

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Policy Statement:

The East Kent College Group has a commitment to provide all students with fair and equal opportunities to support their educational aspirations. This policy conforms to the expectations of the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice. Details of related college policies and the definition of SEN and Disability are on page 6. The college ethos is to promote student independence in all aspects of learning by supporting students to take responsibility for using the additional resources available.

Additional needs for which provision is made at the college

Specific Strategies for supporting learning are provided across all colleges within the East Kent College Group for young people and adults with a range of support needs and conditions, some of whom will have an Education Health and Care Plan.

The college is committed to providing flexible learning programmes that are designed to meet the needs and aspirations of young people with additional needs: basic skills, English language and life skills.

Specific conditions and the support that is available is detailed within the East Kent College Group Accessibility Statement for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. External professionals provide advice, training and individual therapy programmes where required.

Process for identifying and assessing students who require Learning Support

For applicants without an Education Health and Care plan:

All young persons who apply for a course at college can identify a support need on the college online application form. This will identify the need for a course interview and support meeting. A member of staff from the Additional Learning Support team will meet with the applicant to identify the support required and strategies to meet needs. A subsequent conditional offer may be made, dependant on exam results, support needs being met and safeguarding matters being followed up. Curriculum and support staff are responsible for making any 'reasonable adjustments' should this be a prerequisite to a student's start at college. All information disclosed for the purposes of providing learning support to students will be stored on the college network in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the student's agreement to share information.

Support staff will write a Personalised Plan for a young person who has a high level of need that clearly requires support and interventions beyond the usual college support offer. The Personalised Plan will be submitted at the earliest possible stage with the high needs funding document to the

Local Authority prior to the young person's start. Agreement to fund support from the Local Authority is essential in order to meet the young person's needs. Any delay to this process, either on the college's part or the Local Authority, will impact on the young person commencing their programme of study.

For applicants with an Education Health and Care Plan: Higher Level of Need

Decisions on the placement of students with an Education Health and Care Plan are made through the statutory consultation process, which is led by the Local Authority, whose responsibility it is to make the final decision on where a young person with an Education Health and Care Plan is to be placed. This process commences in the autumn term prior to the young person leaving school. On the occasion of a young person making a direct application to the college and then disclosing that they have an Education Health Care Plan the college will notify the local authority who will then formally consult with the college.

Learning Support staff work in partnership with schools by attending year 9 to 14 annual review meetings where the Education Health and Care Plan and transition opportunities are discussed. Early meetings with schools are held to identify the young people who are planning to progress to college.

Following this, subsequent meetings are held to ascertain the activities that will be established in order that an effective personalised transition programme can be put set in place. A range of activities may be organised to support a young person to transition into the next stage of their life.

There may be exceptional circumstances when the college is unable to provide the appropriate level of support to enable the young person to start or continue at college. This may be due to safeguarding concerns for the young person, other students and staff. In all instances the college will first consider any "reasonable adjustments" that can be made to enable the student to attend college.

On identification of the need for a young person to have a Personalised Plan, support staff will contact the school and other services to obtain additional information and request that the young person attend college to undertake an assessment of need, ability and level of vulnerability. This information will contribute to the writing of the Personalised Plan.

Evaluation and effectiveness of the provision for students with Additional Learning Support Needs

Judgements on the quality and effectiveness of provision are made by Ofsted within the Ofsted cycle of inspections. Annually, all areas within the college undertake a self-assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of provision for which the governing body are notified of the outcomes.

Regular observation of teaching and support contributes to the effectiveness of teaching and support.

Assessing and reviewing the progress of students with additional needs

Students' academic and support progress is continually monitored with formal student review meetings. Parents/ carers are invited twice a year to meet with curriculum staff to discuss student progress. Students with an Education Health and Care Plan or Personalised Plan will have two in-year reviews and a formal annual review for which the student is prepared and able to contribute to any changes made. At any stage additional support needs will be reviewed and extra support may be available to enable the student to progress. Some young people with a greater level of learning need may require parent/ carer support with their decision making.

A more detailed assessment may be undertaken to inform additional resources and alternative approaches that may be required to enable the student to progress.

Details of the outcome will be documented and shared with parents/ carers and teaching staff. If at any stage a student demonstrates a continued high level of need, the student (if under 19 years old) can request that the college applies to the Local Authority for an Education Health and Care Plan. The college will work with parents and Carers to enable them to engage with the young person's learning while at college through the 'Parent Portal'.

Teaching students with additional needs

The college has a comprehensive process for supporting lecturers to meet student needs with the Learning Support staff being available to inform teaching and support staff on aspects of differentiation. The partnership of support and the curriculum contribute to the quality of teaching and learning. All Student Support documents are held on the Student Information System and are available for all teaching and support staff. This identifies the support strategies to enable the lecturer to differentiate teaching to meet the student needs. Students with Education Health and Care and Personalised Plans will be supported to build on their social skills through personal and social achievement activities where the plan identifies a need. Where appropriate and for the majority of young people with support needs, the college promotes independence and the reduction of support from staff.

Adapting the curriculum and learning environment for students with additional needs

Adaptations can be made to enable students to access the curriculum e.g. producing work in Braille, individualised timetable, use of overlays and coloured paper. Adaptations can be made to the facilities to enable safe access for students with sensory and or physical needs.

In addition, a Supported Learning area is available for students with global learning delay and cognitive learning difficulties at Broadstairs, Folkestone and Canterbury Colleges with provision being available at Folkestone and Canterbury for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Broadstairs College has secure provision for students with learning difficulties, challenging behaviour and complex needs. Each college has a retreat facility for students who experience a high level of anxiety, some of whom have language, communication needs and Autism. All colleges have support for students with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Equipment and facilities to support young people with additional needs

External professionals may be called upon to advise on adaptations to equipment or facilities: Qualified Teacher for the Visually Impaired, Kent Association for the Blind. For highly specialist communication equipment the college will seek the advice of the Local authority Communication and Assistive Technology Team and other external agencies. The college has a range of equipment including a Sensory Room at Folkestone and Canterbury Colleges, details can be found in the Accessibility Statement for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

Funding support: for students with a higher level of need

The respective local authority* has the responsibility for managing the allocation of High Needs Funding for students with a high level of support need (young people aged 0 – 25 years who are in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan) and other young people who have a clearly identified high level of need where, in a few cases, an exceptionally high level of funding resource is required. The ESFA funding guidance requires Further Education colleges to provide up to £6,000 per year of resource for students with a learning difficulty and disability. The Local Authority should provide a higher level of funding for those students whose resource needs are above £6,000. This funding can provide: staff support, specialist equipment and specialist services where required. The amount of support required is personalised to enable each student to make good progress. The full list of interventions are detailed within the Accessibility Statement for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

*A looked after young person (16-19) has their high needs support funding paid by their original home local authority. At 19, the local authority where the young person is resident has responsibility for paying for the high needs support. If a young person with an Education Health and Care Plan aged 16-25 moves from another local authority with their parents/carers to Kent, the original local authority should formally transfer the responsibility for the Education Health and Care Plan to Kent's SEND education office.

The College will notify the original local authority of a looked after young person who has made an application to the College to seek confirmation of funding.

Enabling students with additional needs to engage in work experience and extra-curricular activities

The college will endeavour to support all students to access extra-curricular activities. Following a risk assessment, the college, where reasonable, will use the resources available to provide additional support to enable the safe participation in the activity where there is evidence of need.

Welfare Support for all students

All students are allocated a mentor who has responsibility for student welfare. The mentor and liaises directly with parents /carers. A college counsellor can be available, with support from the Well-being centre. A referral can be made to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Early Intervention and Psychosis Team, with access to the safeguarding team if required. Therapists advise and train staff in specific feeding and personal care programmes to meet the care requirements of students with physical needs. Students can contact the Support Services staff regarding funding welfare support: including bursary, travel costs, support with paying for consumables relating to their course and childcare. Prior to starting college, parents /carers of young people with a high level of need contact the local authority travel department to discuss support with travel.

Qualifications and training related to support roles

- Managers, Heads of Supported Learning, Tutors and Facilitators: teaching qualification and an enhanced qualification related to their specific areas of responsibility.
- Lead Learning Support Practitioners: Level 3 qualification in Learning Support or equivalent, specific area of study related to conditions.
- Learning Support Practitioners: training related to frequently identified conditions and either a level two or three qualification in Learning Support.
- Job Coaches: Travel training.

Dealing with complaints

Should there be a cause for complaint parent/carers are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Learning Support Manager and the Head of Supported Learning for the relevant college to resolve the issue before making a formal complaint. The college's complaints procedure can be found in the college's complaint policy.

For students who have an Education Health and Care Plan there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision made by the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category are the responsibility of the Local Authority and cannot be investigated by the college. The college encourages parent/ Carers to take impartial guidance on the long term implications if the application for an Education Health and Care plan is declined by the Local Authority.

Working with external agencies

The East Kent College Group engages with the following partners who provide support for students:

- Independent Speech & Language Therapists
- Kent Communication Assistive Technology Team
- NHS Occupational Therapists/Physiotherapists
- Kent Association for the Blind
- Hi Kent
- IASK (independent advice service for parents /carers and young people)
- KCC Independent Travel Trainers
- CAMHS
- Qualified teachers for visual and hearing impairment
- Virtual school for LAC

HE Students

Any applicant for Higher Education with a support need will need to declare this via UCAS. The student will be advised by Learning Support staff, where appropriate, to apply for Disabled Students Allowance funding from Student Finance England. Once approved, the applicant will be assessed by an HE recognised Assessor when the funding is approved. Support will be put in place as deemed appropriate by the Needs Assessment Student Finance England.

14-16 students

The additional support policy and assessment processes apply for young people aged 14-16. There will be some additional considerations which will be referenced in 14-16 policies.

Looked after Children

The college has a commitment to provide additional learning support for young care leavers, to support access and engagement with learning in order to facilitate retention and achievement. ESOL/International students undertaking cross college vocational programmes are able to access the services of the Learning Support team who offer pastoral support for students often coming from traumatic situations. Students are able to access counselling support. The college has a Counselling Team to help students deal with a wide range of difficulties.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Admissions Policy
- Accessibility Statement for Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
- Safeguarding Policy
- Procedure for the Administration of Medication
- Procedure for the Management of Risk
- Student Health and Wellbeing policy
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Process
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Procedure for Health Care Needs
- Procedure for Students with an EHCP
- Procedure for the management of support for Students Challenging Behaviour & Complex Needs
- Procedure for Physical Contact

Local Offer

The Local Authority's "local offer" is published on the Kent County Council KELSI website.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- a. Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- b. Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions SEN Code of Practice (2014, p4).

Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' SEN Code of Practice (2014, p5).