

## **St Albans Independent College – Special Educational Needs Information Report 2016/2017**

### **How does the College know if students need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?**

- At interview, the Principals will meet both the student and the parents to ensure that all information is shared. This allows for successful transition into the College.
- Following receipt of the completed enrolment form, the College will write to the student's previous school to request records including SEN and assessment information.
- After each of the College tests, student progress is monitored and students meet with their mentors. This gives an opportunity for mentors and students to discuss agreed progression grades and to set both personal development and academic targets.
- Cause for concern forms are available for subject teachers and other staff to pass on their concerns with respect to learning needs, progress or wellbeing of students. These are checked by the SENCO and passed on to mentors. Any significant issues are then discussed with the student and/or parents, as appropriate.
- Parent Consultation Evenings in October and February are an opportunity to discuss progress and any existing or emerging needs. Parents and students meet with mentors but further meetings can be arranged with subject staff if considered necessary.
- Where parents have concerns before parent consultations, mentors or the SENCO can be contacted.
- If a student joins part of the way through an academic year, the College will write to the previous school for references, reports and SEN information.

### **How will the College staff support my child?**

- The support received by students at the College is individually based on their strengths, needs, interests and aspirations.
- The pastoral team, including the Principals, Assistant Principals, the mentoring and administrative staff look after all aspects of the students' needs throughout the academic year.
- College classes are kept small to ensure that student's learning experiences can be personalised, whilst maintaining high expectations and celebrating success.
- All teaching staff are made aware of the student's needs and are expected to make appropriate provision in the planning and delivery of their lessons. All teachers are responsible for the progress and personal development of every student in their classes, and for providing varied and appropriately differentiated resources.
- Students have access to assistive technology in class and for use in assessments.
- Students are tested for exam access arrangements in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).
- The Principals and leadership team oversee the SEND policy and SEND provision.

- The wellbeing of students is monitored by all staff and mentors. Concerns are passed to the SENCO who liaises with the Principals to determine if the College Educational Psychologist or other external professionals need to be referred to for appropriate advice or supportive intervention.
- The mentors meet with students each half term to discuss progress, effort, motivation, attendance, punctuality, organisation and wellbeing. The mentors also discuss what has gone well, where students could do better and review agreed progression grades and targets. When setting targets, mentors discuss ways in which specific outcomes can be measured as successful. They will work with students to ensure they know what is expected of them to demonstrate improvement.
- For students with an Education, Health and Care Plan, or where they have significant additional needs, the SENCO will meet with them on a regular basis to provide individual guidance and support. As well as the ongoing review of provision, students and the SENCO will also plan future transitions into employment, apprenticeships, or other further or higher education.

#### **How will I know how my child is doing?**

- Formal written reports are sent home twice a year. These will contain information on progress, effort in class and with homework, organisation, punctuality and attendance.
- All staff are responsible for monitoring students' progress and for providing interventions where necessary. The SENCO will be responsible for initiating and assessing the success of any interventions.
- Mentors and the SENCO can be contacted for parents to check on the progress of their child.
- Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will have an annual review of SEN provision.
- For students who are on the College SEN register, the SENCO will be responsible for overseeing the setting and reviewing of targets with mentors. The SENCO will also be present at parent consultations and other meetings, if necessary. Parents may request the attendance of the SENCO at any meetings taking place at the College.
- The College will provide relevant curriculum information to parents.
- The SEND Policy is available to view the College website.

#### **How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?**

- Provision for each individual student is closely matched to their needs.
- All students have a key information sheet which shows strengths, needs, interests and aspirations. This is made available to all relevant members of staff.
- Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan also have a one page profile, written jointly by the SENCO and student, which gives information about learning and needs from the student's perspective.
- Interventions include the use of 1:1 teaching, additional lessons, exam support, study skills, social skills and wellbeing workshops.
- Laptops are available for use in lessons and in exams. Additional resources and equipment will be provided by the college to help support the learning of students, such as flash cards, coloured overlays for reading, voice recorders or electronic readers if applicable.
- Where a student has an EHCP, the support they are given will be reviewed regularly, with a formal annual review with the LEA.

- All students discuss ways to improve during mentoring meetings. These are reviewed by the SENCO and passed on to subject staff as appropriate. The key information sheet for each student is reviewed following each mentor meeting.
- All students are tracked and their progress is reviewed each half term.

#### **What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?**

- All social, emotional and mental health difficulties are passed on to the SENCO. These can be addressed either with more frequent mentor meetings, by referral to the College Educational Psychologist or a specialist counsellor.
- Where students are experiencing social difficulties, the SENCO or mentors will arrange for another student to act as a buddy. Records of buddies are on the key information sheets.
- For students with social anxieties, the key information sheet also records a friend or group of friends who can be called upon if required.
- The College has a clear Behaviour Policy.
- There are sessions throughout the year to help support with study skills, including exam anxiety.
- The College Educational Psychologist runs mindfulness sessions in small groups for the students who have significant anxieties.
- Information and self-help booklets are displayed, or available to take away, in both buildings.

#### **What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the College?**

The College has links with:

- The College Educational Psychologist
- Social Services
- Connexions
- External mentors and counsellors
- Young Carers
- CAMHS

#### **What training have the staff supporting children and young people with SEND had or are having?**

- The SENCO is currently studying for the National SENCO Award.
- Staff have received training on effective mentoring.
- The SENCO is planning to offer online training on Autistic Spectrum Disorders to all staff.
- The SENCO is planning training on supporting literacy.
- The SENCO is negotiating the support of the Hertfordshire Specialist ASD Team to train and support staff.
- Staff have received Mental Health First Aid training.
- Staff have received Suicide awareness training (safeTALK).
- The mentors and other staff are being offered Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training (ASIST) before the end of the academic year.
- The Principals, Assistant Principals and the SEN team have received CAMHS referral training.
- The College regularly reviews training offered to staff based on student needs.

### **How will you help me to support my child's learning?**

- Regular emails are sent to parents about targeted sessions at College.
- Parents are invited to all consultation evenings.
- Parents may also contact the College to arrange appointments with mentors, the SENCO or the Principals at any time throughout the year.
- Parents are given feedback each half term to engage their support in helping students meet agreed personal and academic targets.
- Where concerns have arisen at the College, mentors will contact parents to make them aware of the issues and to discuss ways in which they can support us in addressing the difficulties.
- Students have a homework diary which can be used to communicate between home and College.
- The Educational Psychologist will gain written parental permission to work with their child. Where appropriate, the EP will also work with the family and make home visits to support the whole family unit.
- Parental attendance is expected in Annual review meetings for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan, so that their views and concerns are always considered.

### **How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?**

- Parents are invited to termly consultation evenings with mentors. The SENCO is also available at consultation evenings for students on the SEN register.
- Mentors, the SENCO or the College Principals can be contacted at any time during the academic year to celebrate success or discuss concerns.
- When a student is identified with needs, parents will be contacted to inform them of any planned interventions.
- Where the College EP is involved with any student, parents are also invited to participate and provide information.

### **How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including College trips?**

- All students will be able to participate in off-site activities including College trips.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made if needed to ensure all activities and trips are inclusive.

### **How accessible is the College environment?**

- There are wheelchair accessible classrooms within the College.

### **Who can I contact for further information?**

- Contact details can be found at [www.stalbanscollege.co.uk/contact-us](http://www.stalbanscollege.co.uk/contact-us)

### **How will the College prepare and support my child to join the College, transfer to a new school or college or to the next stage of education and life?**

- Students are encouraged to visit the College prior to enrolment. They can attend lessons and meet staff and students.
- We ensure that information from previous schools is obtained following enrolment to enable efficient transition into the College.
- We provide careers guidance throughout the year.

- UCAS seminars are provided for students applying to or planning to apply to University.
- Workshops on CV writing, letters of application, and interview technique provide students with the necessary skills to apply for employment or apprenticeships.
- We provide references to any College or school where a student is hoping to transfer.
- We pass on all necessary documents to any future school or College.

**How are the College's resources allocated and matched to student's special educational needs?**

- The College provides small classes which allow for effective learning. The ratio of students to teachers never exceeds 7:1
- If appropriate, students may be taught on a 1:1 basis.

**How can I find information about the local authority's local offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?**

- [www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer](http://www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer)