

LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Audience	All stakeholders – staff, students, trustees, parents and visitors
Status / review cycle	Statutory/Annual
Current review	March 2024
Next review	March 2025
Review committee	Operational Development
Staff lead	Nick Levy, Learning Support Manager and Kate Parsons, Assistant Principal – Student Services
Trustee lead	N/A

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear information and underline the College commitment to Learning Support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and the wider student body when applicable. The aim is to ensure equal opportunities for all students, enabling them to access a broad and varied curriculum and achieve their potential.

The College recognises the importance of study skills and techniques, and uses Learning Support to actively promote these to students making the transition from Secondary education/GCSEs to Sixth Form/A Levels, BTEC. This focus aims to equip students with tools to help prepare them for progression to university, employment or other desired routes.

COLLEGE OBJECTIVE

- The College recognises its statutory duties with regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) for all students and uses its best endeavours to secure and provide the special educational provision the individual student needs.
- Esher Sixth Form College offers an inclusive approach to teaching and learning, with high quality teaching which is differentiated for individuals where the course content and teaching allows.
- The College recognises that Learning Support requires a whole College approach. Staff are made aware of the specific needs of students through the confidential central College database, with differentiated teaching in the classroom to accommodate those needs as a result.
- Esher Sixth Form College is ambitious for its learners with SEN, and focus is on supporting learners to reach positive destinations in adult life. These destinations include higher education, further training or employment.
- The ethos of Learning Support at Esher is to enable all students to work as independently as possible in fulfilling their potential, by providing strategies and techniques that can be practised and honed to achieve this.
- Esher Sixth Form College is able to screen students for any literacy needs or difficulties that may impact on their studies when a student or teacher makes a referral to the department. Students who have disclosed needs are familiarised with key Learning Support Staff through transitional support and early support sessions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OVERVIEW

The Learning Support Manager is responsible for all aspects of learning support in the College covering the identification processing and application of appropriate support. The Learning Support Manager liaises with appropriate departments such as Exams, other Student Services and Admissions.

Teaching staff are responsible for accessing Learning Support notes for their students via the database and responding to their needs appropriately in the classroom.

The Learning Support Team operate the Study Centre, where drop in and one to one or group timetabled lessons take place. This space is also available for students to use and access study materials or specific support and advice.

The Learning Support Team aim to anticipate the needs of College students and have protocols in place should a change in Learning Mentor for a session be unavoidable (such as staff absence).

LEARNING SUPPORT OFFER

The College offers:

- Group study skills sessions for students with identified Access Arrangements (Supervised Academic Learning)
- One to one drop ins
- One to one scheduled mentor support
- Revision technique advice and strategies
- Anxiety support
- Essay writing and planning support
- Dyslexia and literacy support
- Time management and organisational support
- Support in the production of materials

In-class support is provided as a requirement of an Educational Health & Care Plan, and ongoing reviews will be made to ensure growing student independence.

Where possible, the use of assistive technology is encouraged to promote independence. Reading Pens & reading software are provided as the College's normal way of working and a student requiring a reader will be expected to use one of these options unless agreed with the Learning Support Manager. Dictaphones, and voice recognition software are also encouraged where appropriate for specific needs and individuals.

The College is able to provide laptops for short term student use in College; there are many PCs and laptops available for both class work and private study within the College. Students may wish to bring their own laptop in from home at their own risk.

The College requests all documents relating to an individual need prior to commencement of the course, in order to ensure a smooth transition and best inform the teaching staff prior to teaching. Students are encouraged to discuss needs with the Learning Support Manager upon interview and enrolment, to ensure the appropriate measures are put in place.

EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

The College has a duty to admit students with Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) if Esher College is named in the plan as the Post-16 Placement, dependent on a successful consultation having taken place with the relevant Local Authority. All EHCP students are required to achieve the College entry criteria as set out in the College Admissions Policy

Esher College must be consulted on all EHCP applications by the relevant Local Authority. Only upon a successful consultation can students with EHCPs be invited to interview. Local Authorities must be in contact throughout all stages of the application and enrolment process. The College cannot deal directly with parents until this process is complete or a place is confirmed. Any final place at Esher College is dependent on the Local Authority completing the consultation as directed by the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the student achieving the College entry requirements.

In the event that a student enrolls without disclosing possession of an EHCP plan, the College cannot ensure that the appropriate support will be provided.

The college publishes its SEN Information Report on its website as required by Surrey County Council. This is reviewed and updated annually in accordance with "The Local Offer".

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

FE Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges, 16-19 Academies and independent schools approved under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014 have duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The College will make "*reasonable adjustments*" to prevent a student being placed at a substantial disadvantage. The Department for Education define making 'reasonable adjustments' as "to take such steps as is **reasonable** to have to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service".

EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Learning Support Manager is responsible for the application of special arrangements. These are commonly: Extra Time, Readers and Scribes as regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications.

All access arrangements must be processed and applied for by the College prior to March of a student's 6.2 year in order to be granted by an examination board. It is mandatory for colleges to provide and demonstrate sufficient evidence for the application of an arrangement. This is deemed as a student's 'normal way of working', which is proof that a student has trialed and benefitted from a proposed arrangement along with possession of the relevant supporting documentation.

It is an individual's responsibility to provide the College with the appropriate supporting evidence of arrangements at GCSE in order for arrangements to be made at Esher Sixth Form College. It is also expected that a student engages with any targeted support put in place to build a continued evidence of need for a specific

arrangement. If a student fails to engage with this process, or does not disclose previous documents, no arrangements can be put in place.

Engaging with support constitutes attending timetabled support sessions, or meeting with the College support network of learning support, nurse or councillors to regularly review need.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST REPORTS

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) state that a College is under no obligation to accept a privately commissioned report. Such reports are not sufficient evidence to initiate exam access arrangements and the recommendations within them do not have to be acknowledged.

Esher College employ two In-House Assessors who assess students that have been identified through the College SEN identification process. All students are put forward by the Learning Support Manager.

A student may be identified through teacher referral, learning support referral or self-disclosure.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRALS

Students can be referred to or refer themselves to Learning Support through a number of channels. Students can make themselves known at various stages such as admissions interviews, or upon commencement of their course. Students can be referred by a subject teacher at any point in the year to the Learning Support Manager, who will then assess and action any support needed. A student may make themselves known to the Learning Support Team by dropping into the Study Centre anytime during the College day.

The College records all disclosures formally via the College database so that information can be shared with staff that need to know. Every effort will be made to accommodate late referrals or disclosures regarding students and support, but Exam Access Arrangements will not be possible past the internally set deadlines due to the substantial processing and administration involved.

Related Policies:

Examinations Policy

Access Arrangements Policy

EDI Policy

Admissions Policy

Disability Policy (Exams)

SEN Local Offer

KBP: March 2024