LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

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We review our schemes and policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this scheme.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person:
Executive Group, SMT	**v 6**	**October 2026**	**October 2029**	**Head of SEND & ALS**

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LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

1. Policy and Statement of Intent

1.1 Policy Context

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and other relevant policies relating to safeguarding, teaching, learning and assessment, attendance, learner wellbeing and support services.

The College is committed to fulfilling its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. The policy reflects the College's commitment to ensuring that learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are able to access, participate in and benefit from all aspects of college life.

1.2 Commitment to Inclusion

The College is committed to creating a fully inclusive environment in which all learners are welcomed, respected and supported to achieve their individual potential.

We recognise that learners bring a diverse range of strengths, experiences and needs. Our aim is to identify and remove barriers to learning, participation and progression, ensuring that all learners have equitable opportunities to succeed.

Inclusion is a shared responsibility of all staff. High-quality, inclusive teaching is the foundation of effective support for all learners. Where required, additional support, reasonable adjustments, specialist interventions and services will be provided to enable learners to access their programmes, participate fully in college life and achieve positive outcomes.

The College adopts a graduated approach to support, whereby learners' needs are identified, appropriate provision is planned and implemented, progress is monitored and support is reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains effective and responsive to individual circumstances.

1.3 Equality and Disability

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Learning difficulties and specific learning differences
- Autism and other neurodevelopmental differences
- Speech, language and communication needs
- Mental health conditions
- Sensory impairments
- Physical disabilities
- Long-term medical conditions
- Non-visible disabilities and health conditions

The College will make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled learners are not placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared with their peers and are able to participate fully in education and college life.

1.4 Learner Voice and Partnership Working

The College values the views, wishes and aspirations of learners and recognises the importance of working collaboratively with parents, carers, local authorities and external agencies where appropriate.
Learners will be encouraged and supported to participate in decisions regarding their support, targets, reviews and future aspirations. Support arrangements will be developed through a person-centred approach which recognises individual strengths, ambitions and outcomes.

1.5 Preparation for Adulthood

The College is committed to supporting learners to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required for successful progression into adulthood.

This includes promoting the development of English, mathematics and digital skills alongside wider outcomes relating to:

- Further study and lifelong learning
- Employment and career progression
- Independent living
- Community participation and citizenship
- Health, wellbeing and personal development

Support will be designed to promote independence, self-advocacy and positive long-term outcomes for learners.

1.6 Statement of Intent

The overall intent of this policy is to ensure that the College provides a safe, inclusive and ambitious learning environment in which all learners can participate, achieve and progress. Through high-quality teaching, effective support and collaborative working, the College seeks to remove barriers to learning, promote independence and enable all learners to achieve their aspirations and fulfil their potential.

2. Principles Underpinning this Policy and Practice

This policy is founded on the principles of inclusion, equality, participation and high aspirations for all learners. The College is committed to ensuring that learners with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are able to access, participate in and benefit from all aspects of college life.

Inclusive learning is achieved through high-quality, inclusive teaching, reasonable adjustments and the effective use of support arrangements where required. In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice and the Equality Act 2010, the College will use its best endeavours to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation, enabling learners to achieve positive outcomes and reach their full potential.

The College recognises that learners have a wide range of strengths, needs and aspirations. We are committed to adopting flexible approaches that respond to individual circumstances and support equitable access to learning, enrichment opportunities and wider college experiences.

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and to creating a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All learners will be treated with dignity and respect and encouraged to develop independence, confidence and self-advocacy.

Support will be delivered through a person-centred approach that values learner voice and encourages learners to contribute to decisions about their learning, support and future goals. The College will work collaboratively with learners, parents/carers, local authorities and external agencies, where appropriate, to ensure support is effective and responsive to individual needs.

The College is committed to supporting learners to build on their prior achievements and prepare successfully for adulthood, including progression into further study, employment, independent living and active participation within their communities.

3. Identification, Assessment and Support

Scope

This policy applies to all learners studying at Tyne Coast College and is committed to ensuring that all learners have equitable access to learning and are supported in accordance with their individual needs, programme requirements and aspirations. Support is provided through a graduated, evidence-based approach that promotes inclusion, independence and positive outcomes.

Identification and Assessment of Need

The College recognises that learners may require different levels of support throughout their learner journey. Support needs may be identified before enrolment, at transition, during the application process, at enrolment, or at any stage during a learner's programme of study.

Evidence used to identify support needs may include:

- An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- A formal diagnosis or medical evidence
- Information from previous schools, colleges or training providers
- Evidence of previous SEND support arrangements
- Reports from external professionals or agencies
- Information shared by parents, carers or the learner
- Internal assessments and screening activities
- Concerns identified through teaching, learning and assessment activities

The College recognises that some learners may experience barriers to learning without having a formal diagnosis or Education, Health and Care Plan. Where concerns are identified, information will be gathered and reviewed to determine whether additional support, interventions or reasonable adjustments are required.

Graduated Approach

Support is delivered through a graduated approach in line with the SEND Code of Practice. This process enables needs to be identified, assessed, planned for and reviewed to ensure support remains effective and responsive to the learner's changing needs.

This may include:

Assess

- Gathering evidence from learners, parents/carers, previous providers and external agencies.
- Reviewing prior attainment, identified needs and barriers to learning.

Plan

- Identifying outcomes, support strategies and reasonable adjustments.
- Agreeing responsibilities and reviewing arrangements with the learner.

Do

- Implementing agreed support, interventions and reasonable adjustments.
- Providing inclusive teaching and learning opportunities.

Review

- Monitoring progress, participation and outcomes.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of support and making adjustments where required.

Support Arrangements

To ensure effective support and successful transitions, the College may provide:

- Assessment and information gathering during transition through liaison with schools, colleges, local authorities and referral agencies.
- Transition activities and events to support progression into, through and beyond college.
- A designated contact to coordinate assessment, support planning, monitoring and review.
- An Inclusion Plan for learners requiring additional support, shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Liaison with parents/carers, external agencies and other stakeholders where appropriate.
- A support interview for learners who disclose a support need at any stage of their learner journey.
- Reasonable adjustments and support arrangements that are proportionate to identified needs and designed to promote independence and participation.
- Ongoing monitoring and review of support arrangements.

Support will be personalised and outcome-focused, while maintaining high aspirations and expectations for all learners, including those with SEND.

Preparing for Adulthood and Employment
The College is committed to raising the aspirations of learners with SEND and supporting them to prepare successfully for adulthood.
Learners will be encouraged to explore a wide range of progression opportunities through an inclusive curriculum and access to careers education, information, advice and guidance. Where appropriate, learners may be supported through:

- Work experience opportunities
- Industry placements
- Employer engagement activities
- Mentoring programmes
- Enterprise initiatives
- Supported transition activities
- Further and higher education progression opportunities

The College will work collaboratively with learners, families, employers and external partners to support positive destinations and long-term outcomes.

4. Staff Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote inclusion, remove barriers to learning and ensure that learners with SEND can access, participate in and benefit from all aspects of college life. Supporting learners with additional needs is a shared responsibility and should be embedded within everyday practice.

Staff are expected to:

a. Professional Development
Undertake relevant continuing professional development (CPD) and maintain an up-to-date understanding of SEND, inclusive practice, safeguarding and relevant legislation to support learners effectively.

b. Understanding Learner Needs
Develop and maintain an understanding of the individual strengths, needs and aspirations of learners and use this information to inform planning, teaching and support arrangements.

c. Inclusive Teaching and Learning

Plan and deliver high-quality, inclusive teaching that takes account of individual learning needs through appropriate differentiation, adaptive teaching strategies and the effective use of reasonable adjustments.

d. Recording and Sharing Information
Use college systems appropriately to record, access and share relevant information to ensure a coordinated, person-centred approach to supporting learners, whilst maintaining confidentiality and data protection requirements.

e. Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments
Review and adapt teaching methods, learning resources and learning environments to ensure accessibility and to anticipate and remove barriers to participation wherever possible.

f. Assessment and Exam Access Arrangements
Ensure assessment, recruitment and examination practices are accessible, and that appropriate reasonable adjustments and access arrangements are implemented where required in line with learner's normal way of working and appropriate guidance including JCQ.

g. Identification and Referral
Identify potential barriers to learning and follow college referral procedures where concerns arise regarding a learner's progress, participation, wellbeing or support needs.

h. Learner Disclosure and Confidentiality
Encourage learners to disclose any learning difficulty, disability, medical condition or support need where this may enable appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to be provided. Information will be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary to support the learner and in accordance with data protection requirements.

i. Implementation of Support Strategies
Consistently implement agreed support strategies, recommendations and reasonable adjustments identified through Inclusion Plans, EHCPs or other support planning processes.

j. Promoting Independence
Promote learner independence, resilience, self-advocacy and positive attitudes towards learning, supporting learners to prepare for adulthood and their next stages of education, employment and life.

k. Collaborative Working

Work effectively with Learning Support staff, curriculum teams, parents/carers, local authorities and external agencies to ensure support is coordinated and effective.

l. EHCP and Multi-Agency Processes
Contribute to Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) annual reviews and other relevant meetings, including disciplinary, safeguarding, wellbeing and Fitness to Study processes where learners have identified support needs.

m. Programme Changes
Consult with the Learning Support Team before any significant programme change, withdrawal or transfer is agreed for a learner with an EHCP or a learner identified as vulnerable, including those who are Looked After or Care Experienced, to ensure appropriate consideration of support arrangements and statutory responsibilities.

n. Promoting Inclusive College Services
Support and promote the accessibility of all college services and activities, including:

- Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Student Services
- Safeguarding and Wellbeing Services
- Library and Learning Resource Centres
- Personal Development and Enrichment Activities
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance
- Catering and Social Spaces
- Work Experience and Industry Placements

Staff should take anticipatory action wherever possible to identify and remove barriers that may affect learners' access to these services.

5. Senior Management Responsibilities

Senior Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the College has effective systems, resources and oversight arrangements in place to promote inclusion and secure positive outcomes for learners with SEND.

Senior Leaders will ensure that:

a. Statutory Compliance
The College fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice, including:

- Cooperating with local authorities and partner agencies.

- Admitting learners where the College is named within an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), unless there is a change in circumstances and it has been communicated with the relevant local authority that the college is no longer able to meet their needs.
- Having regard to the SEND Code of Practice.
- Using best endeavours to secure the special educational provision required by learners with SEND.
- Making reasonable adjustments to prevent substantial disadvantage.

b. Strategic Leadership

Inclusion, equality and learner success are embedded within the College's strategic priorities, curriculum planning and quality improvement processes.

c. Resources

Appropriate staffing, training, specialist expertise, assistive technology and financial resources are available to meet identified learner needs and fulfil the College's statutory obligations.

d. Systems and Processes

Robust procedures are in place for:

- Identification and assessment of need.
- Support planning and review.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- EHCP annual reviews.
- Multi-agency working.
- Transition and progression planning.

e. Quality Assurance

Learning support provision is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is effective, responsive and provides value for money. Findings will be used to inform service development and continuous improvement.

f. Monitoring Outcomes

Performance and participation data relating to learners with SEND is reviewed regularly, including:

- Attendance.
- Retention.
- Achievement.
- Progression.
- Destinations.
- Learner feedback.

Any gaps in outcomes are identified and addressed through quality improvement planning.

g. Governance and Accountability
Governors receive appropriate information and assurance regarding SEND and learning support provision to enable effective scrutiny of compliance, learner outcomes and service effectiveness.

h. Information Management
Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that information relating to learners with SEND is handled confidentially, shared appropriately and managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

i. Continuous Improvement
Learner, parent/carer and stakeholder feedback is used to review and improve support services, ensuring provision remains inclusive, responsive and aligned to statutory requirements and sector best practice.

7. Learner Responsibility

Learners should:

a. Disclosure of Support Needs
Disclose any disability, learning difficulty, medical condition or support need as early as possible, ideally during application, enrolment or induction, to enable appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to be considered.

b. Engagement with Support Processes
Attend support interviews, review meetings and other appointments arranged to identify, plan and review support needs.

c. Participation in Support Planning
Contribute to discussions regarding their learning, support arrangements, aspirations and future goals, helping to ensure support remains relevant and effective.

d. Implementation of Agreed Strategies
Engage with and act upon agreed support strategies, recommendations and reasonable adjustments that are designed to support their progress and success.

e. Communication of Changes
Inform relevant staff of any changes to their circumstances, needs or support requirements that may affect their learning or wellbeing.

f. High Aspirations and Positive Participation

Maintain high aspirations for their learning and future progression and actively engage in opportunities that challenge and develop their skills, confidence and independence.

g. Independence and Self-Advocacy
Develop increasing independence and self-advocacy by taking an active role in understanding and communicating their support needs where appropriate.

h. Behaviour and Conduct
Follow College expectations relating to attendance, behaviour and conduct, taking responsibility for their actions and contributing positively to the College community.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

a. SMT is responsible for the periodic review of this policy (every 2 years)

b. The next review is due in October 2028. This mechanism recognises the changes to legislation, good practice and may prompt a review before the date stipulated.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Learner achievement, attendance, retention and progression data.
- Progress towards agreed support outcomes and EHCP outcomes.
- Learner and stakeholder feedback.
- Internal assessments and outcomes including Fitness to Study panels, Student Disciplinaries, and Teaching and Learning Observation Reports.
- Quality assurance activities and reviews of support provision.
- Staff development and confidence in inclusive practice.

Findings will be used to inform service development and continuous improvement.

9. Accountability for the Policy

All staff are responsible for adhering to this policy and contributing to an inclusive learning environment.

Overall accountability for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy sits with the Head of SEND & ALS, supported by the Senior Management Team and Heads of Department.

The Head of SEND & ALS is the College's designated lead for SEND and is responsible for overseeing the coordination of SEND provision and

contributing to the strategic and operational development of inclusive practice across the College.

Regular review of learning support provision, learner outcomes and policy effectiveness will be undertaken to inform continuous improvement and ensure ongoing compliance with statutory requirements.

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Appendix A

Relevant linked policies

1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
2. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy
3. Student Relational Behaviour Support Policy and Procedure
4. Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure
5. Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
6. Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
7. FE Admissions Policy
8. HE Admissions Policy
9. Assessment Policy, HE and FE
10. Learning and Teaching Policy

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Appendix B:

Legislation

Primary Legislation

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Care Act 2014 (where appropriate to transition and preparing for adulthood)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 (where applicable)

Statutory Guidance

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

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