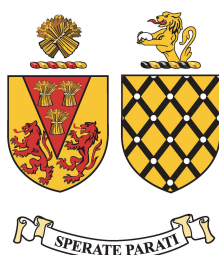


Watford Grammar School for Girls



Special educational needs (SEN) information report

Reviewed	February 2024
This version adopted by the Board of Trustees on:	25 th March 2024
Next review:	March 2025
Committee responsible:	Curriculum

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Dear parents and carers,

The aim of this information report is to explain how we implement our SEND policy. In other words, we want to show you how SEND support works at Watford Grammar School for Girls.

If you want to know more about our arrangements for SEND, please read our SEND policy which can be found on our website or by using the following link: [SEND Policy](#)

Note: If there are any terms we've used in this information report that you're unsure of, you can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the report.

1. What kinds of SEN are provided for at our school?

Our school provides for students with the following needs:

AREA OF NEED	CONDITION
Communication and interaction	Autism spectrum disorder
	Speech, language and communication needs
Cognition and learning	Specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
	Moderate learning difficulties
Social, emotional and mental health	Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD)
	Attention deficit disorder (ADD)
	Anxiety disorders
	Mental health needs
Sensory and/or physical	Hearing impairments (HI)
	Visual impairment (VI)
	Physical and neurological impairment (PNI)

2. Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had?

Our special educational needs and disabilities co-ordinator, or SENDCO

Our SENDCO is Mrs Sara Robinson who has held the National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (NASENCo) since 2016 and has been a qualified teacher since 1994. The SENDCO attends relevant courses and conferences both locally and nationally to keep up to date with current information relating to SEND.

Subject teachers

All of our teachers receive SEN training through the school's ongoing programme of Continuing Professional Development and are supported by the SENDCO to meet the needs of students who have SEND.

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

We have a team of 3.5 LSAs, including one higher-level teaching assistant (HLTA), who receive regular training in the delivery of SEND provision.

3. How do we identify students with SEND and assess their needs?

Close liaison takes place with primary schools prior to secondary transfer to gather relevant information. Relevant information is requested for in year and sixth form admission. Students already identified with SEND at their previous school will continue on the SEND register to facilitate a smooth transition to Watford Girls.

Year 6 students and their families are invited to meet with a member of staff during the Summer term before commencing school in September, enabling parents/carers and students to pass on pertinent information. The SENDCO is also available to meet with prospective Year 6 parents/carers if your child is currently on SEN Support or has an EHC plan.

All students' reading and spelling abilities are tested in Year 7 and Year 9. If appropriate, more detailed individual assessments are carried out during the course of the year to help identify areas of need.

Subject teachers carry out regular progress assessments for all students and will identify those whose progress:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match their previous rates of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the individual and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social needs.

Liaison takes place with the Heads of Year and Directors of Key Stage to monitor and discuss students with concerns.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND.

If parents or students are concerned about an aspect of learning they can contact the SENDCO, Mrs S Robinson, via send@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will consider expected progress and attainment as well as the views and the wishes of the student and their parents/carers. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

4. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?

We will provide annual reports on your child's progress.

The SENDCO will work in partnership with families and you will have the opportunity to meet with a member of the Learning Support Department regularly throughout the year to:

- Set clear outcomes for your child's progress
- Review progress towards those outcomes
- Discuss the support we will put in place to help your child make progress

You are able to contact/meet with the SENDCO throughout the academic year, including parents' consultation evenings.

If your child has an EHC plan you will be invited to attend an Annual Review meeting each year to discuss your child's progress towards the outcomes outlined in section E of their plan.

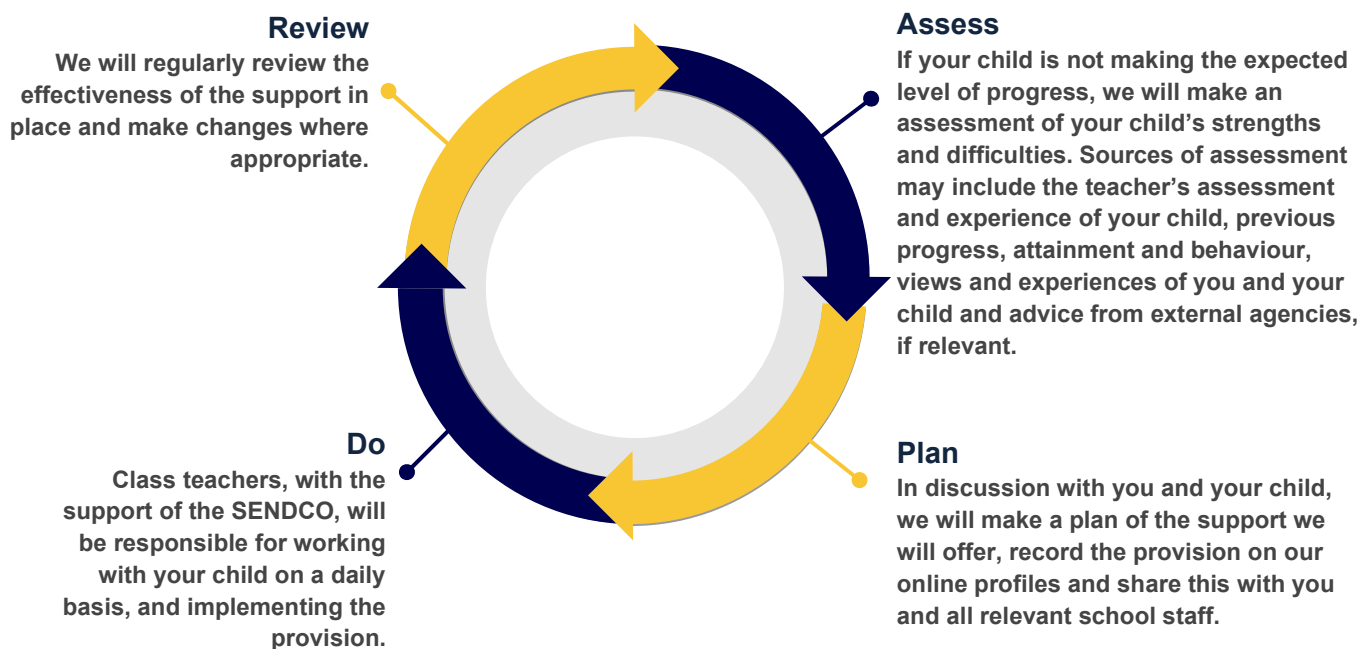
5. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?

We value student views and recognise that no two children are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input, the level of involvement of your child. We may seek your child's views by inviting them to:

- Attend meetings to discuss their progress and outcomes
- Discuss their views with a trusted member of staff
- Complete a survey

6. How will the school assess and review my child's progress?

We will follow the 'graduated approach' to meeting your child's SEN needs. The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.



This process will be continual. If the review shows that your child has made progress, they may no longer need the additional provision made through SEN support. For others, the cycle will continue and targets, strategies and provisions will be revisited and refined.

7. What is our approach to teaching students identified with SEND?

A three-tiered approach in supporting students to overcome barriers to learning is used:

Tier 1: Universal Support - Quality First Teaching

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class. High quality teaching, where adaptations and adjustments are made to meet the needs of the students, is the first stage in responding to individuals who are identified as having or may have SEND.

Tier 2: Targeted Support

Some students require additional interventions and/or provision to support them in working at expected levels. Interventions/provisions are time-tabled according to the need of individual students and may include:

- in-class support
- reading programme
- online literacy programme
- assistive technology
- weekly check-ins
- communication/social skills
- revision techniques and study skills
- organisation and planning skills
- homework support

Tier 3: Specialist Support

A small number of students may have significant needs which require a more personalised support programme to enable them to make progress. This could include the above interventions/provisions as well as:

- an adapted curriculum pathway in the appropriate Key Stage
- one to one/small group support sessions
- alternative provision
- support from external agencies

8. How will we adapt our curriculum and learning environment to support students identified with SEN?

Subject teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class. High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs.

Teaching is adapted to suit the way each student works best. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child.

These adaptations include:

- Adjusting our curriculum to make sure all students are able to access it, for example, by grouping, one to one work, content of the lesson, offering alternative qualifications such as Entry Level and Level 1 courses and use of alternative provision
- Adapting our teaching, for example, using explicit instruction, giving longer processing times, breaking down instructions into smaller chunks, providing visual support to aid verbal instructions and reading instructions aloud
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, assistive technology, sensory aids and task planners

We may also provide additional support for learning, based on the needs of the students. Provision may include:

AREA OF NEED	HOW WE SUPPORT THESE STUDENTS
Communication and interaction	Visual timetables Social stories Comic strip conversations Safe space Time out yellow card One to one or small group support sessions Sensory equipment IT provision Homework support Sixth form support Referrals to and support from external agencies, as appropriate Mentoring Outreach Counselling Alternative provision such as AQA Unit Award Scheme Exam Access Arrangements
Cognition and learning	One to one or small group support sessions In-class support That Reading Thing (one to one phonics-based reading intervention)

	Reciprocal reading Spellzone IT provision Homework support Sixth form support Referrals to and support from external agencies, as appropriate Mentoring Outreach Counselling Alternative provision such as AQA Unit Award Scheme Exam Access Arrangements
Social, emotional and mental health	In-class support Time out yellow card Safe space/Calm space Mentoring Outreach Counselling Referrals to and support from external agencies, as appropriate
Sensory and/or physical	Seating arrangements One to one or small group support sessions In-class support Referrals to and support from external agencies Specialist equipment Timetabling considerations eg classrooms on ground floor where possible IT provision Exam Access Arrangements

These interventions and provisions are part of our contribution to Hertfordshire County Council's local offer.

9. How are specialist services and expertise secured?

We aim to build strong working relationships and links with external services and when required we will make the necessary referrals and work collaboratively with external support services to meet the needs of our students with SEND. The SENDCO is the designated person responsible for liaising with a wide range of services including:

- Hertfordshire's Integrated Services to Learning (ISL) Advice Lines
- Hertfordshire's Integrated Services to Learning (ISL) Advisory teams - The Educational Psychology Service, Physical and Sensory Impairment Team, Speech, Language, Communication & Autism Team, Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA)
- Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL9)
- Chessbrook Education Support Centre
- Children and Young People's Therapy Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Services for Young People, Hertfordshire County Council

We will do our utmost to secure specialist equipment, including auxiliary aids, for individual students as required. Such equipment is usually recommended by external professionals and specialists.

10. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?

We will evaluate the effectiveness of provision for your child by:

- Monitoring of students' individual progress using the whole school data reporting system
- Reviewing their progress towards their targets
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Using pupil surveys
- Conducting SEND snapshots
- Regular liaison with Heads of Year and Directors of Key Stage
- Assess, Plan, Do and Review meetings/communication with parents/carers and students
- Holding annual reviews for students with EHC plans
- Department Evaluation Form (DEF) completed annually
- Termly meetings between the SENDCO and SEND Trustee

11. How will school resources be secured for my child?

Funding (the Notional SEND budget) is used towards employing staff such as Learning Support Assistants, providing equipment, training for staff or relevant resources to support students identified with SEND.

Applications for Local High Needs Funding (LHNF), an additional funding stream, can be made for time-limited intervention and provision which goes beyond high quality teaching and reasonable adjustments where we are unable to meet need through the notional SEND budget.

Top up High Needs Funding (HNF) is allocated to students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); the funding is designed to enable the delivery of Section F within an EHCP. The needs outlined within the plan determine the level of top-up funding.

12. How will the school make sure my child is included in activities alongside pupils who don't have SEND?

All of our extended-curricular activities and school visits are available to all students and they are actively encouraged to participate. All students are encouraged to go on our school trips, including our residential trips. All students are encouraged to take part in a wide variety of activities including sports day, school productions and concerts, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and workshops.

No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability. We will work collaboratively with parents/carers to make reasonable adjustments, carry out risk assessments, liaise with external providers and deploy additional staff as appropriate.

13. How accessible is the school environment?

The Accessibility Plan can be found on the school website or by using the following link: [Accessibility Plan](#). It is updated every three years and contains actions to improve access to the physical environment, the curriculum and availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Where possible, reasonable adjustments have been made to include disabled toilets, ramps and lifts. Substantial changes have been made to improve access by moving the main entrance and installing new access ramps & automatic doors. The school has a new Maths and IT building (Hyde House 2011) which has ten classrooms, and a new Sixth Form block (The Tennyson Centre) which includes a lecture theatre, classroom, café, study areas and changing rooms. Both buildings are fully accessible. A further bridge with integrated lift was built in 2020 to allow wheelchair access between the North and South site. With over 1400 pupils, the school grounds are spread across an extensive site with each department situated in a different area of the school. The age and nature of the buildings and site do limit access to some areas.

14. How will the school support my child's mental health and emotional and social development?

We provide support for students to progress in their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- All students have an assigned Form Tutor and Head of Year, led by a Director of Key Stage who together support students' social and emotional well-being. All students participate in a weekly Personal and Citizenship Education (PACE) lesson which covers all aspects of personal, social and health education
- Students with SEND are encouraged to take a full and active role within the wider life of the school such as putting themselves forward as Form representatives, raising money for charity or participating in assemblies
- Students with SEND are also encouraged to make use of the Hive during unstructured times such as lunchtimes. The Hive offers a quiet, supportive and safe space for students to emotionally regulate and build friendships in a nurturing environment
- The Learning Support Department has a trained ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) who can provide one to one and small group support to develop emotional and social skills
- Students with SEND can access peer mentoring and/or adult mentoring as necessary
- Students have access to medical intervention from the school Welfare Officer. Access to the Hertfordshire County Council School Nurse Service is provided where appropriate

We provide additional pastoral support for listening to the views of students with SEN through:

- regular one to one check-ins as required
- student surveys
- the Annual Review process for students with an EHCP
- regular Assess, Plan, Do and Review meetings where student views are recorded on their Passport to Learning and shared with staff

We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying. We prevent bullying in the school by raising awareness amongst students of how to identify and challenge bullying through:

- school and year group assemblies
- materials used in PACE and Forum
- externally provided workshops i.e. Stand up in Year 8
- annual awareness campaigns
- the School Council
- information to parents/carers and students
- the school website

15. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings, or in preparing for adulthood?

Support is provided for pupils at each transitional stage as follows:

Secondary Transfer

To ensure close liaison with the primary schools, members of staff visit as many of the relevant schools as possible to gather information. Where it is known that a student has been identified with SEND, a member of the Learning Support team will communicate directly with the primary SENDCO to collate more detailed information. The SENDCO is available to attend the Year 6 Annual Review meeting for any student with an EHC plan. From the information gathered, Passports to Learning are generated which outline the strengths, needs and strategies for support. Upon arrival to secondary school these are completed in more detail and the information disseminated to all teachers. All Year 6 students are invited to a Transition Day, in the summer term, to provide opportunities to meet key members of staff and their peers as well as to familiarise themselves with their new environment. Additional transition visits are arranged for individual students where this is considered beneficial.

Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 Transition

Preparation for GCSE option choices takes place with Form Tutors and Heads of Year during PACE lessons and assemblies. Students attend an Options Fair and advice is also available from subject teachers and Heads of Department during lessons and at a GCSE Options Evening. Students' selections are carefully monitored to ensure that choices are appropriate. In a small number of cases, where a full GCSE complement is not suitable an alternative curriculum pathway may be offered. All Year 9 students with an EHC plan will have a face-to-face guidance interview with a Personal Advisor from Services to Young People to encourage them to consider their future plans and support them in making realistic option choices in line with their strengths and future plans.

Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5 Transition

Preparation for Key Stage 5 takes place with Form Tutors and Heads of Year during PACE lessons and assemblies. Students are advised on all possible post-16 options, and are encouraged to attend College and Sixth Form Open Evenings to ensure they are fully informed of the differing courses available to them. Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening takes place in the Autumn term. All Year 11 students with an EHC plan will have a face-to-face guidance interview with a Personal Advisor from Services to Young People where they may discuss their aspirations, progress in education and post-16 options. The Annual Review meeting for Year 11 students with an EHC plan will take place in the Autumn term to support the decision-making process. Where an external student joining the school in Year 12 is known to have SEND, information will be sought from parents/carers, the student themselves and their previous secondary school including information pertaining to Access Arrangements. Where a current student with SEND is moving on to a new school or college, when requested, we will provide relevant information including that pertaining to Access Arrangements.

Sixth Form Leavers

All Sixth Form students benefit from extensive support and advice from the Sixth Form team, Careers Fair, Careers Advisor and visiting speakers. As students identified with SEND move to employment and Higher Education, we will provide relevant information to their next placement as requested.

16. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEN?

The designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children is Miss Tai who can be contacted on head@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk. Miss Tai works with Mrs Robinson, SENDCO, to make sure that all teachers understand how a looked-after or previously looked-after student's circumstances and their SEN might interact, and what the implications are for teaching and learning. Children who are looked-after or previously looked-after will be supported in much the same way as any other child who has SEND. However, looked-after students will also have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEN support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

17. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?

If you are concerned about SEN provision for your child, in the first instance, contact the SENDCO or pastoral leaders such as your child's Form Tutor, Head of Year or Director of Key Stage. If no resolution can be reached and you wish to pursue a complaint, you should refer to the school's complaints procedure which can be accessed via the following link: [Complaints Procedure](#).

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the student themselves. To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

If you feel that our school discriminated against your child because of their SEND, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disability-discrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

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

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal.

[The KIDS SEND Disagreement Resolution Service](#) is free of charge for parents, carers and young people. You can refer yourself by telephone, or email:

KIDS SEND Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Service

TEL: 0207 359 3635

Email: mediationlondon@kids.org.uk

If your child has an EHCP and you have concerns relating to your child's special educational needs beyond the scope of the school or you have concerns about statutory assessments of special educational needs, these should be raised directly with the

Hertfordshire SEND Team. Details of how to contact the Statutory SEND Team can be found via the following link: [Hertfordshire's Local Offer, How to contact the Statutory SEND Team](#)

18. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEND, please get in touch using the email address: send@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk

The Local Authority's Offer lets parents and young people know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in Hertfordshire, and who can access them. Hertfordshire County Council's local offer can be found via the following link: [Hertfordshire Local Offer](#)

If you would like to seek impartial advice outside of the school environment you can contact services such as:

- Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). Further information can be found via the following link: [Hertfordshire SENDIASS](#)
- Delivering Special Provision Locally Area 9 (DSPL9). Further information can be found via the following link: [DSPL9](#)

19. Glossary

- **Access arrangements** – special arrangements to allow pupils with SEND to access assessments or exams
- **Adaptive teaching** – adjusting teaching to better match pupil need whilst maintaining high expectations
- **Alternative provision** – education that a student receives away from their school, arranged by local authority or by the school themselves
- **Annual review** – an annual meeting to review the provision in a pupil's EHC plan
- **Area of need** – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a pupil with SEND can have. The 4 areas are communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- **EHC needs assessment** – the needs assessment is the first step on the way to securing an EHC plan. The local authority will do an assessment to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan.
- **EHC plan** – an education, health and care plan is a legally-binding document that sets out a child's needs and the provision that will be put in place to meet their needs.
- **First-tier tribunal/SEND tribunal** – a court where you can appeal against the local authority's decisions about EHC needs assessments or plans and against discrimination by a school or local authority due to SEND
- **Graduated approach** – an approach to providing SEN support in which the school provides support in successive cycles of assessing the pupil's needs, planning the provision, implementing the plan, and reviewing the impact of the action on the pupil
- **High-quality teaching** – teaching which ensures that planning and implementation meets the needs of all students, and builds in high expectations for all students
- **Intervention** – a short-term, targeted approach to teaching a pupil with a specific outcome in mind
- **Local offer** – information provided by the local authority which explains what services and support are on offer for pupils with SEN in the local area
- **Outcome** – target for improvement for pupils with SEND. These targets don't necessarily have to be related to academic attainment
- **Provision** – support that is different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age
- **Reasonable adjustments** – changes that the school must make to remove or reduce any disadvantages caused by a child's disability
- **SENDCO** – the special educational needs and disabilities co-ordinator
- **SEN** – special educational needs

- **SEND** – special educational needs and disabilities
- **SEND Code of Practice** – the statutory guidance that schools must follow to support children with SEND
- **SEN information report** – a report that schools must publish on their website, that explains how the school supports pupils with SEN
- **SEN support** – special educational provision which meets the needs of pupils with SEN
- **Transition** – when a pupil moves between years, phases, schools or institutions or life stages