

POLICY FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Definition of Special Needs

“A child is defined as having special education needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which needs special teaching. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age. Or, it means a child has a disability which needs different educational facilities from those that schools generally provide for children of the same age in the area” DfES 2003

The Equality Act of 2010 defines ‘disability’ as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day to day activity.

In October 2007, the British Dyslexia Association Management Board approved the following definition:

“Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effect can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling.”

Admission with regard to SEND

The Headmaster will admit SEND pupils if the school can offer appropriate support. Each case is considered on an individual basis and every effort is made to accommodate a pupil with SEND/EAL.

The school pays due regard to the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability:

- Identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- Looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- Considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- Judging the impact of long-term adverse effects on normal day-to-day activities.

Any child who, at admission interview, appears to have SEND/EAL may be referred to the SENCO for further assessment so that the school is able to provide appropriate intervention on arrival. If a child is already identified as SEND/disability, the relevant reports should be made available to the school prior to, or at, the admission interview. The SENCO will advise The Headmaster.

Aims and Objectives

The specific objectives of our Learning Support Policy are as follows:

- To identify pupils with special educational needs and ensure that their needs are met, to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum, to ensure that all learners make the best possible progress

- To ensure parents are informed of their child's special needs and provision and that there is effective communication between parents and school
- To support and advise staff in their roles and responsibilities to those pupils with additional needs
- To promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate
- To maintain a register of all pupils requiring monitoring/support
- To provide a regular INSET programme to Learning Support staff and mainstream teaching staff
- To encourage the whole school community to demonstrate a positive attitude towards SEND

Staff

The Head of Learning Support is Mrs Kate Hamilton–Bowker. The learning support department is staffed by a number of part–time specialist teachers. A Speech and Language Therapist and an Occupational Therapist specialist are available to give individual lessons to those children whom the learning support department has identified. This is a private arrangement between parents and the visiting specialists.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

Ludgrove is committed to early identification of special educational need, informing the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation. The school adopts a graduated response to meeting special educational needs in line with the SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2014, based on Assess, Plan, Do and Review. A range of evidence is collected through the usual classroom assessment and monitoring/tracking arrangements: if this suggests that the learner is not making the expected progress, the class teacher consults with the Head of Learning Support in order to decide whether additional and/or other provision or further informal monitoring or assessments are necessary. This is decided in consultation with the Headmaster, Head of Learning Support and the parents.

In consultation with the Headmaster, learning support staff, subject staff and parents, pupils are withdrawn from appropriate sessions in order to receive specialist support. If the school has evidence that a boy is making insufficient progress, despite significant support and intervention, we may suggest that parents seek further advice from outside professionals such as Educational Psychologist, Optometrist, Speech and Language Therapist etc.

Learning support may be in the form of in-class support, specialist 1-1 tuition (in literacy and numeracy) or specialist group work (for example extra mathematics 1:4, extra English 1:3)

Where appropriate, after consultation with parents and staff, support is offered in the exam situation in the form of reader/exam pen, scribe/laptop, extra time, prompt or read aloud.

If special exam arrangements are deemed necessary at public examinations (Common Entrance), this is discussed with the relevant Senior School, using evidence from recent Educational Psychologist's recommendations as well as Learning Support department recommendations.

All boys at Ludgrove are tested in reading, spelling and mathematics on entry at year 4. They are also given a computerised screening test. Those boys whose scores are below age appropriate or give cause for concern are given 1:1 tuition to bring skill levels up to the requirements of the division (class) to ensure maximum possible access to the curriculum. Once this is achieved and there are no further signs of learning difficulties, these lessons will cease.

Any boy arriving at Ludgrove with an Educational Psychologist's Report will receive extra tuition in accordance with the recommendations of the report. Likely difficulties relate to mild or moderate dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD(H)D or occasionally English as a second language. Associated behavioural difficulties are rare. Currently, we do not have any boys with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

In addition to new boys, screening for specific learning difficulties is carried out on any boy showing signs of under achievement at any time in his school career at the request of any member of staff. Initially this is an internal assessment. 1:1 tuition can commence at any time.

Boys are withdrawn for the extra tuition from non-core subjects in liaison with teaching staff. A maximum of three lessons per week can be timetabled and each lesson lasts 35 minutes. Extra reading sessions are shorter, either 1:1 or 1:3 and can take place up to twice weekly. Extra mathematics sessions are often scheduled as a small group lesson after breakfast before morning lessons begin. There are also extra spelling and handwriting booster sessions.

Progress of all boys receiving extra tuition is constantly reviewed and discussed with division masters, subject teachers and parents. Frequent meetings can be arranged and a termly written report is sent home. Re-testing of reading and spelling is carried out on all pupils in the school in conjunction with the English department on a yearly basis.

The learning support will cease when scores are comfortably in advance of the age appropriate level and the boy consistently demonstrates in mainstream work that the need is no longer apparent. The Headmaster is aware of all decisions made by the department.

Roles and Responsibilities of the SENCO

The key responsibilities of the SENCO include:

- Maintaining and continuously updating the Learning Support Register
- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND/LDD policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Ensuring that an agreed consistent approach is adopted
- Liaising with and advising other school staff
- Managing department staffing and timetables
- Liaising with SENCOs in future schools to ensure there is a smooth transition between schools
- Carrying out detailed assessments in liaison with the division teacher
- Overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs
- Liaising with parents
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff

Roles and Responsibilities of the Class/Subject Teacher

The Code of Practice emphasises that all teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils is the first step to responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. It states that the class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and delivery of a differentiated curriculum which meets all children's needs
- Delivery of interventions outlined in Pupil Profiles

- Being aware of the school's SEND Policy and procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEND
- Giving feedback to parents of children with special educational need

Learning Support Lessons

The main objectives of these are:

- To provide the best educational and pastoral support for the boys with SEND
- To deliver continuous pastoral care for the boys with special educational needs, by maintaining an 'open door' policy within the learning support department and providing an ear for their problems at all times. This is especially important in a boarding school
- To encourage boys to become independent learners
- To develop skills and strategies in reading, writing, spelling, language and communication, numeracy, study skills and personal organisation in order to fully access the curriculum
- To provide qualified, specialist teachers who will work at the pace, style and level appropriate to the individual boy, based on the results of diagnostic tests, continuous assessment, teacher consultation and parent input
- To set short term targets via Half Termly Planners which are reviewed, analysed and provide the basis for the next targets.
- To identify teaching strategies that can be recommended to subject/division teachers (Pupil Profiles).

Reasons for Intervention:

If a boy:

- Makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in his identified area of weakness (Half Termly Planners give evidence of this.)
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas (school tests or CAT tests give evidence of this)
- Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed by the school
- Has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum

Reasons for External Intervention:

If a boy:

- Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- Continues working at levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- Continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematical skills
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the boy's own learning or that of the class group
- Has sensory or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- Has on-going communication and/or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning