

HIGHGATE SCHOOL

## **Junior School Learning Support Policy** **YEARS 3-6**

### **1. Background**

Highgate School 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 register.

### **2. Aim of the School's policy (ISI Regulatory requirements Part I (2.2) (b), (e), (i); Part I (3) (d))**

Highgate 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 schoolwork.

### **3. Objectives of SEN and LDD provision**

- to provide appropriate material resources, dedicated support and suitable advice to support pupils with SEN and LDD who are on the Learning Support Register;
- 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 SEN and LDD;
- to maintain close links with the parents/guardians regarding the progress of those who are on the Learning Support Register.

### **4. Staffing**

The Learning Support Coordinator for the whole School is Mr Dan Jones. He has specific responsibility for pupils in Years 7-13, and is assisted by one part-time colleague with responsibility for KS3 (and who will manage the transfer of information about pupils moving from Year 6 to Year 7). Pupils in Years 3-6 are specifically assisted by the Learning Support Coordinator for the Junior School, Ms Deborah Blackburn, and pupils in the Pre-Prep School by Mrs Janet Mills.

### **5. 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 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 of a pupil with an existing Educational Psychologist's report and/or an Educational Statement are requested to submit copies of such papers to the Director of Admissions, who will then consult with the Learning Support Coordinator. A meeting may then be arranged between the parents of the child and 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 known specific educational needs, the School, acting on the advice and guidance of the Learning Support Coordinator, will do all it can to meet those needs. The School will agree with the parents 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 Learning Support Coordinator and the Form Tutor, and through observations of and interactions with the pupil.

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

## **6. Identification of pupils with SEN/LDD**

The School aims to identify pupils with SEN 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 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.

## **7. The Learning Support Register**

The Learning Support Register records the current status of all those pupils within the School who are under the responsibility of the Learning Support department. The Register is reviewed regularly and includes not only the nature of the pupil's difficulty, but also notes as to the progress of support being offered to the pupil and guidance for teachers about how to provide support.

The Register 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, as well as a hard copy in the School office.

## 8. Support for pupils

Pupils receive support for their learning at Highgate 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 Form Tutor would discuss the referral with parents.
- Stage 2: Appraisal 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. In addition, she may choose to observe the pupil within the classroom. Her meeting with the child is likely to include, with the permission of the parents, a selection of diagnostic tests as well as a pupil interview.
- Stage 3: Assessment of pupil needs.* In the light of her observations of, and meeting with, the child, as detailed above, the Learning Support Coordinator will discuss the needs of the pupil with the Form Tutor, 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. Depending on the level of support deemed to be required, the pupil may then go on the concerns list or receive group support, or will be placed on the Learning Support Register and receive support accordingly.
- Stage 4: Pupil in Learning Support.* Pupils may be offered learning support lessons on either a regular or occasional basis. These lessons will 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.
- Stage 5: Preparation of IEP.* At an early stage in the work carried out by the Learning Support teacher, an Individual Education Plan will be prepared in consultation with the Form Tutor 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.
- Stage 6: 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 7: Conclusion of programme of support.* Progress will be reviewed at regular intervals. Where a programme of support is concluded, the

pupil will continue to be recorded on the Learning Support Register and, where appropriate, their IEPs reviewed on a regular basis. Whilst the pupil will not continue to be seen by the Learning Support Coordinator on a weekly basis, it is possible for them to be re-assessed or reviewed by the department at any subsequent stage in their school career.

## **9. Support for teachers**

All teachers are supported in their teaching of pupils with SEN and LDD in the following ways:

- Staff INSET (at regular intervals; all new staff receive an induction session on LDD and SEN from the Learning Support Coordinator early in their first term in the school);
- Information contained in the Learning Support Register;
- Advice given within whole-school, Head of Year or year group meetings, by the Learning Support Coordinator, when it is clear that there are particular issues relating to a child;
- 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 SEN and LDD and subsequent feedback from the Learning Support Coordinator (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 must read them and act on advice and strategies recommended by the Learning Support Coordinator, insofar as they are relevant to their pupils.

## **10. Assistance from outside agencies**

Highgate 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 to engage the services of an external Psychologist or other professional and to cover all costs relating to the consultation and report.

Where a pupil has a Statement of Needs prepared by the LEA, the School will work with this body to ensure that the provisions of the statement are addressed and that the relevant IEPs are prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (e)). 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. The Director of Learning Support for the Foundation, in consultation with Ms

Deborah Blackburn and the School Principal, liaises with the Bursar where necessary over matters of access and SENDA legislation.

## **11. 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 Register for additional assistance, although they are included in full lessons for all classes in the School, including English.

Pupils come to us from a variety of multi-lingual families and multi-ethnic backgrounds, which we welcome. In the cases of some second language learners, or children from whom English is not the language spoken in the home, their development in English literacy may be delayed.

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.

## **12. Reporting to parents**

The School works in partnership with parents to endeavour 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 of children on the Learning Support Register when there is an issue to be resolved, and parents are encouraged to contact her directly and at once if they have concern or require information. In addition, she reports formally once a year on a pupil's main report on all pupils receiving regular individual learning support. She is also present at Parents' Consultation Evenings for pupils in Years 3-6.

## **13. Gifted and talented pupils**

As part of its G&T Policy, the school keeps a record of which pupils in Years 4 to 6 have been identified as Gifted and Talented. This roughly equates to 10% of the cohort. These pupils are identified in a collaborative process between the Director of Studies, the Learning Support Coordinator and Heads of Year, where all relevant statistical data is reviewed, and the children are rank ordered according to their performance in Maths and English assessments over time: including by their PIPS context score, which gives an indication of underlying ability. A pupil may be identified as Gifted and Talented where multiple sources of evidence indicate exceptional potential or performance, relative to his or her peers. This may be across the subject range or within one specific subject, where he or she obviously excels. In Year 6, such pupils attend Junior Academic Forum. In addition, in all year groups, such pupils are offered extension work in English and Maths, under the direction of the Head of Year, who works with Teaching Assistants to provide

extension opportunities for G&T children within small groups: e.g. extension group reading with the Librarian. In Years 3 and 4, children who are gifted in numeracy are taken out of lessons for 'Brain Academy' booster activities, which are of a problem-solving nature. There are, in addition, other opportunities for Gifted and Talented pupils to learn beyond the curriculum. Gifted Mathematicians in Years 4 and 5 attend weekly extension Maths classes, which are held in partnership with St Michael's Primary School. These pupils are selected by means of a Maths test, set by the Senior School Mathematics department, and, while the names of attendees are not exactly the same as those on the Year 4 and Year 5 G&T lists, nevertheless there is, inevitably, some overlap. Irregular opportunities may exist within the school year for children gifted in particular subjects to represent the School at particular events – e.g. the John Betjeman Poetry Competition – and these pupils are selected in the same manner as those on the G&T list, except the focus is on one subject area only. The after-school clubs and activities programme, which is self-selecting, also provides opportunities for extension and challenge to G&T pupils, through activities such as Chess, Philosophy and Debating.

#### **14. 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 check the Learning Support Register on ADM4/Learning Support to see if a pupil is already included on the Register. If they are already on the Register 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 form located on the School network at ADM4/Junior/Learning Support/Referral Form and pass to the Form Tutor who has the responsibility for liaising with the pupil's parents and for providing supporting information regarding the pupil including timetables and recent report information.
3. The form is then passed to Deborah Blackburn who will arrange for an assessment at the earliest opportunity.
4. The Principal is then informed of the referral

#### **Pre-Prep SEN arrangements**

There is supplementary guidance for the Pre-Prep, supplied by Janet Mills, and for the Senior School, supplied by Dan Jones and David Fotheringham.

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