



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY

(Inc English as an Additional Language Policy Appendix)

References:

- A. Handbook for the Inspection of Schools, Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements, ISI, September 2024**
- B. Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DFE, January 2024**
- C. Framework for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings, ISI, March 2024**
- D. Children and Families Act, 2014E. SEND Regulations 2014, SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years, 2014 Updated May 2015.**
- E. Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)**
- F. The Equality Act 2010**
- G. The Joint Council for Qualifications: Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and Learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, with effect from 1 September 2024-31 August 2025**

Vinehall is an Early Years provider, which takes funding from East Sussex local authority and therefore has regard to the SEND Code of Practice. This SEND Policy works alongside and in conjunction with a variety of other school policies, namely the Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 SEND Policy, Assessment Policy, Behaviour Management Policies (Prep School and Pre-Prep) and Disability Policy. The SEND provision is embedded in the teaching and learning framework of the school. Provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is a matter for the school as a whole. The Headmaster, Deputy Head, Head of Pastoral Care, Head of Learning and Assessment, Head of Juniors, Head of Pre-Prep, Learning Support Specialist in Pre-Prep (Tessa Richardson), Head of Learning Support (Phoebe Cameron), Housemistress and all other members of staff, both teaching and support staff have very important day-to-day responsibilities. The Pre-Prep Learning Support Specialist, Tessa Richardson, is the identified SENCO for the EYFS.

The Head of Learning Support meets regularly with the Head, Deputy Head, Head of Pre-Prep, School Nurse, Head of Learning and Assessment, Head of Pastoral Care, Housemistress and teachers.

Vinehall implements policy and procedures to promote equality of opportunity for children, including support for children with SEND. Individual needs of all children at Vinehall will be met (including those with disabilities or those who have SEN). These children will be included, valued and supported, and reasonable adjustments will be made for them. Members of staff consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development for each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of the curriculum. SEND support is available across the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage Children (EYFS).

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ADMISSIONS AND SPECIAL NEEDS

We welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer and can flourish in the caring environment of Vinehall School. Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with special educational needs, providing that we can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive treatment.

We advise parents of children with special educational needs to discuss their child's requirements with Vinehall School before entry so that we can make adequate provision for him/her in order for all groups of pupils to have the opportunity to learn and make progress. This includes provision for children who experience delay in one or more subject areas or skills, children with learning difficulties, those for whom English is an additional language, and the most able. It also encompasses those pupils who have other particular needs, such as young carers.

We encourage strong partnerships with parents and promote ongoing communication, in order to have a joined-up approach to best support the child. Parents are encouraged to have an open dialogue about their child's needs and to share relevant information and reports. Reports such as a copy of an Educational Psychologist's report, medical report, statement or EHC plan should be provided to support requests for any special arrangements.

ON ENTRY

Each pupil with a special educational need requires thoughtful consideration and appropriate provision to ensure progress and increasing independence. We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their child both on enquiry and once they have accepted the offer of a place and before he/she becomes a pupil at the school.

Our Learning Support Department has expertise to support pupils with specific learning difficulties in the following areas: dyslexia, developmental co-ordination difficulties, Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder and speech/language difficulties, depending on the severity of the difficulties experienced and availability of the external specialist services required.

Our Local Offer for EYFS provision is published on the school's website.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION

High quality teaching which is both differentiated and personalised is available for pupils and each class is a continuous cycle of assessing, planning, teaching and reviewing, taking into account a wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children. The majority of children will learn and progress within these arrangements. Those children whose overall attainments or attainment in specific subjects fall significantly outside the expected range or whose output does not reflect their cognitive abilities may have special educational needs.

Legally, "SEND" is described as where a child has a "learning difficulty" or "disability" which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A "learning difficulty" or "disability" occurs when there is:

- A significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of others of the same age or

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- A disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

A child may be under compulsory school age and fall into the definitions above or would do if special educational provision were not made for them. For children aged two or more, “special educational provision” is education that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children the same age. For children under two, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

Four types of action will be taken to put effective graduated support in place for any child who appears to be behind expected levels at Phases 1-4 of the SEN procedures.

1. Assess
2. Plan
3. Do
4. Review

PHASE 1

Pupils may experience difficulties or have gaps in their learning and not make expected progress for a variety of reasons. They may have differentiated support prepared for them by teachers in conjunction with support staff. Progress at this stage will be tracked by the school's tracking systems informed by the teaching staff's close observations. Parents will be made aware of any emerging concerns raised at milestone checks. In addition to the two specific points in the EYFS for formal assessment (Progress Check at age 2 and EYFS Profile), there is monitoring and review of progress throughout the EYFS. The Progress Check is in the form of a written summary of the child's development in the prime areas. It is provided for parents/carers and identifies strengths and any areas where progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns or an identified SEND, a targeted plan is developed to support the child in liaison with parents/carers (see phase 2).

PHASE 2

Specific interventions in the classroom and/or boarding house may be employed if needed, after discussion between any or all of; SMT, teachers, boarding staff, support staff, parents, pupil and the Head of Learning Support. A setting based support plan and/or ILAS (Individual Learning Advice Sheet) may be implemented if necessary. Progress will be monitored and depending on the impact of the strategies used, children may then work within phases 1, 2 or 3 or 4.

PHASE 3

When there is evidence that children are still not making progress as expected, they may be referred to the Head of Learning Support for assessment to determine whether a learning difficulty exists, according to the definitions above. School screening, advice from CAMHS, assessment by a Speech and Language therapist, Occupational Therapist, Educational Psychologist or Clinical Psychologist are available options, which in most cases incur extra charges to be arranged directly with the service provider.

PHASE 4

Following formal assessment or requests from parents, appropriate interventions at stage 2 or one-to-one, small group or other support at phase 4 will be arranged by the Head of Learning Support in one or more of the following areas:

- I. Communication and Interaction
- II. Cognition and Learning
- III. Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- IV. Sensory and/or Physical.

Specialist Services and teachers with additional specialist qualifications may be called upon for intervention. Recommendations following assessment may involve strategies to be followed by all adults coming into active learning situations with the child. These recommendations will be communicated to staff on an ILAS (Individual Learning Advice Sheet), following discussion with parents.

The Learning Support Department offers specialist one-to-one or small group lessons for literacy, maths and associated skills, additional help with study skills and exam preparation, support with fine motor and handwriting skills, Nessy Reading, Spelling and Touch Typing sessions, social skills and one to one "Social Use of Language" programmes when appropriate, Sensory Circuits, in addition to the normal curriculum. SEN children are also offered use of a Sensory Space for one-to-one support sessions, break times and lunchtimes. We can arrange for an Individual Needs Assistant to support a child in the classroom if necessary.

When one-to-one lessons have been agreed with parents, the specialist teachers will work with each child to prepare learning plans on a termly basis. Children's aspirations will be the starting point for each learning plan and desired outcomes will be agreed for that term. Meetings are then arranged with parents to discuss the learning plans and amend accordingly.

Targets will be reviewed at the end of each term and comments entered onto the plan by the student, the specialist teacher and parents if they so wish.

PHASE 5

Should children still not be making appropriate progress at an acceptable level the formal procedures for an Education, Health and Care Assessment <http://www.specialneedsjungle.com/new-send-system-flow-chart-3-conducting-education-health-care-assessment/> may be started by the SENCO or parents or other health professionals, following the legal assessment procedures outlined in the Local Offer by East Sussex County Local Authority. Parents are encouraged to discuss their children's progress with Learning Support teachers and/or the Head of Learning Support by telephone, email or face to face appointments at any/all stage(s) of the graduated support outlined above.

EHC plans will be reviewed on an annual basis in liaison with all professionals involved in pupils' intervention.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

We recognise that some children with special educational needs may also have physical disabilities. Parents and prospective parents of disabled children can request copies of Vinehall School's Accessibility Plan, this shows the ways in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors. The Disability and Accessibility Policy is available on the school website ([link](#))

EXAMINATIONS

Access arrangements for Common Entrance Examinations or similar will follow JCQ guidelines in the light of senior schools' requirements as advised by the ISEB.

Rest breaks, adjustments to the papers (e.g. enlargements, coloured paper), use of a word processor and/or a human voice in place of pre-recorded tests and access to a reading pen may be implemented at the discretion of the Head of Learning Support, with the agreement of teachers and parents, ideally no later than the start of Year 7. The school has a laptop policy (see Appendix B).

Extra time and/or use of a reader or a scribe will be allowed if recommended by an external assessor, in liaison with the school within 2-3 years of the examination and ideally no later than the start of Year 7. Consideration will be given when difficulties have been diagnosed at a later date, but cannot be guaranteed.

These concessions will be made available in the same way for school examinations and must reflect the child's usual method of working within the school over the duration of the C.E. course.

OTHER ADJUSTMENTS

We are able, depending on need, requirements of future schools and touch typing ability, to arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes and examinations, once typing skills enable them to use one efficiently, in accordance with the school laptop policy.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND and are dealt with separately under the EAL Policy (see Appendix A).

In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of Vinehall School, pupils must be relatively fluent English speakers. We may recommend that some children, whose first language at home is not English, receive group or individual tuition in English as an additional language.

LINKS WITH PARENTS

Parents are encouraged to play a significant part in their child's SEND provision and are involved at each stage (see Identification, Assessment and Provision). Decisions to involve external specialists and/or the Head of Learning Support are taken in discussion with parents.

Parents are invited to meet with the Head of Learning Support at the start of each term to discuss learning plans for children who have one-to-one Learning Support sessions. Additional appointments can be made at any point during the school year.

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STAFF TRAINING

All members of staff (including teaching and support staff) are given regular training on working with pupils with disabilities. Our teaching staff receives training on the learning needs of pupils with SEND.

CHARGING POLICY

Specialist Learning Support assessments and lessons may incur extra charges as set out in the "Extras" sheet that is posted out at the beginning of each academic year, unless they fall within the school's duty to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled pupil, when no charge will be made. Charges for the help of an Individual Needs Assistant will depend on the number of pupils involved and the frequency of the sessions. Parents will be advised of these charges as they arise before support is implemented.

External specialist services will be charged directly by the service provider for assessment and/or intervention. Vinehall has close links with other professionals such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists, who visit the school regularly to assess or provide intervention for pupils.

SEN COVID-19 Strategy

In the event of school closure due to Covid-19, lessons will need to be delivered in various ways, taking into account that our pupils learn in different ways and at different speeds. In our remote learning provision we will do our best to replicate what would usually happen in a one-to-one in person session; focusing on multi-sensory techniques, phonics, tricky words and tasks to apply learning. A variety of structured presentations have been created, which all follow the structure and pattern of our 1:1 sessions. We have written a Remote Learning Scheme which includes PowerPoint presentations, and each presentation has 5 or 6 activities covering sequencing, phonics, spelling, speed reading and memory games. These will be posted weekly.

For the younger children in Pre Prep, Teddy Training videos will be available, and these will begin with movement and singing. We also aim to include practical activities using playdough and scrap materials as well as scissors and pens to develop fine and gross motor skills and encourage good handwriting. Video tutorials to illustrate a good pencil grip and activities to promote this will also be available.

Our Learning Support team can deliver the lessons according to the child's preference:

- a) Upload the presentation at the beginning of the week for the child to work through at times to suit the family. A catch-up session can then take place at a specified time at the end of the week or through Teams live or email/phone if the latter is difficult, or
- b) A 'live' time can be arranged to go through the activities on the presentation and see how this develops.

For any live sessions to take place, parental consent is required and to comply with safeguarding procedures the sessions are recorded.

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Appendix A: English as an Additional Language Policy

Introduction

Vinehall welcomes pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) from different overseas countries. Many come to complete their prep schooling in the UK, write the Common Entrance or Scholarships examinations and then move on to a public school in the UK. Year 8 students may also be entered for the Cambridge PET exam (Preliminary English Test).

Others may come for a term or a year to improve their English and then move back to their home country. Students enrolling for the summer term only will follow a short EAL course with the emphasis being placed on speaking and listening skills.

Our aim is to help all EAL pupils integrate successfully into the life of the school at all levels, including academic.

Children admitted to the school are expected to follow the curriculum in most subjects, with the exception of French and Latin, unless their level of English does not enable them to access the lessons, in which case an intensive English course may be arranged.

English lessons will be attended when pupils are able to access the content and tasks involved in addition to EAL lessons and they will be fully immersed in subjects with a practical element, such as; art, carpentry, physical education and music, thus affording the students the opportunity to use and develop their existing talents.

In cases where a child joins in Year 6 or earlier and intends to go on to school in the U.K., he/she may also study French or Latin, depending on ability and the senior school of choice.

Whilst we focus on developing the pupils' English, their first languages and cultures are respected at all times.

The EAL department is part of the Learning Support Department and the Head of Learning Support is Head of Department.

The EAL Policy should also be read in conjunction with Vinehall's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy which recognises that children must not be regarded as having a special educational need or learning difficulty solely because their home language is different from the school's medium of instruction.

Aims

The EAL Department aims are:

- To provide a welcoming environment in which EAL pupils can feel confident that their language needs are being addressed to help them realise their academic potential.
- To assess the EAL students' level of English and plan provision so that the curriculum can be accessed in mainstream lessons, with support for subject-specific vocabulary.

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- To offer group EAL lessons to develop competence in the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening as well as developing vocabulary and grammar.
- To offer one-to-one EAL lessons in addition to group sessions when they are deemed necessary by parents, the Head of Pre-Prep or Director of Studies.
- To provide provision that meets needs with respect to Common Entrance and Scholarship exams, and the Cambridge language exams.
- To develop understanding of British culture.
- To liaise with subject teachers so that they are aware of the EAL students' linguistic needs in order to provide appropriate differentiation in lessons for them, as needed.
- To work alongside teaching and boarding staff to help students integrate socially at Vinehall and to help, as needed, with any pastoral issues

Procedure

Pupils sit the Cambridge Placement Test before entry so we are aware of the level at which to begin intervention.

When a potential pupil has little or no English, a place may not be offered should we be unable to provide the necessary level of support and/or have concerns about the child's well-being.

Not all EAL children need to have extra tuition. The EAL department may recommend extra tuition based on the results of the screening test, previous school reports, input from parents and guardians and feedback from boarding staff, form teacher and subject teachers.

If children have extra tuition, the majority of lessons are taught in Year groups, with one-to-one support only when extra is considered necessary.

EAL lessons take place during French and Latin and are charged as extras.

Reporting

Each child having EAL lessons has a written report, which is included in the general academic end-of-term reports. The department has an open-door policy and parents can request meetings at any time.

Exam access arrangements

EAL pupils who have been learning English for less than 3 years are entitled to the use of a bilingual dictionary or translator in the school exams and Common Entrance. If the pupil previously attended an international school, this concession may not apply, depending on the length of time spent attending the international school. If pupils are granted the use of a bilingual dictionary in exams, then they are entitled to an extra time allowance in the exams to give them time to use the dictionary.

Staff

The EAL department has a permanent, qualified EAL teacher. Part-time EAL teachers will be called in on a peripatetic basis where deemed necessary.

Wider school communication and liaison

The Head of Learning Support and EAL teacher attend every staff meeting and are able to respond to concerns raised about any EAL pupil, and to follow up with subject teachers and tutors.

The Head of Learning Support and EAL teacher work in close conjunction with the Head of English to discuss children's needs and plan appropriate interventions, if needed.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Vinehall accepts children from the age of 2 years old. Reasonable steps are taken to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning to support their language development at home. For example staff liaise closely with parents, use technology including apps as well as books and games to inform their practice and promote children's learning. Cultures and languages are respected and embraced. Staff also ensure that EYFS children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language through differentiated activities and liaise with the Head of Learning Support and EAL teacher in the Prep School as necessary.

APPENDIX B: Laptop Policy

This policy on the use of laptops as word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, in line with JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications: JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA), 2024-25; JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE), 2024-25.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum
- To enable all pupils to achieve the best possible for their ability
- To provide guidelines for pupils and teachers on safe, appropriate and efficient laptop use

Who may use a laptop as their normal way of working in school?

Pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties may use a laptop as their normal way of working in school in order to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage. Use of a word processor is only granted if it is appropriate to a pupil's needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand). Permission must have been received from the Head of Learning Support (in conjunction with the Head of Attainment).

The following conditions must be met before permission will be given for a pupil to use a laptop as their normal way of working in school:

- A specific recommendation has been received from either:
an educational psychologist, specialist teacher or medical expert or the School's Head of Learning Support
- Touch-typing speed should exceed handwriting speed (c.30 wpm)
- Pupils and parents have signed the Laptop Code of Practice
- The laptop is adequately marked and insured

The Head of Learning Support will confirm the list of laptop users. Concerns related to possible laptop use should be referred to the Head of Learning Support in time for arrangements to be in place at the start of the course in order to show normal way of working to meet JCQ requirements. The Head of Attainment and Head of Learning Support will liaise with IT support over requisite technical support and the provision of a 'clean' laptop.

Staff with any concerns e.g. illegible writing should see their Head of Department, who will pass concerns onto the Head of Learning Support. The Head of Learning Support will see pastoral and academic staff and liaise with the Head of Attainment. JCQ regulations will inform the decision made in every case.

How and when is a laptop used?

In class:

- Laptop use is allowed with the agreement of the subject department head and the subject teacher
- Work must be printed out by students and stuck into exercise books or placed in a file as required by each department. Work must be submitted in an acceptable format
- Pupils must ensure that laptops are charged every evening

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- Laptops must be capable of being run on battery, and that battery power should always be used. For health and safety reasons mains cables can be used only with specific permission to do so
- Laptops must be on mute at all times
- Any integrated recording devices must be disabled at all times

Homework:

- Written homework tasks must be printed at home and, where appropriate, stuck into an exercise book or placed in a file as required by each department
- Work must be submitted in an acceptable format
- Pupils may email homework to teachers only with the express prior permission of that teacher.

Examinations:

Vinehall School complies with *AA Adjustments for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled student
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Pupils may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our pupils, the need for the use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the academic year. Pupils are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations
- Pupils are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and non-examination assessments
- The use of a word processor for pupils is only granted if it reflects the support given to the pupil as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
 - a. in the classroom; or
 - b. working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - c. literacy support lessons; or
 - d. literacy intervention strategies; and/or
 - e. in internal school tests and mock examinations
- The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment. In such cases, the school may ask to see medical documents as evidence of need

Vinehall School complies with the 2024-25 JCQ regulations and guidance as follows:

- We will notify JCQ of any arrangements to use a laptop in examinations by submitting a Preparation Form 1 and keeping evidence of need until certificates are issued.

The school allows pupils to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. The school is also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where pupils will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to

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handwrite within the answer booklet. The pupil avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen

In all cases, the school:

- ensures that a word processor cover sheet is completed and included with each pupil's typed script
- does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a pupil because he/she prefers to type rather than write, or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Spelling and grammar checks and predictive tools will be disabled (in very specific circumstances an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher Assessor may recommend differently) as will any connection to the internet.

Scripts will be printed out on school printers as soon as each examination ends. The pupil must be present for this to check that all pages have been printed and then sign each page.

The school will also save a digital copy of each printed examination onto an encrypted drive until the end of the Post Results period.

Word processors and their programmes

Vinehall complies with JCQ *Word Processors* instructions by abiding with their ICE 14.20 regulations.

Laptops and tablets

Vinehall further complies with JCQ (ICE 14.20) instructions by ensuring:

- pupils will be provided with access to a laptop/tablet in the main examination hall which is either connected to a mains power supply or is 'free standing' with a battery, checked to ensure sufficient capacity for the entire duration of the examination, allowing for any additional time
- pupils are reminded that their centre number, student number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
- pupils are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer (if they are unable to do this electronically) once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; pupils are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way
- pupils are instructed to appropriately number each page (e.g. page 1 of 6)
- pupils are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- pupils are reminded to save their work at regular intervals
- pupils are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Pupils using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

Pupils will be seated in the main examination hall unless they have another access arrangement which requires separate invigilation, for example a read aloud.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors is no different to any other invigilation since students are accommodated in the main exam room.

Liaison with Parents

- The Head of Learning Support will be responsible for liaising with relevant parents so that they are fully aware of the school's procedures. She will ensure that they have a copy of the school's policy
- She will indicate that it is the parents' responsibility, in line with the original request, to ensure that their child has adequate touch-typing and operational skills
- She will reiterate to parents the requirement that the laptop is properly insured

Code of Practice

Pupils and parents will be asked to sign a Laptop Code of Practice. This ensures each pupil agrees to follow the basic rules of laptop use to ensure that it is a tool to support and does not hinder progress.

Parents will be responsible for organising any extra support required to ensure the pupil has adequate touch-typing and operational skills.

Occasional laptop use:

Pupils suffering from an injury that temporarily prevents them from writing may bring in their own laptop for use in lessons and must also fulfil these three requirements. Use of a laptop in this way does not constitute a normal way of working and does not impart the right to use a laptop in internal or public examinations.

Policy Last Reviewed: September 2024

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Signed: Phoebe Cameron, Head of Learning support

Date: 13 September 2024