

SEND and Access Arrangements Policy

1. Overview

Ashbourne is an academically selective independent college whose students benefit from the small class sizes, socratic teaching methods and positive and friendly learning environment. The College is not a specialist centre for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), however, it does offer a high level of individual attention, support and flexibility, both academically and pastorally.

Applications to join Ashbourne are treated equally given the applicant can satisfy the College's selection requirements, which include being able to meet the academic and behavioural standards of the College.

Ashbourne is committed to integrating all students fully into the life of the College, with due regard to individual needs as assessed in consultation with students, parents, teachers and external agencies. If a student presents a special educational need or disability, which is corroborated by the College or by an approved external specialist, Ashbourne will endeavour to make special educational provision and 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate their needs whilst at the College.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- highlight relevant legislation
- identify relevant staff responsible for the learning support of SEND students
- detail the procedures and requirements for needs assessments and access arrangements
- outline what constitutes 'reasonable adjustment' under the *Equality Act 2010* and Ashbourne's commitments in this regard.

3. Legislation

This policy is underpinned by the *Children and Families Act 2014* of which Part 3 is the *SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2014 (SEND Code 2015)*.

Ashbourne adheres to the definition in the *Introduction to the SEND (2014) Code of Practice* with regard to provision, which states that a child 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 facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Ashbourne is committed to fulfilling its duties in compliance with the *Equality Act 2010*, and as such will make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with SEND.

4. SEND team

Ashbourne's SEND team comprises the following members of staff:

Fran Burns – *Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*. All SEND students are automatically entered onto the College's safeguarding database, as part of Ashbourne's commitment to safeguarding. Fran therefore collaborates with the SEND team to help support these students, including ensuring that students with an education care and health plan (ECHP) are adequately supported.

Lee Kirby – *SEND Co*. Lee is responsible for coordinating provision for SEND students in collaboration with all members of the SEND and Safeguarding teams.

Simone Shaw – *SEND Advisor and Assessor*. Simone is a dyslexia tutor and specialist assessor qualified to carry out the Access Arrangements tests for examination concessions. Simone is responsible for ensuring all Form 8s, required for Access Arrangements, are processed for SEND applications.

Simone supports students who require curriculum modification due to their specific needs and gives students with dyslexia tailored one-to-one support with their work.

These sessions are designed to meet student's specific individual requirements and any recommendations made in their Educational Psychologist's reports (such as study

and revision skills, organisational and time management, working memory etc.).

Supporting staff

Members of the SEND team meet with teachers on a regular basis in order to offer advice and support in relation to SEND students and regarding any access arrangements required. The SEND Advisor and Assessor uses these opportunities to introduce new staff to methods for the identification of SEND students and how to meet their individual requirements in the classroom and during online lessons. These meetings also provide the opportunity for staff to discuss their concerns about individual students and strategies to support them.

5. Procedures and requirements

5.1 Admissions arrangements

Students with SEND have an equal opportunity to join Ashbourne if they satisfy the College's selection requirements which include meeting academic and behavioural standards. Please read the [Student Behaviour and Exclusions Policy](#) and the [Admissions Policy](#) for further details. If examination concessions are required for the entrance assessments (e.g. use of a laptop or extra time), evidence should be submitted to the Admissions department prior to the test date. This documentation will be considered by the SEND team who will make the necessary recommendations.

5.1.2. Failure to disclose a pre-existing SEND

Before a place is offered at the College parents of a candidate with any known or suspected circumstances relating to a disability, long-term medical condition or special educational need and/or an educational health and care plan (EHCP) must provide full written details as part of the application process. Should parents or students fail to disclose any relevant information prior to acceptance, the College may be unable to meet the needs of the student and, in some circumstances, this may result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.

Where a student's SEND is identified or develops after beginning at Ashbourne, the College will continue to support the student under the following conditions:

- The College possesses the appropriate resources and facilities to provide the support required; and
- It is in the best interests of the student and the College community for the student to remain at Ashbourne.

Where either of these conditions cannot be met the College reserves the right to withdraw any place that has been awarded.

Applications to the College by students with an EHCP will only be considered if:

- the EHCP is fully up to date
- the EHCP is accompanied by all relevant supporting (section K) documentation

- the EHCP includes references from previous schools, where applicable
- the set provisions within the EHCP have been agreed by the College in consultation with
- the Local Authority, with respect to 'reasonable adjustments'
- the EHCP properly discloses any notes relating to child protection and safeguarding issues.

5.1.3 Students with an educational health and care plan (EHCP)

Where a student, who has been accepted at Ashbourne having fulfilled all the admissions requirements, has an existing EHCP with supporting documentation, the College will make all 'reasonable adjustments' (refer to 6. below) to support their needs as outlined in their plan.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with the SEND team, is responsible for ensuring EHCP student's needs are met by:

- working with all relevant parties – student, parents, teachers, staff and external agencies – to monitor, appraise and review the provision as outlined in the plan;
- ensuring relevant staff understand how to meet the student's needs and are offered training and practical support to do so;
- carrying out an annual review, with input from all relevant parties, if there are any concerns about the

student's progress or if their needs have changed substantially;

- close and effective liaison with all relevant parties involved.

5.2 Students with pre-existing access arrangements

Any students accepted at Ashbourne who were provided with access arrangements in their previous place of learning will be given a review assessment at the start of their first term at the College; this is a Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) requirement for students transferring onto an A-level programme and/or different place of learning. The review assessment will typically consist of a visual processing test (SDMT) and the DASH handwriting assessment, as outlined below. Relevant applications are processed subject to requirement. If a student does not meet the JCQ threshold, further assessments may be carried out to ascertain if there is an ongoing need. Given that JCQ threshold guidelines can vary from one year to the next, students who have previously received access arrangements at their former school should not expect that these will automatically be granted when they transfer to Ashbourne.

5.3 Students without pre-existing access arrangements

It is not the College's policy to screen and assess each student for specific learning difficulties. To be eligible for a screening test students must be referred by their teacher to the SEND team who will then initiate the

process of assessment.

Prior to October half-term, teachers will be asked for feedback about any students who may have SEND. If necessary the SEND team will invite relevant students for an initial screening which will typically involve a programme called EXACT (a JCQ recognised assessment tool). Further assessment may follow subject to initial results. Where results yield standardised scores of 84 or less in areas of processing, (e.g. reading speed, visual processing, cognitive function etc.) an application for examination concessions can be made.

For more complex access arrangements such as 50% extra time, further testing would be required and appropriate scores (69 or less) would need to be recorded. Ideally, this would be done by an educational psychologist who would carry out a full diagnostic assessment. However, the SEND Advisor and Assessor could carry out this assessment if required. In the case of students with conditions such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) alternative access arrangements may be given (e.g. rest breaks).

All access arrangements are reviewed on an individual basis with consideration to the needs of the student and the needs of the wider student body.

The SEND team will assess a student for access arrangements only. The specialist assessor does not offer

a full diagnostic assessment; this should be done by an educational psychologist. In addition, students who require testing for dyscalculia will need to be assessed externally (e.g. with an educational psychologist).

Any students who have not received prior access arrangements but do have an educational report detailing a need will meet with the SEND Assessor for further testing. This will typically involve two tests in processing, and a handwriting test if Word Processing is required.

5.4 Testing process for SEND

Ashbourne follows statutory timescales for assessments. Provision for remote assessment is available via online programmes.

5.4.1 Tests

No prior access arrangements

- EXACT – online program to test reading speed, writing speed, typing speed plus single word reading and reading comprehension. This test takes approximately 40 minutes. EXACT can be accessed remotely, which means that students who are learning remotely and/or cannot attend the small group assessments that take place from mid September on, will be able to be assessed for access arrangements during this period.

Existing prior access arrangements

- Symbol Digit Modality Test (SDMT) – Visual processing;
- Rapid Naming subtest of Comprehensive Test of Phonological ProcessingII (CTOPPII) – Cognitive processing;
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH) assessment (10 minute assessment, usually followed up with a typing test of similar length).

Further assessments

- Wechsler Individual Achievement TestIII (WIATIII) – tests of attainment.
- Test of Memory and Learning2 (TOMAL2) – assessment for memory.
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Test2 (ADHDT2) for attention deficit and impulsivity.

5.5 Access arrangements for exams

Ashbourne facilitates a number of different access arrangements for examinations for SEND students, which include:

- Extra time
- Laptop use
- Special seating arrangement within the exam hall.

Ashbourne's criteria for extra time are in line with the JCQ guidelines and are subject to regular review by the SEND team.

Ashbourne does not have the resources to offer separate invigilation for any examinations nor does the College have provision to offer scribes. Those students who have previously required a reader will be issued with a specialised reader pen and headphones to allow them to complete their examination in the same room as other candidates.

6. 'Reasonable adjustment' under the *Equality Act 2010*

Ashbourne will endeavour to make any 'reasonable adjustment' for the provision of education to any SEND students accepted at the College to enable them to perform to the best of their academic potential within the learning environment. In accordance with guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission relating to 'reasonable adjustment', the College considers the following factors when assessing provision:

- The extent to which special educational provision complies with Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The resources of the College and the availability of financial or other assistance.
- The financial and other costs of making any relevant adjustments.
- The extent to which taking any particular step would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage experienced by the student.
- The practicability of any adjustments.

- The effect of SEND on the individual.
- Health and safety requirements.
- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards.
- The interests of other students and prospective students.

Ashbourne will assess each application for 'reasonable adjustment' on a case-by-case basis.

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