

HIGHGATE

Learning Support Policy

JUNIOR SCHOOL: YEARS 3-6

Documents to be read in relation to this policy:

- Teaching Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Able, Gifted and Talented Policy
- Well-Being, Mental and Emotional Health of Pupils Policy

1. Background

Highgate is an academically selective school which admits pupils into its Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior Schools on the basis of ability shown in tests and interviews. The School is keenly aware that addressing individual learning needs is the key to pupil success and this policy therefore aims to provide a framework for the support of learning throughout the School. The School maintains a Learning Support List.

2. Aim of the School's policy [ISSRs 2014 Part1, Paragraph 2 (1) (b)(i); Part 1, Paragraph 2 (2)(h), Paragraph 3 (d)]

The School aims to enable pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) to achieve their full potential by:

- working with the pupils concerned to enhance their learning skills and abilities;
- working with their teachers to ensure the best programmes of study for each pupil;
- working with outside agencies, where necessary, to enable the greatest access to opportunities for pupil progress in their school work.

3. Objectives of learning support provision

- to provide appropriate material resources, dedicated support and suitable advice to support pupils with LDD who are on the Learning Support List;
- to provide support and advice to pupils, where appropriate, who do not have a specific LDD, and yet have been identified as having specific difficulties with the curriculum;
- to develop a partnership with all members of the teaching staff to ensure that there is a positive approach to the learning of those with LDD;
- to maintain close links with parents/carers regarding the progress of those who are on the Learning Support List.

4. Learning difficulties defined

A pupil is defined as having a learning difficulty if:

- a) S/he has significantly greater difficulty than the majority of pupils of the same age;
- b) S/he has a disability preventing or hindering them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Authority.

We identify four areas of need:

- cognitive and learning needs, including specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
- behavioural, emotional and social development needs
- communication and interaction needs – including autistic spectrum disorders
- sensory and/or physical needs – including visual or hearing impairments

5. Staffing

The Director of Learning Support for the whole school is Dr Patrick Johnston and the Acting Head of Learning Support is Ms Sue Bambrough. She has specific responsibility for pupils in Years 7-13 and is assisted by one full-time and one part-time colleague (Gurjap Dhillon and June Hamilton). Pupils in Years 3-6 are specifically assisted by Mrs Ramita Anand (Learning Support Coordinator) and Ms Deborah Blackburn (Assistant Principal Academic), and pupils in the Pre-Prep School by Ms Jessica Bagenal. Ms Bambrough is responsible for the coordination of the Learning Support policy across the School.

6. Admissions policy

Admission to each section of the School is selective. The School must feel confident that a prospective pupil will benefit from the education offered so that there is no reasonable doubt at the time of admission that s/he will have a complete, happy and successful school career.

Both at the application stage and also later in the admissions process, parents/carers are given the opportunity, and indeed urged, to notify the School of any disability or special educational needs affecting their son or daughter of which the School should be aware.

The parents/carers of a pupil with an existing LDD, Educational Psychologist's report and/or an Educational Health Care Plan (or Educational Statement) are requested to submit copies of such papers to the Director of Admissions, who will then consult with the Junior School Learning Support Coordinator. The Learning Support Coordinator will review all documents provided to the School to establish 1) if any reasonable adjustments are required for the entrance assessment and 2) if any reasonable adjustments within the School and/or curriculum are required if the candidate is successful with their application. The Learning Support Coordinator will report initial thoughts to the Director of Admissions and the Bursar, if necessary, for their consideration.

A meeting may then be arranged between the parents of the child, the Learning Support Coordinator and the School Principal, so that, if necessary, steps to accommodate the needs of the child can be arranged well in advance of admission.

If a pupil is accepted into the School with a known learning difficulty/disability, the School (acting on the advice and guidance of the Learning Support Coordinator and the Director of Learning Support) will make reasonable adjustments to meet his/her needs. The School will agree with the parents/carers how the needs of the pupil can best be met. If a pupil is accepted into the School and their needs become identified at a later stage, the School will assess how best to meet those needs in consultation with the parents/carers, the Learning

Support Coordinator and the Form Tutor, and any external agencies which are felt appropriate.

Failure to disclose information regarding LDD or SEN issues may result in the School being unable to offer an adequate level of support.

7. Identification of pupils with LDD

The School aims to identify pupils with LDD or those for whom learning support would be valuable in the following ways:

- by the receipt of information from a previous school or other educational establishment;
- by the provision of information by parents/carers as described above;
- by the raising of concerns from members of staff about the learning progress of a pupil. In these cases all staff should be aware of their responsibility to refer concerns to the learning support department by means of the procedure identified below;
- By reviewing the progress of all pupils within the School through the School's assessment and reporting system

8. The Learning Support List

When a child becomes the responsibility of the learning support department his/her SIMS profile is updated accordingly. In this way all members of staff are readily able to see who is currently receiving learning support ('learning support active') as well as a brief summary of their difficulties. IEPs and relevant documentation such as summaries of educational psychologists' assessments are also attached to pupils' profiles. Termly, the Learning Support Department prints out a SIMS report of pupils who are under the responsibility of the Learning Support Department and this is known as the Learning Support List. A paper copy of this list is held in the Learning Support Office and issued to all staff for review at the start of the academic year.

Once the Learning Support Department has closed a pupil's file i.e. s/he no longer requires support on a regular basis, the status of their learning support provision will be changed on SIMS from 'learning support active' to 'support no longer needed'. The fact that they were once on the learning support list and a record of what difficulties the pupil presented with and the support they received will continue to be on their SIMS profile for the duration of their education at Highgate.

The List is issued to all relevant staff at the beginning of the academic year. Updates are available for staff inspection on the staff-only section of the School intranet.

9. Support for pupils - procedure

Pupils receive support for their learning in the Junior School as follows:

Stage 1: Concern raised. Concerns may be raised by any member of staff at any stage in a pupil's career in the School. This would usually be in the form of an informal discussion with the Learning Support Coordinator, followed by completion of a referral form. At this point the class teacher would discuss the referral with parents/carers.

- Stage 2: Observation.* As appropriate, the Learning Support Department will arrange to observe the pupil in a lesson(s) to obtain first hand evidence of the potential problems he or she may have. Furthermore they may ask for feedback on the pupil from his/her teachers and review the pupil's academic progress.
- Stage 3: Pupil meeting.* The Learning Support Coordinator will aim to meet with the pupil as soon as possible and usually within two weeks of receiving the referral form. The meeting may include, with the permission of the parents/carers, a selection of educational assessments as well as a pupil interview.
- Stage 4: Assessment of pupil needs.* In the light of the pupil meeting and observations, the Learning Support Coordinator will discuss the needs of the pupil with the class teacher, subject teachers and the Principal. At this stage it will be usual for some feedback to be given to parents on the outcome of the appraisal. The pupils may then be placed on the Learning Support List and the level of support required will be determined. Relevant information will be input on the child's SIMS profile as described above.
- Stage 5: Pupil in Learning Support.* Pupils may be offered learning support lessons on either a regular or occasional basis. These lessons may be offered on a one-to-one or small-group basis and will require the pupil to be withdrawn from scheduled academic lessons. Staff are expected to release pupils from scheduled lessons in order to take part in Learning Support lessons. For some children, additional classroom support from a teaching assistant may be put in place.
- Stage 6: Preparation of IEP.* At an early stage in the work carried out by the Learning Support teacher, an Individual Education Plan may be prepared in consultation with the class teacher and circulated to relevant teachers. This will aim to highlight targets for the pupil and guidance for his/her teachers in order to enable teaching and learning to be more effective. IEPs are stored on the staff-only section of the school intranet and linked to pupil profiles on SIMS.
- Stage 7: Consideration of extra assistance.* As part of the assessment of a pupil under the Learning Support Department, it may be necessary that further assessment of need be carried out with the aim of checking that all assistance possible can be offered. This may include referral to an outside professional such as an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist or occupational therapist.
- Stage 8: Conclusion of programme of support.* Progress will be reviewed at regular intervals. Where a programme of support is concluded, the pupil's status on SIMS will be changed from 'learning support active' to 'learning support no longer needed'. Whilst the pupil will not continue to be seen by the Learning Support Coordinator on a regular basis, it is possible for them to be re-assessed or reviewed by the department at any subsequent stage in their school career.

10. Support for teachers

All teachers (including visiting music teachers) are supported in their teaching of pupils with LDD in the following ways:

- Staff INSET (at regular intervals; all new staff receive an induction session on LDD from the Learning Support Coordinator early in their first term in the School);
- Information contained on SIMS and on the Learning Support List;
- Advice given within whole-school, Head of Year or year group meetings, by the Learning Support department, when it is clear that there are particular issues relating to a child's progress;
- Advice given within PIPS feedback meetings, when the Learning Support Coordinator leads the School through the outcomes of the PIPS tests, and their possible implications for the pupils;
- In-class observation of pupils with LDD and subsequent feedback from the Learning Support department (especially when particular learning or behavioural issues are identified);
- Provision of IEPs for pupils who are receiving regular support from the Learning Support Department; teachers are aware of these IEPs for the pupils they teach and have ready access to them on SIMS and in the secure shared area. They must read them and act on advice and strategies recommended by the Learning Support Coordinator, insofar as they are relevant to their pupils.
- Informal discussions between teachers and the learning support department about children in their care as issues arise during the term.

11. Assistance from outside agencies

The School has links with a number of educational psychologists and other advisers who are able to assist when required in additional support for pupils with LDD. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to engage the services of an external psychologist or other professional and to cover all costs relating to the consultation and report.

The Learning Support Department will not carry out any diagnostic assessments; however, they may provide specific feedback to parents/careers on any assessments which have been conducted. This feedback may indicate that a pupil's difficulties are potentially associated with a given diagnosis and that further investigations are needed. Parents/carers wishing to have a diagnosis investigated will need to consult an educational psychologist. The Learning Support Department are happy to provide a recommended list of educational psychologists.

Where a pupil has an Educational Health Care Plan or Statement of Needs prepared by the LA, the School will work with this body to ensure that the provisions of the plan or statement are addressed and that the relevant IEPs are prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. [ISSRs 2014 Part 1, Paragraph 2 (1)(b)(i)] It is the duty of the Learning Support Coordinator to advise teachers on the particular needs of the pupil and the recommended strategies for teaching him/her.

For any pupil with SEN or with a severe LDD or EAL issue, we take every reasonable step we can to ensure his/her welfare. Such pupils, in the interests of their welfare, will sometimes require an amendment to the normal programme of study, whilst at the same time being given equal access to the academic curriculum. For pupils with an Education,

Health and Care Plan or an Educational Statement the Director of Learning Support will chair a full annual review, with, in attendance, representatives from the local education authority. Furthermore, he liaises with the Bursar when necessary over matters of access and SENDA legislation.

12. Pupils with EAL needs

The School conducts its learning in English and there is an expectation that all pupils will be able to communicate effectively in English. There are a number of pupils in the School who have learnt English as an additional language (EAL) in addition to their mother tongue. These pupils may be added to the Learning Support List for additional assistance, although they are included in full lessons for all classes in the School, including English.

To enable us to provide all necessary support for pupils, and to gain a better understanding of a pupil's learning profile, the School has historically conducted an informal questionnaire with pupils to solicit details of any other languages regularly spoken, in addition to English.

13. Pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) prepared by the LEA, the School will work with this body to ensure that the provisions of the plan or statement are addressed and that the relevant IEPs are prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. [ISSRs 2014 Part 1, Paragraph 2 (1)(b)(i)]. It is the duty of the Director of the Learning Support to advise teachers on the particular needs of the pupil and the recommended strategies for teaching him/her.

The Director of Learning Support will chair a full annual review, with, in attendance, representatives from the LA for pupils with an EHCP (or Statement of Education). Furthermore he liaises with the Bursar when necessary over matters of access and SENDA legislation.

14. Reporting to parents/carers

The School works in partnership with parents/carers to meet their child's needs, and considers learning support to be a two-way process between the School and the home, which works most effectively when there is open and regular communication between the two. The Learning Support Coordinator reports directly to parents/carers of children on the Learning Support List when there is an issue to be resolved, and parents/carers are encouraged to contact her directly and at once if they have concern or require information. The Learning Support Department is represented at Parents' Consultation Evenings throughout the year.

15. Referral of a pupil to the Learning Support Department in the Junior School

The following procedure is to be followed by teachers who wish to refer a pupil to the Learning Support Department.

1. A teacher who believes that a pupil would benefit from Learning Support should initially the pupil's profile on SIMS to see if a pupil is or has ever been included on the Learning Support List. If they are already on the List from an earlier period of intervention, please see the Learning Support Coordinator for advice and a possible supplementary referral.

2. If there is no record that a pupil has received learning support previously, the teacher should complete a referral form located on the School network at ADM4/Junior/Learning Support/Referral Form and pass to the class teacher who has the responsibility for liaising with the pupil's parents and for providing supporting information regarding the pupil.
3. The form is then passed to Mrs Ramita Anand who will arrange to observe the child in a classroom setting and, where necessary, to follow up with an assessment meeting at the earliest opportunity.
4. The Principal is then informed of the referral.

16. Able, gifted and talented pupils (see separate AGT Policy)

By national standards, the academic caliber of all pupils in the School is high. Following ISI definitions (Integrated Handbook – Guidance, September 2015 paragraph 213), the vast majority of our pupils are gifted and are in the top 5% of the national ability range. AGT pupils are considered to be those who achieve or have the ability to achieve at a level significantly higher than his/her peers in the school. Within the curriculum, teachers are made as aware of AGT pupils as they are of pupils on the Learning Support List. A list of AGT pupils is compiled regularly and shared with all staff. If a child has been identified as AGT this is recorded on their SIMS profile. While the list is coordinated by the Deputy Principal (Academic), it is the responsibility of all teachers to identify children who are AGT. Identification of such pupils should be based on a combination of:

- Quantitative measures of pupil attainment and rates of progress
- Observations of learner characteristics such as motivation, creativity and curiosity

The School's schemes of work (based on the programmes of study in the National Curriculum) form the basis for the planning in all curriculum areas. Teachers must ensure that they provide suitable learning challenges in all lessons for all learners and, as such, enrichment/extension work is provided by all teachers in all classrooms as part of normal provision. In Maths, setting in Years 5 and 6 and Migration Groups in Years 3 and 4 provide additional opportunities for differentiation.

The rich and varied co-curricular life of the school, while benefitting all pupils, plays an important role in ensuring that AGT pupils are provided with additional opportunities to practise and extend their skills.

17. Pupils with behavioural, emotional and/or social development needs

Highgate is committed to supporting pupils with such needs. The involvement of the Learning Support Department is outlined in the Behaviour Policy and the Well-Being, Mental and Emotional Health of Pupils Policy.

18. Evaluation and Review of Policy

This policy is formally reviewed every two years to update both legislative elements and also functional aspects of its content.

DB/PJ
September 2017