



St Hilda's School

HARPENDEN

*Caring, Curious & Confident*

## Learning Support Policy

### Important Note

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

**REVIEW DATE:** November 2018

**REVIEWED BY:** Dan Sayers (Headmaster)  
Rosie Abbot-Drake (Head of Learning Support)

**SIGNED:**

**DATED:** 30.11.18

### INTRODUCTION

At St Hilda's we aim to develop in each child the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes that will help them to reach their full potential. We give high priority to the quality of care and nurture attitudes of mutual respect and responsibility within the school community.

The School provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. However, we recognise that some children do not achieve in line with expectations. This can be manifested in difficulties acquiring and using new knowledge, concepts and skills. This policy is informed by the current Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (SEND) Code of Conduct Practice: 0 to 25 (2015), the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014). We consider the guidance in the current framework reflects good practice and we therefore make use of and observe this guidance where appropriate.

St Hilda's offers a board, well-balanced curriculum, designed to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum, Common Entrance and other public school entrance examinations. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. They take account of pupils needs and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Differentiation opportunities are outlined in Medium Term and Short Term Plans.

At St Hilda's we recognise that there is a continuum of Learning Support and Special Educational Needs; and that the needs of the majority of our pupils may not be considered as SEND under the terms of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice Act 2001. The term **Learning Support** is therefore applied to the department, the pupils with SEND and those other pupils who may be a cause for concern within our own context.

We recognise that a range of learning support needs exist in this school. For some pupils the difficulties might be mild and short term but for others they may be long term and more complex. We implement provision for pupils whose difficulties may fall into one or more of the four areas of need identified in the Code of Practice (2015):

- Communication and interaction
- Cognitive and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and / or physical needs

Special educational provision should be matched to the child's identified SEN and is defined as educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age.

## **ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM**

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to both understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities as well as experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Teachers use a range of strategies to assist pupils requiring additional needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; work is differentiated appropriately, including homework, assessment is used to inform the next stage of learning.

Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision made in the school. Breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, helps children to experience success.

Children are supported in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Children are supported within the classroom where appropriate. There are times when children work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom to maximise learning.

We also provide the facility to further enhance our policies, at parental wish/request, by offering individual 1:1 sessions on a chargeable basis. This does not affect our normal teaching procedure or reasonable adjustments.

## **AIMS**

The aims of this policy which should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy, are to:

- To work in partnership with pupils, staff, parents and external agencies (when appropriate).
- To create an environment in which quality teaching and learning can take place which enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress, according to their ability, so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught.
- To provide equal access for all children to the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled.
- Identify as early as practically possible any learning needs.
- Create an environment that meets the specific educational needs of each child.
- Ensure that the specific educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for.

## OBJECTIVES

- To apply a whole school policy to meeting pupils' individual needs
- To ensure that children who require Learning Support are identified as early as possible and the appropriate provision made for them.
- To initiate assessments when it is considered appropriate either internally or by an outside agency.
- To work in partnership with children, parents, staff and outside agencies (when appropriate) in order to make the best possible provision for children with additional needs.
- To ensure that the pupil's records include information relating to her individual needs and that the interventions have been put in place.
- To conduct termly reviews and monitor and evaluate pupil progress.
- To make the best use of the available resources (both human and material) in school.

## EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION

Through appropriate curricular provision, the school respects the fact that all children:

- Have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- Require different strategies for learning
- Acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- Using quality first teaching (QFT) as originating in the then DCSF's Guide to Personalised Learning published in 2008.
- Using both formal and informal assessments (as per the Assessments policy) to identify and plan for children's needs
- Providing support for children who need help with communication, language, literacy and numeracy
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of appropriate senses and experiences
- Planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- Helping children to manage their behaviour
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions

The Learning Support Department is an integral part of St Hilda's. The emphasis is on identifying and supporting children who may require additional support, some of whom may be identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND Code of Practice (0-25)). We are committed to meeting the need of all our pupils. This is a shared responsibility and whole school approach, and there is good liaison between all staff, parents and outside agencies.

## TERMINOLOGY

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code (2015) states that:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person 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 or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

The Equality Act 2010 states that schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to 'policies, criteria and practices' to address potential issues of discrimination.

The duty is 'to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantages' to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of an ancillary aid or service.

The reasonable adjustments duty is owed to disabled pupils, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The Act says that a pupil has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Substantial is defined as being anything more than minor or trivial. More guidance on the definition of disability is available from [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) (some disabled pupils, but not all, will have special education needs).

For further reasonable adjustments this section should be read in conjunction with the 3 Year Access Plan.

### **EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

Procedures for school examinations take into account a pupil's learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Appropriate arrangements may include, but are not limited to: extra time, an alternative exam location, a reader (unless assessing reading and comprehension), use of a laptop, and/or provision of a scribe.

All procedures relating to school trips will take account of pupils learning difficulties for disabilities. Appropriate arrangements are made as needed to meet a specific need.

### **THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

The Governors appoints one of its members (currently Mrs Mary Piachaud) to have specific responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the learning support provision in school. At a general level, the Governors ensure that:

- Its designated member meets regularly with the Head of Learning Support to review and discuss provision
- Periodic reports are made on the learning support provision in the school to the Board of Governors
- The school adopts a suitable Learning Support Policy which is reviewed regularly and meets the requirements of pupils with specific learning needs
- Regard is given to the SEND Code of Practice (August 2014) when carrying out its duties

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS**

- Parents play a key role in enabling girls to reach their potential. Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings and termly individual meetings as and when appropriate
- As found in the School Parent's Contract, they are expected to inform the school of any relevant essential information pertaining to their child's SEND or indeed any factors that could affect this
- Parents are expected to reinforce the support given to ensure pupils have carried out required set tasks and regularly checking pupil's homework diary
- Parents are informed at termly meetings about a pupil's progress either directly from the Head of Learning Support, or from the Form Teacher and school reports
- Sympathetic and positive discussion between the school and parents is encouraged at all times

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF PUPILS**

- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress

- Pupils are encouraged to participate in regular reviews of their individual support with the Head of Learning Support and to voice their opinions
- When homework is set as part of the support provided, it is essential that this is afforded the same importance as homework set by academic departments for the pupil to gain maximum benefit

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEAD OF LEARNING SUPPORT**

In St Hilda's School, the role of the Head of Learning Support is:

- To help classroom Teachers to identify, set targets and make provision, through usual classroom differentiation and support, for pupils with specific learning needs
- To provide specialist teaching to groups or individuals in response to needs identified
- To provide advice to staff/parents on external specialist assessors
- To liaise regularly with all staff and monitor pupil's progress
- To liaise with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition to secondary schools
- To ensure that extra time is given to entrance examination candidates
- To maintain the Learning Support Provision Map so that it is readily accessible to staff
- To conduct the Form II (and new entrance if necessary) Dyscalculia and Dyslexia Screening computer programme and assess results, including consultation with staff
- To liaise with all subject heads of department to offer advice on pupils requiring additional support
- To provide information on all children with specific learning needs to all relevant members of staff
- To keep pupil records, write, review and evaluate IEP's termly together with class teachers, parents and pupil
- To liaise with parents regarding additional support for pupils with Educational Psychologist/specialist teacher's reports and recommendations
- To involve parents in the decision making process
- To seek and respond to the views of the children themselves at all stages
- To be responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the School

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

Details of the school's Learning Support Policy and Provision is available to parents upon request. The Governors with monitoring responsibility for Learning Support are always willing to talk to parents.

At all stages of the special needs process, the school keeps parents fully informed and involved. Account is taken of the wishes, feelings and knowledge of parents at all stages. Parents are encouraged to make an active contribution to their child's education.

Meetings with parents are held three times each year to individually share the progress of all children. Parents are consulted regarding any proposed outside intervention, and the process of decision-making is shared by providing clear information relating to the education of children with special educational needs.

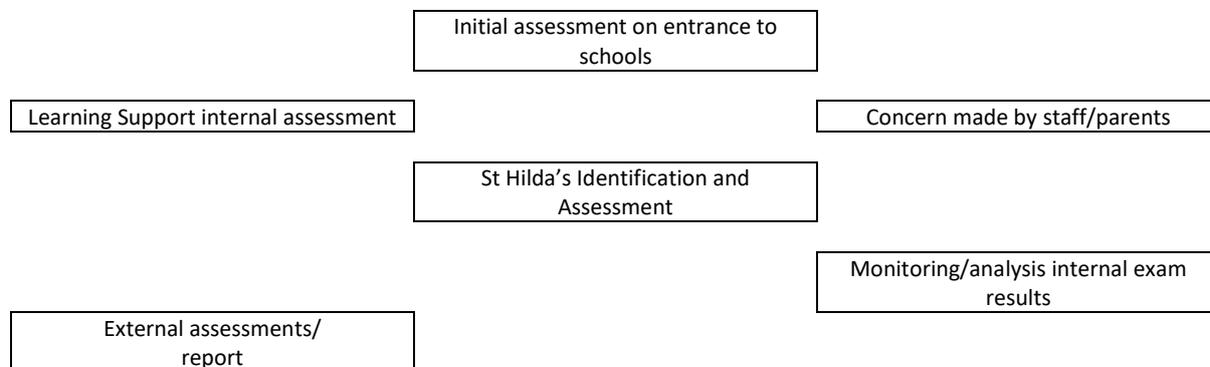
## **ASSESSMENT & IDENTIFYING SEND IN SCHOOL**

Early identification is a vital step in the provision of intervention strategies. The Form Teacher and Head of Learning Support raise concerns with the parents at the earliest opportunity and enlists their active support and participation.

The Form Teacher and the Head of Learning Support assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices.

The Head of Learning Support works closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of intervention and support.

The Form Teacher and the Head of Learning Support can break assessment tasks into smaller steps in order to provide detailed and accurate indicators.



## LEARNING SUPPORT PROVISION MAP

Although not mandatory, the school maintains a Provision Map.

## RESPONDING TO CHILDREN'S LEARNING SUPPORT (See Chapter 6 of the SEND Code of Practice August 2014)

The School follows the COP's advice and we aim to Assess – Plan – Do – Review with parents informed and involved at all stages. Our SEN support aims to take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provisions in place. Their support takes the form of a 4 tier cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupils needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialised expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children.

### Stage 1 – Concern Raised

Concerns are addressed within the classroom by the Class Teacher, Class Assistant, Nursery Nurse and/or Learning Support Teacher. Parents may be asked to provide additional opportunities for repetition and/or review with cross reference to the aforementioned teachers responses to children's needs.

Examples of the teaching and learning strategies utilised at this stage may include, but are not limited to:

- More periodic checks of progression and understanding
- Provision of concrete materials or frames
- Differentiated work or outcome expectations
- Paired work
- Extension activities
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Provision of extended thinking time
- Organisational strategies

## Stage 2 – Interventions & Tailored Support

The child's progress or lack of progress is the key issue for additional support. This should be read in conjunction with the School's Assessment Policy.

Concerns continue to be addressed within the classroom by the Class Teacher, Class Assistant, Nursery Nurse and/or Learning Support Teacher. Parents may be asked to continue providing additional opportunities for repetition and/or review. The child is included in small group work to allow for more repetition, further development of concepts use of concrete materials, better pupil/teacher ratio, more individualised explanations and questioning, and supported exploration of concepts. The child may have 1:1 or paired tuition to provide individualised lessons. Individualised lessons are tailored to meet the specific needs of the child in liaison with the Class Teacher and Head of Learning Support.

Examples of the teaching and learning strategies utilised at this stage may include, but are not limited to:

- More periodic checks of progression and understanding
- Provision of concrete materials or frames
- Differentiated work or outcome expectations
- Paired work
- Extension activities
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Read/Write phonic group work
- Focussed discussion of texts to enhance comprehension
- Four Square planning frame to organise and develop ideas for writing
- Use of models and images to support/extend mathematical understanding
- Provision of extended thinking time
- Organisational strategies

## Stage 3 – Outside Intervention and Specialist Provision

Concerns continue to be addressed within the classroom by the Class Teacher, Class Assistant, Nursery Nurse and/or Learning Support Teacher. Parents may be asked to continue providing additional opportunities for repetition and/or review. The child will continue to be included in small group work to allow for more repetition, further development of concepts use of concrete materials, better pupil/teacher ratio, more individualised explanations and questioning, supported exploration of concepts. Provision of 1:1 or paired tuition is strongly recommended. Individualised lessons are tailored to meet the specific needs of the child in liaison with the Class Teacher and Head of Learning Support. A child at this stage who is still not making expected progress after receiving appropriate support / intervention is referred to an external agency for appropriate assessment.

Examples of the teaching and learning strategies utilised at this stage may include, but are not limited to:

- More periodic checks of progression and understanding
- Provision of concrete materials or frames
- Differentiated work or outcome expectations
- Paired work
- Extension activities
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Read/Write phonic group work
- Toe by Toe phonic revision
- Focussed discussion of texts to enhance comprehension
- Four square planning frame to organise and develop ideas for writing
- Use of models and images to support/extend mathematical understanding
- Provision of extended thinking time
- Organisational strategies

- Bullet pointed instructions that are easy to follow
- Use of an electronic spellchecker in the writing process
- Additional time allocated for completing a given task

Initial concerns relating to a child's education are raised with the Head of Learning Support. These concerns can be raised by any member of staff or by parents.

## **SPECIALIST PROVISION**

The school seeks the support and advice of external specialists when needed. Children are referred when, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support:

- Little or no progress is made in specific areas over a long period;
- Work is at a level substantially below that expected of children of similar age
- Development of Literacy and mathematics skills is continuously difficult
- Emotional and mental health difficulties substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- Sensory or physical needs requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- Communication or interaction difficulties impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning

## **SCHOOL PROVISION**

Part of a class teacher's responsibility is to identify children with specific learning needs. The class teacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the schools usual differentiated curriculum.

Strategies employed to enable the child to progress should be recorded within an Individual Education Plan. The IEP should focus on several individual targets chosen from those relating to the key areas of communication, literacy and mathematics and social, emotional and mental health. The IEP should be discussed with the child and parents. IEPs should be reviewed termly and should include the views of both parents and pupils.

## **EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT (See Code of Practice Chapter 6)**

When the Headmaster asks for a EHCP referral of a child, the school will provide written evidence of or information about:

- School Provision and Specialist Provision
- IEPs for the pupil
- Records of regular reviews and their outcomes
- The pupil's health including medical history where relevant
- Attainments in literacy and numeracy
- Assessments
- Views of the parents and pupil
- Involvement of other professionals including Social Services and Educational Welfare

## **SCHOOL TRANSFER**

When children move schools, the school is required to transfer school records, including SEN documentation, within 15 days of the child ceasing to be registered at the school.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Head of Learning Support and Headmaster regularly monitor the progress of children receiving learning support. The Head of Learning Support, form teachers, support staff and parents work together to draw up Individual Education Plans with the children following consultations whereby previous IEPs are evaluated.

The Governors review this policy annually and amendments are considered in light of the annual review findings.

St Hilda's School's Learning Support Policy should also be read in conjunction with other key policies, in particular:

- ❖ Assessment Policy
- ❖ Teaching and Learning Policy
- ❖ Equal Opportunities (Pupils) Policy
- ❖ SENDA Policy
- ❖ EAL

**This policy will be reviewed annually, by the Senior Management Team, in line with the school's review schedule for policies.**