

Whitecross Hereford
High School and Sports College

Special Educational Needs Information Report
Updated April 2017

Introduction

At Whitecross we strive to support all students to achieve their potential. For those students who may have a Special Educational Need or Disability, additional support will be put into place as needed to help them achieve their targets.

At Whitecross, a student is deemed to have a Special Educational Need or Disability if:-

- They have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers.
- They have a disability as defined under the equality act which affects their ability to access the same educational opportunities as experienced by their peers.

This Special Educational Need or Disability can then be broadly split into the following 4 areas:-

- **Communication and interaction.** Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder and Asperger's Syndrome;
- **Cognition and Learning;** Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) like dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia;
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties;** may reflect underlying mental health difficulties, Attention Deficit Disorder, ADHD, attachment disorder;
- **Sensory and/or physical needs** disability, visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI).

Quality First Teaching

All students at Whitecross receive Quality First Teaching and this is our priority. Teachers teach well planned lessons where students' individual needs are taken into account. Teachers prepare learning programs and lessons which support the learning and progress of all students through creative and innovative teaching techniques. Teachers are well supported in lessons where appropriate by a team of Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

To aid staff in quality first teaching, they are well supported through a program of Continued Professional Development. Staff have regular training where they can further develop in many of the key aspects of Quality First Teaching including differentiating for those students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Identifying SEND

Students may be identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability through a variety of methods:

Transitional Information

Students will automatically be placed onto the SEND register and therefore receive extra support where there is an explicitly diagnosed condition from Primary school. Whitecross prides itself on its work in making the transition from Primary school to Secondary as seamless as possible. We visit Primary schools as early as possible, to meet any students with SEND and provide extra transition where necessary.

Testing Information

All Year 7 students complete a series of tests when they first arrive at Whitecross. These tests typically consist of Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT's) and a series of Special Educational Needs Tests such as reading comprehension and Spelling Accuracy. These tests allow us to identify students with a potential Special Education Need and therefore put into place appropriate support for them. The SEN testing is then completed again during Year 9 to help us identify students who may need Access Arrangements in place to help support them through their examinations. (Please see the section on Access Arrangements below).

Specialist SEN Assessor

Where we have identified a student has a potential Special Education Need, we may ask our Specialist External SEND Assessor to complete a full assessment. This will give us extensive information as to the students Special Educational Need and how best we can support them. This may also lead to further interventions from outside agencies (please see the section below on outside agencies).

Tracking and Monitoring

Students who have been identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability have their learning carefully tracked and monitored throughout their time at Whitecross. This will be completed by a variety of staff, who have the best interests of the student at heart. This may include the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo), the Assistant Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (Assistant SENCo) or Academy based staff (Form tutor, Learning Manager). Further individual support may be used with Learning Coaches or High Level Teaching Assistants.

We can carefully monitor the progress of any students with SEND through a variety of ways. Students and their parents or guardians receive an Interim Report four times a year. This gives us a valuable insight into how the student is progressing across the whole range of subjects they study. Leading on from this, the SENCo will carefully analyse the achievement and progress of students with SEND through a specific SEND Tracking spreadsheet. This allows the learning support team to put any interventions in place that may be necessary to support the student to make progress in line with their targets.

Supporting students with SEND

Where a student is identified with a SEND, a variety of support and intervention is available. These interventions will be measured to ensure they are having a positive impact upon the students' progress.

Some examples of intervention may include:-

- Extra Numeracy Classes;
- Extra Literacy Classes;
- 1 to 1 reading support;
- Communication and Interaction groups to develop social interaction and speech and language skills;
- Academic mentoring via the SENCo or Assistant SENCo to help support them in their education;
- Peer mentoring by another student from their own form group.

Alongside this, all students with an identified Special Educational Need or Disability will also have a Pen Portrait completed. This is completed in conjunction with the student and the student can contribute to ideas of how to best support them in the classroom. These portraits are then distributed to relevant teachers and teaching assistants with extensive information on the students' needs and the best methods of supporting them.

Outside Agencies

There may be situations whereby the school needs to involve outside agencies to help the student to reach their potential. Listed below are some of the external professionals we may involve:-

- Physiotherapists;
- Occupational Therapists;
- Speech and Language Therapists;
- External support agencies such as Strong Young Minds and Venture;
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS);
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

This is not an exhaustive list, but the professionals listed above can play a key role in supporting the work we do in school to ensure the student makes exceptional progress.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are put in place for those students who need extra support and help to complete their examinations. Access arrangements came into existence following the Equality Act of 2009. They ensure that examinations are a level playing field for all students, irrespective of any Special Educational Need or Disability.

All students are tested at the end of Year 9 to identify any who need further investigations. These students are then fully tested for access arrangements. For students to receive Access Arrangements, we must have evidence that it is their normal way of working. For example, does the student require extra time to complete work in every day lessons? This evidence is obtained through teacher statements and sits alongside other evidence that the student requires extra support, such as a pen portrait.

Access arrangements could include:-

- Extra time;
- A scribe;
- A reader;
- A prompt;
- Supervised rest breaks;
- A separate room.

Where there is a recent medical condition that may inhibit a student from completing their exams, a letter from a medical professional may be required to be submitted to the exam board.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parents and guardians of students with a Special Educational Need or Disability are expected to fully engage with the school in supporting their child to make exceptional progress during their time at Whitecross. The SEND team will use a variety of methods to keep in regular contact:-

- Emails;
- Telephone;
- Parents evenings;
- Parent Forum;
- Personal appointments.

Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the SEND team should you wish to discuss any of this information further or if you have a specific enquiry regarding your child.

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Alternatively, further information on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be found on the Herefordshire County Website under the Local Offer:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200228/local_offer