

HIGHGATE

Learning Support Policy

SENIOR SCHOOL: YEARS 7-13

Documents to be read in relation to this policy:

- Curriculum Policy
- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Teaching Policy
- Scholarships Policy
- Sport and Exercise High Performance Programme
- Admissions 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)]

Highgate 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, in their programmes of examination, and in their future study or careers.

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 links with the 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 a more significant and 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, an Educational Psychologist's report and/or an Education, Health and Care Plan (or Educational Statement) are requested to submit copies of such papers to the Director of Admissions, who will then consult with the Learning Support Department. The Learning Support Department will review all documents provided to the School to establish i) if any reasonable adjustments are required for the entrance assessment and ii) if any reasonable adjustments within the school and/or curriculum are required if the candidate is successful with their application. The Learning Support Department will report their initial thoughts to the Director of Admissions and the Bursar, if necessary, for their consideration.

A meeting may be arranged between the candidate, their parents/carers, and the Director of Learning Support, so that, if necessary, steps to accommodate the needs of the pupil 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 of the Director of Learning Support) will make reasonable adjustments to meet his/her needs. The School will agree with the parents and pupil 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, the pupil 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 as described above;
- By screening all new pupils who enter the school (as outlined below);
- By the raising of concerns from members of staff about the learning progress of a pupil;
- By reviewing the progress of all pupils within the School through the School's reporting system.

8. The Learning Support List

When a pupil 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 confidential paper copy of this list is held in the Learning Support Office should it be required.

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. Screening of pupils

In the Senior School new pupils will be screened for special educational needs and learning difficulties during their first term in the School. Parents/carers must be aware that these are screening and not diagnostic tests. The screening tests are not competitive, and no specific preparation is required, nor indeed would it be beneficial. In addition to information from parents and teachers, school assessments and reporting may be used to identify pupils with a potential learning need.

If the outcome of a test and/or any other circumstances give the School reason to think that a pupil may have a special education need or learning difficulty, the School will report and consult with their parents/carers as necessary and make recommendations.

10. Support for pupils – procedure

Pupils receive support for their learning in the Senior 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 or indeed by a pupil or parent/career.

Stage 2: Observation. The Learning Support Department will arrange to observe the pupil in a lesson(s) to obtain first-hand evidence of the potential problems a pupil 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. A member of the Learning Support Department will aim to meet with the pupil as soon as possible, usually within two weeks of receiving the initial concern. This 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, the teacher from the Learning Support Department will discuss the needs of the pupil with the referring teacher and the relevant senior teacher (in the Senior School this is likely to be the Head of House, or the Assistant Head for pupils in yy7 and 8). At this stage it will be usual for some feedback to be given to parents on the outcome of the appraisal. The pupil may then be placed on the Learning Support List and the level of support required will be determined.

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 group basis and may require the pupil to be withdrawn from scheduled academic lessons. If necessary, these lessons may take place at the beginning or end of the School day or at lunch or break time. Staff are expected to release pupils from scheduled lessons in order to take part in Learning Support lessons. These lessons have an agreed focus, for an agreed time period.

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 and circulated

to relevant teachers. This will aim to highlight targets for both the pupil and his/her teachers in order to enable learning to be more effective.

Stage 7: Conclusion of programme of support. At the end of a defined period the regular lessons of support for most pupils are concluded and a review is carried out of their progress. They will continue to be recorded on the Learning Support List and, where appropriate, their IEPs will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis. Whilst they do not continue to be seen by the Learning Support Department on a regular basis it is possible for them to be assessed or reviewed by the department at any subsequent stage in their school career.

11. Support for teachers

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

- Staff INSET (at regular intervals, as part of the cycle of compulsory training; all new staff receive an induction session on LDD from the Director of Learning Support early in their first term in the school);
- Information contained in the electronic Learning Support List, accessible via SIMS;
- Advice given within departmental meetings, often by the Director of Learning Support, when it is clear that there are particular issues relating to a subject;
- In-class observation of pupils with LDD and subsequent feedback from the Director of Learning Support or one of his assistants (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, must read them and act on advice and strategies recommended by the Director of Learning Support, insofar as they are relevant to their subject.

12. Assistance from outside agencies

Highgate 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 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 further investigations are needed. Parents 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 Education, Health and 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 Director

of Learning Support 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.

13. Pupils with EAL needs

The School conducts its learning in English and there is an expectation that all pupils are 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 in most cases included in full lessons for all classes in the School, including English. In practice, such assistance is sometimes required in the first term, and members of the English Department help with this work, under the direction of the Learning Support Department.

In previous years, pupils with special circumstances have come to us with less English than they need to access the academic curriculum. These pupils have had incorporated in the planning of their learning both curriculum and EAL-specific objectives, including the acquisition of key curriculum vocabulary and enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening in the form of peer support and linguistic scaffolding provided in classes with the Learning Support Department. This is a strategy which may be adopted as appropriate.

Special provision in examinations can be provided where necessary, and in day-to-day life pupils with EAL requirements are supported by the school library, and have made available the necessary tools, such as bi-lingual dictionaries, electronic translators and the like. It is our experience that those coming to us with significant language needs invariably fall into the 'gifted and talented range', and a means for allowing access to 'gifted and talented' provision is always found amongst the adjustments that have to be made for the acquisition of good quality English.

To enable us to provide all necessary support at the critical point of entry, we ask at application for details from parents/carers of their son's/daughter's ability in English and language background. Additionally, the screening tests conducted as described in section 8 allows us not only to identify potential pupils with EAL but also the level of support they may require. Those who are deemed likely to need support are given a further, qualitative assessment which is used to inform a scheme of support, if it is seen to be required.

14. Pupils with an Education, Health and 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.

15. Reporting to parents/carers

The Learning Support Department reports directly to parents/carers when there is an issue to be resolved. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the department directly if they have a concern or require information. The Learning Support Department is represented at each of the Parents' Consultation Evenings throughout the year.

16. Able, gifted and talented pupils

By national standards, the academic calibre of all pupils 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. Our method of distinguishing those who are the most able is to award academic scholarships. The Scholars' List is therefore our list of the particularly able; a pupil is made a scholar at the end of Year 7 or at the end of any subsequent year after showing outstanding academic ability throughout the academic year (measured in part by the academic tracking system and/or in internal examinations). A pupil who gains all but one A* at GCSE is able to apply and be interviewed for a scholarship in the Sixth Form. Such pupils' ability is fostered both in and outside the normal curriculum. In addition to the scholars' list, we have from September 2016 drawn up a separate list of pupils who have talent in particular academic subjects (only Music has its own Music Scholarships; music scholars therefore form Music's talented list). Finally (again from 2016) we use MidYis data to spot pupils who are able and who do not appear on the list of scholars or on a department's list of talented pupils: we do this to ensure that such pupils are catered for and that gifted pupils are not under-achieving and therefore being under-challenged.

The performance of those on the A, G and T list is monitored at each Learning Review point during the academic year. The membership of the list is updated annually by the Deputy Head (Academic): see too the Scholarships Policy.

Beyond the curriculum. A major means of provision for AGT pupils is the Academic Forum: such forums are held at regular intervals, to which the ablest pupils are invited and indeed expected to attend (see Curriculum Policy document; any pupil in the year group is welcome to attend these meetings). Trips and visits form an integral part of this programme, as well as talks from visiting speakers or from members of staff and seminars led by the pupils themselves, based on their own independent research. Extension lessons are provided in Year 12 for pupils

aspiring to study a particular subject at university: while these are open to all, potential Oxbridge candidates are expected to attend; and in Year 13 these sessions become specific preparation for candidates applying to Oxford and Cambridge. This provision is planned and overseen by the Teacher in charge of Scholars (Mr James Newton, the Head of History) and the Deputy Head of Sixth Form (Oxbridge: Dr Ben Dabby), who both report to the Deputy Head (Academic).

Within the curriculum. Teachers are made as aware of AGT pupils as they are of pupils on the Learning Support List. These pupils are on the Scholars' List; we use entry data to identify likely scholars in Year 7, so that their needs are met before scholarships are formally awarded. We impress on teachers the need to consider the learning requirements of such pupils in their lesson planning, ensuring that extension material is available and that pupils are stretched by differentiated questioning and, where appropriate, by planned paired work which is also differentiated. The school's policy of 'going beyond' is crucial to this provision too and aims to ensure that even in public exam years able pupils are not restricted by exam criteria, however crucial they are. A review of our provision and of our teaching practice with regard to AGT pupils is underway in the current academic year.

The Sport and Exercise Department operates a High Performance Programme where able sportsmen and sportswomen are identified from their work in Sport and Exercise lessons and activities and invited from Year 9 upwards to participate in a programme which offers training and coaching from school staff and from external experts; we liaise where appropriate with any clubs to which these pupils belong, in order to coordinate their sporting and athletic development.

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. Access Arrangements for public and internal examinations

The Learning Support Department will review the needs of identified pupils for access arrangements in both public and internal examinations. The Learning Support Department works closely with the Examinations Officer and the Deputy Head (Academic) to ensure that such needs are met whenever possible.

For public examinations, access arrangements will be made in accordance with the regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (www.jcq.org.uk). An assessment for such access arrangements will be carried out by a member of the Learning Support Department at the beginning of a pupils GCSE or GCE studies as advised by the JCQ. Parents/Carers should be advised that these assessments are to provide evidence that an access arrangement is required by the pupil and are not diagnostic.

For internal examinations in years 7, 8 and 9 extra time will not be granted under normal circumstances. Alternative access arrangements such as the use of a word processor may be granted. Please see Appendix 1 which outlines our laptop and word processor policy.

19. 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.

PJ/JPRN

September 2017

Appendix 1: Guidelines on the use of Laptops and Word Processors

The school recognises that for some pupils with specific learning differences a laptop may be the most appropriate method of organising and presenting their work. Pupils are allowed to use a laptop in School as their normal, routine way of working where a need has been established and where appropriate training has been undertaken.

1. Use of a Laptop

Pupils will be allowed to use a laptop in School as their routine, normal way of working under the following conditions:

- A Specific Learning Difficulty (such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia for example) has been identified and use of a laptop is recommended and approved by the School;
- The pupil has received recommended training to ensure that typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed to be able to cope in class: as a guide, we would expect 30 to 40 words per minute, depending on age;
- The Learning Support department approves the use of a laptop as the normal method of working;
- The pupil has been using the laptop as her/his routine way of working in any subject where she/he wishes to use a word processor (WP) in an examination and has had specific practice and rehearsal in the use of a WP under examination conditions.

While the School accedes to JCQ's recommendation (section 5.8. in the Joint Council for Qualification booklet on Access Arrangements 2016/2017), the complexities outlined above mean that it will be unrealistic and not in the best interest of the majority of our pupils to use a WP in an examination unless they have been using it as their routine, normal method of working throughout their examination years (e.g. Years 10 and 11 if they wish to use it for their GCSE examinations and Years 12 and 13 for GCE examinations).

2. Limitations to Laptop Use

A subject teacher has the right to veto the use of a laptop in particular situations:

- Where its use might be dangerous or problematic e.g. in a particular experiment in Chemistry;
- Where particular exercises should not be done with computer assistance e.g. maps and diagrams;
- Where calculations are required without the assistance of computer functions such as in Mathematics;
- If an individual pupil, in any lesson, is using a laptop in such a way as to cause a distraction or disturbance to the learning of others.

While we do not currently enter pupils for examinations where any part of the syllabus requires coursework to be completed in handwriting, such examinations do exist and we may revise our laptop policy accordingly as syllabuses change nationally from 2015.

3. Detailed Procedures

- Pupils should not expect always to have access to mains power and are therefore advised to have a spare battery;
- All written work, which would normally be done in exercise books during lessons, is to be printed out nightly at home and filed appropriately so that pupils possess a hard copy of all their work filed in ring binders or pasted into exercise books;
- Pupils should use a plain font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana) and allow room for teachers' comments;
- Spell Check cannot normally be used on all pieces of work specifically in examinations.
- If there are problems with a laptop during lessons, the pupil should immediately stop using it and switch to pen and paper;
- In public examinations pupils will use a School word processor;
- Pupils should not expect the School's technicians to maintain their machines or undertake repairs to them.

4. Backup

Pupils should backup their work on to a **separate hard drive** on a regular basis – ideally weekly, but at the very least at each half term. The cost of losing a term/year's work, particularly in public examination years through a computer crash can be very considerable, both literally and in terms of stress.

5. Printing work

If pupils save work on memory sticks, it can be printed from printers which are available for pupils to use in the Library, IT rooms and many other subject locations around the school. With staff permission, pupils may print their work in these areas.

If pupils wish to print their work first thing in the morning, they should go to the Library or IT rooms.

6. Assistance with Laptops

The Learning Support department will be available to:

- Help pupils to establish a daily routine and encourage them to operate in an organised and independent way;
- Act as a trouble-shooter for general staff queries concerning laptop users and their problems;
- Advise on outside help for keyboard competency skills.

7. Security of Equipment

- Adequate insurance cover should be arranged by parents to cover damage or loss;
- The School does not accept liability for damage to or loss of any laptop computers, which will remain the responsibility of the owner at all times.

8. Use of Word Processors in Public Examinations

The Joint Council for Qualification's recommendation for the use of word processors in examinations (section 5.8 or the 2016/17 booklet) must be viewed within the context of the School's position on WP use for Years 7-13. (See Section 1 above.)

- Where a pupil is authorised to use a WP as their routine, normal way of working as per School policy and therefore may use it in examinations, the Learning Support department or Examinations Officer will make contact with the candidate to arrange in which specific examinations they wish to use a word processor.
- Only the relevant software applications will be available; spell check, grammar check and the thesaurus will not be enabled. There will be instructions informing candidates how to set up documents with all the relevant personal details.