

Test Assistance & Access Arrangements

The primary means by which school offers equal opportunity to students with additional needs during tests and exams. The main difference between these two support measures are:

Test Assistance: offered by teachers in accordance with the student's daily needs.

Access Arrangements: in place as a legal requirement from KS4 onwards where they are deemed necessary to enable students to access assessments in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Support Measures

Support measures which may be considered are:

Scribe/Voice Recognition Software: A TA or computer can write for your child.

Reader/Computer Reader: A TA/computer can read for your child.

Extra Time: Your child can have up to 25% extra time to complete the test.

Prompt: A teacher/TA can prompt your child to stay focused during tests.

Word Processor: a laptop or similar device with a keyboard which your child can use to type and overcome some writing difficulties.

Coloured Overlay: A sheet of transparent, coloured plastic which your child can use to overcome some reading difficulties.

Practical Assistant: A TA can provide practical assistance with equipment/physical activities.

Modified Papers: Test and exam papers can be enlarged or printed one-sided. Colour naming for students with difficulties in colour perception is also available.

This list is not exhaustive. We will endeavour to provide whatever support is necessary, as long as it is deemed reasonable.

SEND Team

Students are supported by adults who are qualified, experienced, and enthusiastic about meeting your child's needs:

SENDCo and KS3 SENDCo: We will get to know your child and oversee responsibility for ensuring their additional needs are met whilst at school. We will discuss your child's needs with you whenever necessary. We will conduct Annual Review meetings for children who have EHCPs.

Access Arrangements Assessor: I am responsible for testing for Access Arrangements and work with the SEND team to monitor your child's additional needs in the years leading up to their GCSEs and beyond.

Teaching Assistants: Led by the TA Manager, we will support your children in class.

A note on anxiety

Some anxiety around tests and exams is normal and can be helpful, pushing children to achieve well. Please talk to your child about anxiety and help them to channel it usefully. School can offer support with exam planning & revision techniques which should alleviate any anxiety your child is experiencing.

Special Educational Needs

Test Assistance and Access Arrangements:

A guide for Parents



SENDCo.

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Key Stage 3

All students at St John's receive differentiated work according to their needs (Universal Support).

Your child may have a One Page Profile which highlights their additional needs and suggests appropriate strategies that teachers can use to support them.

When your child needs support in class to access their learning, this support will be reflected in the assistance they are offered in tests. The teacher and TAs are responsible for closely monitoring the additional needs of your child and will request appropriate assistance from the TA Manager accordingly.

Test assistance may be in the form of one or more of the following:

Scribe/Voice Recognition Software, Reader/Computer Reader, Extra Time, Prompt

Wherever possible, your child will be encouraged to practice independence, e.g. use of a coloured overlay or word processor.

Usual Way of Working: The student **must** show that they require the support being requested in their everyday learning. The Joint Council for Qualifications, which works closely with the examining boards, will not approve Access Arrangements unless the school can provide a sufficient body of evidence.

Key Stage 4

Having been monitored throughout Key Stage 3, students at St John's will be interviewed and tested to determine the most appropriate Access Arrangements to support their needs in examinations. The Assessor will conduct interviews and tests, and work with the SENDCo to ensure your child's Access Arrangements are registered and approved by the examining bodies in time for their examinations.

We cannot award Access Arrangements in response to exam anxiety, unless this is supported by appropriate medical evidence and agreed by the SENDCo.

We are not permitted to award Access Arrangements in response to assessments carried out privately. For example, if you arrange for your child to be tested by a private educational psychologist, we cannot allow the results or their recommendations to influence our decision to award Access Arrangements. The only exception to this would be where the psychologist has worked closely with the school to determine the student's usual way of working. However, these tests can be useful in informing the individual difficulties and support highlighted in the student's One Page Profile.

Access Arrangements may be in the form of one or more of the following:

Scribe/Voice Recognition Software, Reader/Computer Reader, Extra Time, Prompt

Wherever possible, your child will be encouraged to practise independence, e.g. use of a word processor.

Key Stage 5

Having been monitored throughout Key Stages 3 and 4, students at St John's will be interviewed and possibly re-tested to determine the most appropriate Access Arrangements to support their needs in the GCE examinations and vocational examinations. Access Arrangements are awarded using the same process as for Key Stage 4.

Although all Access Arrangements are still viable at this stage, it is likely that the Assessor will encourage your child to become more independent wherever possible, in order to pave the way for their academic journey after secondary school.

Colleges & Universities

Occasionally, tertiary education providers may request that we provide them with information about the Access Arrangements we have awarded your child. We can inform them of what the student's usual way of working was at secondary school, and of any Access Arrangements that were awarded, in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications' guidelines.