

## Learning Support Policy

At Sherborne Preparatory School, children are considered to have Learning Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special provision to be made for them. A child is deemed to have a learning difficulty if they have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of education facilities provided for children the same age.

### Principles

The school aims to identify children with Specific Learning Difficulties at the earliest opportunity and offer appropriate provision. Sherborne Preparatory School seeks to offer children with Specific Learning Difficulties full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

There is a whole school approach, which involves all staff, in supporting children with Specific Learning Difficulties. All school staff are made aware of each child's needs at staff and assessments meetings and through information in learning support files, termly notes, Individual Educational Plans and LS Register. All staff have a responsibility to differentiate lessons to cater for individual learning needs.

It is anticipated that parents will be involved and are consulted as fully as possible. Close working relationships are encouraged between parents, teachers, the special needs co-ordinator and outside agencies.

### Staffing and accommodation

Mrs Karen Smith is the school's Learning Needs Co-ordinator (LESCO).

She is responsible for the day to day implementation of the Special Needs Policy. Mrs Smith holds a B.Ed (Hons) and an additional qualification in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia).

Mrs Smith is a part-time member of staff, teaching small groups and individuals with specific learning difficulties throughout the school and acts in advisory capacity for teachers from the Nursery to Year 8.

Mrs Ruth Rogerson and Mrs Tamsin Holroyd teach and support EAL pupils individually.

Mrs Nicole Jones is a Learning Support Assistant who supports children individually or in groups on individual learning programmes. She can work alongside children in the classroom or out, depending on need. She liaises with LESCo and the form teachers.

Mrs Kate Junguis and Mrs Sarah Smibert are also teaching assistants supporting children with difficulties within the classroom and individually. They also work with small groups under the direction of the LESCo and class teachers.

Mrs Rosie Suttle supports children with learning needs at prep time to enable them to have extra practise with reading, spelling and support for prep. Gaps can also be used to support individual children.

All learning support staff are based in the Learning Support room in Netherton House. The room is divided with a screen to segregate individual pupils or groups. There is also a room used by the EAL teachers in the main part of the school which can be used to work with EAL pupils. The Common Room in Netherton is used for assessments and provides a quiet setting for visiting therapists, educational psychologists and parents.

Some children receive support from outside agencies in conjunction with the support received in school. The specialist therapist will come in and work with the child and liaise with LESCO and parents. The

school has a number of visiting Educational Psychologists, Speech Therapists and access to a School Counsellor.

As an Independent School, all learning support lessons are charged to parents in addition to fees. The cost of sessions with therapists (where appropriate), are separate arrangements between therapists and parents.

#### Objectives

To apply a whole school policy to meeting the child's individual needs as set down in The Code of Practice for SEN (2001) and The Disability and Discrimination Act (2002) and Every Child Matters (2006).

To ensure children with learning needs are identified as early as possible.

To assess the child to identify specific areas of difficulty.

To ensure all school staff are aware of the child's needs and are able to meet those needs within the school setting.

To ensure children's records include information relating to their individual needs, interventions and outcomes.

To assist staff in modifying curriculum to meet the child's needs within the classroom and provide INSET programme.

To endeavour to ensure that each child with learning needs progresses to a suitable Senior School where his/her needs will be met.

To ensure that no child with learning needs or disability is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability.

To work in partnership with child's parents and include the child in target setting written in an Individual Education Plan.

#### Responsibilities of the Learning Support team

Screen and record literacy skills and/or maths skills where appropriate on a bi-annual basis.

Help form teachers identify and make provision through classroom differentiation and support throughout the school.

Provide specialist teaching to groups or individuals in response to needs identified at School Action and School Action Plus.

Keep IEPs under review and evaluate termly.

Provide information on all Special Learning Needs children to all members of staff who may be involved with them.

Liaise regularly with parents.

Seek and respond to the child's views.

Ensure that suitable exam arrangements are made for children who cannot cope with normal procedures.

#### Admission Arrangements

Pupils entering the school will normally spend a day with their year group and be assessed by the form teacher and subject teachers. If a child has already been identified as having learning needs, relevant reports should be brought to the admission interview. If necessary the LESCo will meet and assess the

child and talk to parents. Pupils are admitted to the school at the discretion of the Head teacher. LDD pupils will be admitted if the school can offer appropriate support. However, every effort will be made to accommodate a child with Learning Needs. A review of the child's needs is also made on transfer from the Pre-Prep to Preparatory departments.

#### Procedure of Identification and Assessment

A child's needs may become apparent through:

Admission procedures

Teaching within nursery or classrooms

School screening procedures

Parental concerns

Information provided by previous school.

The pupil is then referred to the LESCo for further testing. These tests will highlight any areas of weakness that could then be addressed by the class teacher and/or a specialist teacher in a one-to-one setting. This internal assessment will then be discussed with parents and form teacher and further action considered. It may be necessary to consider a more formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist or another specialist. These can usually be organised through the school. These outside agencies will require specific information about the child prior to the child being seen by them. Sometimes requests are made to parents for a child to have an updated sight and/or hearing test. These tests should be organised by the parents or carers.

#### Provision for Learning Needs

Once a child's difficulties have been identified appropriate provision is made. In Sherborne Preparatory School, the first layer of acknowledgement of identification is a Monitoring Register. This register outlines children who are a cause for concern but as yet do not need intervention other than that provided in class. The register is updated every term and children can be taken off, kept on or moved to School Action (the next stage) as appropriate. Early identification is very important and the Monitoring Register will often highlight children's difficulties in the initial stages. If a child is receiving extra support from the Learning Support Department then he/she will be considered as having School Action. In the event that this level of intervention does not enable the child to make satisfactory progress the LESCo may need to seek advice from external agencies. Children receiving support other than what is offered within the school are considered as School Action Plus.

#### Learning Support in Early Years setting

Emma Fairclough is the designated SEN person for EYFS.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are in an Early Years setting. Identification of a child's learning difficulties in these early stages is very important and Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus lay down the same level of intervention as the rest of the school. However, some of these difficulties can be developmental and children are rarely withdrawn for support unless from an outside agency. Provision will usually take place within the class setting though planned interventions as stated in the IEP can be undertaken by Teaching Assistants. Provision for learning needs in the Pre-Prep Department as a whole allows for greater in-class support because each class has a classroom assistant who is able to work with a specific child either individually or in small groups.

#### Individual Educational Plans

A child receiving individual support will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) written for them. This is written for pupils on Early Years Action or Early Years Action Plus and School Action or School Action Plus and for pupils with statements of SEN. These are written and reviewed each term and are written in collaboration with teachers, pupils and parents.

IEPs focus on three or four individual targets and the teachings strategies used.

The Individual Educational Plan is distributed to the teachers and parents of the child within the first few weeks of term.

Parents of children receiving individual support are invited to Learning Support Parent Evenings which are held just before the second exeat of each term. Here progress is discussed and targets set for the following term.

#### Group Educational Plans

When a group of pupils have common targets or strategies, a group IEP can be drawn up.

#### Timetabling

The amount and type of support offered to a child is dependent on need. Where possible, pupils will not be withdrawn from lessons unless it is necessary to do so.

When a child needs to be withdrawn for learning support, every effort is made to ensure that a child does not miss core curriculum subjects. Their individual strengths are also taken into account in addition to the advice of staff members and parental requests. Some pupils are withdrawn from a second language in order to ensure extra support is given for English and Maths as appropriate. Some support lessons for spelling, reading, literacy skills and Maths are given during study times, assembly times and some break-times.

#### Additional support

In addition to in-class support and individual or group support lessons, some pupils use specific programmes to support their learning. This may involve the use of laptop computers in lessons (more particularly in the senior part of the school), and the use of Spellcheckers. Computer software may also be suggested to support learning at home as well as specific Literacy programmes such as Toe by Toe and Stareway to Spelling.

Some pupils are placed on Reading Recovery programmes and spelling programmes involving daily support over a term to boost skills. Progress is linked to a reward scheme as motivation.

Pupils who board and receive learning support can be assisted by Gap year or boarding staff.

#### Target Club

This is an activity group supporting pupils throughout the Prep with gross and fine co-ordination, perceptual skills and handwriting difficulties. The pupils who attend have been identified by their teachers as having a difficulty in this area. It is timetabled as an activity session or during a sport session.

#### Exam Procedures

Official guidelines are followed for external exams. Future schools are contacted, where necessary, for extra time, or special exam provision is required subject to a recommendation by an outside agency assessment. In school exams, extra time can be allowed wherever a pupil's reading or writing speed is significantly below his or her age level, or where proof reading is essential. It may be necessary for a pupil to have a "reader" for exams other than English to ensure accurate reading of the question. A

'scribe' may also be required if suggested by an outside agency report. It may be appropriate to have a child pre-tested prior to entry to Senior Schools. See Appendix A.

#### Communication

Teachers, tutors and boarding staff have a duty to share information and advice about pupils. This can be done in weekly Pastoral Care and general staff meetings. Also LESCo holds meetings with staff to discuss pupil progress each half term.

Meetings are also held between Head of English, Maths and Director of Studies to ensure an holistic approach to a child's learning.

Learning Support staff will have weekly meetings to discuss pupils and evaluate learning programmes.

SENCo will liaise with staff to inform them about advice given by Educational Psychologists. Every term an LS register is circulated to all staff giving an outline of the child's needs. Termly IEPs are also sent to all staff. In the staffroom copies of all IEPs, LS registers, advice, information and resource suggestions are kept in a Blue file in the staffroom for all staff to look at.

Learning Support parent interviews are held every term and parents are able to contact SENCo by phone or e-mail if they have any concerns.

#### Able Children

Occasionally a pupil will stand out from their peers as having exceptional abilities. If the need is considered very different from his/her peer group, the pupil has special needs. In most cases these special abilities can be nurtured within the classroom by differentiation of the curriculum. In certain circumstances the pupil may be referred to an Educational Psychologist and have an IAP drawn up. A Gifted and Talented Register is maintained by the school and extension programmes, liaising with local schools, are available. These are co-ordinated by the Deputy Head Academic.

#### Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Some behaviour or emotional needs can interfere with learning and social relationships. Such behaviour is discussed with form teachers and in the Pastoral Care Committee and strategies appropriate action is discussed. In some cases, where a pupil's behavioural difficulties need further intervention, it may be necessary to instigate a Pastoral Support Plan ensuring correct support is targeted. Occasionally the pupil may need to be referred to a GP, Counsellor or Educational Psychologist and an individualised programme written into an IEP where particular areas of difficulty are targeted.

#### Support for all pupils in Sherborne Prep

Any pupil is welcome to visit the Learning Support room whether or not they receive special provision. They are welcome to discuss any learning difficulties they may have with a member of the Learning Support Team.

#### In-service training

Staff are kept informed of Learning Needs and developments during school INSET days and specific INSET sessions are arranged where appropriate. LESCo attends courses regularly. TAs receive in-house training and attend courses outside school to refresh skills.

Teaching staff are also invited to attend specific LDD courses.

#### Complaints

Concerns or complaints about learning support provision should be raised with the form teacher or LESCo. They may also be brought to the attention of the head teacher.

## Future Development

The following areas of development have been targeted 2010/11

Staff training in dealing with anger management.

Social skills groups.

Resource base for all staff to access.

Improved record-keeping using a school-wide system.

## SEN policy

The policy is reviewed every two years. The Headteacher, the LESCO and all LS teachers hold a copy of the Learning Support policy. Copies are also kept in the Pre-Prep department, in the Learning Support room and in the secretary's office for parents to read. A copy is also kept in the Learning Support file in the staff room for all staff to read.