



Special Educational Needs *Working Policy*

Aims

- To ensure that The Rushden Community College meets the needs of students identified as having a special educational needs.
- To provide appropriate support to students thereby enabling them to make active progress.
- To fulfil statutory requirements with regards to identified students.
- To enable a strong partnership and commitment with all relevant bodies.

At Rushden Community College we regard all students as equal, regardless of sex, race, ability or background. The purpose of our Special Needs policy is to ensure that all our students receive the educational provision that enables them to make the best possible educational progress. We recognise that some students will, permanently or for short periods, have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of students of their age. This may be due to learning, medical or behavioural difficulties. Some students may require special provision because they are of significantly higher ability than their age group. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum to which all students have access. We are committed to maximum integration, where students are treated as individuals and are expected to achieve. Students with special educational needs will be encouraged to actively participate in their own learning and become independent and responsible.

It is our firm belief that everyone in the college community, governors, staff, students and parents, has a positive and active part to play in achieving this aim.

The governors will fulfil their statutory duties to students with special educational needs, by securing adequate resources, establishing a policy that has regard to the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of students with special educational needs and participating in appropriate training.

Admissions Arrangements

For students without a statement of special educational needs there is open admission in line with the L.E.A. guidelines to Rushden Community College. However, to help with transition, meetings are held between the Head of Year Seven and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from Rushden Community College and teaching staff at junior Colleges, to discuss support already provided and how best this can be continued. Great care is taken to transfer detailed support records and individual education plans for students from College to College. This information is important for maintaining a register of students with special educational needs as specified in the Code of Practice.

Identification and Assessment of Students with Special Needs

This operates at two levels:

1. Identification begins with use of Junior School records, including Key Stage 2 test results. We also receive information from junior schools on reading ages, English and Maths levels. All Year Seven students are tested shortly after arrival to confirm transfer information and to establish a common base level of performance. The tests used include
 - (i) a reading experience test, with performance related to age
 - (ii) a spelling test, giving a spelling age,
 - (iii) a cognitive ability test which indicates a student's ability to think using language, number and non-verbal skills.

Students with English as an additional language are carefully assessed to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

2. Whilst at Rushden Community College, students may develop difficulties of behaviour, a medical problem or may suffer from learning difficulties which require support. Teaching staff complete an initial referral form to register concerns, in line with 2001 Code of Practise. The stages of the Act are set out below:

The Code of Practice Staged Approach

College Action

- identifies that a student has needs that appear more severe than others in the peer group.
- parents are informed.
- the SEN Co-ordinator and tutor gather information and take initial action to address those needs forming an individual education plan in partnership with the student and their parents/guardians.
- additional help is given in the classroom or through withdrawal sessions.
- careful records are kept.
- the student's progress is monitored and reviewed with parents and staff.

College Action Plus

- if a student's progress continues to raise concerns even with the college action then the SEN co-ordinator will inform parents and invite outside agencies to provide specialist help.
- careful records and close monitoring of progress may result in the student improving and moving back to College Action level or it may necessitate a referral request to the LEA for statutory assessment.

Statement

The Local Authority considers the need for a statement of Special Educational Needs and, if appropriate, makes a statement and arranges, monitors and reviews provision.

Most students with special needs do not proceed beyond College Action level and are taught in mainstream classes. There is continuing assessment of their needs and progress by (a) monitoring and modifying individual education plans, (b) monitoring by Form tutors and Learning Development Faculty of academic records, in accordance with college assessment policies, (c) regular reviewing of students with statements, (d) on-going parental contact and involvement.

Parent Partnerships

Rushden Community College values highly and responds positively to parents' views. We will endeavour to involve parents in all decisions about their students. The views of parents will be sought at all stages of assessment and provision. All correspondence will be recorded. Parents are informed about their learning and encouraged to participate fully in their student's education at all stages. Every student/parent is offered a one to one interview with a member of the faculty at least annually.

Staffing

The Leadership Group link for learning support is Mrs West. Regular meetings are held to enable cross-curricular issues to be discussed.

Mrs West is an Assistant Headteacher and part of her responsibilities is to manage the Learning Support Unit (Refocusing Group).

Barbara Winter is the Head of Learning Development and is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Her responsibilities can be summarised as:

- Management of the Learning Development Department.
- Overseeing the smooth operation of the college's Special Educational Needs policy.
- Leading the SEN faculty links group.
- Liaising regularly with Heads of Year and Senior Management Team pastoral link.
- Advising subject teachers and developing their understanding through training.
- Developing individual education plans with consultation with the subject teacher for students at College Action; College Action Plus and Statement levels.
- Keeping detailed records of students on the special needs register.
- Liaising with outside agencies, including the educational psychologist, medical and other support agencies (SN-IP and Connexions).
- Liaising with parents of students with Special Educational Needs.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility towards students with special educational needs, and a variety of teaching methods and assessment procedures are in place in order to accommodate students with special educational needs.

Ensuring that there is close liaison with primary schools and colleges to ensure a smooth transition across phases.

The Organisation of Support

Internal Support

We believe that all students are entitled to a high quality of teaching, enabling full access to the national curriculum. We also recognise that students have individual needs. We provide:

- Individual tuition to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy and I.T. skills.
- Small group tuition to raise attainment in literacy skills.
- In-class support to increase student's access to the curriculum.
- Regular progress checks to identify under-achievers.
- Mentoring of under-achieving students is carried out by the Leadership Group. Some students also have an adult other than a teacher recruited from business or industry as a mentor.
- Learning Development to assist in differentiating work, advising departments on materials and strategies.
- A social skills/self esteem group organised in consultation with the IPS Service.
- Counselling as part of our pastoral responsibilities.
- An equal opportunities policy.
- Anger management support.
- A medical problems service for students.

We have a Refocusing Group for students whose needs are not met by our existing provision. The target group is primarily for those at Key Stage 3 who cannot cope with mainstream education. The group supports a small number of students at any time.

External Support

Rushden Community College has firm links with the following agencies, who assist us to diagnose difficulties and give advice when drawing up individual education plans. Some may also work directly with students in college.

- Children's and Families Service which includes:
 - Educational Psychologist
 - Specific Difficulties
 - Behaviour Team (BACIN)
 - Mental Health
 - Hospital & Outreach
 - Physical Impairment
 - Visual Impairment
 - Hearing Impairment
- The County Medical Service, including school doctor and nurse.
- Hearing and Speech Therapy unit and Occupational Therapy.
- Community Police Officer.
- Education Welfare Officer.
- Child Adolescent and Family Counselling Service.
- Social Services.
- Special Needs Assessment Panel (SNAP).
- Connexions.
- EAL and Cultural Service.

Voluntary organisations: Special Needs – Involving Parents (SN-IP), Spurgeons Service 6

Resources

We provide a senior teacher with 0.3 FTE teacher for Refocussing centre and a special educational needs co-ordinator and 1.2 FTE support teacher from the monies from the statements, the special needs audit funds, and from the college budget. Remaining support will be provided by learning support assistants. We currently employ ten full time and five part time learning support assistants.

There is a well stocked suite of rooms. Resources include:

- A wide range of books, materials, tasks and other resources to suit students of differing abilities.
- A range of I.T. equipment with integrated learning programmes and access to the Internet.
- An appropriately stocked Special Educational Needs resource base.
- Library provision which reflects the needs of students with Special Educational Needs.
- Learning Support Unit, including integration arrangements.
- A library of reference books for staff use.

In-Service Training for Staff and Governors

When drawing up our staff development plan we will ensure that issues connected to special needs will be given a high priority. Included in our termly report to governors, we will include details of any relevant training of staff and Learning Support Assistants for that term.

The Head of Learning Development (SenCo) will be available to assist departments in the development of INSET to address particular issues in their area of the curriculum.

Complaints Procedure

If you have any complaint about the special needs provision in the college for your child, please contact the Head of Learning Development (SenCo) in the first instance. If you are not satisfied, refer the matter to the Headteacher who will investigate and contact you within seven days. If it has not been resolved to your satisfaction, it will be referred to the Special Needs Governor, who will consider the complaint at the next governors meeting.

Evaluation of Success

The governing body will use its best efforts to ensure the best possible provision for Special Educational Needs at Rushden Community College. There is a nominated governor for Special Educational Needs (Mrs A Capper) who will monitor the policy in action.

The governing body will evaluate the success of this policy by enquiring how effectively students with special educational needs participate in the whole curriculum and all activities.

In order to make judgements the governing body will:

- Receive regular reports on the provision available for students with special educational needs. These reports will include details of staffing, any new initiatives, links with outside agencies and comments on our current provision.
- SEN INSET will be reported on via the annual professional development report to the Governors Personnel Committee.
- Consult OFSTED inspection reports.
- Take into account the views of parents.
- Discuss details of any complaints.

The Governors' observations on the above matters will form the basis of the Special Educational Needs section of the annual report to parents.

Reviewed: October 2007

Next Review: October 2009