



“Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures”

## **Student Support Policies and Procedures**

### **SEND Policy**

Aim: The policy covers those responsibilities detailed in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Blackpool Sixth Form College adheres to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice and in particular the responsibilities required of Colleges as detailed in Chapter 7 of the Code of Practice. The Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on duties relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The Equality Act sets out the legal obligations post-16 institutions have towards disabled young people. The college will not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled young people and will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- 1.2 A young person has a special educational need or disability (SEND) if they:
- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
  - have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for other, or
  - have a disability or health condition, which requires special educational provision to be made.
- 1.3 Blackpool Sixth provides support for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. We support students with a variety of needs which include, but are not limited to:
- Physical and mobility difficulties
  - Sensory impairments (visual and hearing)
  - Autism Spectrum conditions & communication needs
  - Learning Difficulties (including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Auditory Processing Difficulties)
  - Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders
  - Medical conditions
  - Mental health conditions
- 1.4 The college has a culture of high expectations that expects those working with young people with SEND to enable them to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes, whether that is through quality first teaching in terms of high-quality everyday personalised teaching and through reasonable adjustments for a disabled young person or special educational provision for a young person with SEN.

- 1.5 Provision for each student with SEND will be carefully managed following the graduated response of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' process.
- 1.6 All teachers are teachers of SEND students. Teaching and supporting students with SEND is therefore a whole college responsibility, requiring an inclusive response, in the spirit of the college's core values. Some students' needs can be met through high quality differentiated quality first teaching and learning and may not require any additional learning support (ALS).
- 1.7 At Blackpool Sixth, experienced, dedicated staff provide additional learning support to students, as required. The Additional Learning Support team includes qualified teachers and a dyslexia tutor, who work with students on a one to one basis or with small groups. Additional learning support workers support students in their classes where this is needed and there is a college Counselling Service to support students with emotional needs and mental health difficulties.
- 1.8 The Additional Learning Support team is based in the Focus Centre, in the main college building. All students are welcome to speak to a member of the team if they have any concerns. If a parent/carer feels that support may be needed at Blackpool Sixth, they should contact the ALS team on 01253 394911, or email [ALS@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk](mailto:ALS@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk).
- 1.9 Some students may only require monitoring by the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team, with minimum levels of support and/or reasonable adjustments in terms of exam access arrangements. Other students may require more specialised, regular support, either in-class or out-of-class support, in order to meet their needs.
- 1.10 Throughout the planning and provision of support, the young person will be provided with information to enable them to be fully involved in all decisions. With the student's consent, parents/carers will be involved in decisions. An advocate may be involved, where necessary, to provide information, guidance and to support the student in their decision-making process or on-going support.

## **2. Admissions and transition**

- 2.1 Blackpool Sixth is committed to welcoming all students who meet the published entry requirements. It is recognised that some applicants, due to exceptional circumstances, may not have the opportunity to undertake GCSE exams in the standard way and consequently may not be expected to achieve the minimum entry requirements for either a level 2 or level 3 programme of study. The process for dealing with exceptional enrolments is outlined in the Admissions Policy, available on the college website:  
<https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>
- 2.2 The college will provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the provision available to support young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This information will be available to young people and their families on the college website and through the local authorities local offer. This can also be found on the college's SEND Information report which can be found on: <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>
- 2.3 Young people will receive confidential and impartial information, advice and guidance to support them in making decisions about their programme of study, support needs and the outcomes they wish to achieve.
- 2.4 All applicants will have the opportunities before enrolment, at entry and at subsequent points, to declare whether they have a learning need, a disability or a medical condition. If a student makes a declaration the ALS Administrator (or any other member of the ALS team) will make contact with the student and their parent(s)/carer(s) to assess how their support needs will be met. Any further assessments will be differentiated and proportionate to the likely level of SEND.
- 2.5 The college has an information sharing agreement with partner high schools, so that we can be best prepared to meet each student's individual needs and ensure a successful transition into college life.
- 2.6 During the admissions process, a key member of the ALS team with responsibility for transition will liaise with local authorities and health and social care professionals to make sure that needs of students are effectively identified and supported.
- 2.7 A 'tell us once' approach is used throughout the admission process so that families and young people do not have to repeat the same information unnecessarily.

2.8 Blackpool Sixth provides information, advice and guidance to support all students to access appropriate study programmes and make well-informed choices which lead to positive progression. Students with SEND will be provided with additional support as required, such as;

- ALS key worker assigned to support with transition
- Support from a member of the ALS team at interview
- Support during subject taster sessions
- Support during New Student Day
- Transition visits
- Bespoke transition activities
- An individual enrolment meeting with a member of ALS team, to ensure the right study programme and support is in place

### **3. Assessing what support is needed**

3.1 Where a student is identified as having SEND, the ALS Administrator will bring together all the relevant information from the school, from the student, from parent(s)/carer(s), from those working with the student and from any screening test or assessment that has been carried out.

3.2 A planning meeting will be held with the student and a member of the ALS team to discuss the student's aspirations for the future, the evidence of need and to agree the nature of the support, the expected outcomes of the support and a date for reviewing the support.

3.3 Plans will be developed with the student, who may be accompanied to the planning meeting by a parent(s)/carer(s), an advocate or other supporter. The support and intervention will be selected to meet the student's needs and aspirations. Support will be aimed at promoting student independence and enabling the student to make good progress towards employment and/or higher education, independent living, good health and participating in the community. Examples of support include;

- Allocation of an ALS Key Worker to monitor progress
- Assistive technology
- Specialist tuition
- Notetaker
- Interpreter
- One-to-one and small group learning support

- Health care plan and/or Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)
- Independent living support
- Accessible information such as symbol-based materials
- Fitness to study/Maintaining Learning Contracts
- Access to therapies (for example, counselling, speech and language therapy)

3.4 Some students may complete an initial screening during induction to identify possible SEN. Further assessments to identify a possible SEN can be provided, but are not available on demand. ALS Tutors will determine when these are required and the type of assessment that is needed in order to make informed decisions about appropriate support.

3.5 Some needs may emerge after a student has started college. Students who fall behind in their studies will have their needs identified by teachers and progress mentors and appropriate support provided. It should not be assumed that they have SEND just because they have lower attainment than the majority of their peers.

3.6 Teachers and/or progress mentors who suspect a student may be having difficulty because of a potential SEND will refer to the ALS team via email ([ALS@Blackpoolsixth.ac.uk](mailto:ALS@Blackpoolsixth.ac.uk)). Members of the ALS team will then work with the student, teachers and other staff to assess the need and agree support.

#### **4. Exam Access Arrangements**

4.1 The ALS assessment team has responsibility for assessing students' eligibility for exam access arrangements where a concern has been identified or raised. This may be informed by the literacy screening, normal way of working, history of need and evidence of relevant long-term and persistent needs, as well as information on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) which would lead to students being at a substantial disadvantage were arrangements not put in place. Further assessment and other profiling systems are used to provide further evidence where required. This may include referrals are made for educational psychologist assessments and other external professionals, where appropriate. See Exams Policy for further details.

## **5. Recording and reviewing support**

- 5.1 Colleges keeps an up-to-date record of support to inform discussions with a student about their progress and support. This includes accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over a student's time in college and its effectiveness.
- 5.2 All students supported by the ALS team will have their progress and support reviewed at least 3 times per year. ALS Key Workers and students will meet to conduct the review which will consider the student's progress and any changes to the student's own aspirations, which may lead to changes in the type and level of support.
- 5.3 Where a student has an EHCP plan and/or a has support from the local authority's high needs funding, the college will cooperate fully with the local authority to review the plan as a minimum every twelve months, including a review of the student's support. Prior to a review, information will be gathered from students, parents/carers and professionals about the student's progress and then circulated to everyone invited to the review at least two weeks before the review meeting. Following the review, a report of the meeting will be sent to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting.

## **6. Preparing for adulthood**

- 6.1 The college prepares all students to achieve successful long-term outcomes in adult life. Staff at the college will work with students with SEND to raise their career aspirations and broaden their employment horizons. A wide range of approaches will be used, such as taster opportunities, open day visits, work experience, mentoring, use of role models and inspiring speakers.
- 6.2 The college's Futures Team provide careers and education information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) and support for the progression of vulnerable students and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes researching options, making applications, preparing for interviews and support with work placement/work experience.
- 6.3 Blackpool Sixth aims to enrich students' studies with extracurricular activities. Our dedicated enrichment programme (6Xtra) is designed to extend students' interests in a range of activities. All students, regardless of learning need, or disability, have the same opportunity to participate in our enrichment activities, including trips, visits, societies, and student representative bodies, such as the Student Council and Progress Mentor Representatives. Where necessary, the



activity organiser will liaise with the ALS team to ensure that students are fully supported during the extracurricular activity.

6.4 The ALS team, working together with progress mentors, teachers, careers advisors and other professionals will help students with SEND realise their ambitions in relation to:

- higher education, employment with training and/or self-employment
- independent living – enabling people to have choice and control over their lives and the support they receive
- participating in society – including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- being as healthy as possible in adult life

6.5 Each review will identify the support the student needs to achieve these aspirations to best prepare them for adult life. This will include the education and training needed to develop skills which will prepare students for work, such as communication, social/emotional development, using assistive technology or independent travel training.

6.6 Staff at the college will work with other agencies such as social care, health services or other specialists for help or advice on the best way to support a student with SEND to realise their ambitions and prepare for adulthood.

6.7 ALS key workers will ensure all students are aware of the support available to them in higher education, employment with training and/or self-employment. This will include details of the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and how to claim it.

## **7. Improving practice and staff training**

7.1 The Head of Additional Learning Support, working with a team of ALS Tutors, will work with curriculum and support teams across college to ensure that all staff have a good level of knowledge across all staff of different types of SEND. This will be achieved through the college's staff learning and development programme, including annual refresher training.

7.2 Curriculum and support staff at college should contact the Head of Additional Learning Support or the Deputy head of Additional Learning Support if they need help in identifying a student's SEND, are concerned about their progress or need further advice.

- 7.3 As a mature and self-critical organisation, Blackpool Sixth will actively seek suggestions in order to improve its services. Anyone not satisfied with the level of service in terms of support/provision for students with SEND should feel able to approach the Head of Additional Learning Support to address their concerns promptly and directly. They should be confident that they can report the matter openly and be sure that the college will deal with the dissatisfaction courteously, sympathetically, fairly and objectively. A concern or complaint can be made in person, by telephone or in writing. For more details, see the Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy available on the college website, <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>

## **8. Accessibility of college site/buildings**

- 8.1 The Blackpool Sixth Form College is fully accessible to wheelchair users or those with restricted mobility. All buildings have lift and ramp access and there is parking reserved for disabled drivers. The college's accessibility plan can be found on the college website: <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>
- 8.2 The Additional Learning Support department is based in the Focus Centre. The Focus Centre is a safe and welcoming environment that we encourage vulnerable students to use as a quiet study area or at breaks/lunchtime.
- 8.3 Blackpool Sixth has a robust Health and Safety Policy to ensure that all students are kept safe while on college premises. The college has a team of qualified first aiders on site. Staff organising any trips or visits complete a robust risk assessment and where there are any specific support needs they liaise with the Additional Learning Support department to ensure those support needs are met. The Health and Safety Policy is available on the college website, <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.
- 8.4 The college has a comprehensive Fire Safety and Emergency Policy to make sure that students who have restricted mobility can evacuate the college in case of emergency. As soon as the college becomes aware that a student has a mobility issue, a member of the Additional Learning Support team finds out the nature of their mobility needs and draw up a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).

## **9. Monitoring provision**

9.1 The Head of Additional Learning Support is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the college's SEND provision. This is achieved by:

- Observation as part of the college's quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment (TL@B) process
- Half-Termly audit of support records and reviews
- Weekly attendance report
- Half-Termly review of progress of SEND groups using predicted grade data
- Student questionnaires
- Student focus groups
- Parent/carers questionnaires
- Annual self-assessment report (SAR)

## **9. Other Related Policies**

Admissions and marketing policy

Compliments, concerns and complaints policy

Children looked after policy

Equality and diversity policy

Exams policy

Fitness to study policy

Teaching, learning and assessment policy

Health and safety policy