



SEN/LDD AND LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

This policy has been written having regard to:
The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001
The Children's Act 2004-5 (Every Child Matters)
The Disability Act 2005

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AIMS

The SEN/LDD coordinator and the specialist Learning Support teachers work closely with the Headmaster, staff, pupils, parents, outside agencies and support services to ensure:

- That there is early identification of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (these include specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia or a sensory, physical or mental disorder which 'has an adverse affect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities')
- That pupils who have fallen significantly behind their peers, particularly in Literacy or Maths, for any other reason, are identified and given appropriate support
- That appropriate intervention and provision are made for the pupils with SEN/LDD and that they are encouraged to reach their full potential
- That children with SEN/LDD have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- That equal opportunities are provided for all pupils irrespective of SEN, LDD or level of ability

ASSESSMENT AND EARLY IDENTIFICATION

The Nursery follows the Code of Practice in Herefordshire in Pre-school settings in which the procedures are set out as follows:

If a child is thought to have special educational needs, the Nursery teacher will discuss him/her with other members of staff and the child's parents, clearly explaining what is thought to be wrong.

Once this has been done, a decision will be reached as to whether anything different from what is done with other children, or whether anything extra, is needed in order to ensure that the child is making adequate progress. If so, the following steps will be taken:

1. The child will be recorded as being on *Early Years Action*, which places the responsibility on those who usually work with the child to:
 - Gather as much information as possible
 - Devise an individual education plan
 - Discuss with the SENCO what to do
 - Discuss the situation with the child, if possible
 - Keep the parents/guardians informed

2. The SENCO will be responsible for ensuring that
 - Information is recorded
 - The IEP is workable
 - Parents/guardians know what is happening
 - Other professionals are involved, if necessary
 - Appropriate assessments have been carried out

Note that the *Early Years Action* is designed to provide effective early intervention, on site, so that children have a chance to catch up with the other children and develop age-appropriate skills. The SENCO, with the parents'/guardians' permission, is permitted to talk to other professionals from Education, Health, Social Services or Voluntary Agencies, but these do not have the personnel to provide regular advice at this stage. The SENCO consults the Early Years Consultant, Deborah Ball, and/or Debbie Hawkswood at the Speech and Language Unit. The SENCO should also make enquiries to establish whether any other professionals have already been involved with the child. These other professionals may be:

- Health visitor
- Area SENCO
- Specialist teacher for visual impairment
- Specialist teacher for hearing impairment
- Specialist teacher for physical disability

- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Paediatrician
- Social Worker
- Outreach worker
- Pre-school Adviser
- Special Needs Adviser

Please note: It will not be possible for every SENCO to talk to every professional directly. The typical person to consult will be the Health Visitor, even where concerns appear to be mainly 'educational' (though it will often be useful to discuss the situation with the Area SENCO).

If, after a review of the IEP, further advice is needed, or the Health Visitor recommends onward referral (usually to a paediatrician), consideration should be given to moving the child to *Early Years Action Plus*.

The Pre Prep department adopts the following procedures:

- All staff members share concerns they may have identified as soon as possible
- Parents are asked to fill in an information sheet, asking about specific areas, such as sight, speech, hearing or other medical conditions or requirements
- Baseline assessments are undertaken during the first few weeks of a child starting in Reception and general assessments of ability are undertaken in Years 1 and 2
- There is ongoing continuous observational assessment.

The Prep school Learning Support staff work with the Pre Prep staff to monitor pupils from the earliest stage and to identify those who may be experiencing difficulties. If appropriate, the Dyslexia Early Screening Test is administered and if necessary early intervention will commence.

All pupils in Year 2 undergo a perceptual reasoning test (Heim, Watts and Simmonds) and in the final term of Year 2 all children are given the Salford Sentence Reading Test and the Helen Arkell Spelling Test, to ascertain reading and spelling ages. All of this information is then considered as soon as the pupils move into the Prep school.

In the Prep school:

Screening tests are administered to each child in the Prep school every September. These are the NFER Reading Test (Years 3 to 7), the Vernon Warden Sentence Completion Test (Year 8) and the Young's Parallel Spelling Test. More able pupils are tested using the Helen Arkell Spelling Test. (For pupils who receive learning support, from a specialist teacher, these tests are carried out six monthly.)

From the age of 8 all pupils take the NFER Cognitive Ability Tests, each year. These tests help to provide a clearer picture of pupils' general abilities and therefore whether they are underachieving in certain areas.

The information gained from the screening tests, together with prior knowledge and information from staff, parents, outside agencies (eg Educational Psychologists), the Pre-Prep department and previous schools is used by the Learning Support staff to identify particular pupils who need either extra support and a differentiated approach in class and/or weekly one-to-one specialist teaching sessions.

Further individual assessment may be carried out by the Learning Support team if it is felt that more detail of the pupil's particular difficulty is needed. The assessments used could include:

- The New Analysis of Reading Ability
- The British Picture Vocabulary Scale
- The Hedderley Sentence Completion Test
- Writing Speed Test
- The Basic Number Screening Test
- The Dyslexia Screening Test
- The Phonological Assessment Battery

Results of all tests taken and other relevant assessments and documents are kept on file by the SEN/LDD coordinator.

Copies of Educational Psychologist's assessments are also kept in the Prep school Resources Room so that they can be read and referred to at any time by other members of the teaching staff.

PROVISION OF SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

SCHOOL ACTION

Where it is established, through the identification and assessment process, that a pupil has fallen significantly behind his/her peers or that they have a Learning Difficulty or Disability or Special Educational Need, that child is added to either the Pre Prep or the Prep School SEN/LDD Register of children who need extra support in class and/or individual specialist support lessons. The Coordinators and staff of the Prep School Learning Support Department maintain these lists, managing each child's special education provision and work with staff and parents to devise appropriate strategies, to ensure that the pupil makes progress. In the Prep school, provision for individual pupils will often be in the form of one or two individual specialist lessons per week, as well as appropriate in-class strategies for support and differentiation.

An Individual Education Plan and a Pupil Profile are drawn up for each child on the SEN/LDD register. The latter shows the pupil's screening test and other assessment scores. It also details the pupil's strengths, weaknesses, interests, learning style and learning support needs. Other relevant information is noted, such as information from an Educational Psychologist or medical sources, if available.

The basis of the targets entered on the IEP is that they are SMART ie. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. A number of specific targets are written on each IEP together with the methods and resources which are to be used. Criteria to be used in order to evaluate the success, or otherwise, of the targets are included.

Each IEP will be reviewed and updated twice in each academic year, or more frequently if thought necessary. A copy of the pupil's IEP is kept in their school file and staff are informed as to the targets related to each IEP

SCHOOL ACTION PLUS

Through the process of School Action, each pupil's progress can be carefully monitored. Depending on the level of progress made, the pupil will either continue at this stage or move off the SEN/ LDD register altogether.

If, however, no progress is being made, if the pupil is falling further behind his/her peers, or if there are significant sensory, social, behavioural or physical difficulties, then external specialist support will be sought. Parents and the Headmaster will be informed and consulted in the process. The class teacher or Learning Support teacher will continue to support the pupil and gather information and evidence from School Action to present to the outside specialist.

Parents will be kept up to date with the advice and information received and will be notified of any costs incurred, with their consent.

The Coordinators, Learning Support teachers and other staff involved will act upon information and advice received from the outside agency and where necessary will modify the IEP, and the nature and/or frequency of support given, in order to ensure that the pupil is able to make progress according to their potential.

In extreme cases, if a pupil's lack of progress or severe difficulties were to give sufficient cause for concern, then a request for a Statutory Assessment might be made.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING IN THE PREP SCHOOL

Subject teachers and Heads of Department are responsible for meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties in their classrooms by partially differentiating work.

If thought to be necessary and appropriate, and after consultation and agreement with parents, one or two lessons per week may be arranged for a pupil, on a one-to-one basis with a specialist teacher, and these lessons take place during normal teaching time. Although pupils miss a class lesson each time, every effort is taken to ensure that they do not repeatedly miss the same one. Ideally they will miss different lessons each week. Some pupils, who need extra literacy support, are allowed to opt out of Latin and work on their English, during those lessons, with a Learning Support Teacher.

Very occasionally, where a pupil has a severe difficulty with maths, he/she will follow an individualised programme delivered by the Learning Support team, but there will be an opportunity each week to work alongside peers in class, with differentiated tasks.

Sometimes, usually with younger pupils, there may be a fifteen-minute session each day on the Phonological Awareness Training Programme. Extra daily reading practice of ten to fifteen minutes might also be arranged for certain pupils ('Focus Readers') within the Learning Support department, or with another member of staff or a gap assistant.

St. Richard's teaches a fully cursive handwriting script, which promotes fluency and neatness and supports memory for spelling. Pupils who need to work on handwriting skills are provided with several, ten-minute, extra practice sessions each week.

When supporting children with spelling and reading The 'Nessy' Programme is used by the specialist teachers to establish the pupils' levels of skill. Precise areas where input is needed are then identified and the 'Nessy' levels are used as a basis for progressive learning, assessing and record keeping. This is by no means exclusive however; a wide range of resources is used by specialist teachers. The content of individual lessons and methods and resources used will be tailored to best meet the learning needs of the pupil. Where children have a learning difficulty of a dyslexic nature, the emphasis will be on a multisensory approach with much repetition, reinforcement and over-learning. The pupils' interests and learning styles are taken into account and every effort is made to engage the pupils fully with a wide variety of activities, games and use of computer software.

The Learning Support teacher uses an individual lesson plan for each lesson with each pupil. This is an important working document. On it the teacher notes the lesson the pupil has missed, the content of lesson (this will be closely related to the IEP targets), the methods and resources to be used and also the progress made during the lesson. The latter then informs the planning for the next lesson.

Pupils are always encouraged to be involved in deciding the content of their learning programme and every opportunity is taken to discuss their progress with them. This helps them build confidence and self esteem. Pupils also gain a better understanding of their strengths and the strategies they can use to deal with their weaknesses and learn more effectively.

With the older children, lessons may include the teaching of study skills. Topics such as essay planning, note taking, organisational skills, revision and exam techniques are covered. (All pupils in Year 8 receive input from the Learning support staff to help them specifically with revision and study skills.)

From Year 4 onwards all pupils start to learn to touch type by regularly using the 'Nessy' Touch Typing programme, as an integral part of their IT lessons. This is particularly beneficial for those children who have difficulties with their handwriting and therefore need to produce much of their written work using a laptop, but it also helps with spelling, as the programme incorporates structured spelling patterns. Dyspraxic pupils may use their laptops in certain lessons, if it means they perform to the best of their ability.

PREP SCHOOL STAFF INVOLVEMENT AND LIAISON

Early in each new academic year, the Learning Support staff meet with all teachers and provide them with detailed verbal and written information regarding every pupil on the SEN/LDD register. Relevant information regarding supporting and differentiating for those pupils within the classroom is also included.

There is continuous close liaison between specialist and subject teachers so that each pupil's progress is carefully monitored. A weekly staff meeting also gives an opportunity to discuss individual pupils' progress and needs.

SUPPORT DURING EXAMINATIONS

Pupils who have Educational Psychologists Reports are able to have an extra 25% in their end of term or end of year exams and those diagnosed dyspraxic or dysgraphic are allowed to use laptops for exams where this is appropriate.

If a pupil's reading or writing skills are poor enough to hinder their performance in exams such as history, geography or science, then that pupil will take their exam in a separate room with a Learning Support Teacher, who can read questions to the pupil and in severe cases, scribe the pupil's dictated answers.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are consulted and informed at every stage, their knowledge of their own children being a vital source of information on the child's background and emotional well being.

The Coordinators and Learning Support staff welcome and initiate frequent contact with parents and a written report is included in the end of term school reports. This provides details of a pupil's progress and how they are being supported.