



## **SEN Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. How do you support pupils who have an EHCP?**

We know that pupils with SEN may have had 1-1 teaching assistants or small nurture groups in Primary school. In our Secondary School, we support our pupils to access mainstream lessons without having a 1-1 teaching assistant sitting next to them because we know that they need to become independent learners by the end of their education. There are no exceptions to this. Our pupils who have an EHCP do have an allocated Graduate Teaching Assistant, but they will not sit next to them in lessons. Instead, they will meet them frequently during the week to work on EHCP targets and to discuss what is happening for the pupil at the moment. The pupil will be taken out of lessons for short periods for this to happen.

If a pupil with an EHCP needs extra support to learn a specific skill, such as to work on their speech and language or their working memory, they might also join a 1-1 intervention a few times a week to practice that skill. When they improve enough, they will stop doing that intervention so that they can go back to their classes and be taught by subject professionals.

Pupils with an EHCP will also have a Pupil Passport, which is a document sent to teachers and given to pupils. It has on it a list of strategies that teachers can use to help the pupil in class as well as a list of strategies that the pupil will remember to use in class.

### **2. How do you support pupils who have a diagnosed Special Educational Need?**

Pupils with SEN will also have a Pupil Passport, which is a document sent to teachers and given to pupils. It has on it a list of strategies that teachers can use to help the pupil in class as well as a list of strategies that the pupil will remember to use in class.

As with pupils who have an EHCP, a pupil on the SEN register will have a Graduate Teaching Assistant who they see once or twice a week to work on specific targets that they need help with. Again, if they need extra support to learn a key skill, they may also join an intervention until they get better at that skill. For example, if a child has a diagnosis of Dyslexia and struggles with spellings, they may join the spelling intervention to help them to learn the spellings of keywords and some strategies for remembering spellings according to phonological rules.

### **3. What else might be different to Primary school in terms of support?**

As mentioned above, we aim to support pupils with SEN to become independent and successful learners. There are certain strategies that might be familiar from Primary school which we do not implement in AJK Secondary as they would be incompatible with the learning environment. For example, we do not allow 'time outs' where pupils leave the classroom at will. This is a safety issue- our secondary site is a big space and we do not want pupils to be unsupervised. We also do not have a 'time out room' or 'sensory room' because we do not have any spaces available in the school for this purpose. We do not run 'Lego therapy' nor allow pupils to have 'fidget toys'. We instead offer pupils a variety of interventions that can support them to manage their emotions and behaviour by explicitly teaching them about discipline (for example in Character sessions) and helping them to find strategies that work for them (for example, Solution Focused Therapy sessions). Please bear this in mind when considering the transition from Primary to Secondary school.

#### **4. How do you keep in contact with parents?**

If your child has an EHCP, you will receive a weekly email from your child's GTA explaining how their week has gone, what they have worked on in interventions and what they are going to work on next week. Your child's GTA will also sometimes call you on the phone and can be contacted via the school office should you need to speak to them. They will also be present at your child's Annual Review Meeting each year, and at the termly Progress Meetings with your child's tutor.

#### **5. Do you offer a reduced academic curriculum?**

We want our pupils to have the best education possible, and we believe that that education should come from teachers who are subject specialists in their fields so we don't offer a different curriculum for pupils with SEN. Instead, we support pupils to access mainstream lessons and we train teachers to create lessons that our SEN pupils will access. All of our Year 7 pupils learn French and all of our Year 11 pupils sit 8 or 9 GCSEs. We do not offer any qualifications other than GCSEs at Key Stage 4.

#### **6. My child has difficulties with behaviour; what allowances do you make for this?**

We believe that every child can learn to have good self-discipline so that when they leave the school they can manage their emotions and their interactions with other people. This is incredibly important whether a child has SEN or not. For this reason, we have the same behavioural expectations for pupils with SEN as pupils who don't. We don't lower our expectations for pupils with SEN. Our SEN pupils attend Catch Ups after school on the day if they make the same mistake repeatedly in a lesson. Our GTAs will talk to our pupils if they are getting a lot of after school Catch Ups to help them to reflect and improve for next time, and the pastoral team will communicate with you at home so that everyone knows how we can support them to learn from their mistakes.

#### **7. I think my child may have an undiagnosed Special Educational Need. What can I do?**

If a pupil is struggling on some specific aspect of their work, they will be given a Pupil Passport, which is a document sent to teachers and given to pupils. It has on it a list of strategies that teachers can use to help the pupil in class as well as a list of strategies that the pupil will remember to use in class. If the pupil continues to not make the progress we would expect them to make, they will join an intervention for a term or more to help them to learn that skill. Normally, this means that they are taken out of class for 10-15 minutes each day to work with a GTA 1-1. If the pupil still does not make progress, we will consider consulting external professionals who will help us to understand their learning needs.

Please note that as a school, we are unable to diagnose pupils with ADHD or Autism. You will need to take your child to the GP and ask for CAMHs referral if this is relevant- only CAMHs can diagnose these conditions at this time. As a school, we do not currently have any staff that are able to diagnose dyslexia or dyscalculia. If you have had your child assessed privately, we would ask to see the paperwork so that we are best able to support your child in school.

*If you still have a question regarding your child's application to Ark John Keats Academy, please contact Alice McIsaac via email: [a.mcisaac@arkjohnkeatsacademy.org](mailto:a.mcisaac@arkjohnkeatsacademy.org) or call the school office and ask to be put through.*