

Learning Support Policy

Junior School

Policy Owner(s)	JS Learning Support Coordinator
Approved by	Director of Studies
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Aim	3
3. Objectives of Learning Support provision.....	3
4. Learning difficulties defined	4
5. Staffing	4
6. Admissions policy	4
7. Identification of pupils with LDD.....	5
8. Recording information	5
9. Support for pupils – procedure.....	6
10. Support for teachers	7
11. Provision of auxiliary aids for pupils with LDD	7
12. Assistance from outside agencies	7
13. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) needs.....	8
14. Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan	8
15. Reporting to parents.....	8
16. Pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties	9
17. Evaluation and review of policy.....	9
Appendix 1: Support and intervention levels.....	10
Appendix 2: Data use and storage.....	11
Appendix 3: Laptop Policy for Pupils on LS Register	12
Table of substantive changes	13

1. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the following complementary documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Teaching Policy
- Sport and Exercise High Performance Programme
- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Wellbeing Policy

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.

2. Aim

Highgate aims to enable pupils with 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.

Thus, Highgate will aim to ensure that it is fully compliant with the Equality Act of 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 to ensure a high-quality education for all its pupils.

3. Objectives of Learning Support provision

- To provide appropriate material resources, dedicated support and suitable advice to support pupils with LDD;
- 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 parents¹ regarding the progress of pupils with LDD.

¹ All references to 'parents' in this policy includes parents/carers/guardians.

4. Learning difficulties defined

A pupil is defined as having a learning difficulty if:

- They have a more significant and greater difficulty than the majority of pupils of the same age;
- They have 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:

- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health;
- Communication and Interaction;
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

5. Staffing

Pupils in Junior School are supported by two part-time Learning Support teachers. The Director of Learning Support, based at the Senior School, is responsible for the coordination of the Learning Support policy across the School. Form Tutors, with guidance from Learning Support, remain responsible for pupil progress and any additional provision or support considered necessary to meet pupils' needs.

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 they 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 LDD affecting their child of which the School should be aware.

The parents of a pupil with an existing LDD, an Educational Psychologist's report and/or an Education, Health and Care Plan 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 Head 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 Department and members of the Senior Team so that, if necessary, steps to accommodate the needs of the child can be arranged well in advance of admission.

If a pupil with a known learning difficulty/disability is accepted into the School, the School (acting on the advice and guidance of the Learning Support Department and the Director of Learning Support) will make reasonable adjustments to meet their 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 Department and the Form Tutor, and any external agencies which are felt appropriate.

Failure to disclose information regarding LDD 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 using internal data including information from standardised tests and assessments;
- By the raising of concerns from members of staff about the learning progress or behaviour of a pupil. All staff are 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. Recording information

When a pupil is identified as having a learning need their SIMS profile is updated accordingly and the pupil is added to the Learning Support register. In this way all members of staff are readily able to see who is currently receiving Learning Support as well as a brief summary of their difficulties. Pupil Profiles and relevant documentation such as summaries of educational psychologists' assessments may also be attached to pupils' SIMS profiles.

Once the Learning Support Department has closed a pupil's file i.e., they no longer require support on a regular basis, the status of their provision will be changed on SIMS. The fact that they were once on the Learning Support register, 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.

9. Support for pupils – procedure

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

- Stage 1: Concern raised.* A concern may be raised by any member of staff or a pupil's parent at any stage in a pupil's career in the School. This may include a Form Teacher identifying that a pupil requires support which is additional to or different from that provided by the School's usual differentiated curriculum and strategies.
- Stage 2: Observation.* As appropriate, the Learning Support Department may observe the pupil in a lesson(s) to obtain first-hand evidence of any potential problems they may have. They may also ask for feedback on the pupil from teachers and review the pupil's academic progress.
- Stage 3: Assessment of pupil needs.* In light of observations and feedback from teachers, the Learning Support Department will discuss the needs of the pupil with the Form Tutor and the Director of Studies. At this stage it is usual for feedback also to be discussed with parents. If it is agreed that Learning Support will commence, the pupil may be placed on the Learning Support register and the level of support will be recorded.
- Stage 4: Pupil receiving learning support.* According to the pupil's needs, Learning Support could be offered through in-class provision, small group work and occasionally 1:1 intervention. These interventions will take place during scheduled non-core academic lessons. Parents will be informed of the Learning Support taking place and will be provided with termly updates on pupils' progress.
- Stage 5: Preparation of Pupil Profile.* In some cases, a Pupil Profile may be prepared and circulated to relevant staff with the aim of enabling learning to be more effective. Pupil Profiles are stored on the staff-only section of the school intranet and linked to the pupil's profile on SIMS.
- Stage 6: External Professional Assessment.* As part of having a greater understanding of a pupil's needs, the Learning Support Department and Form Tutor may consider it beneficial or necessary for an external professional assessment to be carried out. This consideration will be part of a discussion with parents, the Learning Support Department and Form Tutor. Recommendations may include, but not be limited to, a referral to an educational psychologist, child psychiatrist, speech and language therapist or occupational therapist.
- Stage 7: Conclusion of programme of support.* Progress will be reviewed at regular intervals, in most cases once a term. Where a programme of support is concluded, pupils' information will continue to be stored on SIMS and whilst the pupil will not continue to be seen by the Learning

Support Department 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

Teachers are supported in their teaching of pupils with LDD in the following ways:

- Staff INSET and CPD (at regular intervals; all new staff receive an induction session on LDD from the Learning Support Department early in their first term in the School);
- Information contained on SIMS and the Learning Support register;
- Advice given within whole-school, Head of Year or year group meetings, by the Learning Support Department, when there are particular issues relating to a pupil's progress;
- 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 Pupil Profiles for pupils who are receiving regular support from the Learning Support Department; teachers are aware of these Pupil Profiles 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 Department, 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. Provision of auxiliary aids for pupils with LDD

Some pupils may require the use of auxiliary aids, such as a reading pen, an induction loop, or other specialist equipment to enable them to fully access the curriculum. Where a request is made for the School to provide a pupil with such items, it will consider the request on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with what is reasonable having regard to all the relevant factors, such as the means of the pupil's parents, the benefit of the equipment to the pupil and the corresponding disadvantage of not having it, the allocation of the School's resources, and the extent to which the equipment can be funded elsewhere such as by the local authority, among others.

12. Assistance from outside agencies

The School has links with a number of educational psychologists and other professionals 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. The School will not automatically accept a report, or recommendations therein, of an educational psychologist or other professional when there is no evidence from the School to substantiate the report.

The Learning Support Department will not carry out any diagnostic assessments; however, they may provide specific feedback to parents 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 wishing to have a diagnosis investigated will need to consult a suitably qualified external professional. The Learning Support Department are happy to provide a recommended list.

13. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (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 and fully access the curriculum in place. We are a diverse school fortunate enough to have a wide range of nationalities represented with a number of pupils who have learnt English as an additional language (EAL). These pupils may be added to the Learning Support List for additional assistance, if their Learning Support profile indicates extra support is required.

To enable the School to provide all necessary support for pupils, and to gain a better understanding of a pupil's learning needs, the School asks at application for details from parents of their child's ability in English and their language background. Those pupils who are considered likely to need additional support can have a qualitative assessment so that the School can understand the necessary support required. Such information is recorded on SIMS.

14. Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) prepared by the LA, the School will work with this body to ensure that the provisions of the plan are addressed and that the relevant individual educational plans are prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. 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 them.

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

15. Reporting to parents

The School works in partnership with parents 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 Department reports directly to parents of children on the Learning Support register when there is an issue to be resolved. Parents are encouraged to contact the Department or their child's Form Tutor directly and at once if they have concern or require information about their child.

16. Pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties

The School is committed to supporting pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and the Learning Support Department works closely with school counsellors, the Deputy Principal (Pastoral) and her team to ensure the needs of these pupils are met wherever possible.

17. Evaluation and review of policy

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

Appendix 1: Support and intervention levels

Level 1: In-Class Support

The aim is for pupils' needs to be met in-class with differentiated strategies and support. Strategies could include, but not be limited to, in-class adaptations, additional learning resources and/or extra attention from the Form Tutor or a Teaching Assistant.

Level 2: Group Support

If, despite Level 1 intervention, a pupil is not making adequate progress within a reasonable amount of time (usually no more than one term), Learning Support will move to Level 2. This is most often a small group intervention in the area where the need has been identified, generally within core subjects such as Maths and Spelling and/or targeted handwriting practice. This support is timetabled during non-core subject periods.

These interventions are for a fixed number of weeks and progress will be closely monitored by the Form Tutor working with the Learning Support Department. If the support is not adding value, then the Learning Support Department will re-evaluate the intervention required and have further discussion with parents and the Director of Studies.

Level 3: Pupils with a specific LDD, and/or seeing an external professional, and/or receiving 1:1 support

Pupils who have a specific LDD identified and diagnosed by external professionals, and where targeted intervention has been recommended, may be seen 1:1 by the Learning Support department or by an external professional in school. These external professionals could be Speech & Language Therapists and/or an Occupational Therapist. These sessions can take place in school subject to the School timetable and availability. Costs of these external professional sessions are arranged directly between parents and the professional involved.

Pupils who receive 1:1 support by the Learning Support department will have an individual Pupil Profile, which is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure the best levels of support and intervention are provided. At the Junior School, 1:1 support is a weekly session of 25 minutes.

Parents will be informed and updated on progress on a regular basis, generally at least once a term.

Very occasionally 1:1 support may be given to pupils without an identified LDD. These interventions are only given in exceptional circumstances and on a short-term basis.

Appendix 2: Data use and storage

1. Use of Data

All data used by Learning Support is for the sole purpose of assisting pupils' learning. This information may take many forms including, but not limited to, assessments, reports, emails, minutes of meetings, test and exam results and learning reviews. This information will be shared by only those staff with direct contact with/responsibility for the pupil involved.

2. Storage of Confidential Information

Sensitive or confidential information such as Educational Psychologist (EP) reports and similar may be stored on SIMS in one of the categories of Confidential, Private or Public to be decided together by parents and Learning Support.

Information such as Pupil profiles may be stored on SIMS and transferred electronically to relevant teachers.

Hard copies of confidential information may be kept in a secure area in Learning Support in a locked filing cabinet.

In SIMS, the following information may be held on a pupil:

- Learning Support status
- Summary of learning need and strategies for teachers
- Record of Learning support sessions, meetings etc.
- Details of in-house assessments

3. Retention of information

All electronically stored information will remain on SIMS, as per the School's Record Retention Schedule.

Hard copies of information will be kept by Learning Support for two years and then archived. This will remain in Archives indefinitely.

4. Exchange of information

To aid smooth transition from Pre-Prep to Juniors and from Juniors to Seniors, all relevant Learning Support information will be transferred directly as befits the School. If parents do not wish for information to be transferred, they may speak with Learning Support.

Any documents sent by parents or external agencies to the School can be password protected, with the password being sent in a separate email.

Information sent by the School to another school or external agency will be with the permission of parents.

Supply staff on a long-term basis will have access to information on SIMS.

Short-term supply staff will speak with the relevant tutor, teacher, or pastoral leader to apprise themselves of the learning needs of the pupils they will be teaching.

Appendix 3: Laptop Policy for Pupils on LS Register

The School recognises that for some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 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. Windows is the operating system used.

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;
- A pupil has a medical condition, sensory impairment, physical disability; poor handwriting or struggles to plan and organise their thoughts when handwriting;
- 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 a standardised score within the average range or above;
- The Learning Support department approves the use of a laptop as the normal method of working;
- The pupil has been using the laptop as their routine way of working in any subject where they wish 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;
- A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home.

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 Science;
- 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.

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 pasted into exercise books;
- Pupils should use a plain font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana) and allow room for teachers' comments;
- If there are problems with a laptop during lessons, the pupil should immediately stop using it and switch to pen and paper;
- Pupils should not expect the School's technicians to maintain their machines or undertake repairs to them.

4. Printing work

If pupils wish to print their work they should ask a TA or a Form Tutor to help them.

5. 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.

6. 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.

Table of substantive changes

Section	Detail of Change	Date	Owner
All	Reformatted and updated to reflect current provision	September 2023	SG/NW
All	Full review in line with SS guidance	August 2024	SG/NW
Appendix 3	Laptop Policy for Pupils on LS Register added		
Appendix 3	Laptop Policy for Pupils on LS Register updated to reflect current practice	September 2025	AL

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