Disability Policy specific to Exams

Rationale

The Exam Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). These arrangements ensure equality of access for all students to examinations regardless of any disability. The term Additional Learning Need is used as an umbrella term within the school to incorporate ALL students known to or attending our Student Progress provision including those pupils identified as having SEND. The policy forms an integral part of our teaching and learning philosophy, which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil her full potential.

What are exam access arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in a national/ public exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam. This can be in the form of:

- **A scribe**: a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say.

- **A reader**: a trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.

- **ICT:** access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access. In some exceptional circumstances students may be entitled to use a spell check enabled computer.

- **Extra time**: students may be entitled to an allowance of up to 25% depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Teacher. In some exceptional circumstances students may be entitled to an allowance up to 50%.

- **Rest breaks:** where students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.

- **Prompter**: where a student has little sense of time or loses concentration easily, a trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

Scribe	Where there is a physical disability; where their writing:- • Is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time
Reader	Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
ICT	Where there is a physical disability; their writing would be:- • illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time
Extra Time	Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average
Rest Breaks	Where a student has a physical disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.
Prompter	For a student who loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time.
Separate Room	For a student with a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it isn't appropriate for them to sit an exam in the main exam hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also need to sit an exam in a separate room.

Access arrangements for examinations and controlled assessments will be planned and implemented where there is sufficient evidence that individual learners have additional educational needs. Access arrangements are a form of additional learning support that ensures that a learner is not significantly disadvantaged during assessments due to an additional educational need, thereby ensuring equal opportunities. Access arrangements are not intended to give candidates an unfair advantage, but to give all candidates the equal opportunity in which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding. Procedures and practices relating to the awarding of access arrangements are governed by the statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments to provision under guidelines produced by the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ).

Procedures
How would students be identified for Exam Access Arrangement?

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT's
- From baseline testing completed at the start of Year 7
- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral
- Information from Primary schools

KS2 SAT EAA
Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn't necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

Baseline Testing in Year 7
All students in Year 7 are tested at the start of the Autumn Term. We use the Edinburgh Reading Test and G L Assessment Dyslexic Screener. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. *Student Progress* will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place.

Parent Referral

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, *Student Progress* will investigate their concerns by sending a "round robin" to the child's teachers to gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

Teacher Referral

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to *Student Progress* where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All of the students current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Teachers are asked to refer students to *Student Progress* initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. *Student Progress* will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

The role of the SENDco/ Senior Leader responsible for whole school SEND provision:

- The SENDCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.
- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of SENDCo/specialist teacher.
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.
- **Rooming** for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?

- All subject teachers and support staff are given access to the Exams Access Arrangements (EAA). This can be found on the SEND register, in the SEND folder on the 'staff/share' drive. The SEN register and Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) are updated whenever students become entitled. Staff are informed of any changes to the SEND register and Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) via internal school communication systems. It is updated (on a weekly basis or) whenever changes have been made to the students entitlements. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy and are shared on a need to know basis.
- Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

Internal subject specific tests

Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as a 'normal way of working.'

To allow all students with an additional learning needs equality of access to internal subject tests and exams the following reasonable adjustments are followed:

- Faculty Learning Directors are responsible for ensuring that all students in their subject areas have full equality of access to all internal tests and mock exams.

- Where and when appropriate, *Student Progress* can provide a separate room, access to ICT, a reader and a scribe with the required amount of notice. In the case of extra time, subject teachers, where ever possible, should ensure students who need extra time are able to do this in the normal learning environment. This will require other students to remain quiet, whilst the student completes the test in exam conditions.

- When this is not possible, the teacher should make arrangements with the *Student Progress* team for the student to complete the test in the *Student Progress* faculty. Subject staff are asked to liaise with *Student Progress* two weeks' prior to an internal tests/mock exam so that appropriate support can be provided for students who require it during class tests/assessments/exams.

What support is given to students with EAA from the Student Progress Team?
Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively. Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give.

Students with extra time are given sessions with a member of the *Student Progress Team* on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

All teachers are given access to the list of students with EAA, and they are asked to give *Student Progress* two weeks' notice before they assess students so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams. Students who have a reader can be supported by the member of the Student Progress team (teacher) supervising the test. *Student Progress* can provide a separate room, access to ICT and a scribe with the required amount of notice.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly through the use of data from Progress Reports, Trackers and exam results.

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