and the involvement of appropriate professionals, the School concludes that it is unable to meet a student's needs adequately, the procedures set out in Section 10 will apply

10 **Alternative arrangements**

10.1 The School aims to support students with SEND through reasonable adjustments, appropriate interventions and partnership with parents and external professionals. However, there may be exceptional circumstances in which, despite careful planning, consultation and the implementation of reasonable adjustments, the School concludes that it is unable to meet a student's needs adequately within its mainstream, academically selective environment.

10.2 In such circumstances, and following consultation with parents and, where appropriate, external professionals, the School reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student where:

- parents do not consent to assessments, recommendations or support arrangements considered necessary for the School to understand and meet the student's needs appropriately;
- the student's needs require a level or type of provision, support or specialist intervention that the School is unable to provide reasonably or sustainably; or
- despite appropriate support and reasonable adjustments, the School is unable to meet the student's educational, welfare or pastoral needs effectively within its mainstream educational setting.

Any such decision will be made only after careful consideration of the student's best interests, available evidence and the School's ability to provide appropriate support.

In these circumstances, the School will work with parents and, where appropriate, external professionals to assist in identifying an alternative educational setting that is better placed to meet the student's needs.

10.3 Withdrawal of a student in these circumstances will not incur a charge in lieu of notice. Any deposit held by the School will be credited to the parents' account in accordance with the School's terms and conditions.

11 Record keeping

All records created and maintained in accordance with this policy will be stored, retained, shared and securely disposed of in accordance with the School's Data Protection, Privacy and Records Retention policies

12 Version control

Approved by: Governors	August 2020
Updated by LG/CL/LS	September 2026
Date for next Review: SLT	September 2027

Appendix 1 : Adaptable Template

Report to Parents: Screening Indicates a Possible Area of Need

Dear Parents

[Year] Screening Assessment

As part of the School's routine screening programme, all students in this year group recently completed a series of screening assessments.

The results suggest that [student name] may be experiencing some difficulties in the area of [please specify] and may benefit from further monitoring, support or assessment.

The assessments used by the School are screening tools rather than diagnostic assessments. Their purpose is to identify potential barriers to learning and highlight areas that may require further investigation. They do not provide a formal diagnosis and should be considered alongside other information, including teacher observations, academic progress and pastoral information.

I enclose a copy of the School's SEND Policy for your information.

At this stage, I recommend the following:

☐ Participation in learning support sessions or targeted intervention, after which progress will be reviewed and next steps considered.

OR

☐ Further assessment by an appropriately qualified specialist, such as an Educational Psychologist, to gain a fuller understanding of [student name]'s learning profile and support needs.

OR

☐ Other ..

The School will continue to monitor [student name]'s progress and work in partnership with you to ensure that any support provided is appropriate and effective.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss the findings or the options available in more detail. I would be grateful if you could let me know how you wish to proceed at your earliest convenience

Mrs Lucy Smart

SENCo
Level 7 specialist assessor (CPT3A)
Exam Access Arrangements Co-ordinator