Reviewed: September 2020	Next Review Date: September 2021
Responsibility: HD	
Location: Staff Handbook, Staff Drive, School Website, Staff Room Policy Folder	

Aims

In addition to the School Philosophy & Ethos, the aims of the whole school Curriculum Policy and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 (2015), the Learning Support Department Policy aims to:

- support the school aim of bringing out the best in every child and realising his/her abilities to the full.

- ensure that the needs of children who are not making expected progress are fully investigated and appropriate interventions are arranged.

- provide a sensitive and supportive environment for all children referred to Learning Support.

- support children who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age through individual programmes that provide a sense of achievement and promote independent learning.

- ensure provision is made for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (no pupils September 2020), pupils with learning difficulties or a disability, pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.

Objectives

- fully investigate individual difficulties and discuss findings and recommendations with teachers and parents

- develop individual education plans which take full account of individual needs, through rigorous assessment and full consultation with all those teaching pupils referred to Learning Support

- support progression and continuity in teaching and learning across year groups

- deliver individual programmes of study in close consultation with subject teachers and parents

- ensure regular and systematic assessment, recording and reporting of pupil progress against individual targets and via teacher feedback

- present learning activities which are challenging, stimulating and varied in nature

- develop children's understanding of their own learning processes so that areas of strength can be used to support weaknesses

- fulfil many of the SMSC criteria, during LS lessons and LS related events, as detailed by LS records of work.

Differentiation
We believe that every learner is entitled to the full range of activities and that these are relevant to all children irrespective of gender, age, ethnic background or disability. To allow for differentiation, we plan and provide activities for different ages and abilities, including those who are gifted and talented according to our HAPs Policy. Learning Support promotes full access to the curriculum for all pupils.

Resources
The Learning Support Department has an excellent supply of resources, including books, ICT related resources, and all of the modern facilities suitable for the age range taught. See appendix for a resources list.

To be reviewed by subject co-ordinator
Autumn term 2021

Organisation of Learning Support

1 Identification of need
Pupils are brought to the attention of Learning Support through:
- briefing from nursery settings or parents
- a record of concerns completed by class teacher / subject specialist
- baseline tests completed at start of Reception year and standardised tests of attainment and cognitive skills completed each academic year.
- dyslexia screening test completed by all pupils at the start of Y2 (see below)
- parental and pupil concerns

2 Graduated approach
Where a pupil is not making the expected progress, class teachers discuss concerns with learning support co-ordinator and complete a 'record of concerns' highlighting areas of specific weakness. Concerns may relate to progress in communication, cognition and learning, sensory and motor development, or social, emotional and mental health needs.

Relevant specialist teachers are asked to add their views to the record of concerns to ensure the learning support co-ordinator has a complete picture of strengths and weaknesses.

Depending on the detail of the concerns, the learning support co-ordinator may arrange to observe the pupil in a classroom setting and/or carry out a more detailed assessment of attainments and underlying cognitive skills. Parents are asked to complete a background questionnaire to help inform this assessment. The learning support co-ordinator summarises the assessment results in a report and a meeting is arranged with the class teacher and parents to discuss the findings and recommendations.

The learning support co-ordinator discusses the recommended additional differentiation in detail with the class teacher. The pupil is placed at 'monitoring' on the learning support register and progress is discussed at the next learning support meeting, or as need arises. A further record of concerns may be raised at a later date.

Pupils who continue to make inadequate progress, despite additional classroom differentiation, are placed on the learning support register. In many cases, the 'monitoring' stage is omitted in order to move immediately to additional learning support.

Based on the assessment findings, the learning support co-ordinator draws up a provision map and individual education plan (IEP), in close consultation with the class teacher. This includes 4-6 targets addressing the pupil's most immediate needs. These targets are time bound with clearly defined success criteria. Targets are discussed with parents and pupil. The pupil completes a visual self-assessment for termly review.

Work towards achieving the targets is implemented both by class and subject teachers, and by the learning support co-ordinator in 1-1 or small group sessions. The level of intervention depends on need and is reviewed regularly.

At any stage, it may be appropriate to refer a pupil to an external specialist (for example, an educational psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist). Children seeing a speech and language therapist who are nevertheless making good progress at school are not placed on the Register.

Reports from outside specialists are discussed in detail by the learning support co-ordinator, class and subject teachers, and parents in order to ensure that the recommendations are fully understood and followed. Where appropriate, the learning support co-ordinator summarises the content and recommendations for the pupil's teachers.

We are mindful of the effects of emotional difficulties on children's learning and progress. In order to identify and support children with behaviour or emotional difficulties the guidance provided in DfE Advice: Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (November 2018) is followed. Children whose social, emotional and mental health needs are of concern are referred to the visiting counsellor.

Children who have complex needs and do not make progress despite intervention may be referred to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. If this results in the local authority drawing up an Education, Health and Care Plan, the terms of this Plan will be followed by the school in accordance with the Code of Practice (2015). There are currently no pupils with EHC Plans (September 2019) and no Needs Assessments pending.

Screening for dyslexia:
Defined as a difficulty with 'the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling' (The Rose Report, 2009), dyslexia is often characterised by a range of other symptoms, including difficulties with language, motor coordination, visual and auditory processing, verbal and working memory, and personal organisation.

At the start of Year 2 all children complete the Dyslexia Screening Test and results are shared with parents. It is an on-line test, taking about 30 minutes, and aims to identify whether any of the key indicators of dyslexia are present. It does not provide a diagnosis of dyslexia; if a child shows a weakness, a more detailed learning support assessment is arranged with the agreement of the child's parents.

The purpose of the screening is not to label children but to take account of areas of weakness when planning for individuals and to ensure relevant children are monitored. If any underlying difficulty is present, it is helpful to know *before* it impacts on learning.

Methods of teaching
One-to-one or group sessions are arranged Monday-Thursday and are of half an hour – one hour duration, once or twice a week, as appropriate to the needs of the child.

The teaching and learning methods employed by the learning support department during 1-1 and small group sessions are clearly detailed in individual records of work.

Our approach:
- is multi-sensory with learning broken down into small steps to support greater understanding in areas of difficulty.
- includes frequent reinforcement and over-learning opportunities to ensure new learning is secure.
- is contextualised using the interests of the individual child and, where appropriate, their current class topics.
- encourages children to articulate how learning in support sessions will help them in the classroom.
- supports children to develop strategies, using strengths to compensate for areas of weakness.

Homework
Learning Support homework tasks are designed to provide continuity of experience and reinforce new learning without over-burdening a child who already has class homework to complete. Therefore homework is only set at the discretion of the learning support co-ordinator in consultation with class teachers and parents.

Assessment and Recording
IEP targets are based on thorough initial assessment using formal standardised tests, informal tests, observation and suggestions from class teachers. All IEP targets are linked to success criteria and these are measured through both formal and informal assessment.

Pupils are encouraged to describe and monitor their own progress against targets.

Progress and the achievement of targets are recorded on IEPs and children's visual self-assessments.

Marking
Members of the learning support department are expected to observe the whole school Marking Policy and mark according to its guidance.

Display
Displays can be observed in teaching classrooms and the Library. The work displayed celebrates achievement. Posters may also be used to facilitate learning and generate ideas for pupils who have difficulty with writing. Displays are changed on a half-termly basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation
The learning support co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring and evaluating learning support in the curriculum and ensuring each child has access and experiences in accordance with this policy. The AHC and the subject coordinator will be available to assist teachers with planning suitable differentiation and will take part in the Exercise Book Review.

Health and Safety
Teaching/support staff are expected to observe, and apply, the Whole School Health and Safety Policy. In addition to this they are expected to know the safety measures to be adopted in his/her special teaching areas and to ensure that they are applied (Risk Assessment, September).

To be reviewed by subject co-ordinator
Autumn term 2021

Children with English as an additional language

Pupils who at home speak languages other than, or as well as, English are identified before they start school. Details are recorded on the Medical Register to ensure all staff are aware. The EAL Register includes further detail of language use in the home. Parents are invited to complete a brief questionnaire to ensure the information included is as accurate as possible.

Assessments in the first week of school establish EAL pupils' level of understanding, use of English and breadth of vocabulary. Class teachers make adjustments to ensure pupils are supported in developing fluency quickly. Where possible, parents are actively encouraged to speak English at home to support their children and to arrange play dates and clubs. Pupils who continue to need support, particularly with English grammar and vocabulary, are offered 1-1 or small group support.

NB Children with difficulties relating solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not considered to have SEN.

APPENDIX

1 Definitions (from The SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25, 2015)

A child has special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

A child has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

2 Learning Support Resources

Access to a broad range of formal and informal assessment tests including:
Underlying cognitive abilities / skills:
Wide Ranging Intelligence Test (WRIT)
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP2)
Helen Arkell Auditory Tests (HAAT)
Test of Memory and Learning (TOMAL2)
Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (BEERY VMI)
Symbol Digit Modalities Test (SDMT)
Attainments:
York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA)
Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE2)
Helen Arkell Spelling Test (HAST2)
Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)
The Basic Number Screening Test
Diagnostic Interviews in Number Sense

Writing aids: grips, writing slopes, left handed pencils and pens, 'write size' pencils
Coloured filters, coloured paper to reduce glare
Wobble cushions, fidget toys, lap pads, therabands
Puzzles and games for reinforcement and to promote visual discrimination and motor skills
High interest, low level reading books (Barrington Stokes, Phonic Books)
ICT: Wordshark, Numbershark, Nessy Learning Programme, Nessy Touch Typing
Background reading and information sheets on a range of specific learning difficulties; referral information