

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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Preface

Guildhouse School London is an independent international school in central London. The school offers a range of programmes, primarily in the sixth form years (A Level and the University Foundation Programme). There are also students on a pre-A Level course as well as students on a high school term experience. The transient nature of the school means that the average length of time a student is with us is less than one year.

The school recognises that our students are often vulnerable young people, away from home for the first time, learning in a language which is not their first.

Students come from diverse cultures and backgrounds and bring with them an enormously wide set of experiences, values and beliefs.

The school recognises that it has a duty of care in regard to the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice (2014), the Children and Families Act 2014, SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2015 (SEND Code 2015) and guidance issued by the Secretary of State meaning that it must:

- Co-operate as required with the local authority on arrangements for children and young people with SEND.
- Endeavour to secure the provision that any students with SEND requires, whether or not the student has an EHC plan.
- The school must not discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children or young people and must make reasonable adjustments to prevent them being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what young people with special educational needs might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.

Introduction

At Guildhouse School, we are dedicated to cultivating an accessible, stimulating, safe and inclusive learning environment, ensuring that no student is subject to discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, gender, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, family status, or any other protected characteristic. Our aim is to ensure that every student has equitable access to the curriculum and therefore the opportunity to fulfil their potential whether their ambition is to attend university or start employment, as well as being prepared for adult life.

We recognise that students bring a wide range of experiences, beliefs, concepts, and values to their learning and that individuals learn at different rates and with varying levels of ease or difficulty. Barriers to learning may arise from a range of permanent or temporary factors, including language differences, limited prior educational experiences, ill-health, bereavement, low self-esteem or confidence, or underlying neurodevelopmental conditions.

Each student has a unique profile of strengths and challenges, whether or not they have a formally recognised condition. It is our responsibility to accommodate individual learning preferences and make reasonable adjustments to teaching methods, classroom environments, assistive technologies and assessment arrangements to facilitate effective

learning. We aim to provide all students with equal opportunities to learn through a variety of personalised and inclusive teaching approaches.

We acknowledge that neurodevelopmental differences such as dyslexia and dyspraxia may present specific barriers to learning, which can often be addressed through specialist teaching strategies and targeted support. We also recognise that some students may require additional support due to conditions including ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), cerebral palsy, visual impairment, or speech and hearing impairments.

We also recognise that some students may have underlying learning difficulties of a neurological nature that have not yet been formally identified, and that some students may feel uncomfortable disclosing learning needs due to fear of stigma or being perceived as different from their peers. We encourage disclosure through supportive admissions procedures and our personal tutoring system, and we educate both staff and students to value individual differences and judge all members of the community on their merits.

At Guildhouse School, our welfare team includes our nurse, counsellor, pastoral director, deputy head pastoral who are all DDSL and first aid trained, this means we have a holistic approach to our students' individual needs, socially, emotionally, and physically to better support their learning. We place strong emphasis on the student's own views and active participation in setting targets and determining the nature of support they receive.

Identification of learning difficulties or special educational needs begins as early as possible. During the admissions process, Guildhouse School requests relevant information from previous schools, parents, or guardians. This may include reports from educational psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, or local authority services, enabling us to plan appropriate support from the outset.

Purpose and Scope

This document sets out Guildhouse School's statutory Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy and the accompanying SEN Information Report. It explains how we identify, assess and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), how we assure quality, and how we meet our duties under current legislation. It is written for staff, parents/carers, pupils and inspectors, and applies to all programmes delivered by the school.

Definition of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) refers to a broad category of needs that affect a child or young person's ability to learn and participate in school life as effectively as their peers. The term encompasses a range of conditions that can impact cognitive, physical, emotional, or social development, and that may require tailored support to ensure access to an equitable education.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) is defined as,

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. (SEND Code of Practice 2015)

Learning Disability or Disability (LDD) is defined as,

A child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Equality Act 2010)

'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial, and 'long term' means that the impairment will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more. Not all students who have SEN are disabled and not all disabled pupils have SEN but there may on occasion be an overlap.

In the context of UK legislation, as outlined by the Children and Families Act 2014, a child or young person has special educational needs if they:

1. Have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
 - Learning Difficulty: A child has a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or if they have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.
 - Disability: A child has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
2. Special Educational Provision: The provision made for SEND students is additional to or different from the standard educational practices and includes interventions, teaching strategies, or support services that are designed to meet their individual needs.

The term 'learning difficulty' covers a wide range of conditions, and may include dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result from social, emotional or mental health difficulties. It can also include sensory impairments like hearing or vision loss.

Learning difficulties can affect students across all levels of intelligence and may only become noticeable as academic demands increase. We acknowledge that in the context of Guildhouse School catering for international students, that culture, accessibility and availability may have had an influence on SEN assessments and records.

A child struggling with a particular subject does not necessarily have a legal 'learning difficulty', as children develop at different rates and have varying strengths.

EAL students are not considered to have a learning difficulty for that reason alone.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Board of Governors has responsibility for overseeing school policy for all SEN students and students with disabilities.

The Senior Leadership Team has responsibility for the day-to-day management of educational provision for all children, including children with SEND. The Senior Leadership Team will also:

- Ensure that the school's policy is put into practice
- Act as an intermediary in the communication of information between parties involved with the student (although for practical purposes this may be delegated to the Pastoral Deputy Head)
- Be involved in the induction of new staff to inform them of the School's SEND processes
- Contribute to the in-service training of staff to develop understanding and whole school approaches.

The pastoral well-being of students is also a key responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team, who must ensure that the social inclusion and integration of students with SEND is actively supported and promoted.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

Contact details

SENCO: Kim Tapsell - The SENCO is undertaking NPQ SENCO training, due for completion by November 2026

Contact: ktapsell@guildhouseschool.com

The SENCO is responsible for:

Determining the strategic development of the SEND policy and learning support provision, alongside the Board of Governors and SLT, ensuring it is reviewed annually and that any legal changes that arise during the year are included and staff notified.

Ensuring all staff fully understand their responsibilities towards students with SEN and are given the necessary support and information to adapt their teaching effectively, as agreed with their line manager.

Co-ordinating specific provisions for SEN students and students with disabilities, including individual education plans (IEPs) and interventions if deemed necessary and that records are maintained.

Ensure the SEND Register and students' learning profiles are updated termly, or sooner if required, and are circulated to teachers at the start of each term.

Ensure targets are reviewed termly (or sooner if appropriate) and reviewed with parents/carers and the student where appropriate each term. New IEPs will be circulated to parents/carers/stakeholders and teachers each term or sooner if required.

Liaise with parents/carers/stakeholders on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team when appropriate.

Liaise with Curriculum Directors in the purchasing of adequate resources to cater for special needs within the school. Resources required for individuals with SEND will be discussed with parents/carers/stakeholders.

Assist with the collation of evidence and information for outside agencies.

Liaise with external experts/agencies that work with children at Guildhouse school.

Ensure that reports from external agencies such as educational psychologists are updated where required by JCQ guidance.

Make appropriate referrals for support or assessment to relevant agencies.

Attend meetings with the welfare team/SLT to discuss the progress of all students, including those with SEND.

Teachers and Staff

A whole-school-approach is fundamental to success for our students with SEND. Regular liaison with all staff, both formal and informal, serves to support procedures and provision for students with SEND. Careful attention should be given to ensuring that relevant activities that promote the learning of students with SEND are undertaken within the classroom setting, and appropriate expectations are always set.

Teaching staff must ensure that they have obtained full information from the SENCO of any student that they teach who is on the SEN register and must be prepared to offer their individual assessment of the student's learning and progress at any time. (DFE Teaching Standards 5).

Teachers are expected to differentiate/reasonably adjust lessons to ensure suitable activities for a student on the SEN register and with individual needs. This may also include adaptations to the learning environment and where appropriate to the curriculum.

All teachers and staff must pay attention to the social wellbeing of all students under their care, but with particular concern for SEND students, who may be targets for bullying or other unpleasantness. They should be proactive in ensuring that they are socially integrated with their peers.

Teachers are supported in their teaching of students with SEND in the following ways:

- Staff INSET (at regular intervals as part of the cycle of compulsory training; all new staff receive an induction session on SEND).
- Information contained in the students' learning profiles and SEN Register which are available on SharePoint.
- Information on strategies for teaching pupils with SEND shared in staff meetings or individually if more appropriate.
- Advice given during staff meetings when there are issues relating to a student.
- In class observations of students with SEND and subsequent feedback to staff when learning or behavioural issues are identified.

The SENCO will liaise with teachers and external agencies as and when required.

Identification of Assessment of Need

At Guildhouse School students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are identified through a combination of methods. This includes information passed on from their previous schools, staff observations, baseline and on-going assessments, and parent/student voice.

- **Admissions and Enrolment**
Admissions forms, student interview, prior-school information and external reports (e.g., Educational Psychologist, therapists).
- **Baseline Assessments**
ALIS testing, CAT4 testing, English language assessment and other baseline measures used to set targets and screen for potential barriers.
- **Teacher/Tutor Observation**
Subject teachers and personal tutors monitor progress and raise concerns to the SENCO.
- **Academic Data Review**
Regular analysis to identify underachievement or unusual progress patterns; follow-up via individual plans where appropriate.

Teachers monitor students' progress and behaviour closely, and if a student is not making expected progress or is struggling in specific areas, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) will carry out further assessments. Once needs are identified, appropriate support strategies or interventions are put in place, and a SEND Support Plan will be developed in collaboration with staff, parents, and the student

Additionally, Guildhouse School has agents in a variety of countries acting for the school. Agents support the recruitment process, with final decisions resting with the school when there is ambiguity with admission's criteria.

Most students are interviewed and are required to sit tests to determine their level of ability in English.

Parents are required to fill in an admissions form in which they should disclose any particular medical or educational need. Students are also given the opportunity to disclose a particular need or if they have received additional support in the past as part of their enrolment.

To help identify and provide targeted support for students' specific needs SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) are generally grouped into four broad categories as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years.

Communication and Interaction

- This can include speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including Asperger's Syndrome.
- Students may struggle with understanding or using language, or with social communication.

Cognition and Learning

- This covers a wide range of learning difficulties, including Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.
- Students may learn at a slower pace or need additional support with specific skills.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

- This can include conditions such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, or attachment disorders.
- Students may struggle with emotional regulation, behaviour, or forming relationships.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

- This can include visual impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI), and physical disabilities (PD).
- These may need specific equipment or support to access learning and school life fully.

Please note that we endeavour to holistically identify the needs of each of our students to ensure we provide meet their needs not just in the above categories.

The SENCO will determine whether a student requires an Educational Psychologist assessment to investigate further their specific needs based on their normal way of working and previous information. Parents are involved where possible bearing in mind the international nature of the school.

The purposes of further specialist assessment are:

1. to determine if the student qualifies for Access Arrangements and other reasonable adjustment.
2. to provide information to support recommendations for individual support and inclusive classroom practice.

Assessment of Access Arrangements may include a variety of relevant tests.

Referrals will be made to the external agencies, Head of Centre or Examination Officer for Access Arrangements.

In ensuring that we comply with the JCQ guidelines, students who join Guildhouse with prior examination access arrangements in place, wishing for their arrangements to continue, will need to be reassessed in-house, or by our recommended assessor

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is conducted prior to all off-site activities to ensure the health and safety of all students. Particular consideration is given to the needs of students with SEND to ensure appropriate support and inclusion.

In the unlikely event that a student is unable to participate in a specific activity, alternative arrangements will be made within school to provide opportunities that address the same curriculum areas.

Assessment and Monitoring

At Guildhouse School there are four stages of provision; Assess, Plan, Do and Review – The Graduated Approach.

Assess

Staff use the identification procedure (as outlined above) to identify specific learning needs.

Plan

If it is decided that a student has additional learning needs then the SENCO will liaise with the student's teachers to identify strategies and plan the best way to support them, including using information collected at the initial assessment stage.

Do

Teachers and staff will work closely with the SENCO to assess and monitor the student's progress, with support from the learner profile.

A learner profile is prepared individually for students on the SEND register, containing information on their individual needs. The learner profile will include a student's strengths, areas of challenge, strategies and any information the student would like to include to best support their learning. The learner profile will be reviewed termly to ensure the student's needs are being met. The student's teachers are expected to check the learner profile regularly and are also informed whenever a change is made. Teachers are expected to evaluate progression and feedback to the SENCO.

Regular monitoring of the quality of academic provision for all students including SEND students follows the school's assessment timeline and structure. SEND students additionally, have ongoing monitoring, reflect and review provisions throughout the year, with a review/update termly. Additional support and advice will be provided to staff where necessary to facilitate a student's progress and needs.

Review

Guildhouse School monitors the progress and support for SEND students. Teachers working with SLT, and the SENCO will revise the impact and quality of support and interventions in respect of their progress and development, making any appropriate changes (whilst in consultation with parents and the student) as appropriate. If progress is slow, Guildhouse School may ask outside experts for help, but only after talking with parents/carers/stakeholders and the student first.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

If, in the opinion of and agreed by the school Headteacher, SLT, Welfare team and SENCO a student's mental health challenges are significantly impacting their learning, the SENCO and teaching staff will take appropriate steps to reasonably adjust the student's SEN provision to support their needs. Extra pastoral support arrangements within school or our accommodation will be included.

Record-Keeping, Communication and Confidentiality

Students who have been identified with SEN will be included on our SEN register maintained by the SENCO, welfare team and/or examinations officer. The SEN register and related documents are confidential and only accessible to the forementioned team. Key information in the form of a student profile will be shared with the student's teachers, relevant boarding staff, students and parents.

Where possible Guildhouse School will collaborate with parents/carers/stakeholders to enable them to be actively involved, giving them the opportunity to make a positive, empowered and informed contribution to their child's education. Communications are clear, timely and culturally sensitive.

Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Guildhouse School provides training sessions within the whole school CPD programme. This includes the 4 broad areas of needs, but training will also be identified in response to a student's individual needs, which can be devised and delivered by a specialist member of staff, or external expert alongside the SENCO.

CPD sessions will be delivered on,

- Recognising SEN students
- Teaching strategies
- Individual students' needs

Examination Arrangements

To qualify for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (e.g. extra time, use of a computer, supervised rest breaks, room changes, scribes, etc.) there must be clear justification based upon:

- a history of need
- a history of support and provision
- current testing which supports the original diagnostic report/needs

Evidence can be compiled via use of external assessment reports from relevant professionals (i.e. GP, psychiatrist, occupational therapist), diagnostic reports and medical evidence (conducted within 26 months).

Student consent must be given before submitting access arrangements.

Guildhouse School cannot accept any reports or assessments unless they are part of a process initiated and approved by the SENCO, exams and welfare team. This is a requirement of the examination boards and the JCQ. Applications for examination access arrangements will therefore require supporting evidence/information of need.

A learning difficulty in itself does not justify a special arrangement, and evidence must be submitted to prove that the difficulty would unfairly impair the student's performance while being assessed. Where evidence suggests that examination access arrangements would be unjustified, the school reserves the right not to submit a request.

Appropriate documentation to substantiate an approved application are held securely and are made available to a JCQ Inspector upon request. Relevant documentation and evidence are passed on to the school's examination officer to action the access arrangements during public examinations.

Students who enrol in Year 11, 12 and 13 must declare any access arrangements they have previously been awarded by JCQ. A PDF of a fully completed Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, with evidence of the assessor's qualification must be provided. (JCQ Guidelines 7.6)

Guildhouse school's internal deadline to hand in evidence of need for access arrangement applications is the end of January of that academic year.

The final decision in any disputed cases rests with the Headteacher and must be made in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidelines.

Private Assessments

Where appropriate, parents and the SENCO will together decide whether a formal assessment by an external professional is necessary. If a full educational psychologist report is required, parents will be advised to use the UK NHS system, a qualified professional in their home country (private or non-private) or a private UK based educational psychologist and Guildhouse School currently works with CF Psychology www.cfpsychology.co.uk

According to JCQ requirements, any private report used for access arrangements must be commissioned from an external assessor who is on the school's approved list. Reports obtained privately without consulting the school will not be accepted for access arrangements.

For concerns related to social communication difficulties (such as ASD, ADD/ADHD, or other social, emotional, and mental health issues), the school recommends that parents first consult their GP to request a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). Although this process may take longer, it offers the most comprehensive assessment and diagnosis.

Students must have a good level of English to be able to take an assessment.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements support candidates with special needs or injuries so they can complete assessments fairly, without altering the test and must be agreed upon before the exam.

For the Academic Year 2025- 2026

Access Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination/assessment.

- 1) For GCSE November 2025 exams this must be before 20th September 2025.
- 2) For June 2026 exams this must be before 21st March 2026

Complaints Procedure

Initially we encourage all parents/stakeholders to discuss any concerns with the school. This can be via contacting Student Services, the subject teacher, Curriculum Director, Pastoral Director or SENCO directly. If the parent/stakeholder still has concerns regarding the provision or organisation of SEND this will be dealt with through our Complaint's Policy.

Guildhouse School reserves the right, after consulting with parents, to ask for or require a student's withdrawal if, despite making all reasonable adjustments, we believe the school cannot adequately meet the student's needs. Any decision to request or require withdrawal will only be made as a last resort and in accordance with school policy.

Further Information on SEN support

SENDIASS Camden - <https://londonwaitingroom.nhs.uk/sendias-camden#:~:text=SENDIASS%20Camden%20an%20impartial%20Service,information%2C%20advice%2C%20and%20support%20service>

Local Offer - <https://families.camden.gov.uk/send-local-offer/education/>

References

SEND Cod of Practice (January 2015)

Children and Families Act (2014)

Equality Act (2010)

JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025/26

JCQ – Overview of evidence requirements 25-26 Final

JCQ - Overview of evidence requirements for access arrangements (effective from 1 September 2025)

JCQ - Overview of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process for centres accepting private candidates 2024/25 documents)

Department of Education Teaching Standards (2011)

To be read in conjunction with Guildhouse School Policies,

Anti Bullying Strategy

Complaints Policy

Mental Health Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Appendix 1 Student Learner Profile (TEMPLATE)

Date Created

Next review date

Name

DOB

Tutor Group

Exam Access Arrangements

Challenging Area	
Strengths	
Targets	
Suggested Teaching Strategies	

Student Input

I find challenging	
My strengths are	
My targets	
These strategies help me	

Academic	Other Areas of Concern	
Understanding key concepts	Behaviour	
Listening to instructions	Attendance	
Reading speed	Punctuality	
Reading accuracy	Focus/concentration	
Writing speed	Personal organisation	
Vocabulary	Attention seeking	
Spelling	Impulse control	
Presentation Skills	Relationships with peers	
Numeracy	Motivation	
Spatial difficulties	Self-esteem	
Motor control	Anger issues	
Auditory memory	Frustration	
Visual stress	Anxiety	
Working memory	Hearing	
Processing speed	Sight	

A= average, LA = low average, HA = high average. A= average. LA = low average, VL = very low, EL = extremely low

Teacher Notes – please add and circulate if you feel you have anything to add.



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LONDON



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