



# **Exam Access Arrangements Policy**

## 1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out the framework for explaining the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with Additional Needs Support, including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (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 their full potential whilst being as independent as possible.

## 2. Application

- 2.1. This policy applies to ALL students from and including y10 onwards but all lower school students identified by their classroom teacher as experiencing difficulties in completing exams or accessing exams should be given informal access arrangements in the classroom to build up evidence for y10.
- 2.2 As our school implements the new changes in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014, (CoP), we decided to keep a separate Exam Access Arrangements list for students who **ONLY** receive support from the Additional Needs Team for exams, (both internal and external). This means that many students who may have been on the SEN register under the previous CoP legislation at School Action or School Action plus now fall into Wave 1 or Wave 2 provision. Whilst your child is receiving special provision, this provision is not all of the time and to remove the label of SEN, the Exam Access Arrangements list still allows us to track and monitor needs and provide support. The term Additional Needs in our school is an umbrella term which incorporates ALL students being monitored at Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3 by the Additional Needs Team if they receive additional support. Wave 3 provision includes those pupils identified as having SEND and are on the Additional Needs register receiving on going outside agency support or increased personalised interventions.

## 3. What are exam access arrangements?

- 3.1 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. At Carr Hill High School this is in the form of Read and Write Gold which is a computer programme that incorporates a reader and scribe facility whilst enabling the student to have as much independence as possible.
- Read and Write Gold: access to a computer for an exam, (if appropriate), 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.
  - For students who have English as an Additional language, EAL, where they have been in this country for less than 2 years – ever, are entitled to a bilingual dictionary in external exams BUT this must be supplied from the Additional Needs Department and cannot be the student's own personal dictionary. The SENCo monitors EAL students and if we have a confirmed known entry date to the country, we can offer this facility.

## 4 When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

4.1 Scribe facility on Read and Write Gold: 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

4.2 The Reader facility on Read and Write Gold

Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).

4.3 CT may also be used 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

4.4 Extra Time

Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average

4.5 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.

4.6 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.

Due to the separate rooms rules, 'two empty classrooms either side of the classroom where the exam is being sat', at Carr Hill High School and Sixth form Centre, we are only able offer this facility for the aforementioned conditions or similar conditions that fall into 4.6 .

All other students who qualify for Access Arrangements will be encouraged to use Read and Write Gold, a programme which will be familiar to them and they will have received training.

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 provision at wave 1, 2 or 3, that ensures that a learner is not significantly disadvantaged during assessments due to an additional educational need, (which will mean that the classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants and the SENCo are tracking, monitoring and reviewing closely but does not necessarily mean your child is placed on the SEN register but will be on an Exam Access Arrangement list 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).

When an application is made for Exam Access Arrangements parents/carers will be informed via a letter explaining why.

## 5 Procedures

### 5.1

- 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

### **5.2 KS2 SAT Exam Access Arrangements - 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.

### **5.3 Baseline Testing in Year 7**

All students in Year 7 are tested at the start of the Autumn Term. We use the Progress in Maths and Progress in English tests along with an Assessment Dyslexic Screener - IDL. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The Assistant SENCo will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place.

### **5.4 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, The Additional Needs Team 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.

### **5.5 Teacher Referral**

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to the Additional Needs Team 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 the Additional Needs Team initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. The Additional Needs Team will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

## 6 Responsibilities and procedures

### 6.1

- It is the classroom teachers role to collate evidence of any student given informal exam access arrangements in class to help build up a picture of a 'student's normal way of working'. This evidence provides the SENCo with the knowledge to arrange testing for exam provision by the Exam Access Arrangements Specialist teacher. If the results of the specialist teacher's assessments show a student qualifies for Exam Access Arrangements, an application to the exam board will be made for this provision.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that any informal provision made available to them is used as there will be no evidence to show to the Exam Access Arrangement Inspector if they do not make use of the provision offered, such as Read and Write Gold as their 'normal way of working'.
- It is then the role of the SENCo aided by the Additional Needs Administrator to:
- Inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and or any students who require special arrangements during the course and in any assessments/exams.
- Working with staff to remind them of the need to collect evidence of a 'student' normal way of working' thus ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCo/Assistant SENCo/specialist teacher and classroom teachers.
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

### 6.2 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.

### 6.3 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 is emailed to staff and also put into the staff shared area. The Exam Access Arrangements register will be updated whenever students become entitled.

Staff are informed of any changes to the SEND register and Exam Access Arrangements register via internal school communication systems. The Access Arrangements register is updated 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.

### 6.3 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:

- All teachers are responsible for ensuring that all students in their subject have full equality of access to all internal tests and mock exams.
- Where and when appropriate, the Additional Needs Team can provide access to Read and Write Gold which offers the facility of a reader and a scribe with the required amount of notice – 10 working days notice from the subject teacher to their Cluster Teaching Assistant.
- 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 may 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 for the student to be allowed additional time in the next lesson within their subject or liaise with the Additional Needs team for the student to complete the test in the HUB.

#### 6.4 What support is given to students with EAA from the Additional Needs Team?

Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA and Read and Write Gold. 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.

Students with extra time are given sessions with a member of the Additional Needs 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 the Additional Needs Team two weeks' notice before they assess students so that the exam can be input and checked ready for the Read and Write Gold ICT support.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly through the use of data from Progress Reports, Trackers and exam results. The student, teachers and the student's parents are informed when EAA are granted.

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