

## LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES & SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (JUNIOR SCHOOL)

Owner: M Bass / P Mortimer  
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### 1. OUTLINE OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES & SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AT THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) and special educational needs (SEN) are of varying kinds and intensity. They may be temporary or permanent. The school is committed to an inclusive approach to learning and promotes full access to a broad and balanced curriculum; enabling pupils to reach their full potential. Most pupil needs will be met by the Junior School in the normal course of school activity. Some may require additional support, or the Junior School may recommend a consultation with a specialist. The Junior School works in close partnership with pupils and parents; where appropriate outside agencies are consulted to support the needs of individual pupils.

The Junior School endeavours to monitor and promote the social, personal and cognitive development of every pupil and this includes the needs of pupils in the following specific areas:

<u>Nature of Need</u>	<u>Line of Responsibility</u>
Social, Emotional, Mental Health & Wellbeing e.g. eating disorders, anxiety	Form Teacher- SENCO/School Nurse - Head of Junior School - Head Mistress
Physical disability or illness - excluding visual and auditory impairment	School Nurse - SENCO - Head of Junior School- Head Mistress
Specific learning difficulties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dyslexia</li> <li>• dyspraxia</li> <li>• dysgraphia</li> <li>• hearing impairment</li> <li>• visual impairment</li> <li>• other learning difficulties</li> </ul>	SENCO - Head of Junior School- Head Mistress

All teachers share the responsibility for identifying and responding to the needs of all their pupils. Every teacher has an inclusive approach to learning with high expectations of every pupil. Every teacher is asked to anticipate individual learning needs and help pupils overcome barriers to learning.

The Junior School shows due regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equality Act (2010), with reasonable adjustments being made on a case-by-case basis. Whilst we have experience at supporting neurodiversity, not all pupils receiving support have an identified/diagnosed need. As a highly academic and selective school with a rigorous academic nature to the entrance procedures, the nature of learning difficulties at this school is mostly ‘borderline’ cases and less complex needs. The vast majority of these pupils have a difficulty with learning or learning difficulties as opposed to a special educational need or disability. Pupils’ needs are mostly met through high quality teaching, appropriately differentiated. All pupils are able to follow the same curriculum, and differentiation in lessons is normal practice in any case, though some additional help or assessment by a specialist may be required at times.

**Definition of Special Educational Needs from (The SEND Code of Practice 2014):**

*‘A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her’.*

A pupil has a special educational need if she:

- a) *has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- b) *has a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.*

A child must satisfy the definition of disability, as described in Part 6 of the Children and Families Act.

All staff are informed of learning difficulties, disabilities and special educational needs as they arise, and guidance is given to enable those needs to be met as far as possible within the usual classroom setting. Self-help is actively encouraged, particularly as the pupils are generally able enough to develop their own learning strategies. Any intervention is always tailored to the needs of the individual and personalised strategies are given to support the development of their independent learning skills.

**The Graduated Response**

Early intervention increases the chance of a positive outcome for pupils. Essentially, there is a graduated response to meet the needs of learners with LDD/SEN or in response to a concern of a potential underlying difficulty:

Stage 1: Monitoring	Low-level monitoring.
	High quality teaching and personalised learning through differentiation in the classroom.
	Occasionally small group support; neurodiversity checklist sometimes carried out in conjunction with the Form Teacher, parents and SENCO.
Stage 2: Diagnosis and/or In- school provision	Consultation by specialist assessor and/or other outside agencies.
	Formal diagnosis - placement on LDD register.
	Differentiation in the classroom using identified strategies.
	Extra support - advice or targeted one to one or small intervention by a specialist teacher.
	Evidenced based interventions often on a one-to-one basis.
Stage 3: Highly Specialised	Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan;
	Highly specialised intensive intervention with internal or external specialist providing support.

The graduated response offers access to additional learning programmes and resources to support the development of key skills and strategies for independent learning when assessment indicates that the pupil is not making the expected progress or there is (potentially) an underlying difficulty. A pupil can move between the different stages and can move on/off the LDD monitoring or support lists throughout their schooling.

In rare and exceptional situations where a significant, severe and sustained need arises where resources and interventions available are insufficient or inappropriate to meet a pupil's needs, a request may be made from the Junior School, or by a parent/carer, to the local authority for a child to have a statutory assessment of their difficulties. An Educational Health and Care Plan is a legal document that determines the specialist provision for a child. The Junior School, in consultation with parents, would approach the local authority to enter into such a multi-disciplinary assessment process.

### **Pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

Those pupils who enter the school with an EHCP, will have access to all arrangements for pupils outlined in the graduated approach and, in addition to this, will have:

- short-term personalised targets in a student plan/individual education plan;
- strategies outlined to help them address these targets;
- regular reviews of targets;
- a statutory Annual Review of their Plan in conjunction with the LEA and support services.

The Junior School would approach their needs in a positive manner, and seek to make all reasonable adjustments on a case-by-case basis. The pupil and their parent(s) would be given opportunities to participate in decision making regarding their support.

## **2. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF LDD/SEN PUPILS**

### **Social, Emotional, Mental Health & Wellbeing:**

Teachers, School Nurse, Non-teaching staff or parents will alert the Head of Junior School and staff to the nature of the problem.

Please refer to the Head of Junior School for specific details regarding this particular need.

### **Physical Disability or Illness:**

This may be known on entrance to the Junior School from the report from the previous school, or from the information requested from parents by the Junior School.

Parents, the school nurse or the teacher will become aware of a problem and will consult the Head of Junior School or the Head Mistress.

Advice can be given about speech therapy, vision and hearing tests.

### **Specific Learning Difficulties:**

These are identified by the following methods:

- admissions procedures
- reports from previous schools
- information given by parents
- expression of concern from teaching staff or parent(s)
- screening of all Year 4/Upper I pupils in the autumn term

- under-performance in tests, examinations or assessments
- progress reports
- Neurodiversity Checklist completed by the SENCO to develop strategies that may be helpful to supporting the child in the classroom
- advice from the school counsellor
- an educational/clinical psychologist's report

The SENCO collects information from all relevant sources and assesses how the matter should be addressed.

Screening in Year 4/Upper I takes the form of:

1. Lucid Rapid Screener: a computer-based assessment that identifies potential underlying signs of dyslexia.
2. A dictation followed by a comprehension devised by the Junior School. The aim of the latter is to test the pupils' ability to write at speed, to spell when under pressure and to concentrate on meaning and writing at the same time, all of which are difficult for someone with an underlying specific learning difficulty. Weak visual memory and sequencing problems are revealed by poor spelling, and difficulties with processing information and short-term memory problems are revealed by the inability to answer the questions about what has been written down. It is believed that the two tests taken together give a more accurate profile of potential risk.
3. Screening for dyspraxia by PE and other staff.

The SENCO collects information from all relevant sources to assess how the matter should be dealt with. Results are looked at in conjunction with CATS results. This is reviewed by the SENCO in consultation with the Head of the Junior School.

#### **English as an Additional Language:**

*'A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he or she will be taught.'* The SEND Code of Practice 2014. EAL is therefore not a learning difficulty, disability or special educational need.

Information about EAL is requested from parents on entrance to the school so that any pupil needing additional educational support can be identified at an early stage.

All pupils, as a part of the Junior School's entrance procedure, sit examination papers which include written English, both comprehension and creative writing, and thus their ability to understand and use the language fluently is tested. However, if problems are perceived then or later, help may be given on site or, if considered necessary, outside tuition to improve literacy levels will be suggested to parents. The School recognises that an EAL pupil may have dual exceptionality and also have LDDs/SENs.

The line of responsibility for English as an Additional Language is: Form Teacher- DoS or Subject Coordinator - SENCO - Head of Junior School - Head Mistress.

### **High Performance Provision**

The School recognises that LDD/SEN pupils may also have dual exceptionality and be high performers. Please refer to the High Performance Provision Policy (Junior) for further information.

#### **3. METHODS OF ADDRESSING LDD/SEN**

1. Concern expressed by any member of staff or parent(s), or a pupil is identified as “at risk” on screening tests;
2. SENCO and Form Teacher/teacher collate all evidence and monitor progress;
3. Neurodiversity Checklist is administered where relevant and appropriate, by SENCO in conjunction with parents and the Form Teacher;
4. Head of Junior School advised, parent(s) contacted by the SENCO and an assessment by an educational psychologist or other specialist may be recommended, usually followed by a short one-to-one course in learning strategies;
5. Teaching staff advised of LDD/SEN by SENCO, who will give guidance on how to address these;
6. Parents’ involvement at any stage of the process is welcomed. Communication is usually with the SENCO and sometimes the Head of the Junior School.

#### **Review of Progress and Record Keeping**

The continued monitoring of pupils to aid identification, and the continued progress of pupils with LDD/SEN, is the responsibility of all staff.

The SENCO adds details of pupils with LDDs/SENs to the SIMS database on the school network which is constantly updated. Medical information is added to SIMS by the SIMS manager. The Head of Junior School adds/keeps information regarding Social, Emotional and Mental Health & Well-being needs. All information is regularly updated through a thorough programme of pupil monitoring and review

Discussions with parents are recorded.

The Junior School is committed to working in partnership with pupils and their parents to ensure an active role and effective approach is undertaken. Parents are informed of concerns and recommendations by the SENCO to enable the school to support their daughter. Pupil and parental views are ascertained during this process.

The progress of each pupil is under constant review both informally and formally. The SENCO reports to the Head of Junior School to discuss the progress of pupils on a termly basis. Individual teachers also review progress termly to ensure that their needs are being met.

Additional support lessons are arranged on site to suit the needs of the pupils as far as possible. Staff are informed if pupils are withdrawn from lessons. Parents and pupils are consulted in the process.

At the end of an intervention an Individual Education Plan is drawn up by the relevant teacher recording additional help given and learning strategies recommended. They will also report back to the SENCO on the progress that has been made, with relevant advice to

teachers if necessary. The SENCO informs parents of the pupil's progress and an outline of targets to support their daughter are given. The content of each course is recorded on SIMS. Advice on appropriate teaching strategies, where necessary, is placed on SIMS and distributed to relevant staff.

The SENCO is required to liaise with all relevant pupils, parents and members of staff, including any teachers providing targeted support, to ensure that all important information is passed on and that the pupils' progress is reviewed. The SENCO will contact the parents to report on progress and agree future action as and where relevant. Monitoring of progress takes place on a termly basis between the SENCO and the Head of Junior School.

#### General overview: Teachers.

School reports and examinations will be scrutinised with regard to the pupils' LDD/SEN. Progress is assessed with these in mind. Concerns are often initially raised in the standing item of pupils for concern in the weekly briefing meetings and also in termly review meetings. If considered necessary, following implemented strategies by the class teacher, a cause for concern form is formally filled in and given to the SENCO. . Critical comments about presentation, spelling, organisation and concentration should not be made in reports on pupils with a specific learning difficulty.

Parents' evenings provide a forum for discussion for parents with all teachers.

Any matter causing concern can be raised directly by parents with the teachers, SENCO or Head of Junior School at any time.

#### **4. DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Junior School Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Melissa Bass. General advice and guidance is also sometimes sought from Margaret Christodoulou, the Senior School's Head of Learning Support.

The SENCO's role is to co-ordinate and oversee the working of the LDD/SEN Policy regarding specific learning difficulties (as defined above) and visual and hearing impairment within the Junior School. She should also ensure that staff are kept up-to-date as far as possible with any relevant advances in these fields, particularly as they relate to individual pupils. The identification of learning difficulties, disabilities and special educational needs, and general advice on how these can be met, combined with continuity of care, are the key areas of responsibility.

The teacher currently providing targeted support is Nicola Rees, Hornsby Certificate in Dyslexia and Literacy, MA Cantab and Cert Maths (Open), RSA Preparatory Certificate in TEFL.

Occasionally, other teachers may be asked to provide targeted support either at school or at home.

#### **5. EXAMINATIONS**

##### Entrance Examination:

Special arrangements for candidates with LDDs/SENs are possible if notice is given well in advance of the examination. The assessment process will take account of LDDs/SENs if relevant information has been given to the Junior School. All requests must be supported by:

- A report from an Educational Psychologist, Qualified Specialist Teacher or Specialist Medical Practitioner, written within two years of the date of the entrance examination.
- Evidence of history of need and confirmation of the applicant's normal way of working (the applicant's school will be contacted directly for this information).

The granting of extra time for the school's entrance examination papers cannot be taken as a guarantee of the award, by the public examination boards, of extra time for KS2/SATs, GCSE, A level or other public examinations. The school is subject to regulations dictated by the Department of Education (at SATs level) and JCQ (at GCSE/GCE level), and is required to follow a process of evidence gathering which may or may not lead to a successful application for access arrangements in public examinations.

### **Internal Examinations:**

Reasonable adjustments (e.g. Breaks, prompting, extra time) may be made for those pupils with LDDs/SENs where this is thought to be necessary and there is clear evidence of need and normal way of working. Decisions will be taken on an individual basis and with regard to regulations for public examinations. Discussions with relevant teaching staff, SENCO and Head of Junior School will also be undertaken where relevant.

If suggested by a specialist, such as an educational psychologist or doctor, and this is the pupil's normal way of working, WPs may be used as agreed by the SENCO. In such cases, the pupil must be proficient in using WPs and have appropriate touching typing skills in order to not be disadvantaged.

The granting of an Access Arrangement for the school's entrance examination papers cannot be taken as a guarantee of the award, by the public examination boards, of such an Access Arrangement for GCSE, A level or other public examinations.

N.B Parents of pupils with visual or hearing impairment should arrange for up to date assessments of their needs before external examinations. This will help to determine what measures, if any, should be taken to ensure that their needs are met in advance of public examinations.

As in all lessons, those with a hearing or visual difficulty should sit in the best place suited to their needs in all examinations.

## **6. PHYSICAL ACCESS**

Accessibility is provided through a range of resources, methods and adaptations. Please see the Accessibility Policy.

Wheelchair access to most parts of the building and facilities can be achieved.

Notes:

- A lift has been installed to allow for independent access to the first and second floors.
- Biometric or swipe-card access to doors is possible for those in wheelchairs.
- Cloakroom facilities can be provided.
- Parking for the disabled is available.

It is the school's policy that all disabled pupils and staff should have as much physical access to the Junior School's facilities and curriculum as possible. Participation in extra-curricular activities will be encouraged. The disabled person's needs, whether of a temporary or

permanent nature, will be considered on an individual basis and met, as long as reasonable adjustments can be made in order to accommodate them.

## **7. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

The Junior School believes in developing strong partnerships with parents. The Junior School endeavours to put this into practice by formal and informal methods of communication as outlined above. It recognises the importance of the pupil being supported at home as well as at school for a pupil to achieve their true potential.

The SENCO liaises with parents on matters related to LDD/SEN provision throughout the year.

## **8. PUPILS**

The Junior School believes in seeking the personal involvement of the pupil in her own progress. It is hoped that the sensitive and helpful approach to LDDs/SENs encouraged in the Junior School will enable pupils to feel that their needs are recognised and supported without stigma. It is regarded as important that pupils recognise their own needs and become actively involved in learning strategies to help themselves, both for their own personal development and to enhance their self-esteem. A pupil can refer themselves to the SENCO if they have any concerns about their progress/learning.

Continuity of care is very much at the forefront of the Junior School policy towards those with LDDs/SENs.

## **9. OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

Occasionally a pupil may require the support of more specialist services/provision. These external specialists can provide targeted and highly specialised support to contribute to removing barriers to learning and participation. The Junior School maintains a list of recommended specialist providers with whom we have an established relationship e.g. Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapist, Behavioural Optometrist, Orthoptist. Parents may wish to refer their child for assessment following internal screening, on the school's recommendation.

## **10. DATA PROTECTION**

It is recognised that some of the information gathered and stored will be special category data pursuant to Data Protection Act 2018. In any event, the information is personal information and the School complies with its data protection legal obligations in this regard including the safe-keeping and sharing of such information.

## **11. COMPLAINTS**

Any complaints about provision for those with LDD/SEN can be made using the parental complaints procedure.

Links to other Policies and Documents:

- Accessibility Policy
- High Performance Provision Policy (Junior)
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy (Junior)
- Policy to Promote Good Behaviour Policy (Junior)