

Learning Support Policy

SENIOR SCHOOL: YEARS 7-13

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, 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 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 LDD.
- To maintain close links with the parents/guardians regarding the progress of those who are on the Learning Support Register.

4. Staffing

The Director of Learning Support 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 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

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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 LDD, an 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 department. A meeting may be arranged between the child and the parents of the child, and Dan Jones, 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 of the Director of Learning Support) will do all it can 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 and 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 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 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 guidance for teachers about how to provide support.

The Register is issued to all relevant staff at the beginning of the academic year and updates are then available for staff inspection on the staff-only section of the School intranet, as well as a hard copy in the relevant 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 using the referral system outlined below.
- Stage 2: Appraisal meeting.* A member of the Learning Support department will aim to meet with the pupil as soon as possible and usually within two weeks of receiving the referral form. This meeting 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 the appraisal meeting the teacher from the learning support team 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 Housemaster). At this stage it will be usual for some feedback to be given to parents on the outcome of the appraisal. The pupil will then be placed on the Learning Support Register and the level of support required will be determined.
- 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 basis and will 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 lunchtime. 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 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 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 the use of an Educational Psychologist to advise on the suitability of a pupil being offered extra time during public examinations, or on the use of a laptop computer in certain assessments. The Learning Support department works closely with the Examinations Officer and the relevant Deputy Head to ensure that such needs are met whenever possible.

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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 Register 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 weekly basis it is possible for them to be 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 LDD in the following ways:

- Staff INSET (at regular intervals; 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 Learning Support Register
- 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 (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.

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 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 1 (2.2) (e)). 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. There is at the moment no pupil in the school with an active statement.

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. Dan Jones is responsible for the welfare of these pupils, liaising closely with the pupils' class tutor and/or housemaster; he also chairs a full annual review, with, in attendance, representatives from the local education authority, for each child with a statement of need. He liaises with the Bursar when necessary over matters of access and SENDA legislation, and he

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encourages parents to deal directly with him when they have concerns about any aspect of their child's learning.

11. 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 Register 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 Director of Learning Support. In recent 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 Director of Learning Support. Special provision in examinations is 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 of their son's/daughter's ability in English and language background. In addition, at an early stage in year 7 (or in other years where there are significant numbers of new pupils), that year's intake is screened to determine precisely those with EAL support requirements and the extent of the support needed. 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.

12. Reporting to parents

The Director of Learning Support reports directly to parents when there is an issue to be resolved, and parents are encouraged to contact him directly and at once if they have a concern or require information. In addition, he reports formally once a year on a pupil's main report on all pupils receiving regular support from the Learning Support team. He is also present at Parents' Consultation Evenings for pupils in Years 7 – 11.

13. Gifted and talented pupils

By national standards, the academic calibre of all pupils is high. Our method of distinguishing those who are the most able is to award academic scholarships, with two other special awards for English and Mathematics. The Scholars' List is therefore our list of the particularly gifted and talented. Such pupils are identified at the point of entry

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(through entrance examinations and academic interview: we give potential scholars a specifically constructed interview). Alternatively, a pupil may become a scholar in subsequent years after showing outstanding talent throughout the 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 awarded a scholarship in the Sixth Form. Such pupils' ability is fostered both in and outside the normal curriculum. It is usual for them to be offered extension work in many of their subject areas and additional classes in some subjects (eg often in French in Year 11, and in Physics in several year groups). In lessons, teachers are expected to provide differentiated work for these pupils and provide work suited to their talents and abilities. Academic Forums are held at regular intervals, to which the ablest pupils are invited and indeed expected to attend (see Curriculum Policy document); lessons provided in Years 12 and 13 as preparation for candidates applying to Oxford and Cambridge are open to all able pupils who wish to extend their knowledge and academic skills. Such pupils often lead academic society meetings by preparing talks and carrying out their own independent research.

13. Referral of a pupil to the Learning Support department in the Senior School.

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

1. Teachers are made aware of those pupils on the register and must be *au fait* with the IEP. However, a teacher who believes that a pupil would benefit from learning support should initially double-check the Learning Support Register on adm4/ Senior/Learning Support to see if a pupil is already included on the Register. If they are already on the Register, the teacher should contact the Director of Learning Support for further 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/Senior/Learning Support/Referral Form and pass it to the Housemaster who has the responsibility for liaising with the pupil's parents and for providing supporting information regarding the pupil including timetables, recent report information.
3. The form is then passed to Dan Jones and who will arrange for an assessment at the earliest opportunity.
4. The Director of Studies, to whom the Director of Learning Support reports, is informed of the referral.

DJ/DMF

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