

Commonly asked Questions and Answers for students with Special educational needs and disabilities

How does the Academy identify students with Special educational needs and disabilities?

- A range of approaches are used to ensure that students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are identified as early as possible:
- Students with SEND are usually highlighted upon transition or beforehand.
- Liaison with primary schools (for year 6/7) provides additional information necessary for a smooth transition. The transition team visit all primary schools to meet with the teachers and students in order to obtain as much information as possible prior to the student arriving at John Cabot Academy.
- Parents are able to discuss their child's needs with the SENCO at the parent information evening or arrange an individual meeting if required.
- All students are screened on entry using reading, spelling and cognitive ability standardised tests. Areas of weakness are identified and lead to further investigation into possible SEN.
- All teaching staff have undertaken training on understanding and meeting the needs of students with a range of difficulties. They will raise any concerns with the SENCO and initiate further investigation into the student's difficulties.
- Students can discuss any concerns with their tutors, Pastoral Team leader, and Student Support leader or directly to the SENCO.
- The Academy has staff trained and qualified to carry out a range of other assessments if students are highlighted to us, either from referrals by staff, parents or students themselves. Testing for handwriting difficulties, processing speed, verbal understanding, ASD indicators, amongst others can all be carried out and the results used to implement more specialist intervention or arrangements for examinations etc.

What types of special educational needs are provided for by the Academy?

- John Cabot Academy is mainstream secondary school. As such provision is made for the full spectrum of SEND that can be met within mainstream education.
- The school support students with:
 - Cognition and learning including specific learning difficulties including, dyslexia, dyscalculia , dysgraphia and dyspraxia
 - Communication and interaction - including Autistic Spectrum Disorder and speech, language and communication needs.
 - Sensory and/or physical needs including auditory and visual difficulties
 - Social, emotional and mental health difficulties including anxiety related disorders, ADHD, ADD and Attachment disorder If you are unsure whether JCA can meet your child's needs please contact the SENCO.

How are parent/ carers able to raise any concerns?

- Parent/carers can raise concerns through their child's tutor or Pastoral team leader or Student support leader, which will be passed to the SENCO or other appropriate Learning or Student Support staff. Parents can contact the SENCO directly to discuss any concerns at JCAinfo@clf.uk

Who will oversee and plan the education programme? Who will be working with the child/young person, how often and what their roles will be?

- The SENCO, Mrs Alex Lynett, will co-ordinate provision to ensure it meets the individual student's specific needs. Individual teachers are responsible for making lessons accessible to all.
- Information on students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities is provided by the SENCO to all staff. Advice, assistance and support are also given to all teachers if requested, by specialist staff to help with differentiation, modifying written materials and ideas to ensure accessibility for all pupils. The Academy has a number of Teaching Assistants (TAs) with a range of specialist knowledge/training. TAs work with designated groups of students within a year group. This allows them to gain a clear understanding of their needs and strategies to support. TAs will support students within the classroom. Additionally they monitor and track the progress of their students and liaise with parents. Additional support is delivered in a number of ways depending on student's needs
- Please see the Academy Provision Map above for greater details on each intervention.
- Literacy and numeracy support are delivered by trained teaching assistants. Progress is reviewed and additional support offered if required.
- Other interventions such as handwriting, typing, self-esteem, social skills and anger management are offered on identification of need.

Who will explain this to the parent carer?

- For students on the SEND register the provision will be outlined on the student's SIMS profile. Students in need of a higher level of additional support beyond the classroom will also have an individual support plan. This will be discussed with parents at their initial keyworker meeting.
- Prior to any intervention, parents will receive a letter outlining the nature of the intervention and seeking their permission to initiate the support.
- Subject teachers will discuss and review the support offered in their lessons at the Subject Parents Evening.

How Academy governors involved and what are their responsibilities?

- The school has a dedicated SEND governor. The SENCO provides an annual report to Governor's.
- The progress of SEND students is central to all aspects of teaching and learning, and as such is a part of all governor meetings. Information on arrangements made by the governing body relating to treatment of complaints from parents of students with SEND concerning provision made at the school.

How does the Academy know how effective their arrangements and provision for children and young people with special educational needs are?

- The Academy tracks all students' progress twice a year. At these times the progress of students with SEND is monitored by both the subject teachers and the designated Teaching Assistant. If a student's progress raises a concern, the SENCO, subject teacher and teaching assistant will liaise to create an action plan.
- All interventions are regularly evaluated to ensure they are effective. Initial testing/screening and final testing/screening is carried out to demonstrate

progress. Analysis of wider progress such as subject reports, positive behaviour reports and attendance is carried out to ensure the skills/knowledge from the interventions are transferred to the wider school context. If an intervention is not proving effective it will be altered or replaced.

What systems are in place to inform all staff of the needs and interventions required for a particular child/young person to make progress?

- All students with SEND are identified on staff class lists.
- Information on the nature of their needs and strategies to support them is provided in the SEND register which is available on the Academy's information system. Student Pupil Profiles provide more detailed information on the nature of the needs including a summary of any external agency reports.
- Information arising during the course of the year is e-mailed directly to all teachers as well as being added to the register.

What are the Academy's approaches to differentiation and how these will help a child/young person?

- At KS3 students take a common curriculum. Most subjects are taught in mixed ability classes.
- In some subjects students are grouped according to ability to allow teaching to be targeted to their needs.
- In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) all students study the core subjects of Maths, English (Language & Literature), Science (either Triple or Combined), Statistics, PE and PSHE. When choosing their option subjects, all students must select either Geography, History, Computing, French or Spanish. A range of other academic and vocational subjects are studied in addition to those listed above.
- Subject teachers use a variety of data and information to inform their teaching strategies and provide appropriate differentiation to meet individual students' needs

In addition to the normal reporting arrangements what opportunities are there for the parent carer to discuss the child's/young person's progress with the staff?

- All students at the academy receive reports annually, giving information on their progress. Parents can meet subject teachers, to discuss their child's progress, at the annual Subject Parents evening. Additionally, students with an EHCP will be assigned a keyworker.
- The keyworker will be responsible for monitoring and tracking progress and liaising with parents. This will include the offer of two additional meetings a year. One at the beginning of the year, to discuss the student's action plan, and the other at the end of a year to review progress. All Staff are available to discuss a student's progress if a concern is raised outside the formal reporting times.
- Assessment and marking arrangements are available in the Academy policy. Regular feedback is provided by subject teachers through the departmental assessment and marking procedures. Student's progress is identified and reviewed three times a year. Both departments and the SEND keyworker review progress of identified students.

How will parent carers know what progress their child/young person should be making?

- Student's progress is reported to parents through the academy reporting structure. Reports identify a student's current and target level in all subjects. Parents are invited to the Subject parents evening once a year to discuss progress within each subject. The SENCO is available at every Subject Parent evening to discuss SEND student's progress. Parents also meet with their child's Tutor once a year to discuss overall progress.

What opportunities there will be for regular contact about things that have happened at the Academy?

- The transition from Year 6, offers parents an opportunity to meet their child's tutor and the SENCO at the Year 6 welcome evening.
- A Tutor parents evening in term 1 of Year 7 provides an opportunity to review their transition and raise any concerns.
- Keyworkers will liaise with parents on a regular basis according to need.
- Parents can contact school staff directly via e-mail with any concerns. For subject specific concerns the child's teacher should be e-mailed. The Tutor can support with more general queries and the SENCO is available to concerns around a student's learning needs.

How will the Academy explain to the parent carers how their child's learning is planned and how they can help support this at home?

- Every parent can meet their child's subject teachers once a year at the Parents evening. This will provide advice and guidance on how their child can be supported at home.
- The Academy offers a range of Parental Support meetings which offer advice and guidance on supporting students at home. Specific guidance and advice is sent home to parents on supporting their children throughout their schooling.

How and when will parent carers be involved in planning their child's education?

- Parents of students with an EHCP will have a planning meeting with their SEND keyworker which will outline the Action plan to meet their individual needs. Parents are requested to contribute to the Pupil Profile and Action plan for their child.

How does the Academy manage the administration of medicines and providing personal care?

- All medicines are stored and administered through the medical room by qualified first aiders.
- The Academy is happy to administer medication after a consultation with parents.
- The medical room is available to students at all times to meet their medical and personal care needs. Where a medical plan has been implemented with the school nurse the personal needs will be identified and appropriate actions implemented to meet these.
- Students are allowed to self-medicate for some personal medication such as asthma inhalers and non-prescription pain relief.
- Academy staff without the appropriate qualifications will not be able to assist a student with medication.

What support there is for behaviour, avoiding exclusions and increasing attendance?

- The Ready to Learn Policy outlines the student expectations. This is made available to all parents.
- For students who are struggling with this the Academy provides support through our Student Support Leaders. The aim is to support student identify and overcome their difficulties and remain within the mainstream education structure.
- Support is offered on a range of identified needs such as anger management, self-esteem and social and emotional difficulties.
- The support may be one-to-one or in a small group and will be delivered by the pastoral support team or qualified behaviour mentors dependant on need
- Parents will be informed of all interventions and offered meetings to discuss the needs and progress.
- The Academy aim is to avoid exclusions. However where this is the only option, parents will be requested to attend a meeting to work together to stop further instances.
- The Tutor and Pastoral Team Lead monitor students attendance and will initiate an Individual Support Plan if a serious concern is raised. This will include working with parents to identify causes and put in place support structures to assist a student to improve attendance. If a concern regarding attendance is ongoing the Educational Welfare Officer will be requested to provide additional support.

How will the child will be able to contribute his or her views? How will the Academy support the child to do this?

- Students are encouraged to offer their views in a number of settings.
- Regular Student Voice meetings take place throughout the year on a range of topics. Student's opinions are incorporated into whole school procedures.
- SEND student voice meetings provide students with opportunities to contribute to strategies to meet their needs.
- Keyworkers meet with students, so students can contribute their views to their personal educational needs.
- The Academy facilitates all these meetings to ensure students have an opportunity to contribute their views. Students meet with their tutors daily and this provides a regular opportunity for students to discuss concerns and issues which will then be passed to appropriate staff if required

What other services does the Academy accesses including health, therapy and social care services?

- The Academy regularly works with a range of external agencies to support SEND students. These include:
 - The School Educational Psychologist
 - Inclusion Support Service
 - Bristol Autism Team
 - South Gloucestershire Transitions team offer a range of support especially around transition to post 16 for SEND students. Additionally the Academy will access support from health, social care, physiotherapists, and speech and language specialists as required according to identified Health, Social, Emotional and SEND needs.

What recent training and disability awareness has there been for staff at the Academy and what is planned in the future?

- The Academy carries out a formal programme of 'Continuous Professional Development' for all staff. This includes an annual training session on SEND.
- Training last year focused on supporting students with anxiety, dyslexia, autism as well as guidance on Exam Arrangements for SEND and effective working practices in the classroom.
- Ongoing SEND training is available to teaching staff through regular teaching and learning twilight sessions, Guidance and advice on SEND and strategies to support individual students is available in the school electronic folders.

Does a student with SEND have access to all of the activities of the Academy and how they will be assisted to do so? How parent carers involved in planning activities and trips?

- Our aim is to ensure that every student has access to activities of the Academy and trips outside the classroom. Where there may be concerns regarding the safety or well-being of a student, school staff will meet with parents to ensure an effective action plan is in place.

Is the building fully wheelchair accessible?

- The site is fully wheel chair accessible with lifts available in all buildings.

Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities?

- There are disabled toilets and changing facilities in every building.

What preparation there will be for both the Academy and the child before he or she joins the Academy?

- For students joining the Academy at the beginning of Year 7 a clear transition procedure is in place to work with primary schools, parents and students to assist with transition.
- The Year 7 Transition Lead AND SENCO visit all Primary Schools to meet with the Year 6 teacher and with students.
- The SENCO is available to visit all Primary Schools and will do so when requested by the Primary School to discuss individual student's needs.
- Additional transition visits are available for students who may find transition difficult. These students are nominated by the primary school and attend a structured programme on two additional days.
- All year 6 students attend a one day visit to John Cabot Academy during term 6.
- The SENCO will attend Year 6 annual review meetings for students with a Statement.
- The SENCO is available for to meet with parents during term 6 and Primary schools will advise parents of this if it is appropriate.
- All information from primary school's regarding SEND is collated and available to all teaching staff at the beginning of September. For students who join the school at any other time, information will be made available from their previous setting. An admissions meeting will identify any needs and appropriate support put into place.

How will the child be prepared to move onto the next stage?

- All students receive a comprehensive support structure to make choices regarding the move to the next stage.
- The Academy follows a programme of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) delivered through PSHE lessons, school based and off-site activities and individual guidance.
- The Academy has a dedicated member of staff who assists with careers advice, vocational learning, college placements and work experience.
- In year 9 all students attend the Raising Aspirations careers event.
- During Year 11 a range of staff including tutors, subject teachers and the careers advisor will assist students to make their choices.
- For SEND students, Inclusion staff and keyworkers will assist with making choices and preparing students for the next stage.
- A supported additional visit to college will be arranged to assist SEND students if required.

What information will be provided to his or her new setting/school/college?

Prior to a student moving to college or vocational training, information on needs will be included in the application form.

- On transfer, the Academy will forward information requested by the college on needs, support strategies and exam access arrangements.

How will the Academy support a new setting/school/college to prepare for the child?

- Where additional needs on transition are identified, the Academy will meet with the new setting, arrange taster visits and meet with parents as required.
- Students with EHCPs will receive additional support via liaison meetings between transition co-ordinators and the SENCO

How is the Academy's special educational needs budget allocated?

- The SENCO will identify the needs of individual students or cohorts of students and implement appropriate staffing, resources etc. Students with an EHCP may have additional funding provided to meet specific identified needs by the Local Authority.

What is the decision making process for type and quantity of support?

- The Academy follows the graduated approach to SEND provision as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.
- When a need is identified (Identification process outlined earlier) for a student assessments will be carried out as required.
- The first part of support is for teachers to meet the individual needs within the mainstream classroom. For many students these adaptations allow them to progress and meet their potential.
- If progress is not made despite appropriate adaptations in the classroom students may then require some additional support outside the mainstream classroom. Students/parents will be offered the appropriate intervention. Progress within the intervention and in the wider school is monitored.
- If the need continues beyond the initial intervention the student will be placed on the SEN register and further interventions/support offered according to need.

- In some instances the SENCO may consult with other agencies/support services to find the correct support for the student.
- For a small number of students they may need additional support to address their needs and an application will be made for an EHCP. At all stages of this process the parents will be informed and meeting arranged to allow for direct communication.

Who will make the decision and on what basis? Who else will be involved?

- The decisions regarding about the type and amount of support a student will require will be based on the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice.
- Decisions regarding the most appropriate interventions will be based on identified need and have clear success criteria to ensure effective progress.
- The decision to place a student on the SEND register will be made by the SENCO following discussions and advice from parents, teachers, and support staff and outside agencies.

How will the parent carer be involved?

- Parents will be informed of all possible interventions and asked if they would like their child to participate.
- Parents will be given their child's Student Learning Profile and asked for their input prior to its distribution to teaching staff. Parents with children on the SEND register will have meetings with keyworkers.

How will the Academy judge whether the support has had an impact?

- All interventions are for a set time period with clear evaluation procedures. Entry and exit testing and/or self-evaluations are used to demonstrate progress for individual students.
- All interventions keep accurate records of student's progress within their data bases and staff review these regularly.
- Where progress is not being demonstrated a different approach to meet the need may be adopted. All interventions are regularly evaluated for impact and are adapted or changed if it is felt the intervention overall is not effective.

What is the Academy's approach to involving parents in decision making and day to day school life including for their own child or young person?

- The Academy places great value on the input of parents in all aspects of school life. Improving communication with parent carers is central to the Academy Development Plan. For students with SEND the involvement of parents in decision making is critical and the Learning Support department actively encourages parent participation in all decision making for their child. Parents are informed of all decisions regarding the support provided for their child and at every stage their consent is requested prior to initiating any changes.

How does the Academy listen to parent carers and act on and value their views?

- A number of approaches are adopted to listen to parents and enable them to become involved in the decision making and day to day school life:
- The Parent Focus Group enables parents to be part of the Academy decision making progress.
- The SEND Parent Support group provides a venue for parents of SEND students to participate in decisions impacting on SEND students.

- Easily accessible communication routes to all staff including SEND staff and SENCO allow parents to participate in decisions regarding their own children.
- Parental feedback at all parents' evenings is collated and reviewed.
- The Friends of JCA are a very active group who support the school and work alongside school staff.

Who should I contact first if I want to discuss something about my child?

- Parent carers should always contact their child's tutor in the first instance.

Who else has a role in my child's education?

- Pastoral Team Leader oversee student's day to day life in school.
- Students on the SEN register with an EHCP will have a named keyworker parents can liaise with. Staff within Learning Support may work with a student if a need is identified. Parents will be made aware of this.

Who can a parent carer talk to if they are worried?

- If the concern is regarding a curriculum subject then the subject teacher or Head of Faculty will be able to address the concern.
- If the concern is about a pastoral matter then the Tutor or Pastoral Team Leader should be contacted. If the concern regards a SEND query then the SENCO should be contacted.

Who should a parent carer contact if they are considering whether their child/young person should join the Academy?

- Parent / carers should visit the admissions section for more information.

Who is the SEN Coordinator, what is their role and how/why should a parent carer contact them?

- Mrs Alex Lynett is the Academy SENCO. The SENCO co-ordinates all SEND provision within the school. This includes identifying all SEND students, monitoring and tracking progress of SEND students and supporting subject staff to meet the needs of SEND students.
- If you have a child with an identified SEND or if you are concerned that your child may have a Special Educational Need or Disability you should contact the SENCO directly.

What other support services are used by the school that may be able to help a parent carer and provide them with information and advice?

- The Academy works with a number of external agencies and support services who may be able to offer information and advice.
 - Educational Psychology Service
 - Inclusion Support Service
 - Bristol Autism Team
 - CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental health Services)
- Additionally there is a wide range of voluntary organisations that are able to offer support. Inclusion Services staff will be able to signpost parents to the most appropriate support service.