



PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH RELIGIOUS, DIETARY, LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL NEEDS

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Introduction

At Benenden we aim to provide an inclusive environment where all pupils are encouraged to embrace our school values and be compassionate, courageous, confident and courteous. Pupils are inspired to take on the opportunities open to them, helping them to develop personally and engendering a firm understanding of the world in which we live. Every member of our community is an individual who is embraced for who they are. We expect the highest standards of behaviour from all members of the community towards each other.

Considered provision is made for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs.

Religious Needs

We give all pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs and the way in which they affect peoples' lives, by:

- Offering a broad range of topics in Prayers (assembly), including secular messages and the exploring of religious festivals, and ensuring that pupils attend.
- Requiring attendance at school and church services.
- Designating a member of staff to oversee the spiritual welfare of Catholics, including providing the opportunity to celebrate Mass each week.
- Offering pupils the opportunity to explore and develop their faith in several different groups (Bread, Bible Study Groups, Holy Communion, Compline, Eucharist) and through Anglican and Catholic combined confirmation courses.
- Expressing an interest in the religious activities that pupils take part in and encouraging an open-minded approach to religion and faith.
- Regular House visits from the Chaplaincy.
- Making sure the Chapel is always open and welcoming as a place for the community to enjoy peace, quiet and stillness.
- Listening to the religious needs of individuals and responding to requests for specific provision. For example, Ramadan guidance to support pupils who are fasting.

Dietary Needs

Pupils with individual dietary needs are catered for by the Domestic Bursar's Department. Those with allergies, intolerances, diabetes etc. may have specially prepared and plated up meals or may select certain items from the food counter. Gluten-free and all other allergy/intolerance symbols are placed on the menus. The Domestic Bursar prepares individual diet sheets for each pupil in consultation with parents, Medical Centre and the pupil concerned, and these are reviewed with the Deputy Head Boarding and Pastoral. Pupils observing religious events or festivals, such as Ramadan, will have separate catering arrangements for the duration of the festival.

Pupils exercise choice in their diets and any option is catered for both at in-House events as well as in the school dining room. Pupils who are Vegans or those who prefer dairy-free options, for example, will always be provided with alternatives. There are also options for those whose religious beliefs preclude a certain ingredient or require a specific need such as a Halal or Kosher diet.

There is a Food Committee meeting once a term hosted by the Domestic Bursar where pupils have the opportunity to discuss dietary needs.

Language Needs

The school endeavours to find a tutor for any pupil wishing to learn a particular foreign language, be that as part of maintaining their own cultural links or as an extra interest. Among the extra languages offered have been Arabic, Italian, Russian, Norwegian, Italian and Japanese in addition to the regular curriculum languages.



Pupils for whom English is an additional language can receive support in their English studies. The level of support needed is agreed with parents, usually before entry into the school. If at any point, the quality of an EAL pupil's spoken or written English is felt to be impeding progress, we would recommend to the parent that English as an additional language support is taken up.

Cultural Needs

We aim to provide support for those with particular cultural needs (for example bathroom requirements).

Pupils are assisted in maintaining and sharing their own cultural interests where possible and more broadly we seek to blend these with the cultural education of all pupils. We aim to help pupils to develop culturally through providing an opportunity for pupils to learn about other cultures:

- From other pupils through friendships.
- Through the exploration of other cultures in Prayers in School which are often led by pupils from different parts of the world.
- Through the pupil-led International Cultures Week.
- Encouraging consideration and tolerance of the religious commitments of other pupils, such as those who fast during Ramadan.
- Listening to pupils from overseas or from different cultures both individually and through the Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Committee.
- Offering extra-curricular trips to destinations such as China, Italy, Auschwitz, Nepal, Spain, France, Russia and the United States.
- Offering curriculum trips to multi-cultural venues such as Hindu temples, Mosques etc.
- Supporting the extensive Model United Nations programme and encouraging pupils to learn about global institutions.
- Providing global awareness lessons as part of the Personal and Professional Development programme.
- Making cultural diversity a focus of some of the enquiry weeks for pupils e.g., Change the World week, Stars and Stripes Experience.

We also appreciate that pupils from differing cultures might need help to adjust to the school culture and offer them assistance with this.