



## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. How does the school know if students need extra help?**

Through information gathered from the Primary schools during the Year 5 transfer reviews and the Year 6 statement reviews prior to the transfer to Sidmouth College, and additionally through:

- Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) carried out in the Autumn Term of Year 7
- Screening for reading and spelling beginning in the autumn term of Year 7
- Observations in class
- Teacher feedback
- Parental concerns
- Student concerns
- Form Tutor and Head of House concerns
- Concerns from other staff such as the Pastoral Team, Student Welfare Officer, Learning Mentors.

### **2. What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?**

In the first instance contact the Director of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Mrs Cassy Beer [cbeer@sidmouthcollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:cbeer@sidmouthcollege.devon.sch.uk)

### **3. What provision is there for students with special educational needs?**

Teaching staff will support students at a level appropriate to their needs through effective differentiation in the classroom (Quality First Teaching). This is constantly reviewed as the child develops and makes progress. Students requiring more specific intervention to access the curriculum may be supported in a range of ways, for example

- Individual or small group literacy and numeracy programmes
- Individual or small group social and emotional development programmes
- Shared in-class support from a teaching assistant
- Individual programmes to meet specific needs

### **4. How will I know how my child is making progress?**

As a parent/carer you will receive:

- School reports
- Parent-Teacher evenings
- Communication through the student planner
- Information about rewards and sanctions
- A regular school bulletin

- Regular updates via school website

In addition you may also be involved in:

- Annual Review or Transfer review meetings (held for identified high needs students – you will be informed if your child is included within this category), which includes opportunities for the views of parents/carers and the child
- Key worker contact
- Home contact book
- Information from specific intervention programmes in end of year intervention reports.

At any time you may contact your child's Form Tutor, Head of House or the Director of SEND for further information.

### **5. How do I know what progress my child should be making?**

All teachers are aware of every student's starting point at the end of Key Stage 2, and are aware of the rate of progress we expect each child to make whilst at Sidmouth College. Progress can vary in each year, but the overall progress over 5 years is tracked carefully to ensure every child makes the best possible progress for them. We have high aspirations for all students. All students are provided with aspirational but achievable subject targets to help them track and monitor their own progress within each subject they study.

### **6. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?**

This is done on an individual basis where the need is identified for a student to have a more personalised curriculum. Most students follow the same curriculum as their peers, perhaps with minor adjustments. Each teacher should display '**Quality First Teaching**'. Teachers are expected to support students by differentiating the lesson content to meet the needs of all. Where students have complex needs, teachers are supported by the Learning Mentor Team.

### **7. What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?**

All students are supported through the Pastoral System. Each student has a Form Tutor who takes them through the 5 years at Sidmouth College. Weekly meetings are led by the Vice Principal, the Pastoral team, and Heads of Houses. At these meetings students who are of concern for academic and/or emotional issues will be discussed and appropriate interventions identified. These students are then carefully monitored. We adopt a graduated response in all situations.

Students with SEND may have a key worker, usually a Learning Mentor, who offers support with organisation, emotional needs and liaises with the Director of SEND and Inclusion Manager. The Student Support Department also have a weekly meeting where students concerns are raised.

All students who are identified with concerns about their well-being will be offered appropriate interventions. These may include:

- Support from the School nurse
- Support from the pastoral support workers
- Sports/Activities Clubs

- Rewards
- Careers advice
- Support from other agencies, as appropriate
- Lunch/break clubs
- Homework club (currently Weds/Thursday from 3:30-4:30pm)
- Animal Husbandry project

### Students with medical conditions

Students with specific health conditions will have an individual Medical Care Plan which will be drawn up in consultation with the parent/carers and other health professionals as necessary. This will outline the arrangements for administering medication and provide advice for staff in the event of an emergency. Staff will take note of the Medical Care Plans when arranging any curriculum enrichment activity. (See Sidmouth College website: 'Supporting students with medical needs policy').

### Safeguarding

If we have any concerns that a student is at risk, we will always follow our Safeguarding Policy. This means the child's welfare is the paramount concern, over-riding concerns for staff and parents/carers. We will involve external agencies if we consider this to be in the child's best interests. The safeguarding officers for Sidmouth College are Mr J Ingham-Hill, Mr M White and Mrs C Clark.

## **8. What Specialist services are available within, or accessible to the school?**

School based:

- Director of SEND (Cassy Beer)
- Inclusion Manager (Carole Clark)
- Specialist HLTA- Literacy support
- Specialist teacher-Numeracy
- A number of Learning Mentors

All of our Learning Mentors have experience and training in working with students within all four categories of need; Cognition and learning needs, Physical and sensory needs, Speech, language, communication and interaction needs (including Autism ) and Social and emotional health needs. Regular training is available throughout the year and Learning Mentors are also allocated to a pastoral 'House' ensuring support is offered throughout tutor/registration time as well as during structured lesson time.

External services

- Educational Psychology
- Specialist Advisory Teachers
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Educational Welfare Service (attendance)
- School Nurse
- Integrated Therapy Services, including Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy
- School counsellor (Currently Monday/Thursday by appointment)
- Bereavement Counselling (Balloons)
- Careers south west
- DIAS (Devon Integrated Advice & Support )
- Visually Impaired Advisory Service

- Hearing impaired Advisory Service

## **9. What training is available to staff supporting students with SEND?**

Training for teaching students with Special Educational Needs is considered essential. There is an on-going programme of whole school training in teaching and supporting students including:

- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Autism
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- EAL
- Sensory support
- Specific medical conditions training eg Diabetes

In addition there is regular training in:

- Child Protection (Safeguarding)
- First Aid awareness e.g. use of epi-pen, asthma awareness, epilepsy awareness
- Disability Awareness
- Outstanding Teaching
- Behaviour for Learning

## **10. How will I be involved in making decisions about and planning for my child's education?**

Parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concern about their child's development. At Sidmouth College we use the Devon Assessment Framework (DAF process) as an appropriate person-centred approach to put their child or young person and their family at the heart of planning and reviewing provision. We do encourage parents to be involved in their children's education and hope parents will contact us if they have concerns. Similarly teachers will contact parents to address issues promptly.

## **11. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?**

We do expect all children to be able to participate in enrichment activities and we will endeavour to overcome any barriers to inclusion that may arise. The College offers a very wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that are open to all students and information about this is published termly on the College website and can be found under Students – Extra-curricular activities.

## **12. How accessible is the school environment?**

As a school we have worked with outside agencies to improve accessibility. Most areas are now accessible and, if necessary, we will adjust timetables to ensure children have full access to their curriculum. As our site is on various levels, lifts are used for those students with mobility issues and every effort is made to ensure ALL students can access the classrooms/areas required.

## **13. How will the school support my child through transition, both to the school in Year 7 and from the school in Year 11?**

We gather a lot of information about your child from their primary school, and any agencies involved, for the best possible preparation for them joining Sidmouth College. This is usually in Year 6, but when a child has more complex needs the process of transfer may begin earlier, sometimes even in Year 5. In addition to the usual induction week for all students, vulnerable students (not necessarily all children with SEN) are invited to extra days in the school to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and to take part in a tailored transition programme.

We have excellent links with all the Post 16 providers locally in addition to our own Sixth Form, and a strong tradition of supporting students to find the most appropriate course. As students progress through the school they are given a lot of support from the Careers Advisors, who will personalise support. Some students also have individual transition programmes.

#### **14. How are the school's resources allocated?**

We have a Student Support Department, led by the Director of Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator, Mrs C Beer. Alongside our Director of SEND, we have a full time Inclusion Manager, Carole Clark and a number of Learning Mentors (this number varies, depending on the number of students identified with high needs or with Education Health and Care Plans/Statements of SEN.) Allocation of Learning Mentor support is done on a 'need' basis. We try not to allocate Learning Mentors to individual students as we want to encourage the independence of our students.

#### **15. How is the decision made about how my child will receive support?**

The decision making process is informed by the data and information provided by all agencies involved. Support is then personalised, within available resources, to maximise progress. This is regularly reviewed, and in the case of high needs students discussed with parents at Annual Reviews. Where a student makes good progress, and bridges the gap, support may well be reduced, even to the extent of being taken off the SEN Register. When significant changes to provision occur, parents are automatically involved.