

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [SEND] Policy

Valid from (academic year)

2023/2024

Next review (academic year)

2025/26

Polices remain valid until revoked or reviewed.

Policy Owner

Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality and Director Student Services

Committee approval

EXT SLT

Policy & EIA Approval date

April 2024

Board of governors' committee

NOT APPLICABLE

Approval date

Board approval necessary

Date of Board approval

Summary of Changes

Updated previous guidelines

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1. Our Commitment

Stanmore College is committed to a whole college approach to cross-college inclusion.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all learners achieve their learning potential and understand their entitlement to support. All staff must be aware of the colleges' obligations to meet its statutory duty and have due regard to the responsibilities as laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) and aims to:

- Promote equality and inclusion.
- Ensure that individual plans are in place to support learning.
- Monitor the impact and quality of those strategies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students with special educational needs and disabilities, their parents/carers and staff.

3. Definition of Need

A learner is said to need learning support where they need some additional academic support to achieve their stated educational aims, and this applies whether the support need is permanent or temporary.

Learners may have documented support needs in place before they start at the college, or their support may be identified during application, induction or during teaching whilst at the college.

For the purposes of this guidance, and with regard to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Code of practice, we use the following:

Definition of SEN: A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- b) Has a disability which either prevents or hinders him or her from making use of the education facilities of a kind provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Learning difficulties can fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has: a long term mental or physical impairment which has a negative effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities for a period of 12 months or more.

4. Definition of Learning Support and Principles

The activities for which Learner Support (LS) funds may be used are additional activities that provide direct learning support to learners.

Where most learners in a group appear to require additional help to succeed in their learning programme, this should be addressed in the design and delivery of the main learning programme or by reconsidering the suitability of the candidates for the level of programme. Learning Support funds should not be used for this purpose.

In meeting the Learning Support entitlement, the college will exercise reasonable judgement on an individual basis. This judgement will be made by the Learning Support Manager, along with other stakeholders including the Director of Student Services, curriculum teaching staff, parents/ carers and the local authorities (for those learners with EHC plans).

Additional Learning Support is part of a package of support available to ensure that learners stay on course and are successful in their stated learning aims and applies to pre-entry, induction and on programme, both on and off-site activities and assessments.

Learning support is an educational provision that is over and above or different to the normal way of delivery. This will be tailored to suit the individual needs of a learner to maximise their potential and aid successful achievement.

Learning support can take many forms and can provide support for a range of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by supplying equipment, resources, staffing and/or reasonable adjustments.

Appendix A gives examples of types of needs and types of support.

5. Identification of Need

At each stage of the learner journey, learners should be encouraged to disclose any learning support need. Every effort must be made to use pre-entry information from schools or other agencies to support effective enrolment and maximise retention and achievement.

Literacy and numeracy will be routinely screened, and any indication of a specific learning difficulty identified through this screening should trigger a referral to Learning Support for an assessment by trained specialist staff. A learner can refer themselves at any point on the journey. Curriculum staff may recognise a potential need for support through the review system and can refer those learners to the Learning Support after consultation with the learners concerned.

BKSB initial and diagnostic assessments, administered online, are the main process used to assess literacy and numeracy skills. All students undertake these at the start of their course. For study programme students, a BKSB assessment that is 2 levels below that of the main programme of study, and who have GCSE grades below grade 4 in both English and maths, and reasonable attendance, would be a trigger to review whether further support is needed. For students on other courses, the BKSB scores that would trigger a referral may be adjusted for the specific course.

We work closely with local authorities to identify those students who have specific needs and EHC plans to ensure that we have the right information so that the best possible provision, intervention and support can be put in place as early as possible.

Where a student has a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision, the College must do all it can to put appropriate support in place, in collaboration with the student and parents/carers. Support needs to be evidence based.

A graduated response:

- Assess - relevant information needs to be gathered from the school, the student, other agencies and professionals, screening and assessments
- Plan – where it has been identified that a student needs SEN support, the agreed support should be planned and put in place by appropriately qualified staff
- Do – the plan is then shared with relevant staff and followed for an agreed period
- Review - The impact of the support needs to be assessed with the student and regularly reviewed. Where a student has an EHC plan, the College must work with the local authority to review the plan every 12 months

Appendix B gives the referral form for curriculum staff to use to refer learners on programme to Additional Learning Support.

Appendix C gives an overview of the Additional Learning Support process in diagrammatic format.

6. Exam Access Arrangements and Adjustments

Access arrangements are agreed prior to an assessment. Where possible, parents, carers and students are requested to declare at enrolment any medical or psychological conditions, SEND needs, previous exam access arrangements or any other issues which may require exam access adjustments. Exam access arrangements are covered in full detail in the Exams Policy.

7. Disclosure and confidentiality

The college has a duty to anticipate needs wherever possible, to make reasonable adjustments accordingly and to treat all learners equally. Information about a disability cannot be passed on to a third party without explicit informed consent from the learner. If a learner requests complete confidentiality, then information cannot be passed in the college or to a third party. However, it is acknowledged that once a declaration of disability has been made, the whole college is deemed to be aware of their needs.

8. Responsibilities

Responsibilities are as follows:

a. Governors

- The Governing body has specific oversight of the College's arrangements for SEND, fulfilling the statutory duties of the SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- To ensure that there is a named person with strategic responsibility of the operational management of the SEN provision
- To ensure that curriculum staff develop their skills and practice and keep their knowledge up to date.

b. Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality / Director of Student Services

- To ensure that students with special educational needs and disabilities are identified and that their needs are met
- To ensure that the statutory duties relating to Education Health and Care Plans are met
- To ensure that all students with special educational needs and disabilities are able to access the college facilities
- To develop effective links with schools and local authorities
- To ensure equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum, inclusive of all equality groups and regardless of personal circumstance or special educational needs and disabilities
- To ensure that students who have SEND have access to independent careers advice and guidance
- Ensure that the College fulfils the requirement of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and other relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance
- Ensure that there is regular review of the provision and that plans are in place to continuously improve the quality of provision

c. Learning Support Manager:

- To ensure that the interview and enrolment process includes an opportunity for all learners who have indicated significant needs in their application to discuss their needs before embarking on their programme
- To ensure that the interview and enrolment process for all learners on study programmes includes a discussion with a member of the team regarding any needs they might have, whether declared or not at application
- To keep records of any learner identified as needing learning support
- to determine the priority of needs and schedule the support resources to support those learners with learning needs

- To notify curriculum teams of those learners within their group who require support, and work with them on designing appropriate learning activities
- To provide guidance documents and training sessions to teaching staff on how to adapt teaching to meet the needs of specific identified needs
- To ensure there is effective communication between parents/carers, college and other relevant agencies
- To ensure that students can express their views and are fully involved in decisions which affect their education. To promote effective partnerships and involve outside agencies when appropriate
- To develop the whole student; physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually
- to recognise the importance of each student's self-esteem and self-value and enhance this wherever possible
- To provide regular reports on the provision of ALS support and the impact that this is having on individual learner progress.
- To plan, manage and record the regular review of support with individual learners
- To attend external review meetings where appropriate
- To consult with SENCos from other providers to ensure effective use of resources and the dissemination of good practice

d. Admissions:

- To give the Learning Support Team access to application information when a declaration of learning difficulty or disability has been made.
- where a need for support has been indicated to liaise with the Learning Support Team to arrange support during any interview

e. Curriculum teams / Student Services:

- To familiarise themselves with this policy on an annual basis and especially at the start of each academic year
- To ensure all learners have an initial and diagnostic assessment
- To refer to and be aware of the referral system for learning support
- To discuss the learning support provision with all tutees as part of the induction process
- Where learners show a need for support, subsequent to the start of the programme tutors should use the referral system to refer that learner to learning support for assessment
- To ensure support staff assigned have opportunities to contribute to the lesson planning process
- To check as part of the individual tutorial process the effectiveness of any learning support in place
- To liaise with the Learning Support Team to ensure appropriate exam arrangements are in place, by providing evidence of the normal ways of working
- Read guidance on working with your LSA in Appendix D

9. Implementation of support

Application and enrolment

Application, enrolment and induction are the first critical points at which learners who may need support are identified.

At application, learners are asked to declare their support needs and whether they have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This ensures that learners with learning needs can be assessed in advance and supported at interview if required. No learner with an EHCP should progress to interview with the curriculum team until they have been assessed by the Learning Support Manager.

Similar questions are asked at enrolment. Stanmore College has a high proportion of 'walk-in' applicants in August, so this ensures that no information is missed if they have not completed an application form in advance. It also serves as a double check on the information.

Induction

At induction, all learners as part of their induction package are made aware of the Learning Support Team and how they can access support. Learners can refer themselves at any time during the year.

Regular meetings should be scheduled to discuss additional learning support with both curriculum teams and personal tutors.

Support through the LSA team

Support through the LSA team is primarily for those learners with an individual identified learning need. Support can be provided in-class or out-of-class in small groups or 1:1. If learning is taking place on site all support will be face to face. If learning is taking place remotely then the support worker will still attend the class with the student via Microsoft Teams. In remote lessons the LSA will still work with the student and the teacher to develop the skills and knowledge of the student in the subject area, and with the technology to access the lesson if required. Out-of-class and 1:1 support will be through Teams or through phone calls.

Learning Support is available to all full-time learners regardless of the qualification type or awarding organisation. This could be BTEC, NVQ, T level, etc.

Support through Study Coach team

Support through the Study Coach team is largely for those learners whose literacy and numeracy levels on entry are below the level of the course, or for learners who require additional guidance on study skills or digital literacy.

For study programme learners, all learners will receive some planned delivery time to assist them to develop their digital literacy skills. This forms part of the guided learning hours on the programme of study. For 2023-24, this equates to 4 hours per academic year for entry, level 1 and level 2; and 9 hours per academic year for level 3 learners. In these hours they will cover: student log in to network and Wi-Fi passwords, student email, log in to study space, log in to student app, log in to Microsoft Teams and how to locate their online learning, office 365 accounts, etc. Level 3 learners will then also cover study skills, referencing, UCAS statement development and CV writing.

Study programme learners whose BKS levels on entry are 2 or more levels below the level of the programme will be offered small group support in literacy and / or numeracy.

Any study programme, adult funded or apprenticeship learner can be referred to the study coach team for individual or small group guidance on study skills development. Subject teachers remain responsible for the overall progress of learners towards the subjects they are teaching.

Higher Education

Learners on Higher Education funded courses can apply individually for Disabled Students Allowance funding. This requires an individual assessment of need which, once approved, can be used to pay directly for the support needed to study on the programme.

Appendix A - Examples of ALS

People who are Deaf or who have become deaf or hard of hearing

- staff awareness of an individual's needs in order to assist in lesson preparation
- note takers in class
- 1-1 Additional Learning Support
- the loan of technical aids
- special exam arrangements and support
- links with other support agencies e.g. community and/or Primary Care and NHS Trust Services

People with visual impairments

- orientation around the college
- staff awareness of an individual's needs in order to assist in lesson preparation
- 1-1 Additional Learning Support
- support in class and around the college campus
- adapted teaching and learning materials e.g. enlarged printed hand-outs, work adapted and saved on a memory stick
- large PC monitors
- specialist technology and software e.g. screen reading
- enlarging software
- magnifying lenses and tactile aids
- Dictaphones
- help with RNIB
- special exam arrangements
- links with other support agencies e.g. community and/or Primary Care and NHS Trust Services

People who have a learning disability or difficulty

Learning in classes with a higher level of support to help the learners to:

- learn how to be an independent student
- develop skills
- choose their next step (e.g. another course, finding a job)
- learn to communicate
- get on with others
- develop skills to live more independently
- develop skills to help the learner find employment
- Learning Support Assistant to support you in class
- support with literacy and numeracy
- use of signs and symbols to help you communicate with others
- links with other Support Agencies e.g. Local Authorities, Childrens' Services
- equipment to help you work in class
- we also provide various kinds of support to enable individual students to progress and join other courses

People who have an emotional/behavioural and/or mental health issues

- staff awareness of an individual's needs if appropriate and with permission to assist in lesson preparation
- College counsellors (if appropriate)
- links with other Support Agencies e.g. Community Services and NHS Mental Health teams
- special exam arrangements and support

Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

- this area covers a whole range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities including Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, etc, as well general learning difficulties.

To facilitate learning, support for students with a learning difficulty and/or disability may include:

- pre-course visits and opportunities for taster sessions during transition
- liaison with agencies and parents/carers
- assessment of need prior to entry
- adaptation of resources
- Learning Support Assistants (note takers, readers, etc)
- Care Assistants to assist students with personal care and supervision at break times
- special examination arrangements
- access to a range of assistive technology including touch screens, tracker balls, lap top computers, interactive whiteboards, etc
- structured teaching techniques
- additional tutor support
- advice for teaching staff

People with physical access issues

- staff awareness of an individual's needs to assist in lesson preparation

- support with mobility and/or personal care for example all computer rooms equipped with at least one station that can be height adjusted and one large screen computer
- support from Learning Support Assistants in class and around the campus
- loan of specialist technology and/or equipment
- links with other Support Agencies e.g. Community Services

People with medical conditions/hidden disabilities

- staff awareness in order to assist in lesson preparation
- support with mobility and/or personal care
- staff to support you in class e.g. note taking
- special Exam arrangements and support
- links with other Support Agencies
- supportive medication procedures - if required
- if a student is in hospital or is absent through ill health for more than two weeks, tutors will send work home or if preferable will email work directly to the student. There will be a designated member of the Inclusion team to oversee the distance-learning arrangements

This policy has been written in conjunction with the following documents:

- Additional Learning Support Policy
- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years (2015)
- Stanmore College Exam Policy

Appendix B – Learner Support referral Form

Learner Details:

Person Code		Forename		Surname	
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Staff Member making referral:

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Course Details:

Course Title		Course Start	
Course Code		Course Level	

Essential Course Information: How is the course assessed?

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Reason for Referral: what are the areas of difficulty/anticipated difficulties?

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Is there formal evidence of a SpLD or medical condition?

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Has the learner received learning support before either at school or college?

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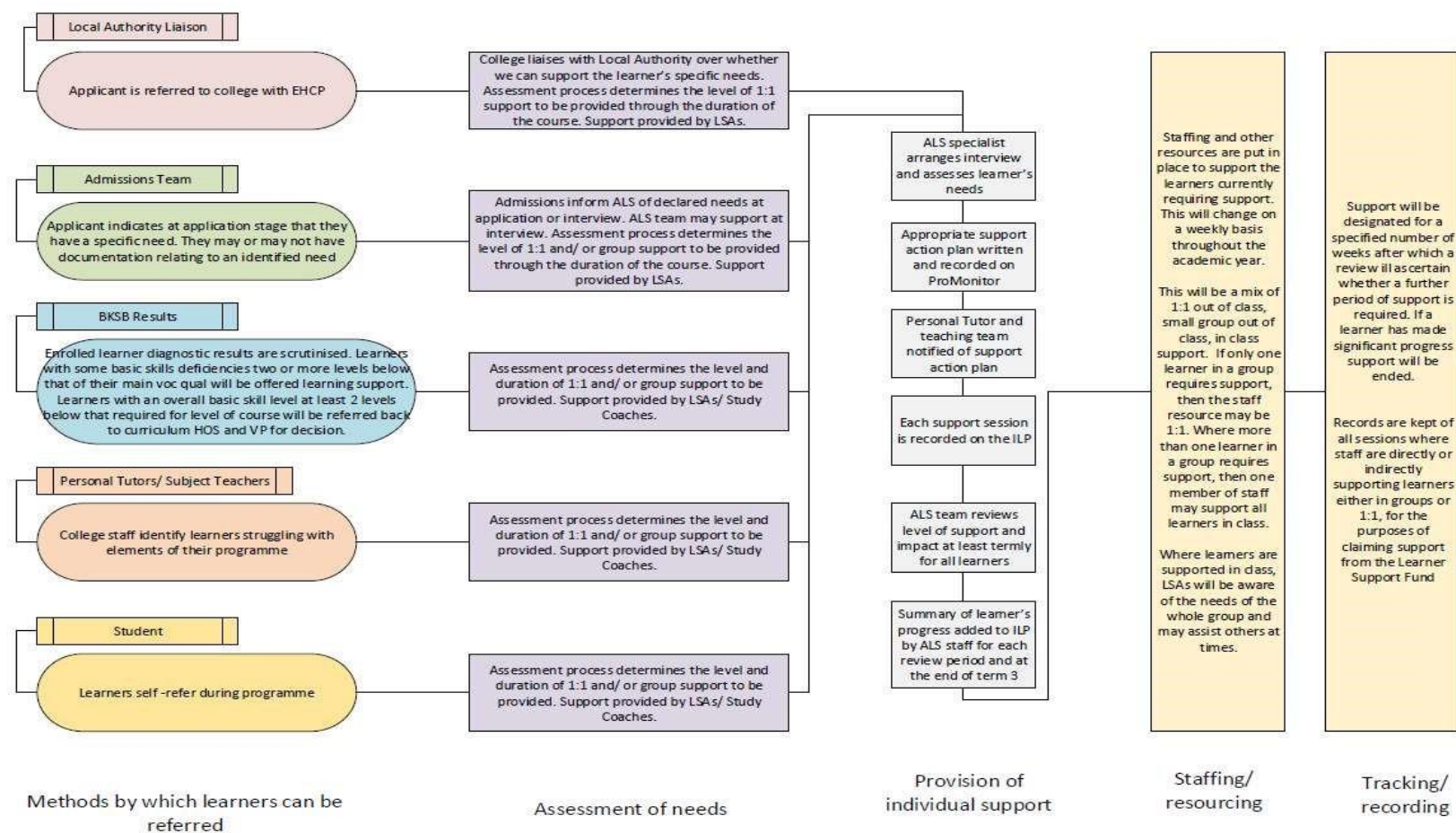
Has the learner been informed of this referral? Yes No

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Referral made by:		Referral Date:	
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Appendix C – Diagram of referral pathways

Summary of Additional Learning Support provision to support and develop independence in all learners



Appendix D - Working with your LSA

The role of the Learning Support Assistant (LSAs) in supporting inclusion

Effective deployment of Learning Support is dependent on good communication between staff and a willingness to support each other in the classroom.

Just as we have expectations of the students, we also have expectations of each other, therefore effective communication is essential.

- LSAs come from very different backgrounds, and many are highly skilled professionals in a different field. They have different levels of experience of working with students and different ways of working with them, but all are professionals, committed to supporting inclusion in whatever form that may take.
- LSAs need to feel that they have the support of teaching staff when it comes to behaviour issues. Poor attitudes and negative comments from some students towards them undermine their position in the classroom. They need to know that this will not be tolerated, and that teaching staff will deal with students effectively and expect them to be as polite to LSAs as they would be to a teacher.
- LSAs work most effectively when they know what is expected of them and what is expected of the students.
- LSAs can contribute most effectively to support in lessons when they know what the plan is for a 'block' of lessons. They don't expect detailed lesson plans weeks in advance, but a medium-term plan, a syllabus or rough notes as to the likely topics in a half term would be very much appreciated.
For those LSAs who are not in many lessons for a particular class it will help them to have some idea of what the students are likely to be doing.

For those LSAs who support certain students in certain classes most of the time it can help them read up on topics that they may never have come across before.

If LSAs are to be fully involved at the planning stage, then they need to know what the handouts and worksheets are going to be so that they can suggest adaptations if necessary.

- Teaching staff can expect LSAs to arrive at lessons promptly, bearing in mind that they may have to travel some distance around the college & they are reliant on the previous lesson finishing promptly.

Once in the classroom, the range of support that LSAs can provide is almost endless, they can:

- Clarify explanations
- Support the reading of challenging texts
- Support students in making notes – without actually doing it for them
- Provide frameworks for writing & recording for those who need it
- Support students in recording self-study
- Help students develop better organisational skills
- Work on differentiated activities with groups of students
- Supervise & support practical work, reinforcing any health & safety requirements
- Read back students' work as a form of checking to enable students to identify errors & area for improvement
- Act as an informal amanuensis to help students who have difficulties to record their ideas & thereby build their confidence
- Help students to develop information retrieval skills
- Contribute to the planning & reviewing of Student Individual Learning Plans, perhaps by identifying significant difficulties and specific subject areas where the students' needs are greatest.
- Support teaching staff in ensuring that any specific resources and equipment required by disabled students is in place
- Support disabled students in moving around the college and in accessing the curriculum without obstructing the development of independent learning
- Support students in unfamiliar surroundings, i.e. on educational visits
- Reinforce the college behaviour code and support behaviour strategies used in class
- Work with students with emotional/behavioural difficulties, to re-focus them on their work and defuse potential conflict situations
- Focus attention and redirect to task, where students have concentration difficulties
- Help build the students' confidence & self-esteem by developing positive relationships with them and ensuring that they can experience success in the tasks that they are doing
- Where appropriate, liaise between student & teacher (i.e. students often find it easier to discuss difficulties with a well-known LSA than with a teacher)
- Liaise with the Welfare Team when students have approached them about personal issues
- Model & encourage appropriate social skills for those students with communication & social interaction difficulties

This is by no means a definitive list but covers most things.

LSAs are generally willing to work with most students. Although they are usually in the classroom to mainly support 1 or 2 students, there may be times when they are able to support a small group or others in the room. But please don't expect them to 'police' the classroom at the expense of a student who is well behaved but has difficulty accessing the work.

By the same token, teaching staff can also expect LSAs:

- To arrive promptly (see above)
- To reinforce their expectations of pupil behaviour
- To position themselves in the best place to support students in the classroom, moving around as necessary to support students (as agreed between teaching staff & LSAs)
- To support the students to become more independent learners, by encouraging them to work out the answers for themselves
- To let them and the student know in advance if they are going to be absent for a lesson
- To distribute resources
- To ask open ended questions
- To give encouragement to both students and staff
- To use their initiative
- To keep any constructive criticism to themselves until after the lesson, when they have a chance to discuss it with teaching staff
- To support & reinforce the decisions of the teacher during the lesson – if it's something they don't agree with they need to talk about it afterwards
- To remember that teaching staff are human too. Having a teaching degree does not mean that they have all the answers – either educational or in terms of behaviour management. It is often quite stressful for teachers to have another adult in the classroom if they are not used to it. It is easy to criticise from the sidelines, but not very useful.

For any further information or if there are any problems, please contact send@stanmore.ac.uk or ask to speak to the Learning Support Manager.