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PADDINGTON ACADEMY

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

2026-2027

Context
This policy was developed in consultation with parents/carers, staff and pupils and has regard to: • The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years – 2015 • Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations
Principals: Katie Gillam and Peter Jones
Governor with responsibility for SEND: Catherine Barker
SENDCo: Anna Gordon
SENDCo Qualifications: SENDCOs is currently undertaking the NPQSENCO
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This policy will be reviewed annually
Agreed by Governing Body: October 2026
Review date: October 2027

This policy is in line with our teaching and learning policy and equality of opportunity policy and aims to support inclusion for all of our pupils. The responsibility for the management of this policy falls to the Headteacher, the day-to-day operation of the policy is the responsibility of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo). The Governing Body, the Headteacher and the SENDCo will work closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively.

Rationale

The United Learning Trust is committed to ensuring that the necessary provision is made for every pupil within their schools' communities. The Trust celebrates the inclusive nature of their schools and strives to meet the needs of all pupils with a special educational need and/or disability.

High quality teaching which is adapted to meet the needs of the majority of pupils is the first response to supporting pupils with SEND. Some pupils will need something ***additional to*** and ***different from*** that which is ordinarily available for the majority of pupils, this is *special educational provision* and the pupils in receipt of this provision are classified as *SEN Support.* Each school has a duty to use their best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it.

Paddington Academy will ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEND. We will ensure that all staff are able to identify and provide for these pupils to enable them to partake in all activities in the school in order to reach their full potential, be included in all aspects of school life and feel a sense of belonging to the wider school community.

This policy aims to support all members of staff in providing a framework of support and advice and is based on the underlying principle that we believe:

Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class even where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

Teaching and supporting pupils with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response. In order to achieve this we will work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils, local authorities, specialist providers and other external agencies required to meet the individual needs of our pupils.

Aims and Objectives

Aim

To provide an inclusive, stimulating and safe environment which will enhance the learning of all pupils and help them achieve, to their full potential, in all areas including their development of knowledge, skills and understanding to equip them for the next phase of their education, employment or training. By doing this we hope to raise the aspirations and expectations of all pupils, especially those with SEND.

Objectives

- To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and regularly assess and review the provision that we offer.
- To use our best endeavours to ensure that a pupil with SEN gets the support they need.
- To have regard to the statutory guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- To operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs.
- To implement a graduated approach to meeting the needs of pupils identifies as SEN Support.
- To appoint a teacher responsible for the coordination of SEN provision (SENDCo) and ensure they have the relevant training and qualification to undertake the role.
- To provide training, support and advice for all staff as often as is appropriate and necessary.
- To ensure that all students with SEN are offered full access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum that sets high expectations for every pupil whatever their prior attainment.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers to enable them to make an active, empowered and informed contribution to their child's education.
- To take the views, wishes and feelings of the young person into account, and involve them as fully as possible in decision making about their own education.
- To work collaboratively with external agencies and specialists including those from Social Care and Health.
- To ensure the Equality Act 2010 duties for pupils with disabilities are met.
- In conjunction with the Medical Policy make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions and to have regard to statutory guidance supporting pupils with medical conditions.
- To have regard to any other guidance issued by the United Learning Trust.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) defines SEND as a child or young person who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A pupil has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities generally available in a mainstream school.
- It is important to note that a pupil who has a disability may not necessarily have a specific educational need.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) identifies four key areas of SEND:

- Communication and Interaction

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory and/or physical

These four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that are planned for but we identify the needs of the whole pupil in order to establish what provision is required to meet their need, not just by the category in which they are placed. [School name] will take into account pupils' needs in all four key areas and make appropriate provision, including where this does not impact on cognition and learning.

Paddington Academy will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEND and ensure that parents/carers are informed that SEND provision is being made for their child.

The progress made by all pupils is regularly monitored and reviewed as part of high quality, differentiated teaching. Where concerns are raised about a pupil's progress or if they fall behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the class teacher. This information will be shared with parents as and when appropriate, for example at parents' evening.

Where concerns are raised about a pupil's progress, despite support and high quality teaching, the class teacher will seek advice from the SENDCo. They will then assess if a pupil has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, the SENDCo and the class teacher will take action to support effective learning by removing any barriers and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach – assess, plan, do, review.

The school will notify the parents immediately that SEN Support is being offered and share with them the provision that is being put in place. This will be reviewed termly (three times per year) with the parents, the child and school staff.

The Graduated Approach to SEND

Assess: In identifying a pupil as needing SEN support the class teacher, working with the SENDCo, should carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw on:

- the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information gathered from other areas of the school.
- the pupil's development in comparison to their peers and national data should also be considered along with the parent's views and experience, the pupil's views and, if relevant, advice from external support services.

This assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome so that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their impact is developed. With some areas of SEN, the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need will be the way in which the pupil responds to an intervention.

Plan: Parents/carers, with their child, will meet with the class teacher and/or the SENDCo to decide on the interventions and support to be put in place as well as the expected impact on progress and

development. A clear plan will be produced. The date for review will depend on the level of need present but will be a least once per term. The plan will clearly identify the areas of needs, the desired outcomes, the support and resources provided, including any teaching strategies or approaches that are required and when the review will take place. A copy of the plan will be given to parents/carers and the child if appropriate. The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and will be provided by staff with appropriate skills and knowledge.
Do: The class teacher remains responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis and will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENDCo will support the class teacher in the further assessment of the pupil's needs, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.
Review: The review will take place on the date previously agreed. This review will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions and include the views of the pupil and their parents/carers. Parents/carers will be given information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved with planning the next steps. Where appropriate other agencies will be asked to contribute to this review. This review will feedback into the analysis of the pupil's needs, then the class teacher, working with the SENDCo, will revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, with decisions on any changes made in consultation with the parents/carers and the pupil. Where there is a sustained period of insufficient or no progress, the school may decide to gain involvement and advice from a specialist or external agency. The school will consult with parents/carers before involving a specialist or external agency.

When a pupil has made sufficient progress in their area of need that they no longer require any provision that is different from or additional to that which is normally available as part of high quality and differentiated teaching they will no longer be seen as requiring SEN Support. At this point, through discussion and agreement with parents/carers the pupil will be removed from the school's SEN register.

SEN Provision

The provision offered to pupils requiring SEN Support will differ from pupil to pupil. They may include:

- targeted teaching strategies
- an individual learning profile
- evidence based interventions (Lexonic, ELSA, Lego Therapy etc)
- additional support from another adult
- different materials, resources or equipment
- working within a small group for a specific intervention
- use of alternative technologies
- personal care support
- use of therapies (e.g. MHST or Place2Be counselling)

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHC)

A small number of pupils whose needs are complex and long term, may require a greater level of support than the school can provide from its own resources. For these pupils all the evidence from the graduated approach process will be gathered and a request made to the local authority to conduct an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. This may result in an Education, Health and Care Plan being provided. Paddington Academy will follow their local authority's guidance for this process and involve parents/carers and the child from the beginning.

Please see the guidance from Westminster on Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment:

https://fisd.westminster.gov.uk/kb5/westminster/fis/advice.page?id=sVUDTXfXOQA

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

Regular monitoring of the quality of provision for all pupils, including those with SEND, follows the school's assessment and monitoring calendar. In addition, the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review ensures that pupils with SEND have their individual provision reviewed regularly, at least termly. Additional training, advice and support will be provided to teaching staff where necessary in order to facilitate pupil progress and to meet pupil needs.

Pupil progress is tracked regularly and where pupils are not making sufficient progress additional information is sought and appropriate action taken.

Supporting Pupils and Families

We value and accept the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with them, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified properly and met as early as possible.

In order that they play an active part in their child's development, the school endeavours to provide parents/carers with the relevant information so they can reinforce learning in the home.

At Paddington Academy we endeavour to support parents/carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported and taken seriously should they raise a concern about their child.
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their child's education.
- Understand procedures and documentation.
- Make their views known about how their child is educated.
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making process about special educational provision.
- Parents/carers of a child with SEN support will have the opportunity to speak with the class teachers at least 2 times a year formally. The SENDCo is available via several methods to communicate with parents and review need.

More information about the support offered to parents/carers from our local authority can be found within their Local Offer :

https://fisd.westminster.gov.uk/kb5/westminster/fis/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0

Children in Care

When a child is in care, the carers are accorded the same rights and responsibilities as parents. The school has both an appointed member of staff and a governor for Looked after Children.

Pupil Voice

We hold the views of pupils highly and recognise the importance of gaining genuine pupil views in promoting the best pupil outcomes. Pupils are able to share their views in a number of different ways (appropriate to age and ability).

These views are welcome at any time but are specifically sought as part of their annual review, if they are in receipt of an EHC Plan , as part of their review meetings and at the end of a targeted intervention. We ask all pupils to contribute to the setting of their own targets.

Partnership with External Agencies

The School is supported by a wide range of different agencies and teams. The school's SEN Information report details which agencies the school has worked with in the last 12 months. This report can be found on the school website and is up-dated annually.

Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the Governing Body, Principal and SENDCo, all members of staff have important responsibilities.

Governing Body:

The Governing Body endeavours to follow the guidelines as laid down in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) to:

- Appoint a member of the LGB to advocate for the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Challenge and support the school to use its best endeavours to make sure that a pupil with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's Special Educational Needs.
- Ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN.
- Check that the school has designated a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision – the SEN co-ordinator, or SENDCo.
- Ensure that the school informs parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child.
- Confirm that the school has prepared an SEN Information Report to confirm their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

The Principals

The Principals have responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for pupils with special educational needs. The Principals keep the Governing Body fully informed on Special Educational Needs issues. The Principals will work closely with the SENDCo and the Governor with responsibility for SEND.

In collaboration with the Principals and governing body, the SENDCo determines the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of pupils with SEND.

The SENDCo

The SENDCo takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordinates the provision for individual pupils, working closely with staff, parents/carers and external agencies. The

SENDCo provides relevant professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high-quality teaching for pupils with special educational needs.

Through analysis and assessment of pupils' needs, and by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' achievements and target setting, the SENDCo develops effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching.

The SENDCo liaises and collaborates with class teachers so that learning for all children is given equal priority.

The principle responsibilities for the SENDCo include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND pupils and reporting on progress.
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support – Assess, Plan, Do, Review.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Monitoring relevant SEN CPD for all staff.
- Managing the SEND team.
- Overseeing the records of all pupils with special educational needs and ensuring they are up to date.
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with special educational needs.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Being a point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for pupils with SEND.
- To lead on the development of high quality SEND provision as an integral part of the school improvement plan.
- Working with the Principals and the school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements (see Annex B).

All Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

- All staff are aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Class teachers are fully involved in providing high quality teaching, adapted for individual pupils. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, their understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.
- Class teachers are responsible for the progress and development of all pupils including those with SEND.
- Class teachers are responsible for setting suitable learning challenges and facilitating effective special educational provision in response to pupils' diverse needs in order to remove potential barriers to learning. This process should include working with the SENDCo to carry out a clear analysis of pupil needs, drawing on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil as well as previous progress and attainment

- Class teachers will ensure that any pupil on SEN Support is provided with the required support as outlined in the graduated approach plan and clearly identifies this provision on their class lesson plans for every lesson
- Education SEND support staff will liaise with the class teacher and SENDCo on planning, on pupil response and on progress in order to contribute effectively to the graduated response.

Training and Development

Training needs are identified in response to the needs of all pupils. We have a number of staff with specific training in ELSA, literacy interventions, speech and language interventions, physical therapy and personal care support, as well as trained counsellors.

The whole school attends training sessions led at least half-termly by the SENDCo, who also offers regular briefings on specific students, groups of students and areas of needs.

All members of teaching staff discuss the progress of all pupils and the support and provision that is being offered to them through their subject lead. The SENDCo is involved in these conversations if the progress of a student with SEND is not in line with expectations.

The school offers opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and to offer peer-to-peer support and guidance.

Funding

Funding to support the majority of SEN pupils in mainstream schools is delegated to the school's budget. It is the expectation that schools provide support to their pupils with SEN from their SEN budget. Where the school is not able to meet the needs of a pupil from its budget we will seek "top-up" funding from the local authority. Where a pupil is in receipt of additional funding allocated via an EHC plan (or statement) the school will use its best endeavours to ensure it is spent effectively to meet the needs of the pupil and to deliver the outcomes as set out in the EHC plan.

Storing and Managing Information

Pupil records and SEN information may be shared with staff working closely with SEN pupils to enable them to better meet the individual pupil's needs. Pupil SEN files are kept in a locked filing cabinet and all electronic information is stored on the school system in compliance with United Learning Records and Retention policy.

Complaints

In the first instance, parent complaints about the provision or organisation of SEND are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the School's Complaints Policy.

If there continues to be disagreement with regard to SEND provision the Local Authority should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons with a view to avoiding or resolving disagreements between the parents/carers and the school. This includes access to mediation before tribunal. Parents/carers have the right to appeal certain decisions about their child's special needs made by their Local Authority. Such an appeal is made to the SEND Tribunal. A decision made by a school cannot be appealed to the SEND Tribunal.

Admissions

No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the Equality Act 2010 we will not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. We will use our best endeavours to provide effective educational provision.

Transition Arrangements

Support for pupils with SEN includes the planning and preparation at key transitional phases of education. For students arriving at Paddington Academy we have a comprehensive package of transitional support that is put in. This includes:

- Additional Transition days
- SENDCo visits to primary schools and presence at Y5/6 Annual Reviews
- Detailed information exchange with Year 6 teachers and SENDCOs
- Individual transition plans where necessary
- Liaison with specialist services, where appropriate

Access Arrangements (see Annex B)

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments. At Paddington Academy we do our best to ensure that those pupils who require access arrangements receive them. This is based on diagnostic testing as well as history of need and normal way of working. The SENDCo works closely with all teaching staff in completing the application to the awarding bodies.

This policy will be reviewed annually. It will be monitored by the SENDCo and updated and revised if necessary during the annual cycle.

Annex B: Guidance for Schools on Exam Access Arrangements – Best ways of working

All schools should ensure they have a clear, fair and rigorous approach to identifying, implementing, and applying for appropriate exam access arrangements. Schools should ensure they are familiar with the guidance set out below and in the JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration documents.

What is an exam access arrangement?

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

JCQ – Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments & Special Consideration – 2024

Access arrangements are reasonable adjustments, as defined by the Equality Act (2010), and are specific to the individual pupil. The concessions should be used as part of their daily provision within their education, most commonly within their subject lessons and then subsequently be implemented within exams, whether these are internal school-based exams or formal examinations from awarding qualifications.

The rationale behind Access Arrangements is to allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment/exam
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment/exam

There are a range of concessions that can be implemented during an examination which will allow fair access, reducing disadvantage.

A list of the more common concessions is found below:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Prompter
- 25% extra time
- Computer reader
- Human reader
- Use of a word processer (Computer or laptop)
- Scribe
- Modified papers
- Smaller examination room
- Enlarged papers
- Coloured overlays
- Reading aloud
- Bilingual translation dictionary (+ 25% extra time)

All exam concessions have to be assessed and agreed to prior to any formal examination. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. Each application must be considered carefully and individually and may vary from exam to exam. For certain exam concessions there may need to be a formal medical diagnosis provided by a consultant, in contrast there are other concessions where a medical diagnosis is not required. These are determined each year by JCQ.

Predominately, exam access arrangements will be put in place for pupils who have a formal diagnosis, however, there can be circumstances where this is not the case, and the student may have the following difficulties;

- Slow/inaccurate reading
- Concentration and attention
- Anxiety
- Working memory
- Processing
- Illegible handwriting
- Communication
- Visual tracking
- Hearing

JCQ set out clear principles on the timeline for determining whether a pupil meets the stringent criteria and which staff members are accountable.

- *The SENDCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.*

- *Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.*
- *Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment.*
- *The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.*
- *The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.*

The full annual JCQ guidance can be read here – https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/JCQ-AARA-24-25_FINAL_2024.pdf

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

For each individual exam concession there is expected evidence that needs to be submitted and showcased to be the pupil's normal way of working. Examples of some of the evidence are listed below, however these will be dependent on the concessions being applied for and the annual JCQ guidance. Each individual subject should be evaluated (e.g maths, science, geography), and it may be the case after investigation of normal way of working that the pupil only receives a concession in certain subjects, due to the assessment method. The SENDCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

- Form 8 report from a Specialist Teacher or Specialist Assessor completed no earlier than the summer term of when the pupil was in year 9
- Form 9 report outlining a history of need and normal way of working
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate and declaration it is the student's normal way of working
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests, standardised psychometric testing
- A level 7+ medical professional (Consultant level) report or communication

When results from assessor testing is used, the school will review all scores from these tests, however the predominant scores that support an application for exam concessions are Standard Age Score which will then support understanding of how the pupil is performing relative to a national sample of pupils of the same age. This is the scoring that JCQ encourage and set criteria against.

Normal way of working

With most exam concessions there is a requirement that an exam concession can only be used in a formal examination if the concession is deemed the *normal way of working* for the pupil. It would be expected that the pupil regularly uses their concession within their lessons, internal assessments and has done so for significant period of time. Consistency is key. There should be individual review points with key stakeholders to ensure this provision is required, suitable and allows fair accessibility. For certain exam concessions it would be expected the pupil has training on how to utilise their concessions outside of the classroom in order for them to feel confident in using their arrangement within the lesson and then in formalised examination settings. The table below provides examples of how normal ways of working may occur for certain concessions.

Exam Concession	Examples of normal way of working
Word Processor	A pupil uses a small laptop daily for subjects where there is extended writing for note taking and independent tasks. The pupil

	also utilises a desktop computer for their homework. They have been using a laptop in their everyday learning for 18 months.
Rest Breaks	To support a pupil's fine motor condition, they take a break from writing by hand if the written task in a lesson is over 15 minutes and they experience discomfort. Sometimes they may carry out exercises set out by their occupational therapist to reduce discomfort and increase stamina.
Coloured overlays	A pupil carries their own individual light blue overlay to each lesson and uses the overlay when required to read text and worksheets within their lessons. They have done this since they joined the school in year 7.
Prompter	A pupil is re-directed (prompted) to continue their independent task within their lessons by their teachers if they lose focus or have not written anything for over 4 minutes. The teacher taps on the desk to regain their attention to the task. This provision has been in place for the student since they were diagnosed with ADHD 6 months ago.

Checking the Qualifications of the Assessor(s)

Specialist assessors must be used to conduct the assessments in line with JCQ regulations and guidance. They have to have a Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET) and a Certificate in psychometric testing, assessment and access arrangements (CPT3A).

It is the SENDCo's responsibility to check the assessor/s are appropriately qualified to carry out the testing and evidence of the assessors' qualifications are held on file for inspection purposes. Schools should ensure they make clear in any local policy who their specialist assessor is.

Individual student EAA identification & timelines

Each school is responsible for investigating whether an individual pupil requires a concession and should communicate with stakeholders to fulfil this process fairly. Students should be identified and put forward for further internal assessor investigations through a variety of methods. These are outlined below;

- The student had exam arrangements in their KS2 SATS – this information is obtained through the primary transition process.
- Baseline screening in the September of Year 7 using MidYIS and NGRT testing
- Parental discussions
- Intervention observation
- Educational SEND support staff referral
- Subject teacher referral based upon in-class work and assessments
- Information from previous school/education provider

It is crucial to note that historic exam arrangements **do not automatically roll over** into each key stage, most importantly KS4. Needs and normal ways of working may change, alongside the formal

JCQ criteria, for each exam concession. For example, a student who was in possession of a human reader for their KS2 SATS due to a below average reading speed score may not qualify for a human reader in their GCSE examinations because their reading speed may have increased to above average, therefore they no longer meet the JCQ criteria.

The authorisation granted by the Awarding Bodies lasts 26 months, therefore it is prudent to assess and apply for EAA no sooner than the April/May of Year 9 in order that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

A reapplication must be made in Year 12 (KS5) in order to cover Year 12 and 13. Per the JCQ guidelines, it is possible to "roll forward" the application for EAA, however the student ideally should be re-assessed to provide up to date information for the centre to determine if the concession is still required, including whether it is their normal way of working.

JCQ set the deadline for applications for exam concessions. This differs each year but usually falls in half term 3 or 4 (February or March). The deadline is significantly earlier for modified language papers. If a student is sitting any formal examinations in Year 10 this deadline would also need to be met.

The formal KS4 and KS5 application for exam concessions is carried out online via Access Arrangements Online (AAO), with specific information requested by the examining bodies for each individual pupil. Usually, the approval is instant but, in some instances, further information relating to the student and their need is required.

As per the JCQ guidance, each individual student must have a secure file with all their supporting evidence and completed paperwork. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form as well as the Data Protection confirmation form by the SENDCo prior to the processing of the online application. This must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, in either paper or electronic format. This is conjunction with the school's data protection policy and GDPR. A formal unannounced JCQ inspection of the school will also take place at least once per year during the exam period. During this inspection the school will be asked to discuss their EAA process and supporting evidence for students to ensure it is compliant.

In-Year Admissions

For students who do not join the school in the Autumn term of Year 7, there is a necessity to liaise with the previous educational setting to ensure historic exam concessions are identified, (if any) and discuss the student's normal way of working. The school will need to undertake baseline assessments and then potentially complete further investigations to determine whether exam arrangements are required. Based upon the JCQ guidance, the SENDCo at the new setting will have final decision making on whether an exam arrangement is appropriate.

Post-16/18 education providers

To support the continuation of exam concessions in a student's future education and training, schools should provide a summary letter of which exam concessions a student received in their final

formal examination series, as part of their results pack. With permission from students and parents/carers, the school should liaise with Post-16/18 providers if required for further clarification.

The Role of the Principals

The Principals of the school must:

- ensure that the SENDCo is fair, unbiased and professional in the process of assessing and determining which students meet the criteria for exam concessions.
- Budget for adequate resourcing for formal testing, technological aids and staff training.
- Encourage a whole school culture where all staff see their role in supporting the investigation and fulfilment of exam concessions.

The Role of the SENDCo

The SENDCo of the school must:

- Be aware of the annual updates in the publication of JCQ's Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
- Ensure any external assessor is suitably qualified and has access to all historic information about the pupil prior to testing them.
- Complete all necessary paperwork thoroughly and in a timely manner.
- Work collaboratively with the centre's named exams officer to meet all formal deadlines for AAO applications, hold and store the required evidence and logistically plan for the resources required for formal exams (e.g. laptops, human scribes, separate rooms).
- Actively listen to parental queries and staff referrals surrounding exam access arrangements.
- Take into consideration external professionals' opinion and suggestions.
- Communicate to staff on which students have exam concession entitlements.
- Train all staff annually on the EAA process and accompanying criteria.

The Role of the classroom teacher

The classroom teacher must:

- Be aware of which pupils they teach who have exam concessions.
- Put in place provision to support exam concessions within their classroom.
- Provide timely feedback to their Head of Department and SENDCo if they believe a pupil should be considered for further EAA investigations.

How will parents/carer know their child has an exam concession?

Parents/carers must be notified if the school wishes to carry out internal investigations, as well as then finding out the results and outcomes from these investigations. The school must keep parents, as well as students, abreast of any changes to exam concessions, alongside discussions if the student is not routinely using their concessions, meaning it is no longer their normal way of working, which ultimately puts the concession in jeopardy.

Prior to any formal examination, a reminder should be sent to parents detailing which concession/s their child is entitled to.

How will the student know they have an exam concession?

If is student is internally assessed (after appropriate permissions are sought) there should be clear dialogue with the student on what the assessments are for and discussions about the outcomes of the results with them. If they are awarded an exam concession, there should be an explicit discussion with the student on how this works during normal lessons and then when formal assessments take place. Prior to formal assessments, a reminder to the student should take place by a member of the SEND team on how to utilise their EAA. If a student is not consistently using their entitlement, check in conversations must take place, with follow up calls to parents.

How will teaching staff know which pupils have an exam concession?

Teaching and support staff must be able to access the SEND register where it identifies exam concessions for individual students. In addition, this must be recorded on the students' individual MIS record. Teaching staff should be routinely reminded via whole staff briefings and then within their subject meetings on how to implement exam concessions into normal classroom working. Senior leaders, alongside the SENDCo are expected to routinely observe and monitor lessons to ensure exam concessions are embedded, utilised and consistently applied to ensure they are habitual for formal assessment.

Examination Rooming

For the vast majority of students with exam arrangements, they will conduct formal examinations in the standard setting within the school e.g. Sports hall. Within the location, consideration should be given by the SENDCo and Exams Officer on where to best sit students with concessions, which may include individual pupil discussions.

In rare circumstances, some pupils, particularly those who may use a human reader, reading aloud or having a scribe may need to complete their examination in a smaller alternative room with fewer students to not disrupt the other pupils. It is not common place or reasonable for students to be in a room by themselves for their examinations.

The decision to accommodate alternative rooming is made by the SENDCo, Exams Officer and specialist assessor. Such concession requires reflection on whether this is the pupil's normal way of working for previous examinations. As per JCQ's guidance, this should only occur if there are long-term and substantial medical conditions or social, emotional and mental health needs. For such cases, a room should be assigned where smaller numbers of students will sit their exam with similar exam concessions or needs. Being anxious or nervous about examinations does not warrant the need for an alternative room - these are usual emotions before examinations.

Private Educational Psychologists' and Therapist Reports

Due to current NHS waiting times and an increase in the private diagnosis market, an increased number of parents are paying for private assessments. These assessment reports are costly, thorough, but often there is no communication between the school on how the pupil presents with their learning or discussion on previous intervention. This means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As per the JCQ regulations, a school must be consistent and fair in their decisions and ensure that no student is *'either given an unfair advantage or be disadvantaged'* by any arrangements in place. Routinely there are recommendations within these reports that the pupil assessed should be awarded certain exam concessions, these can, at times, conflict with the JCQ regulations around normal way of working.

The school should always read and take into consideration a private assessment provided that:
a) the parents have informed the school that a private assessment is taking place or has taken place;
b) the details of the private assessor, including details of their appropriate qualifications, have been passed on to the school; and
c) the private assessor makes formal verbal or written contact with the SENDCo to discuss the student and the school's perspective of her potential needs.

A private assessment does not instantly mean an exams concession will be implemented. Normal ways of working will still have to be proved and demonstrated, alongside an internal assessment of need. The school's assessor and assessment process should always take precedence with decision making of awarding any EAA. This follows the guidance set out by JCQ in that SENDCo's are only the determiners in confirming arrangements.

Word Processor Policy

As per the statutory requirement of JCQ, each school must have their own individual word processor policy, which provides guidance and clarity on when word processers would be used by students within the classroom and for examinations. It also provides the formal arrangements for doing so and keeping students safeguarded.

Late requests

Only in rare and exceptional circumstances can individual student's late request be made after the deadline has passed. Schools will have to make direct communication with the specific examining bodies and each case should be considered carefully.

Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment requiring authoritative support and at the discretion of the examining body. This is not a formal exam access arrangement, and individual school policy, alongside JCQ criteria, would need to be followed.

Right of Appeal

If a student is not deemed to meet the criteria of an exam concession, yet it is felt the student has complex needs where a concession is deemed appropriate, but the application has been rejected online, the school can directly appeal via the examining bodies. Parents and students cannot appeal decisions through JCQ, all forms of appeal must go through school.

Centre malpractice

If exam concessions are provided to an individual where they have not met the criteria, staff have falsified documents or not followed the appropriate process, this is deemed to be malpractice.

If a centre (school) is found to be guilty of malpractice there will be sanctions put in place to the individual and the centre, with the severest sanction being withdrawal of the centre to conduct qualifications.